The Cultural Role of Chess
in Medieval and Modern Times
50th Anniversary Jubilee
of the Sandomierz Chess Discovery

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The Cultural Role of Chess in Medieval and Modern Times

50th Anniversary Jubilee of the Sandomierz Chess Discovery

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Reminiscences

Poland – Sandomierz, May 25-26, 2012
The jubilee of the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the Sandomierz chess

Conference: *The Cultural Role of the Game of Chess over Centuries*

In 2012 half a century passed since the discovery in Sandomierz, Poland, of a mediaeval chess set. It has been housed in the District Museum in Sandomierz since 1980 and is one of its most valuable archaeological exhibits. Various chess pieces and even complete sets dating several centuries back are known from museum exhibitions and private collections all over the world. However, most often they lack the context or even reliable information about the place of their finding and so belong to the group of beautiful, spectacular artefacts that very often offer no full cognitive possibilities as a source of scientific study. The Sandomierz find is thus one of the few stunning discoveries, not just because it comprises two almost complete sets (with only three pieces missing) but also because it was made during regular excavation work and is documented.

The jubilee makes one reflect on the impact of the find on the scholars' awareness of the subject, the state of research of games, including chess, and the use of the possibilities of scientific analysis in the study of the subject. The District Museum in Sandomierz in cooperation with the Poznan Archaeological Museum and the Polish Chess Federation, have taken the initiative to organize an international, conference and invited representatives of various disciplines of science who wanted to present their own studies into the role played by chess in the history of the European culture from the Middle Ages until present.

The result of the two-day meeting was the presentation of over 20 papers, most of which are included in the presented publication. Chess, all over Europe, has found its supporters and their adaptation in the Middle Ages in various ways. The pages of this book include researchers on the history of the development of the royal game from the East and West of Europe, researchers dealing with various early and later related games, as well as verification studies undertaken after 50 years to update findings on the mystery of the discovery of early medieval chess in Sandomierz. We would like to thank all those who took part in the deliberations and presented their research in the form of articles collected in this volume. We would also like to thank all those who were involved in the organization of the conference, thanks to whom Sandomierz on the two May days of 2012 became the capital of the history of chess.

Agnieszka Stempin
Marzena Szmyt

A view of the St. James Hill, circa 1880. Photo from the collection of the Diocesan Museum in Sandomierz; reproduced in *Dawny Sandomierz*, Sandomierz 2002 (ed. U. Stępień)

Sandomierz, St. James Hill. Place of chess discovery and St. James Church

Sandomierz Chess Pieces

Liebe Freunde und Kollegen,

sehr geehrte Teilnehmer der Internationalen Konferenz auch der Schachhistoriker in Sandomierz vom 25. bis 26. Mai 2012 anlässlich des 50jährigen Jubiläums des Fundes eines Schachspiels aus dem 12./13. Jahrhundert durch eine archäologische Expedition der Polnischen Akademie der Wissenschaften!

Erlauben Sie mir, Ihnen Erfolg für die Veranstaltung in Erinnerung an dieses bemerkenswerte Datum zu wünschen.

Ich bedauere sehr, dass es die Umstände nicht erlauben, an Ihrem Forum teilzunehmen. Das ist um so bedauerlicher, als ich mich selbst viele Jahre mit Problemen archäologischer Forschungen zum Schach im Alten Russland beschäftigt habe und seinerzeit an der zweiten Auflage meines Buches „Schach im Alten Russland" und an ihrer englischsprachigen Version „Chess in Old Russia" (Zürich 1979) arbeitete, in der die Bedeutung dieses mittelalterlichen Fundes für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Schachkultur in Polen hervorgehoben wurde.

Dabei habe ich mit großem Vergnügen die Äußerung von Frau Eligia Gąssowska über die erste Ausgabe meines Buches in der polnischen Zeitschrift für Archäologie im Jahre 1964 gelesen. Und dann haben natürlich die Reise nach Polen mit einer Gruppe russischer Professoren im Jahre 1975 und die Teilnahme an zwei internationalen Konferenzen von Schachhistorikern in Kórnik unauslöschliche Eindrücke hinterlassen. Die letzteren waren von der Polnischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und persönlich von Frau Magister Maria Łuczak bestens organisiert worden. Ich nutze die Gelegenheit, hier noch einmal mein Beileid und meine Trauer zum viel zu frühen Tod dieser bemerkenswerten Vertreterin der polnischen Schachkultur zu bekunden.

Ich bin überzeugt, dass die neue Konferenz der Schachhistoriker wieder einen neuen Meilenstein in der Geschichte der Schachkultur Polens setzen wird.

Abschliessend möchte ich hervorheben: Mögen dieses Grusswort, das dieser Konferenz freundlicherweise von meinem Freund Herrn Meissenburg zur Kenntnis gegeben werden wird, der übersandten Nummer der Zeitschrift „64" mit dem Artikel von Wladimir Linder „Pani jesien" und die Schachenzyklopädie (2003) mit dem Artikel über Polen, der mit dem Schachspiel von Sandomierz beginnt, dem Ausdruck meiner besten Empfindungen gegenüber Polen und seinem Beitrag zur Kunst des Schachspiels dienen.

† *Isaak Linder*

Sandomierz, Opatowska Gate

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you all to the Interdisciplinary Conference "The cultural role of the game of chess over centuries."

A layman would ask - what is chess, if not a sport or entertainment? Our presence here confirms that chess is so much more. The game of chess is absolutely unique and in its journey through the centuries it has gained both devoted admirers and detractors, and inflamed extreme emotions. This is a game that has been a mirror of cultural trends ever since it was created. As a reflection and a record of history, chess is a source of a rich historical and archaeological heritage, that promotes and encourages valuable research, cultural, sociological, psychological, mathematical and linguistic.

"No one knows which of the gods brought it to Earth ... to sharpen the senses and take the soul" (Stefan Zweig)

How often do we, as active players who have to deal with the game every day, seem to know it from the beginning to the end, to know it almost inside out forgetting that chess does not begin with Staunton and his Chess Player's Handbook, nor does it end with chess figures signed by him. We are not historians or archeologists but the chess players who have always treated chess primarily as a sport or an intellectual duel, people then, who during the tournament are left with little time to ponder over the history of the game. During this very conference we shall all be taken on a remarkable and almost magical journey to India via Rus, Scandinavia and the Mediterranean Basin. We shall visit the Carolingian Empire and have discussions about men and women playing chess as well as about the recreational and therapeutic role of chess, its symbolism and the message it conveys. We are also going to reflect on the extraordinary richness of shapes among chess pieces and their characteristics in different regions.

Chess remains a popular reference point in other cultural forms, including literature and film, and this wider context means that chess can never simply be treated as another sport. Those diverse reference points include The Seventh Seal by Ingmar Bergman, Schachnovelle by Stefan Zweig, Chess, a heroi-comic poem by Jan Kochanowski, and finally, for the younger generation, the theme of the game of chess is present in one of the Harry Potter books (Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone).

The symbolism of chess and the chessboard has fascinated people for many ages. The white and black squares frequently symbolises darkness and light, the battle between the titans and the gods, or between the demigods and demons.The chessboard represents the visible world, which is managed by the white and black squares.

It consists of sixty-four squares, where the number „sixty-four" symbolises the creation of cosmic unity. Sixty-four hexagrams can be found in the book of I-Ching ('Chinese Book of Changes'), written by Confucius. The eight trigrams of the eight combinations represent sixty-four changes or transformation processes. They are in a continuous process of transformation, always trying to modify one of the three lines of trigrams. These lines represent life: the features constant and changing. "Nothing is permanent" – so says Trismegistus (Thrice Great Hermes) on the Emerald Tablet, created by himself, which with its seven

principles is a synthesis of the philosophy and wisdom of ancient Egypt. Most of the meanings of the board revolves around the symbolism of life and death, the worship of ancestors and the dead, the eternal succession of days and seasons of the year, the wheel of life, good and evil and destruction and rebirth.

The chessboard symbolizes both the outer space, with its cosmic forces, and the inner man who is struggling with himself. Chess is a kind of dialogue that is partly scientific and partly magical, both analytical and intuitive, eloquent and silent, which is indeed a unique challenge.

Can this unusual phenomenon of chess be still seen as exclusively non-scientific? We are deeply convinced that this game deserves a lot more.

Siegbert Tarrasch once said: "Chess like love, like music, can make people happy"

Hanna Ereńska-Barlo
The first Polish Chess Grandmaster

Sandomierz Chess in the Context of Medieval Chess finds from Poland – 50 years of Mystery

Andrzej Buko

Agnieszka Stempin

Dariusz Niemiec

Monika Bajka

Andrzej Buko

Sandomierz in the Twelfth Century: An Archaeological Perspective

In the 12th c., following the division of the Polish state by Boleslav Wrymouth, Sandomierz became the capital of the Duchy of Sandomierz Principality, under Heny of Sandomierz (1146-1166). No major building development is associated with his rule but his successor Casimir II the Just is remembered as the founder of the collegiate church, the largest church in the city (cf. Lalik 1986: 63). This was not the only sacral investment in the 12th c. New churches were also erected on Wzgórze Staromiejskie (Old City Hill) and Wzgórze Zamkowe (Castle Hill), while the church of St. Peter's on the Wzgórze *Collegium Gostomianum* (*Collegium Gostomianum* Hill) was totally rebuilt. These large-scale developments constituted just a small part of the overall grand design for the city's makeover.

The redevelopment was underway even before Henry of Sandomierz took control, so much so that at the beginning of the 12th c. the sweep of changes in the spatial layout of the town was quite impressive. On the hills of *Stare Miasto* (the Old Town) the old cemetery was replaced by an urban borough with at least two parish churches. A new element in the city's landscape was a massive wooden rampart of box construction with a moat, to which a dwelling area abutting the fortifications (*przedwale*) was successively added. A skeletal cemetery discovered in the castle courtyard and, in its immediate vicinity, the remains of a mysterious stone construction date to the same period.

Defensive ramparts, comparable to those on *Wzgórze Zamkow*e (Castle Hill) were found on *Wzgórze Katedralne* (Cathedral Hill). In the grounds of *Collegium Gostomianum* the suburb settlement was replaced by the rebuilt St Peter's and its surrounding cemetery. From the early 12th c. Castle Hill was no longer used as a burial ground and over the succeeding centuries the area expanded as an urban development.

Only the areas of the stronghold and suburb continued in their functions in the 12th and 13th c. (fig. 1). Interestingly, traces of defensive constructions are still visible in the 12th c. parts of the three hills (*Zamkowe*, *Katedralne* and *Collegium Gostomianum*), while the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* reports that the city within the walls consisted of stronghold and suburb, in other words of two, not three, fortified parts. We will try to solve this dilemma below.

The spatial layout of the early mediaeval city as presented in the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle

The starting point for an analysis of the spatial layout of the pre-charter city (i.e. the city prior to the granting of the municipal charter under Magdeburg law in 1287) is the *Chronicle's* description of the second Tatar raid of 1259/1260. The faithful depiction of the details of the siege and the subsequent capturing of the city indicate that the author of the report had an intimate knowledge of the dramatic events; thus he was either a witness or got his information at first-hand.

As reported by the *Chronicle* (cf. Sielicki 1987: 244), the city consisted of the stronghold proper and suburb. Despite the use of sophisticated siege engines it took the invaders three days to weaken the walls of the city severely enough to permit an immediate attack on the ramparts. The city's system of fortifications must therefore have been considerable. Next, the *Chronicle* also says that it was easier

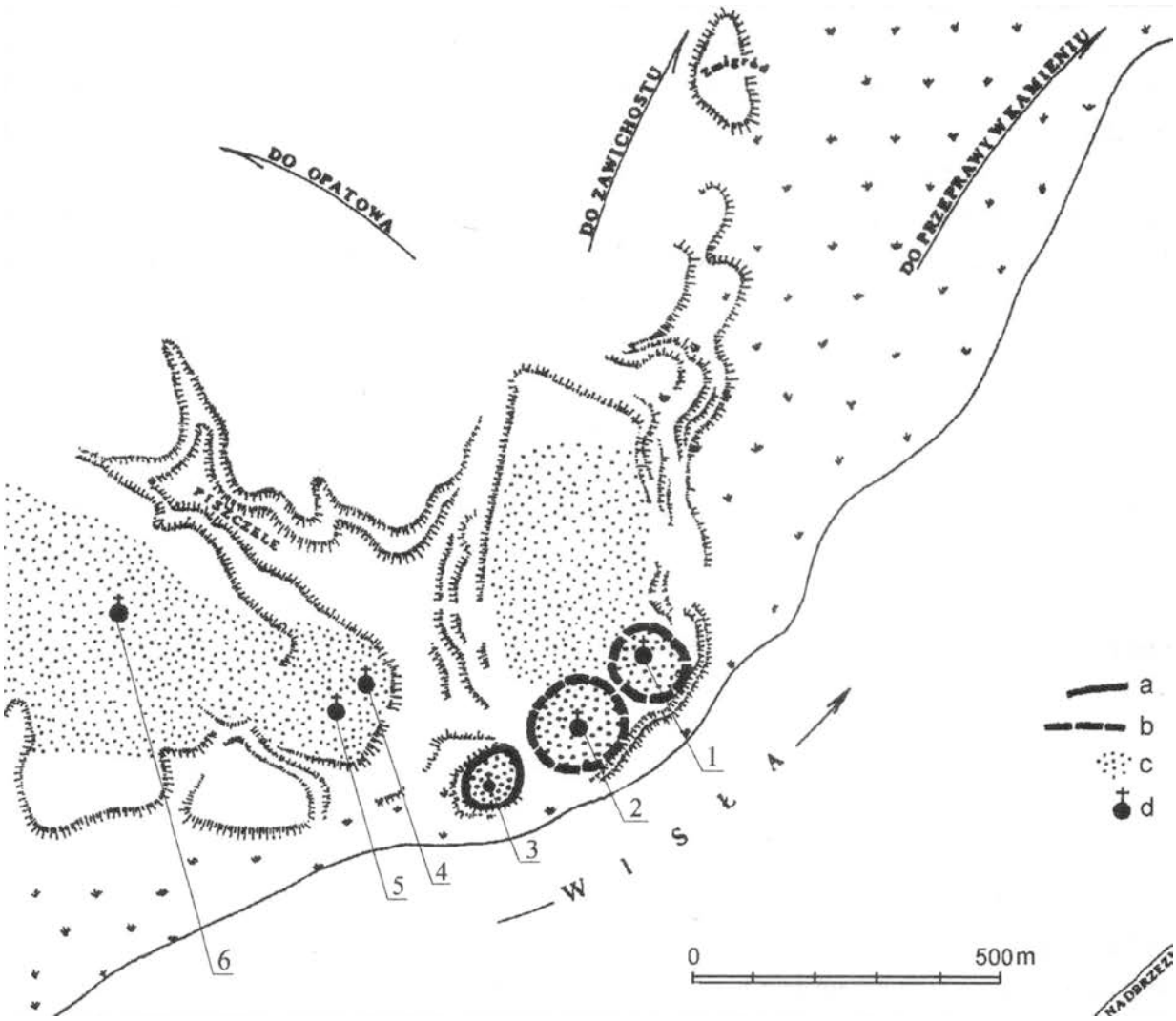

Fig. 1. Sandomierz in the 12th and first half of the 13th c.; plan of spatial layout: a – stronghold, b – fortifications of suburb, c – inhabited area, d – church with adjacent cemetery: 1 – St Peter's church, 2 – the collegiate church of Holy Virgin Mary, 3 – city chapel, 4 – St John the Baptist's church, 5 – St James's church, 6 – St Paul's church. After S. Tabaczyński 1996

to capture the *suburbium*, which the Tatars attacked first before moving on to take the stronghold. Additionally we learn about the character of the buildings within the walls: there were shacks (pit houses?) covered with straw but a church built of hewn stone blocks with a shingled roof which caught fire and collapsed into the building, burying those inside seeking refuge. Finally we learn that that stronghold and *suburbium* were separated by a moat (which the *Chronicle* tells us people fell into) but connected by a bridge, a bridge that *suburbium's* dwellers ran across trying to escape inevitable death.

A projection of the *Chronicle's* report onto the topography of early mediaeval Sandomierz seems to leave no doubt that the events described refer to *Wzgórze Katedralne* and *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. It was widely held that it was there that the great church – the collegiate church of the Holy Virgin Mary – of white, hewn stone stood. It seems that lower down the hill, below the church, spread the wooden constructions of the *suburbium* mentioned by the chronicler.

The second hill to which the *Chronicle* refers is probably *Wzgórze Zamkowe*, where, in recent years, excavations have revealed the strongest fortifications so far identified in the city. Prior to the Tatar invasion they consisted of a double circle of ramparts and two moats (cf. below). The two hills were separated from the rest of the city by deep ravines that were still evident in the 19th c., when they were recorded in several paintings (fig. 2). The city within the walls was an integral part of the en-

Fig. 2. *Wzgórze Zamkowe* and *Wzgórze Katedralne* in the mid-19th c. Note the remarkable steep, falling loess escarpments and the Vistula channel following a different course than the present-day riverbed. After the copy of a painting by M. Szermentowski, negative from District Museum in Sandomierz

tire agglomeration, though before the Tatar raids it covered an incomparably larger area. Below we shall describe the main parts of the pre-charter city as they may have been in the 12th c.

A political and administrative centre – the stronghold on *Wzgórze Zamkowe* (Castle Hill)

A spectacular result of the excavations on *Wzgórze Zamkowe* (fig. 3) was the discovery of a system of fortifications on its western slope, which in their prime consisted of a double circle of ramparts and moats. The new grillage – box constructions reveal impressive engineering skills. The shortage of space within the walls must have been acute during the redevelopment of the city, perhaps explaining why the fortifications were built on the slope of the hill rather than the plateau.

Before the mid-12th c. the rampart was partially damaged and then repaired. At the same time the defences were reinforced by an additional ring of fortifications erected at the foot of the hill. The latter can be described as a fore rampart with entanglements of diagonally positioned poles and an additional outer moat. Prior to the Tatar raid in 1259 the system of fortifications on *Wzgórze Zamkowe* consisted of two circles of ramparts and two moats (fig. 4).

Construction of these designed fortifications was an enterprise that required organised labour on a large scale and a huge stockpile of suitable wood. Surmiński (1993) has shown that whilst to begin with it was possible to amass a sufficient stock of the much favoured oak, in the later phases, especially of the last to-be-built (a fore rampart), pinewood – a technically inferior material – is the prevailing wood. This is a likely indication of a crisis in acquiring material, probably caused by the thinning of forest cover, already felt in the Principality in the early phase of its existence.

A moat ca 2.5 m deep and up to 5 m wide ran at the foot of the hill. Its fill revealed various objects of everyday use and elements of later constructions; a horse skeleton found in the moat could be connected with military operations. The area inside the stronghold revealed remnants of courtyard con-

Fig. 3. Sandomierz castle and the western escarpment of *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. S-W view. Photo by A. Buko

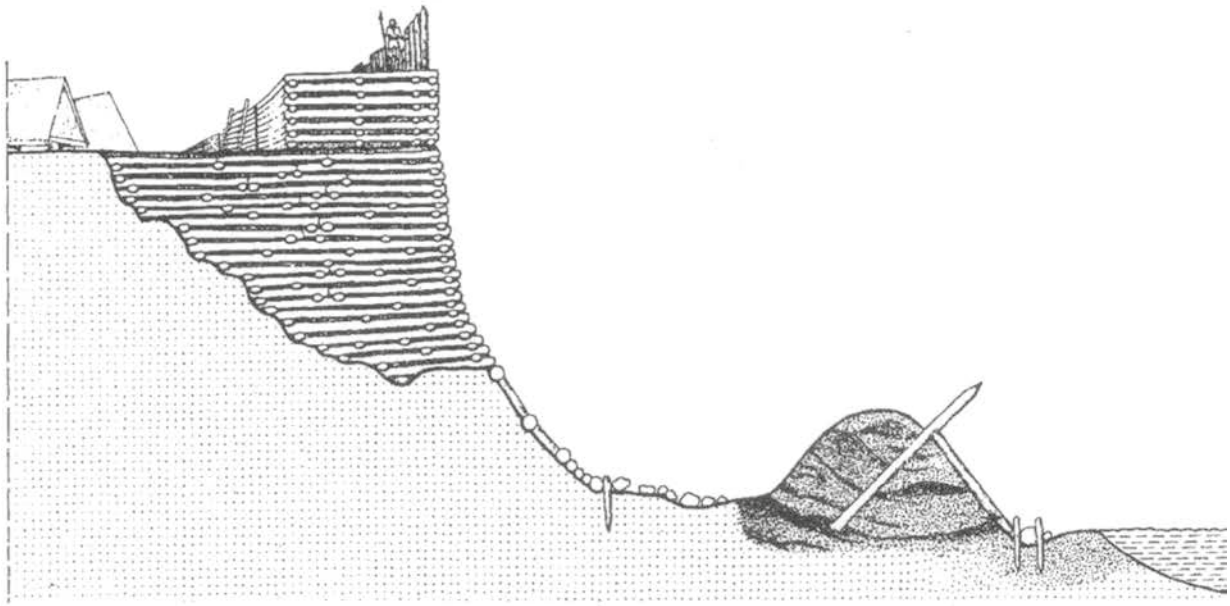

Fig. 4. *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. System of the defensive walls of the Sandomierz stronghold prior to the Tatar raid of 1259/1260; a reconstruction. After A. Buko 1998, il. 52

Fig. 5. The central part of the castle courtyard (trench 55C). The mysterious stone wall with traces of repairs (two rows of bricks on the right), western view. Photo by S. Biniewski

structions. They included the bottom parts of pits cut into the loess and the remains of out-buildings, one with a huge permanent hearth. Some of these buildings are interpreted by Gąssowska (1970: 212f.) as the remains of dwellings.

The skeletal cemetery located in the courtyard, dated to the 12th or the first half of the 13th c. (cf. Gąssowski 1967: 191), was an important discovery. Altogether 10 burials were unearthed. The graves seem to indicate the location of St. Nicholas' church, sometimes identified with the castle chapel that stood there until the early 16th c. (cf. Lazar 1958: 63f.; Gąssowski 1967: 192). Miłobędzki (1967: 247) suggested that the *domus lapidea* mentioned in the inventory (catalogue) from 1510 could in fact have been a Romanesque *pallatium*.

Despite many arguments the question of the constructional development of the city remains open. The character of human settlement on *Wzgórze Zamkowe* has not been explained, nor the location of St Nicholas' definitely settled (Tabaczyński 1993). In this context the fragment of a stone wall found at the centre of the courtyard is a noteworthy discovery. The interpretation of this puzzling structure (fig. 5) has been beset with difficulties. The absence of contemporary settlement-strata seems

to indicate that the area had been carefully levelled before its construction. However, with the limited data at our disposal any more precise claims about its chronology are impossible, not least because of the total destruction of the wall and the original stratigraphy since the 19th century. We are reduced to hypothesising: If the line of bricks visible in the western section is evidence of its repair in the early Gothic period, then it follows that the wall had been erected earlier, i.e. during the early Middle Ages. The repair may be indirectly confirmed by a narrow trench captured at the wall at the bricked section, which stops short of the foundations.

The hypothesis is not refuted by the results of the mortar analysis. Samples taken both from the discovered wall, undisturbed loess soil near the wall and the western fragments of St. Peter's church wall reveal a similar formula. Stratigraphic data do not rule out accepting an early mediaeval dating for the remains of the wall in question (cf. Buko 1993b). Thus it cannot be excluded that the discovered wall fragment is evidence of an early mediaeval stone building. Two of the possible attributions that can be considered are the most pertinent: 1) the wall is a relict of a Romanesque *pallatium*; 2) the remains testify to a sacral function. Which seems the most probable? The context of the skeletal cemetery from the 12th-13th c. identified less than 10 m away from the wall appears to substantiate the second suggestion.

Compelling as they are, these arguments should not be overstated. We have no direct evidence that the discovered remains of the wall are the remains of a sacral building and even less that they can be identified with the former city church of St. Nicholas, which some authors (including Długosz) suggest was located on the neighbouring *Wzgórze Katedralne* (cf. Jop 1997 and the older sources he cites).

No remains of the ducal residence have been discovered on *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. Can its location be more precisely defined? It may be conjectured as with other centres of the early Piast state that the residence was located closer to the line of fortifications. In *Wzgórze Zamkowe* case the ideal place was probably the western or southern edge. It remains to be determined whether its remains lie beneath the later castle. The defensive advantages and the picturesque landscape of the spot, however, make this hypothesis highly probable.

The Romanesque collegiate church in the fortified suburbium

The collegiate church considerably increased the status of Sandomierz and it became the second ecclesiastical centre of Małopolska, after Kraków. Its erection date is unknown; we only know that it was founded by Casimir II the Just. The new church was consecrated in 1191, with Wincenty Kadłubek as the first provost. The foundation of a collegiate church with a complete team of the canonical monastery gave Sandomierz an opportunity of intellectual growth, a rare phenomenon in the Polish state (Szymański 1964). The canons of this church formed a key component of the province's intellectual elite. The church also accrued wealth, through benefices, which in Sandomierz alone included St. John's and St. Nicholas' (Lalik 1993: 58f. and references therein).

According to the *Chronicle*, the oldest church was built using the monumental technique of white hewn stone blocks. Research conducted so far has not revealed any traces of the building. Any surviving remains are currently inaccessible to archaeologists, perhaps beneath the present cathedral. Test pits around the cathedral made by J. Gąssowski in the 60s, however, showed a complete destruction of the older settlement structures and the layers present at the site chronologically correspond to the building of the Gothic collegiate church (Gąssowski 1967: 190).

In 1967 the discoveries in the vicinity of the suffragan bishop's house recovered significant new evidence. The courtyard of the building at 1, Katedralna Street, buried under a 5 m thick layer of fill revealed a portion of the loess core of the early mediaeval rampart, its base captured at the depth of ca 12 m (Gąssowska 1970: 220f. and 1971: 46f.). Discovering fortifications on this spot, the only unquestionable defensive constructions found *in situ* whose chronology can be referred to the pre-charter period, is a confirmation of the hill's significant role in the spatial layout of the city.

In 1978, during repair and construction work under the building at 5, Cathedral Street, a single-chamber furnace dug in the loess was found; its location on the original edge of the hill indicates that compared with the mediaeval times the present-day escarpment has moved ca 5-8 m towards the Vis-

tula valley (Buko 1993c: 35 with literature). Again, in 1979 the remains of a rampart were unearthed in the mining trench on the northern edge of the suffragan's house. Its loess core remained intact – a mound of almost pure loess on which wooden boxes were built; the latter were completely destroyed and burnt and they were lying above the rampart core as a layer of destruction (Buko 1993a: 37).

To date, the majority of objects found on *Wzgórze Katedralne* have not come from its plateau. This may be a result of the almost total destruction of the original structures around the present-day cathedral. Only the objects dug deep into the ground or situated on the edges of the hill had a chance of preservation, such as the remains of the defensive rampart identified on the northern slope. For this reason we can only hypothesize that the pre-charter development of *Wzgórze Katedralne* contained two districts. The Romanesque collegiate church of white hewn stones and a shingle roof, was situated on the higher, northern part of the summit, while below, in the southern part, lay the dwellings and other buildings of the suburb. The collegiate church was distinct not only because of the material used but because of its location on the highest part of the plateau, to the effect that its bulky body rose high above the top of the ramparts (cf. fig. 2). This location reflects the topography of the Wzgórze *Collegium Gostomianum*, where the oldest church, dedicated to St. Peter, stood on the outermost position above the ravine on the western part of the hill, while the correspondingly early domestic buildings occupied the central and eastern parts of the hill by the early 12th c. (cf. below).

The 12th century on the Wzgórze Collegium Gostomianum: functional transformations

According to the generally accepted view the Wzgórze *Collegium Gostomianum* in the 12th and 13th c. had the function of a fortified suburb. Florek (2005: 33) however suggests that it was here that the oldest city of Sandomierz had been situated, which later was relocated to *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. This hypothesis, however, seems less probable given that in the 11th c. the hill was at the most protected by a simple palisade. Defensive fortifications proper were built on its edge only at the beginning of the 12th c. As pointed out by Tabaczyńska (1996: 107f.), it was a grillage-box construction rampart with a gate tower, attested by a trench in the loess ca 2 m in diameter and the negative of a pole ca 40 cm in diameter identified in the north-eastern edge of the plateau. It cannot be excluded that the descent to the Vistula was situated at this very place.

Fig. 6. Stone remains of the chancel part of St. Peter's church discovered in the Collegium Gostomianum courtyard, eastern view. Photo by S. Biniewski

In the early Middle Ages the *Wzgórze Collegium Gostomianum* was separated from *Wzgórze Katedralne* by a deep gorge (Buko 1993a: 37). Between Jana Długosza Street and the bishop's garden rose one of the oldest churches in Sandomierz, St. Peter's, the remains of which were found by excavation (fig. 6). Before the Tatar raids it was probably the seat of the parish serving the inhabitants of this part of the city; to some extent this is confirmed by the multilayered cemetery which functioned from the 12th c. until the modern times (cf. Rysiewski 1996).

Archaeological excavations failed to unearth the 12th c. phase of the church's history, yet its material evidence is provided by various architectural details reused in the walls of the church: three blocks

Fig. 7. Collegium Gostomianum hill, foundations of St Peter's church: architectural details from the earlier 12th c. phase of the church, reused as construction material. Eastern view. Photo by S. Biniewski

of sandstone, two of them carved, and a fragment of a Romanesque base of a half- or quarter-column (fig. 7), datable to the early 12th – early 13th c. (Kunkel, Mrozowski 1996: 145). The presence of these details in the construction of the succeeding church indicates that the previous edifice was a substantial stone monument as well. It is possible that the reason for pulling down the earlier church was its destruction by fire (Weber-Kozińska 1996: 168, 175), suggested by traces of partly burnt material in the flagstones of the foundations and considerable amounts of burnt rock material found in the foundations of the aisle. Possible corroboration of an earlier stage of the church is provided by some of the skeletal graves destroyed by the walls of the 13th c. church, so by the same token connected with the church's former phase.

The remains of the church discovered during excavations in the courtyard of the *Collegium Gostomianum*, consisting of stone foundations of a rectangular building with the interior dimensions 14 x 8.4 m, with an annexe on the northern side, represent phase III of the church (cf. fig. 7). These discoveries, or more precisely the question of their dating, have been the subject of much controversy and discussion. According to Weber-Kozińska (1996: 177), who analysed the building material, we are dealing with a detached, separate building originally closed off on the western side, to which the annexe was successively added. The characteristic features of the material – lime flagstones and the build technology – seem to indicate that this phase dates to the 12th c. Architects Kunkel and Mrozowski (1996: 147) see the matter differently. They believe that it is a church constructed in two stages. The first is indicated by the three-span chancel, and was completed ca 1300. In the second stage (around the mid-14th c.) the edifice was extended with a brick nave, the remains of the aisles of which were revealed by excavation. In contrast, T. and H. Rysiewscy (1996: 463f.) suggest that during the first phase (pre-1285) the brick aisle building was constructed on the site of the older church, with the material from the demolition of the latter later used to construct the stone chancel in the times of Casimir the Great.

Which of these versions is the most likely? The first hypothesis, that dates the discoveries to the early 12th c. and relies on the reuse of architectural

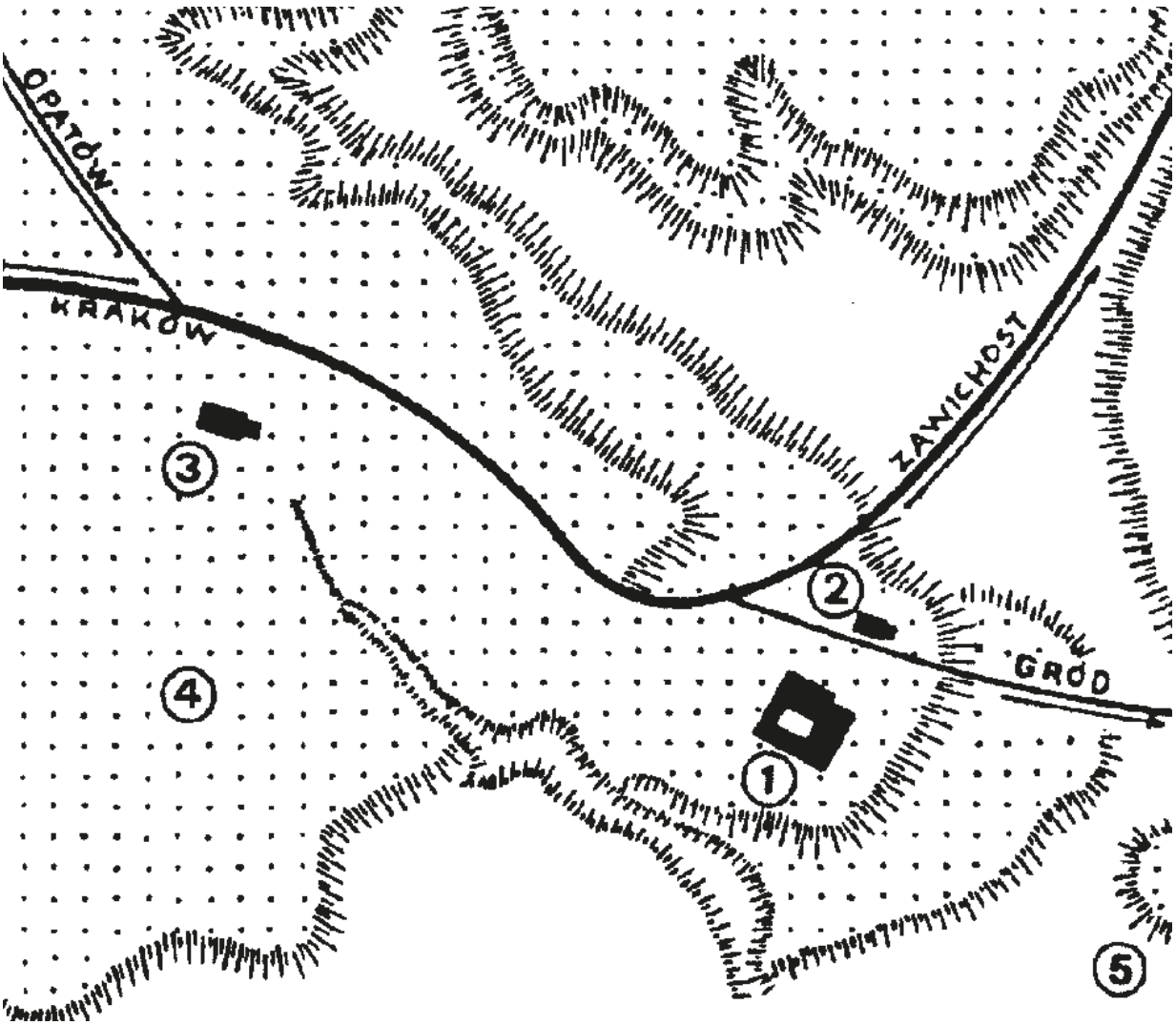

Fig. 8. General plan of the old city settlement at the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th c.: 1 – monastery of post-Dominican church of St James', 2 – St John's church, 3 – St Paul's church, 4 – zones of extensive development, 5 – stronghold on *Wzgórze Zamkowe*. After A. Buko 1998, il. 66

materials from an earlier church is the least probable of them all; analyses of the architectonic details show that they are elements that could date as late as the early 13th c. The second hypothesis, which proposes a late, 14th c. dating of the chancel, is not convincing either. The presence of graves beneath the floor of the church, dated to mid-14th c. (cf. Rysiewscy 1996: 462), cannot be a decisive argument for the late construction of the building. The dead could have been buried beneath the floor at any period of time. By the same token, the dating of the remains to the close of the 13th c. seems to be the best documented hypothesis so far.

The church of St. Peter's included a cemetery. Its eastern boundary, and possibly southern and northern ones as well, were detected during the excavations. Most probably the cemetery spread outwards from the west, i.e. the present-day Jana Długosza Street – where the alleged oldest church was standing – eastwards. During the 12th and over the following centuries the cemetery came to cover almost the entire suburb. Out of 627 burials found in the *Collegium Gostomianum* courtyard 93 are ascribed to the early mediaeval phase (Rysiewski 1996: 184, 186). The dead were buried on their backs, with their heads turned westwards. Their arms were positioned in different ways, straightened along the torso, bent at the elbow with the hands placed in the area of the sacrum, or bent at the elbow at a 90° angle.

Together with the development of the network of parishes (a processes which intensified from the

Fig. 9. *Wzgórze Świętojańskie* seen from above. In the centre the post-Dominican complex of St. James'. On the right side of the road (opposite the church) the field where the chess set was found. Photo by J. Wieczorek

second half of the 12th c.) the status of the settlement systematically diminished. As early as the second half of the 12th c. St. Peter's probably played the role of a Sandomierz parish church, and the cemetery expanding around it gradually invaded the area of the former settlement, as graves cut into the plots of former dwellings and outbuildings testify (cf. Buko 1998: 101f).

Possibly as early as the first half of the 13th c. the former reinforcements of the ramparts and the so-called dwelling tower were pulled down (Tabaczyńska 1996: 111) to prepare the site for the new parish church, which was much larger than the former with its expanding cemetery. Before the Tatar raid of 1259 the character of constructions on the hill could essentially be characterised as of sacral buildings and interments. This underwent complete transformation in the wake of the Raid, for it was this very spot that gave the Tatars the best position possible for launching the attack on the fortified suburb – a fact mentioned in the *Galician – Volhynian Chronicle*.

The city outside the fortifications: the settlement on the *Wzgórza Staromiejskie* (the Old City Hills)

The *Wzgórza Staromiejskie* are situated west of the parts of the city discussed so far. A sharp lowering of the ravine and of the course of the *Piszczele* brook separates them from *Wzgórze Zamkowe*; the brook defines their natural north-western boundary. The southern limit is a loess escarpment adjacent to Krakowska Street and the Vistula valley. West of St. Paul's church the hills diminish into a vast loess plateau.

Traditionally, two hills are distinguished: *Wzgórze Świętojakubskie* (St James's Hill) and *Wzgórze Świętopawelskie* (St Paul's Hill); their names and locations refer to the still functioning churches of St. James's and St. Paul's (fig. 8). *Wzgórze Świętojakubskie* (fig. 9) is actually a lower terrace of a long slope situated roughly half-way up the hill. Excavations show a relatively good preservation of archaeological deposits at the site. Similarly, the morphology of the area in the past did not differ much from the present conditions.

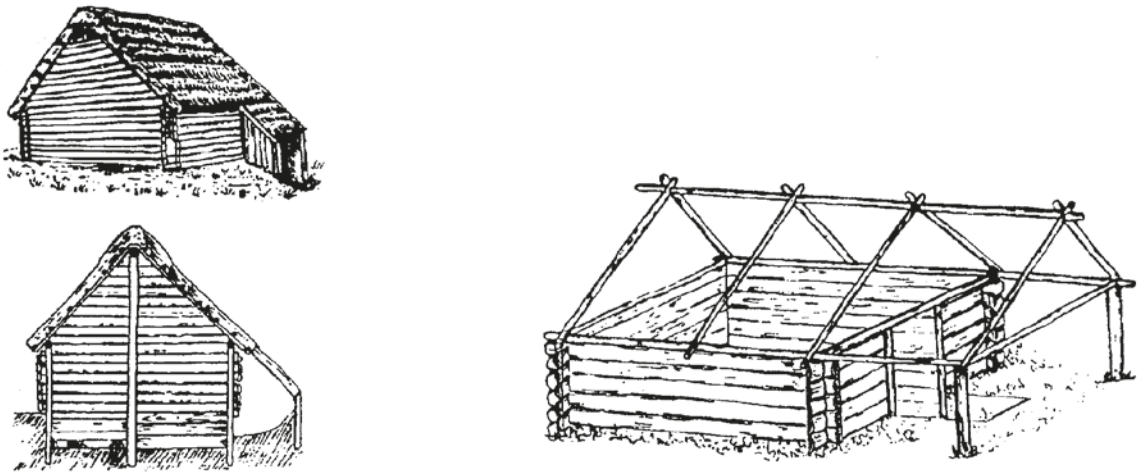

Fig. 10. The settlement of *Wzgórze Świętojakubskie*. Reconstruction of dwellings. After E. Gąssowska

The settlement near the church of St. James's grew on the site of the old cemetery from the 11th c. and was investigated when the terrain was being levelled for the construction of the Priests Retirement Home. Although the work was carried out before the Second World War, the results were published only in the 60s (cf. Gąssowski 1969). In all, 55 archaeological features were unearthed. 14 dwellings were discovered, all of them pit houses dug into the loess 0.4-1.4 m deep (fig.10). Their sizes varied from 10 to 40 m (Gąssowski 1969: 467). They were entered by wooden steps. On each wall there were three vertical poles; two additional ones functioned as the door-jamb. Larger dwellings had a central pole. The walls were built of horizontally placed wooden planks in a framework -like construction. Some of the houses were provided with domed ovens built outside the dwelling. Others had clay ovens (or hearths) situated in the east or north corner.

Dwellings were accompanied by utility outbuildings, often resembling the cellar pits dug in the loess still used in some villages in the Sandomierz region. In the past their function was more varied. Among the structures on *Wzgórze Świętojakubskie* archaeologists identified fish and meat smokehouses and the remains of a bakery (Gąssowski 1969: 467).

Monumental buildings, such as St. John's church and the Dominican complex of St. James's on the eastern side and the parish church of St. Paul's on the northern side of the settlement, added an urban look to the district (cf. fig. 8). The parish was transferred to St. Paul's in 1226, after the Dominicans took over St. James's. The location of the new parish church does not seem incidental. It was situated at the spot where the roads forked out to Opatów and Kraków; the market place and the cemetery were probably there as well (Wąsowicz 1967: 117).

The older, 12th c. (pre-Dominican) St. James's church was discovered during the 1990-1992 excavations (Florek 1995 with references), which revealed the remains of foundation walls and reused stone elements in the construction of the new church. It was probably a one-nave stone church, its dimensions not extending beyond the later brick church. An interesting survival from the old church was a stone tomb slab with an engraved sword, re-used for the construction of one of the pillars between the aisles. The sword depicted is consistent with swords used between the mid-10th and mid-13th c. (Florek 1995: 20). Was the slab connected with the burial of a knight? Florek (2012) cites a number of grave slabs with representations of swords, e.g. from Sandomierz, Radom and Wąchock, as probable tombstones of knights who took part in the crusades. In the opinion of Ścibor and Wódz (1997: 30), the sculpture of a lion's head which comes from the same area was an element of the portal of the pre-Dominican church destroyed after 1226 when the late Romanesque monastery complex of St James's was built.

In the 12th c. the settlement of the *Wzgórze Staromiejskie* enjoyed an economic boom which peaked in the first half of the 13th c. It expanded

rapidly in the direction of the St. Paul's plateau and northwards to the *Piszczele* ravine. Surface surveys have shown that in the 12th and 13th c. many dwellings were scattered over the area extending to the *Piszczele* ravine and the hills north of it, including craftsmen's workshops. The evidence includes numerous pottery sherds dated to the 12th-13th c. and semi-finished products suggesting bonework workshops (Buko 1993d). The slopes of the hills were probably covered with gardens and vineyards.

It is believed that the number of *Wzgórza Staromiejskie* dwellings did not extend to more than 100, and the number of inhabitants is estimated at several hundred (Lalik 1993: 62). T. Lalik is of the opinion that the first *sołtys* (local government leader) might have been appointed at the time of Leszek Biały (from 1184 or 1185 to 1227). The seat probably existed in Sandomierz by the early 13th c; one of the documents referring to 1243 mentions a certain Piotr, the son of a Sandomierz *sołtys* (Lalik 1993: 61-62).

The route to Zawichost and further on towards Rus ran over the *Wzgórza Staromiejskie* (fig. 8). Lalik (1993: 62) believed that from St. James's church its course followed the ravine in the direction of *Przedmieście Zawichojskie*, by-passing the fortified parts of the city (cf. fig. 8). Florek (1995: 21) on the other hand, opined that the route ran along Staromiejska Street to the stronghold proper and the fortified suburb. His belief is based on the fact that the rockfalls in the ravine next to St. James's reveal skeletons from an early mediaeval cemetery, which might indicate that the ravine was dug at a later date. Yet another course of the route is suggested by Wąsowicz (1967: 118), who suggested the road led from below the Vistula crossing at Żmigród towards the former site of the church of St. Wojciech (Adalbert's) and on to the St. Paul's summit. He noticed that except for periods of drought the loess ravines would have been an insurmountable obstacle, especially for goods-laden carts. The opinions are not mutually exclusive and it seems reasonable to agree that in the pre-charter Sandomierz there existed not just one but several communication routes, their use dependent on the immediate demand and possibility.

The material evidence of the communication routes criss-crossing Sandomierz is provided by the archaeological sites containing artefacts of everyday use from the settlement districts and the chronologically earlier cemetery, which are believed to have been imports or local products drawing on foreign influences. They include a fragment of a glass bracelet, glass beads, semi-precious stone beads (cornelian), fragments of Rus amphorae (or korchagas) used as wine or oil containers (Gąssowska 1964; Gąssowki 1969), early mediaeval painted and slipped pottery with eastern motifs (Buko 1981: 114f.) and a silver bracelet with adder-head terminals, similar to Scandinavian examples.

Certainly the most valuable find to date is the Sandomierz chess pieces. These were discovered by J. and E. Gąssowscy in the early 60s close to the church of St. James's, in the northern part of the garden (cf. fig. 9). The find comprises a nearly complete set of 29 pieces (Gąssowska 1964).

Contrary to the fortified districts of Sandomierz, the settlement on the Old City Hills was not limited by any spatial considerations. This contributed to the fast growth of the settlement but at the same time posed a deadly threat in case of a military disaster. Thus, not surprisingly, it was here that the first act of the drama unfolded at the turn of 1260 and the Tatar Raid.

Przedmieście Opatowskie: the puzzling origins of St. Wojciech (St. Adalbert's) church

In the former Przedmieście Opatowskie, also known as Czwartek, stands the parish church of St. Joseph's, founded as a friary for Observicant Franciscans. Wąsowicz (1967: 119) draws attention to the fact that apart from the junction near St. Paul's, St. Joseph's was the second place in Sandomierz that acted as a focal point for the routes leading to the river-crossing towards Zawichost, to Opatów and to Kamienna. Even the name *Czwartek* (Thursday) seems to refer to the custom of weekly markets.

The origins of St. Adalbert's church, which unquestionably stood on the site in the late Middle Ages, are rather vague. It is first mentioned in the taxation records of prebends in 1325, when it belonged to the Sandomierz Benedictines (Lalik 1993: 57f.). Whether it was one of the oldest churches in the city, as suggested by Buliński (1879:

393), or began at the time of Boleslav Wrymouth (1086-1138), or was a relatively late 14th c. foundation has yet to be determined (cf. Lalik 1993: 58; Derwich 1992: 301). The analysis of Sandomierz's later topography shows that such an early dating seems unlikely; the location of the church indicates not one of the centres but a periphery of the early urban agglomeration. Further, the fairly late dating of the construction of the church seems to be indirectly supported by the fact that St. Adalbert's prebend was endowed with the tithe from a cluster of villages situated at some distance from Sandomierz (pers. comm. Z. Morawski), possibly indicating properties nearer to the site of the church were already tithed to other churches in Sandomierz before the construction of St Adalbert's.

The church of St Adalbert's was burnt down in 1809 (Buliński 1879: 394) and no archaeological work has been conducted on the site. The tradition of the old church is preserved in the name of *Plac Św. Wojciecha* (St. Adalbert Square) at the eastern border of the park, close to the entry to the grounds of St. Joseph's church.

Conclusions

The spatial arrangement of the city following the state's division into principalities was maintained until the Tatar raid in 1259. Then a hiatus followed, to be succeeded by a structural reorganisation of Sandomierz. Its result was the charter city with the central marketplace close to the present-day market, with the municipal charter granted in 1287.

The fate of the former settlement on the *Wzgórze Staromiejskie* is a separate question. In sharp contrast to other districts of the city, its history came to a halt at the dawn of the fully-fledged Middle Ages. What seems surprising is the scarcity of finds of late mediaeval and modern pottery vessels in the area when compared with their abundance on other hills (Buko 1993d: 289). This might have been caused by the fact that following the trauma of the 1259/1260 Tatar Raid, urban life there came to a standstill for a long time. In consequence the former thriving urban district became more and more rural. This is reflected in its popular remembrance as a landscape of orchards, gardens and scattered housing (cf. fig. 9). The former urban character of *Wzgórze Staromiejskie* is recalled in the roofs and spires of St. James's and St. Paul's towering above the trees and the ancient route that connects the hills along Staromiejska Street. Thanks to these circumstances the district remains a huge archaeological site undisturbed by compact urban development.

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Agnieszka Stempin

An Archaeology of Chess Pieces from Medieval Poland: Problems and Possibilities

What is the beginning of the era chess was known in Polish area? First historical written sources that mention about chess are known from 14th century. Former view of oldest traces of chess from Pomorze are no longer valid. The pieces originating from 10th and 11th century (from Szczecin and Wolin), were meant to play *hnefatafl*.

The oldest chess pieces dated from second half of 11th century were discovered in Wrocław. Next abundant discoveries in this region prove that chess pieces and rules were adopted by local communities. In the bone and antler workshop in Milicz originating from the beginning of 13th century a nearly finished chess piece of knight has been found. Apart of that some interesting chess pieces discovered in Inowrocław and Kruszwica are of import origin and the only known piece of inlaying a chess piece from Gniezno. Medieval chess pieces found in Poland illustrate the different formations of troops and types of weapons in the sphere of influence of both Western Europe and the East.

This contribution discusses the context of chess pieces dated for the 11th-15th century found in Poland and does so in the context of the history of board games and the social significance of those games. It does not discuss the chess set from Sandomierz, which is discussed in full by this author, in this volume.

In the Middle Ages board games, notably chess and tables, were hugely popular (Bubczyk 2009: 50-67). These games seized the human imagination and became a means for reflecting the social reality of those who played those games. This can be seen as a unique outpouring of creativity through the depiction of society and its structures and mores in the context of playing board games. The rules of the games were derived from the social relations, functioning as a sort of coding for the world of politics and military dependencies and even astrononmical phenomena and literary or mythological messages (Bubczyk 2009; Pastoureau 2006: 297-336; Janowski 2008: 117-125; O'Sullivan 2012). Through these games societies found a way to visualize important conceptions, forms and situations. Widespread diplomatic and trade contacts were conducive to the games spreading from country to country. At this time chess played a particular role as a gaming system offering a developed complex of concepts in terms of both strategy and instruments. Chess figures in the Middle Ages were ruled by the determined stylistic rules, mostly related to a given form, abstract or figurative. Nonetheless the style was strictly related to the function which specific units played on the chessboard. The chessmen reflect the hierarchical world, where particularly in the oldest period of adoption, their form was independent of the individual caprice of the craftsman. The characteristic features of the governed pattern are visible in most exclusive sets as well as in the simple, "home-made" chess pieces. The archaeological and historical awareness of the significant value of these medieval games treated as a cultural pattern is leading to further considerations about their transfer between different societies. That transfer is not only a measure of their appeal and success as entertainments but it also demonstrates that the adoption of the games in ever newer and newer areas was a form of cultural exchange.

The significance of finding chess pieces

The essential point for the consideration of the role of chess in the culture of the Middle Ages is the assumption that the discovery of chess pieces can be treated as a proof of the existence of concrete games or individuals in the possession of chess pieces and

the required skills to use them. Something of a dilemma remains as to how well we can estimate that chess penetrated all levels of society as it moved across borders through high-level contacts? A reliable sign of the full adaptation of any activity in a given environment is the archaeological identification of the local manufacturing of the related objects. By the twelfth century in Western Europe a specialized craftsman already existed, called in France *eschequetier*, in England *chessmaker* and his function was the manufacture of exclusive chess sets (Bubczyk 2009: 112-113). In his monumental work "A History of Chess", Murray (1913: 420) mentions a twelfth century chess-figure carver recorded for Kirkcudbright in Scotland. Such craftsmen no doubt made other types of gaming pieces (including for tables). Nevertheless it is symptomatic that the name of the craft was derived from the highest status of board game, chess. The crafts of making these seemingly exclusive playing-pieces is also attested from Trondheim, Norway; Salerno, Italy; Koeln, Germany and Northern France (Janowski 2008: 123; Caldwell, Hall and Wilkinson, 2010: 66-67; Kluge-Pinsker 1991: 65, 72; Mann 1981: 164-165; 1983). Undoubtedly, in most cases that kind of craft was practised by local craftsmen who specialized in bone and antler working. The confirmation of the existance of the need for local production of game pieces is equal to the fact of the emergence of the demand for that kind of activity, and allows us to discern specific behavioral patterns around their production and use. Futher confirmation is gained if analysis of the material reveals locally distinctive decorating styles for chess pieces and/or the usage of the local raw materials.

Playing chess in early medieval Poland

Written sources describing chess and the excavation of chess pieces show that in the medieval period chess in Poland transitions quickly from being an alien cultural product to becoming a staple element of the canons of behavior and Polish state. The earliest references in Polish written sources date to the first half of the fourteenth century. Jan Dlugosz, when discussing the 1333 political accident, recalls the coat of arms deployed was that of a Roch (a chess rook on a red field; Bubczyk 2003: 9). Heraldry is an important source of information on Polish chess, particularly the legends that accompany the coats of arms. The earliest coats of arms (twelfth century) referencing chess are those of the duchy of Legnica and Wrocław, along with the banners of the duchy of Legnica and Brzeg, and the coats of arms of the Silesian Piast houses, all including the representation of a chessboard (Bubczyk 2003: 8-9). All are clear testaments to the knowledge of chess in noble circles. From among 274 knightly coats of arms functioning on the territory of Poland until the 15th century two are referencing chess. The first one is the *Roch-Pierzchała* coat of arms. On the red background there is a silver figure of *Roch* – that is a rook. In 1333, Jan Długosz in his *Annales* mentions Klemens of the Pierzchała coat of arms who had as his emblem *a chess marshal-Roch*. Kacper Niesiecki gives the following explanation of the appearance of this figure in heraldry:

> The Duke of Mazovia who was occupied with many matters in the war camp took with him a knight called Pierzchała to entertain him with chess to help him distract melancholy and when Pierzchała had checked and mated the Duke with a Roch he decided to grant him the Roch itself in his coat of arms and endowed him with lands.

Kacper Niesiecki is of the opinion that the event which decided about the creation of this coat of arms happened during the battle fought with the Lithuanians and Yotvingians in 1238 and is connected with count Rościsław Pierzchała the commander-in-chief of Konrad Mazowiecki's army. (Niesiecki 1841: 117)

Another coat of arms with a chess motif is *Wczele* coat of arms. The legend tells a story of a Silesian knight Hołuba who led by the desire of adventure found himself in the kingdom of Moors and sat to a chess-fight with the local princess regarded as a master of the game. The young lady being very confident in her abilities demanded that after the game the winner should beat the loser with a chess board. The knight had won the duel and did what he was requested. Hence, the Wczele coat of arms has chess squares and in the gem a bust of a black girl represented naked with a band around her head. The legend of the Wczele coat of arms is not of Polish origin and appears on the territory of Silesia thanks to the contacts with Meissen (where it was known already in the 13th century). However, the most likely place of its origin seems to be the 12th century France. The oldest image of the coat of arms on our territories goes back to the year 1368

where it is visible on the stamp of the Starost of Sieradz – Czema from Włościejowice.

More enigmatic are the granite blocks placed in Pomeranian churches during the thirteenth century containing chess motifs (Świechowski 1950: 42-46).

If we relied solely on written sources, chess in Poland would be understood as a very late medieval phenomenon. Characteristic of those sources is that chess is mentioned as the background to various events. It must, therefore, be assumed that in the period to which the first mention relates, chess was already widely and well-known, as explanations of the games and its rules were not deemed necessary in those written accounts. In this context, it seems that archaeological finds play a very important role in the history of chess in Poland, where many medieval gaming pieces have been found. It should be noted, however, that in the older archaeological literature, all gaming objects tended to be automatically linked to chess rather than any more precise designation against a variety of games. The serious study of sporadically found gaming pieces was left to game historians and antiquarians though this did not always lead to their full understanding. Thus no allowance was made for the 10th-11th century pieces from places including Szczecin, Wolin, Kołobrzeg and Gdańsk to be *hnefatafl* pieces rather than chess pieces helping to create a false view about the earliest phase of chess in Poland, a view still perpetuated by some writers (Rulewicz 1961: 18-24; Giżycki 1984: 16). In reality, seen in a European context, 10th century chess pieces in Poland would have been very rare (Stempin 2007: 195-209). Let us consider some examples in more detail.

Trade centers such as Wolin have been eagerly interpreted as testifying to trade relations with the Muslim world in the tenth and eleventh centuries and to a sort of *natural* transfer of the knowledge of chess as a consequence. This, despite the fact that there are no known examples of Islamic style chess pieces from this early period on the southern Baltic coast. There must then be doubts around the traditional identification of the eleventh century Ringerike-style horse excavated at the Wolin-gardens as a chess knight (fig. 1a; Filipowiak 1997: 67, fig.17; Sołtysiak 2013: 254-266; 2014). Whilst such realistic chess-knight horse depictions are known from eleventh century France and Italy, for example, they generally have features that betray the oriental cultural background from which they derive (Grandet, Goret 2012: 129, 137). On the eleventh century Polish-Baltic sites listed above there is no such mixture of Arabic chess traits in the early gaming pieces. What seems more likely is that the horse figurine from Wolin belonged to a *hnefatafl* set, and could well have been the key piece of the set, the *hnefi*, its resemblance to a chess knight purely coincidental. Also with an early date and defined as a chess pawn is the figurine from Ostrówek in Opole (fig. 1b). date from the half of the eleventh century was found in association with an annular pin (Sachs 1985: 105-109). Again as a gaming piece a *hnefatafl* interpretation seems more likely at this date and would not be unexpected as part of the Scandinavian presence in the Opole stronghold. In contrast to these mis-interpretations, the gaming pieces found in Truso (near Janów Pomorski, Elbląg) have always been interpreted as pieces for *hnefatafl* (Jagodziński 2015: 77-84; Adamczyk 2012: 65-71). Truso thus provides clear evidence that in the north of Poland in the 10th-11th century *hnefatafl* was played as an element of the Scandinavian cultural package; with the game recognized as a divine invention, something from the sacred sphere. Its importance is emphasized historically in numerous sagas (Słupecki 1998: 124; Bubczyk 2005: 27; Teichert 2011: 307-321) and archaeologically in the many finds of playing pieces (often complete sets) in the most important centers of the early medieval world linked with Scandinavian settlements and trading contacts. (Batey and Clarke 1998: 64; Jankuhn 1936: 132, fig.12b; Rundkvit and Williams 2008: 69-101). From the 9th century onwards, *hnefa* accompanied Scandinavians colonization of Rus territory, as evidenced by examples found in Old Ladoga, Gnezdowo or Ryurik Gorodishche (Duczko 2006: 76).

The oldest chess pieces known from Poland date to the first quarter of the eleventh century and come from Southern Poland (fig. 2; Jaworski 1990: 41-46; Stempin 2012: 81). There is a gradual increase in such finds with a twelfth century and later date (fig. 2). They have been found in strongholds, in urban areas, in market settlements and in the rural hinterlands of towns. The greatest variety of gaming equipment was found in Wrocław, through excavations carried out over several years (Jawor-

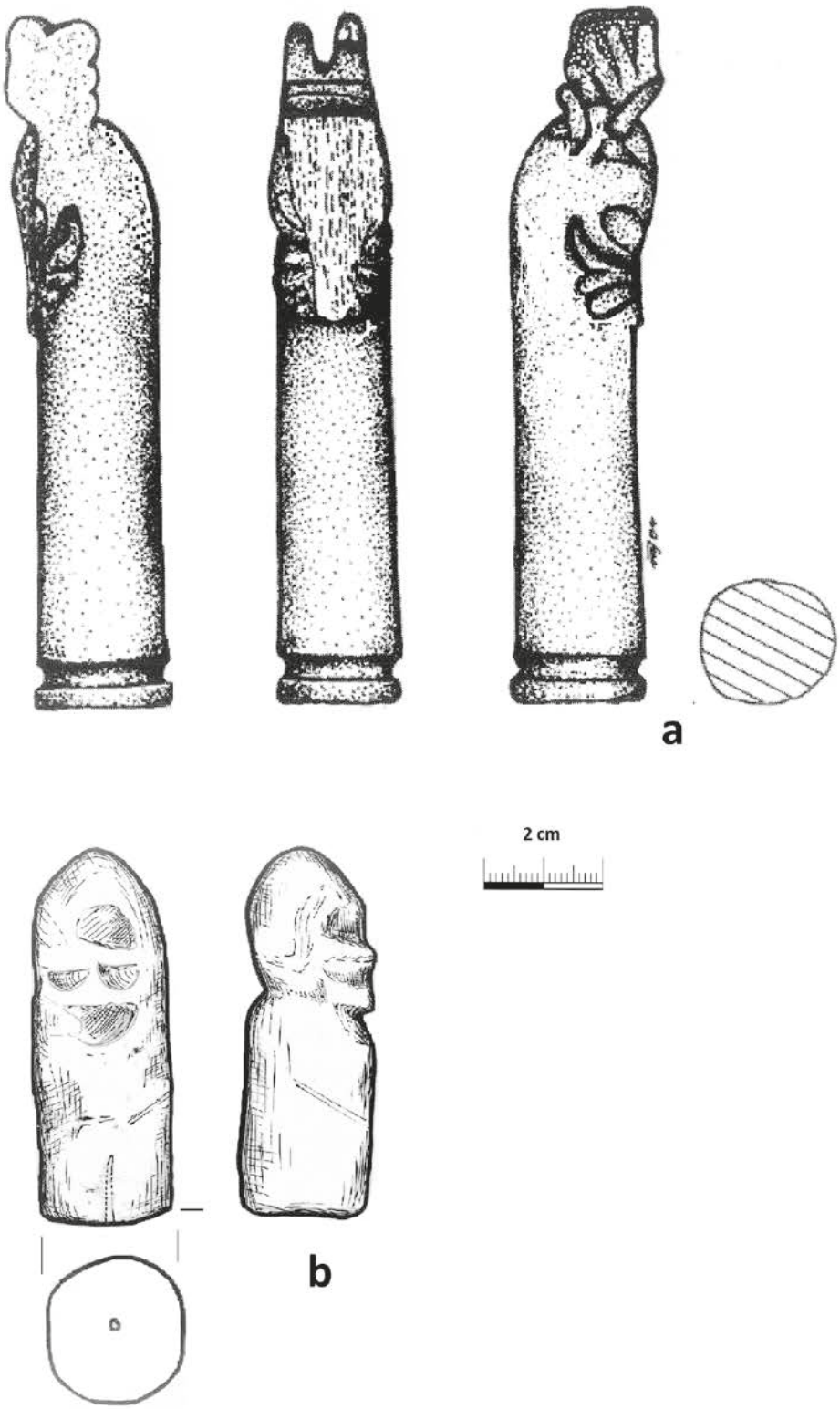

Fig. 1. Examples of *hnefatafl* game pieces from Poland: a – Wolin – Ogrody (by Filipowiak 1997: 67, il. 17); b – Opole (after Sachs 1985: 109). Drawings by A. Stempin

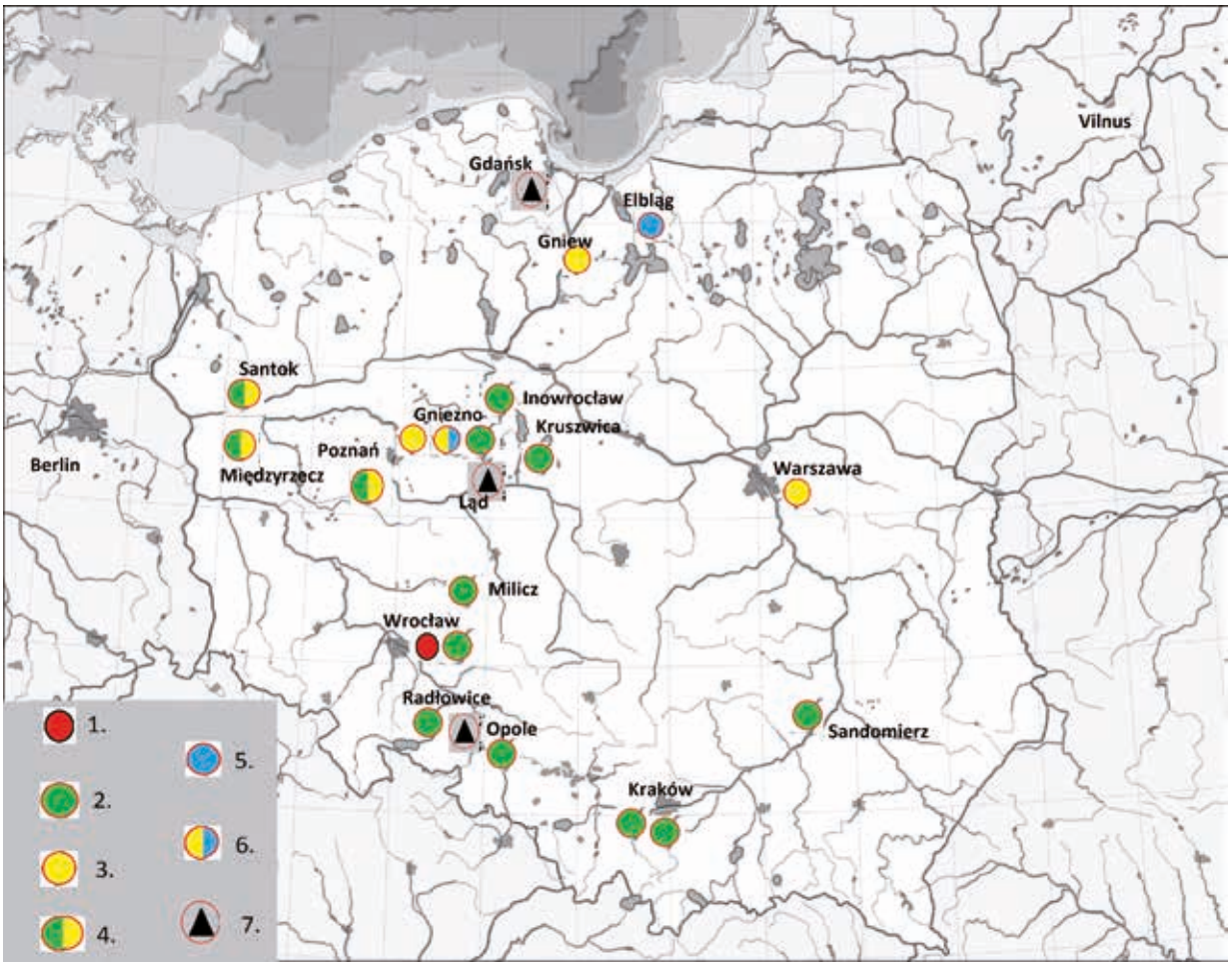

Fig. 2. Medieval chess pieces from Poland: 1 – 11th- The first half 12th century; 2 – The second half 12th-13th century; 3 – 14th century; 4 – 13th/14th century; 5 – 15th century; 6 – 14th/15th century. Prepared by A. Stempin

ski 1990: 41-46; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77). Wrocław is the only stronghold in early medieval Poland where the finds of chess pieces span several centuries: seven pieces, all of deer antler (fig. 3), were recovered from two centuries of settlement spanning the first half 11th century to the 13th century. This is critical evidence in demonstrating the continuing popularity of chess in medieval Poland and also way that the shapes and the methods of manufacture evolved. The forms of the pieces show increasing complexity and linked to the move away from knife-carving to lathe-turning (Jaworski 1990: 41-46). The majority of the pieces were found within or close to buildings interpreted as relatively poor households (Jaworski 1990: 43, 46, 57).

The most interesting of the Wrocław pieces comes from the group found on Wrocław Cathedral Island. It is a horse made in the Arabic or Islamic abstract style and dating to the first half of the twelfth century (fig. 3k, 12a). It also exhibits some of the more realistic features which were typically being added to such abstract pieces across Latin Europe (Jaworski 1990: 43-45). Thus the horse's mane is modeled much more realistically and helps to suggest the evolution of a European set of abstract chess pieces. The Wrocław knight is finely executed and somewhat larger than previous Polish chess pieces, possibly from a high status set. Analogies can be found in examples from Mayenne and the Vosges area of France and also from England: where chess horses or knights have marked eyes and mouths thus violating both the convention of the form and the lack of features identifying an animal. This move away from the strictures of Islamic convention to more closely reflect European social contexts and mores is also exhibited by the remaining sets of Polish pieces, including the wearing of crowns by king and queen pieces and the giving of "faces" to pawns (Grandet,

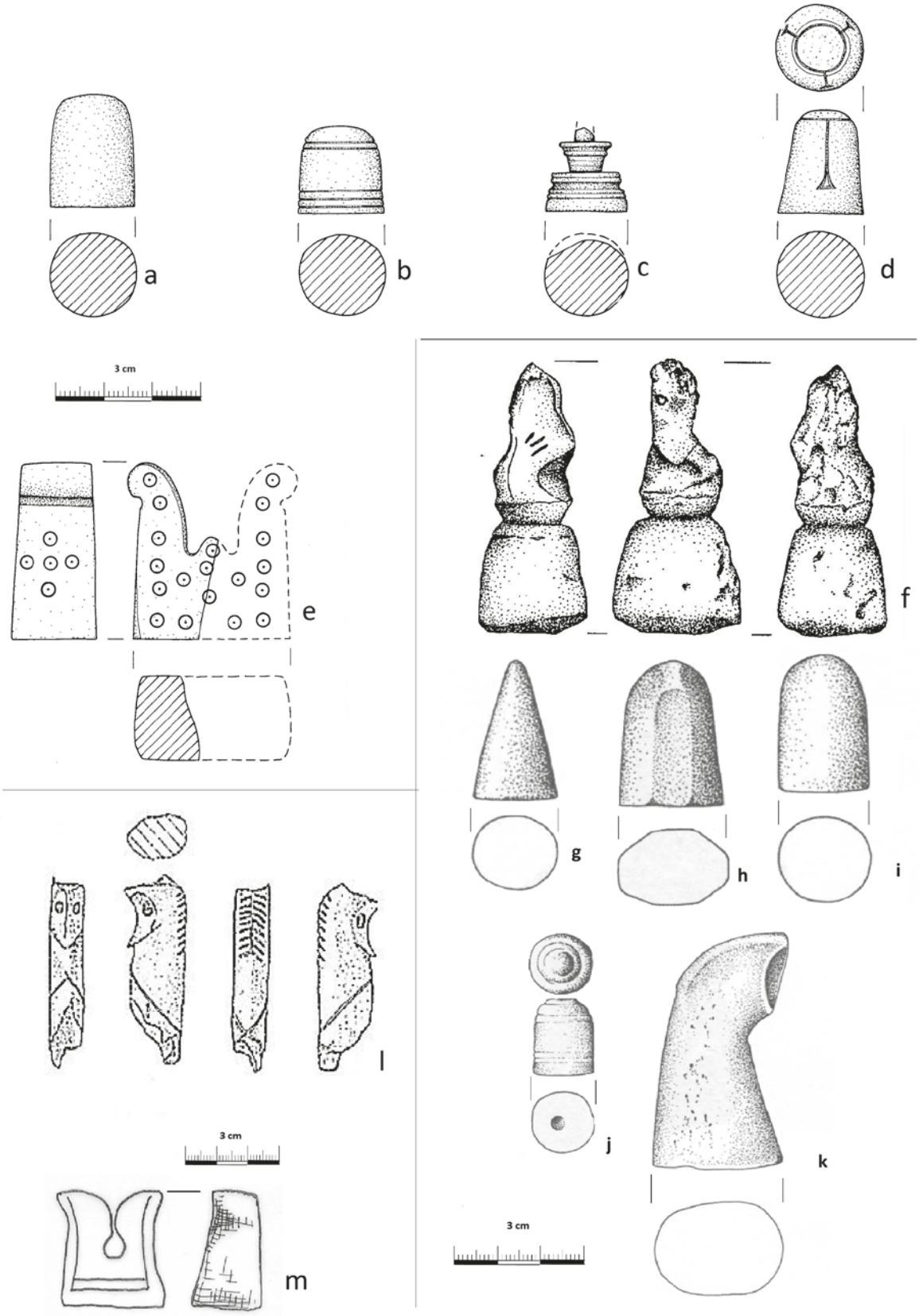

Fig. 3. Medieval chess pieces from: a-e – Kruszwica (drawings by J. Kędelska); f – Milicz (drawing by A. Stempin A.); g-k – Wrocław (after Jaworski 1990: 124); l – Gniew (drawing by A. Stempin); m. Warszawa (drawing by A. Stempin)

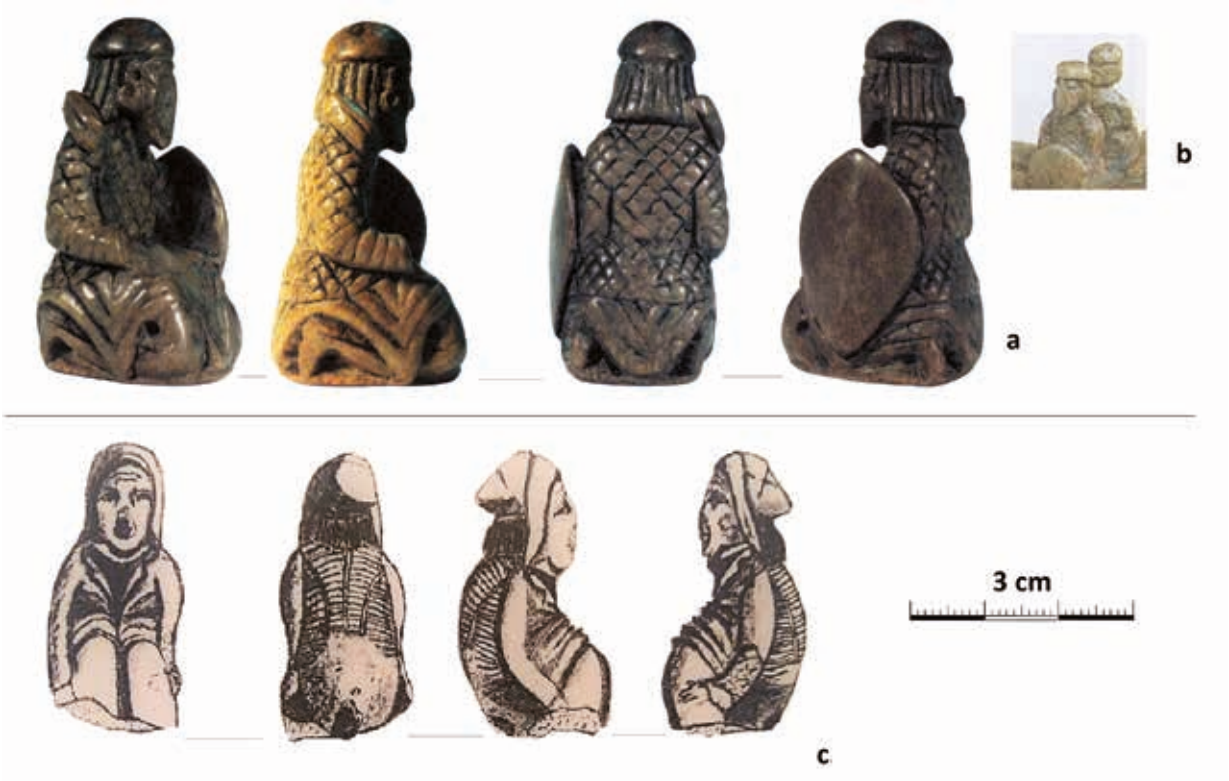

Fig. 4. Medieval chess pieces from: a – Wrocław (by Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 78); b – Rook with Varangians in a boat, from Volkovysk (after Plastka Bielarusi 1983: catalogue nr 5); c – Radłowice (after Pazda 2002: 526, drawing by B. Józefów)

Goret 2012: 75). This new trend did not completely replace a taste for more traditional abstract sets but the various styles of figurative piece, including those depicting Biblical scenes or scenes from Chivalric epics, did become more frequent (Kluge-Pinsker 1991: 77). Elements of these new designs in the Wrocław chess pieces identify them as products created under the Latin culture, or rather as created locally according to a well-known and properly applied vision. This being so, we need also to recognize that the knowledge of stylistic trends in such a narrow field as the production of chess would involve high sophistication and excellent knowledge of the subject among local craftsmen. Jaworski (1990: 46) suggests that the appearance in Wrocław of chess could be the result of lively contacts within the stronghold due to the influx of people from different territories but with over-lapping interests and skills (including Germans, Czechs, Scandinavians and Arab traders). In the light of the arguments already presented we might see the European, Latin tradition as the main influence with its written sources from the Germanic, Holy Roman Empire, the overall form of the Polish pieces (Gamer 1954: 734-750; Bubczyk 2009: 7) and the similarly early references in the Czech literature (Iwańczak 2001: 461-462).

It is worth mentioning here the presence of another early, but non-chess, playing piece, specifically a half of a disc or table for playing tricktrack (a variant of tables) in a slightly younger (2nd half of 12th century) chronological layer to that in which the horse piece was found (Jaworski 1990: 60). Discovered in 1972, it was only in 2008 that it was identified as a gaming piece (Janowski 2008). A luxury item, made of ivory and highly ornamental with its mythological theme, all consistent with manufacture in one of the specialist workshops for such material in northern France or Cologne (Janowski 2008: 120). The presence of the chess knight and this half of a disktablesman in adjacent archaeological layers suggests that the chess piece may have come from a similar specialist workshop.

I turn now to one of the later chess pieces from Wrocław (fig. 4a), a realistic, figurative piece recovered from a thirteenth-fourteenth century well located in University Square (Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77-81; Lavysh in this book). It is one of only three figurative chess pieces known from medieval

Poland. Made of antler, it depicts a man kneeling and resting back on his heels, holding an almond-shaped shield and a sword. On his head he wears a semicircular helmet or, more likely, a cap. It has been compared to the figurative pieces from the gaming hoard found on the Scottish Island of Lewis and also other twelfth century pieces from Scandinavia and Europe (Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77-81). What stands out about the Wrocław piece is certainly the kneeling pose of the figure, which is characteristic of Middle Eastern pieces and practice. The oldest presentation of this type, is the 7th-8th century Afrasjab bench (formerly Samarkand) in Uzbekistan (Linder 1975: 28). Such figures are representations of the Persian army and illustrate, among other things, squating warriors leaning on one leg and presenting their weapon as a gesture of loyalty. It seems a reasonable deduction to suggest that the Wrocław piece may well be an import form the Middle East. That said, as we have already seen around the Wroclaw knight piece, unpicking the influences in such pieces is a complex issue, requiring a broad, comparative background. Chess sets modeled on the Persian forms also appeared in France at the end of 10th century, as witnessed by the five pieces from Saone-et-Loire, and the chess pawn from Pineuilh (Grandet, Goret 2012: 26, 129, 137). In the literature discussing them attention is paid to their oriental inspiration, with their clear imitation of Persian original but also the fusion of these elements with localized, European, feudal gestures and symbolism, notably the depiction of European king figures (Gaborit-Chopin 2005: 189; Grandet, Goret 2012: 137). Overall the closest parallels for the Wroclaw piece are found in several examples from Belarus. From here in the eleventh-thirteenth centuries comes at least 6 figurative chess pieces, fully reflecting the terminology used in the Middle Ages in Russia (and prevalent today), one significantly different from that used in Latin Europe (Medvedeva 2005: 14). The Wrocław figure is very similar to the Vizier (Hetman = Queen) from Lukoml, imagined as a man with negroid characteristics and sitting cross-legged, with his hands folded on his lap. The position in which the figure is shown suggests dignity and high birth. (Lavysh, in this publication). A total of thirty-two chess pieces, of twelfth-thirteenth century date, from Minsk, Lukoml, Vitebsk, Grodno and Kopysti, indicate a very intense interest in chess at an early period, immediately east of the Polish border (Medvedeva 2005: 64). The Wrocław chessman parallels the piece from Lukoml through the same hairstyle and headgear, which they share with depiction of Persian warriors on the Afrasjab bench. The shield of the Wrocław piece is like those depicted on the pieces from Grodno and Volkovysk, where they are held by warriors on a boat or *ladja*, the distinctive Russian form of the rook or castle piece. The fill of the well from which the Wrocław piece was recovered does not help solve the riddle of the origin of such an interesting chess figure, however, one can venture to say that it arrived in Wroclaw as a result of contacts with Russia and was probably part of a high-status chess set, perhaps given in gift-exchange.

To the south of Wrocław, in a pond situated in the village of Radłowice, a light-red figurine made of perfectly fired clay was found (Pazda, 2002: 525-528). No chronological premises result from the context of the find, however, the modeled figure suggests that it may be the image of an oriental warrior from the Middle Ages. The figurine (fig. 4c) represents a person with distinct mongoidal features sitting in a crouching position with the pulled legs and hands put under them. Very characteristic is a pointed cap and a kaftan of the type used by nomadic tribes. Probably, this little known chess piece in Polish collections, is connected with the Mongolian invasions which took place in the 13th century. Clay, the raw material totally unknown on the those territories which was used to produce the figurine suggests it was manufactured in Eastern parts of the Continent just like the famous gaming pieces from Nishapur (though they were made in Arabic abstract convention).

Moving away from the Wrocław finds, from the Silesia region come the earliest known Polish examples of the local manufacture of chess pieces. The site known as No. 1, in Milicz, is part of a thirteenth century stronghold where a bone-antler workshop was excavated in 2004. The finds included an unfinished or broken figure of a chess horse (i.e. a knight; fig. 3f, 12b). It appears to have broken during manufacture and so was consigned to the waste pit, preserving evidence for us of local demand for chess met

in part by local production (Stempin 2008: 77-96). The closer dating of the waste pit suggests a late-twelfth – early-thirteenth century date for the chess piece. Superficially the piece looks rather crudely or sloppily made but closer analysis reveals that the left side is clearly modeled: visible are the outline of the head with an eye, an ear in the development stage and a trace marking of the mouth. In contrast, on the right the carving form is difficult to grasp: only single cut marks are visible which aim at giving it a form, they suggest not a lack of skill but a decision to abandon the piece as it was not working out. One gets the impression that the production of the figure was discarded at this stage of carving, with the base too much undercut, consequently making the piece unstable – experiments have shown that it does not remain standing and always falls over. The carver could no doubt have saved the piece with further modification but this may have made it markedly different from the rest of the set and so the decision to abandon was taken. It is worth noting that on the completed part of the head three parallel cuts can be observed. These may have symbolized the elements of horse harness, and thus that the horse was ridden by a knight. To this day, the same two or three incisions are found on some knights in contemporary sets, including the Staunton No. 5 knight.

Chess figures and pawns have also been excavated from the No. 4 site in Kruszwica, which from the second half of the twelfth century until middle of the thirteenth century was a rapidly developing urban centre (fig. 5a; Cnotliwy 1999: 154). The material recovered from the excavations implies an increased level of contact with Pomerania, Mazovia, Little Poland and Kyiv Rus, and along with the structures found suggest a series of specialized craft workshops, including Russian glassblowers. The chess pieces, all made in the Islamic or Arabic style (fig. 3a-e) have been interpreted as the property of the craftsmen. All of the chess pieces are made of highly polished antler and worked with a knife and saw apart from a single turned example. Perhaps the most intriguing piece is incomplete, comprising around 50% of a rook/castle or to use the Russian terminology a boat or *ladja*. Its form is typical of many rooks found in Western Europe but the highly pronounced, sweeping terminals of the Kruszwica example suggest the form may be an abstract version of the figurative boat forms known, for example, from Grodno. The Kruszwica rook is decorated all over with single ring-and-dot motifs, again very familiar on European pieces. One of the other pieces, probably a pawn, is unusually decorated with aline running all around the upper circumference of the cylinder from which straight line run vertically down the body, each terminating in a triangle (fig. 3d; 5a).

The quantity of Polish-found chess pieces of thirteenth century and later date is significantly higher than for the earlier pieces. They include the abstract pieces from site No. 125, Inowrocław. They were found in two separate but closely situated pits, in the area associated with the economic hinterland of the thirteenth century city (fig. 5b). Based on the stratigraphic context the excavators dated the pieces to the second half of the thirteenth century and they offer three explanations for their being there (Kozłowski and Woźniak 2007: 7-16). The first hinges around Inowrocław being founded in 1238 and attracting a steady stream of settlers from Silesia and the Czech lands, including vistors with such chess pieces. The second hinges around merchant activity facilitated by the location of Inowroclaw on the Cuiavian-Teutonic border, which generated mutual trade relations. Thirdly, the chess pieces may evidence contacts between the royal courts of Poland – under Siemomysł – and Czech – under Przemysław Otokar II. However there may be more to learn from acloser look at the pieces themselves. Both are large in size and made from deer antler, which although not considered a noble raw material does not preclude us thinking about these two pieces as exclusive items given the extraordinary level of care and detail that has gone into their carving. Such richly decorated abstract forms appear in the early history (tenth-eleventh century) of European chess pieces, including those made of rock crystal (Kluge-Pinsker 1992: 72). The decoration of abstract forms with scenes depicting chivalric and biblical epics was established by the twelfth century (Grandet, Goret 2012: 28; Linder 1975: 82-83). Both the raw material (elephant ivory or walrus tusk) and their subject matter speak eloquently of the value placed on chess and its ability to reflect the status and beliefs of the owners. Abstract chess pieces decorated with geometric or floral motifs appear to be a later development of the twelfth-

fourteenth century and are common finds from the territory of Kyiv Rus (e.g. the finds from Novgorod, Linder 1975: 114). Returning to the Inowrocław examples, they are certainly not exceptional for the use of deer antler, common across Europe but they are exceptionally highly ornamented. The king piece (fig. 5) has a motif associated with a Greek cross that is rarely seen in Poland. Exactly the same motifs appear on monuments connected with the Byzantine court, compare for example the Byzantine decoration on the liturgical comb of ivory, dating from the first half of the eleventh century and found on Ostrów Lednicki (Górecki 2013: 89-114). The same motifs, again associated with Byzantine influence are found on the chess king discovered in Chernihiv (Khamaiko in this volume, fig. 2: 4), where they are used in the decoration of the king's crown and his robes. These Byzantine motifs are frequently seen as decorative elements in imperial costume and there translation into the chess medium signals the proxy value of the chess pieces for their high-status owners (Herrin 2013: fig. 13).

The second figure from Inowrocław, the Vizier or Queen, also carries refine ornament, though it is less explicitly Byzantine in flavor. It comprises hanging grape motifs, made with a pair of compasses of a varying diameter, and an isosceles triangle running from the back and completely filled with rising rows of, the so-called, wolf teeth. The decorated triangle rests on the lower row of large wheels encircling the figure. Because the ornaments of the King and Queen pieces differ markedly, they have been taken to indicate different sets of chess. This need not be the case and there is no inherent reason why the decoration of a chess king and queen should differ either within the same side or across the set – as long as the two sides were always distinguishable, one from the other. The differences of course may have helped to reflect on the chessboard any differences in court politics or military disputes. The thirteenth century began with the Fourth Crusade (Laion, Morrison, 2014), in which Latin troops conquered Constantinople, it is possible that the figures were the plundered property of one of the crusaders or his offspring. The game of chess certainly did not lose any of its original military function and for many sophisticated players created an excellent field of competition, in which they could feel like participants and decision-makers of politics. The dimensions of both the Inowrocław figures are similar (king's height of 4.9 cm, diameter of the base 4 cm; vizier: height 4.8 cm, diameter 3.5 cm) therefore they may have belonged to two different sets but standing on one board. The chessman from Krakow discussed in this volume (Niemiec in this volume) may also suggest a crusading reference, but to those conducted in the North against Prussia. In Kraków also discovered chess king made in Islamic style. Unfortunately, we do not know anything about the context or time of discovery. That is why we can generally date it from the 11th to the 13th centuries (fig. 6b, c; Tyniec 2016: 74)

It should be noted here that the collection of chess pieces discovered in Gniezno belongs to the most versatile ones both in terms of forms and their high level of craftsmanship (fig. 6a, 7, 13a-d). The research which has been carried out here since 1936 on the grounds of the stronghold on the Lech Hill and on the territory of the town allow to present five items. (Sawicki 2016: 170-235). Gniezno was the central stronghold of the early monarchy of the First Piasts, called at the beginning the *State of Gniezno*. It was the centre of both lay and church authorities and in the written sources mentions of the chess passion among the medieval elites of Gniezno may be found. The Archdeacon of Gniezno – Janko from Czarnków (1320-1387), ranked high in the church hierarchy, describes in his chronicles his own passion for chess which he shared with other members of the Gniezno Chapter (Bubczyk 2003: 29). One of the most interesting pieces discovered here is a figure of bishop made from antlers in the Arabic style (fig. 7a; 12a; Sawicki 2016: 214-215, 220). It was found on the territory of an early medieval open settlement outside city walls dated for the second half of the 11th century and the turn of the 13th/14th centuries. The bishop was deposited in a waste pit from the 12th century. The most crucial issue in this case is the fact that it is almost identical with the figure of the knight in the set of Sandomierz chess, here I mean the knight which was not in the original set but was described as one additionally made, a *spare* one (see the article by A. Stempin in this volume).

The similarity concerns basically all features, both metrical (height 2.3 cm; the basis 1.1 cm x 1.5 cm) as well as the decorative ones and the raw material it

Fig. 5. Medieval chess pieces from: a – Kruszwica; b – Inowrocław. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 6. a – Chess bishop from Gniezno; b, c – chess king from Kraków. Photos by T. Sawicki (a) and R. Liwoch (b, c)

was made from. Definitely, it is the closest analogy to the bishop of Gniezno, but the chess of Sandomierz, according to the latest findings, should be dated for the end of the 12th century or half of the 13th century at the earliest. A very interesting decorative element is the incrustation with white substance preserved mainly in the carved ornament lines. The pawn has not yet been examined under a microscope hence, at the present stage it can only be stated that it is the only example among Polish chess pieces where the introduction of a colorful element to the appearance of chess figures can be explicitly confirmed. A similar situation is mentioned in article Olga Medvedeva (in this volume) where the king from Volkovysk has a black cologing and a red decoration in the form of incrustation.

Another item is a figure of a king (or queen) also made from antlers, 4.3 cm in height (fig. 7, 13b; Sawicki 2016: 216-218). It was found on the settlement nr III outside the city walls of Gniezno stronghold in mixed layers hence, its dating is more difficult. In its form it refers to the figures of abstract type most closely related to those which appeared quite numerously on the territory of Rus' – e.g., in Novgorod in the period between the 13th and 14th centuries (Linder 1975: 110-111, 114, 160; Kolchin, Yanin, Yamshchikov 1985: 29-33). These are lathed figures taking the shape of a cylinder with a small bump placed in the central part of the top. The lack of characteristic for Arabic shapes cut-outs symbolizing the elephant torso refers to the style of Persian patterns, dated for the 11th and 12th centuries, which are deprived of this element.

Fig. 7. Medieval chess pieces from: a-e – Gniezno (by Sawicki 2016: il. 32); f – Santok; g – casete type *Brettspiel*. Photos by K. Zamelska-Monczak (f) and K. Zisopulu-Bleja (g)

Still another figure from the collection of Gniezno chess is a rook of 5.7 cm in height, made from antlers dating back for the late Middle Ages. (fig. 7e; 13c; Sawicki 2016: 218-219). It was discovered in the western part of the cathedral foothill (stronghold). It has been partly damaged although its appearance can be reconstructed through symmetric reproduction of the missing element. A similar type of figures appeared in the 12th/13th century represented for quite a long time, with various modifications, mainly on the territory of Rus' although they are also found in Scandinavia and Western Europe (Linder 1975: 88,160).

It is very interesting how the pawns are presented in the collection from Gniezno. Among them there is a unique copy of a pawn, made like all the previous ones from antlers, found during the exploration in 1948-1953 in the western part of the stronghold near the northern tower of the cathedral in Gniezno (fig. 7, 13d; Sawicki 2016: 218).The pawn is not big, lathed, very neatly finished and decorated with two belts of double running round grooves on the trunk (in the middle of the piece and in its lower part) and a characteristic carved rosette on the top. Unfortunately, it comes from the mixed surface layers with the material dated back to the early Middle Ages until the 20th century which makes the precise determination of the time of usage impossible. However, the uniqueness of the ornament performed on the piece incline to consider several possible options of its origin. The decoration has been interpreted as a five-leaf-clover and is associated with the prediction of success in the game. (Sawicki 2016: 218). If we assume the medieval origin of the pawn then the motif such as a clover was known at that time as a three-leaf-plant (in this case it symbolizes a Holy Trinity and a sign of salvation where a possible additional leaf was treated as a sign of Divine Grace).The identification of the clover with good luck comes a little later. The figure of a knight (close in form to the one from Gniezno), decorated on the top with a four-leaf-flower ornament was discovered in Novgorod (Linder 1975: 113) and also in Vilnius (Blaževičius 2008: 70, 71), both date back for the 14th-15th century. Plants apart from their practical and decorative functions also had symbolic meanings. Both the colour and the shape of flowers or leaves carried a meaningful message (Pudelska, Mirosław 2013: 55). It is quite likely that in the case of the pawn from Gniezno a flower was used exclusively in the form of a decorative motif, however, as it is the only known example from the territory of Poland the possibility that the carved flower was a part of a complex iconographic idea is worth considering.

First of all the use of such an ornament was connected with applying it in the whole set (at least on one side of a chessboard, i.e. on the remaining seven pawns). The medieval kit for playing chess consists of a specific *micro-cosmos* in which particular elements are related with each other esthetically, functionally, logically and symbolically. It particularly refers to the exclusive chess pieces and that is exactly the item we deal with in this case. So, the pawns were a part of a bigger whole with a well thought out message by the person ordering or manufacturing and the motif carved on them was most often not accidental thus creating a distinct narrative structure. The key element of the chess piece described here is a five-petal-flower placed on it. Such a number of petals can be seen on numerous medieval presentations of violets, daises wild strawberries or roses. The first three plants usually symbolized humility and moderation and were among most frequently pictured plants in gardens – in iconography – they were usually placed in the Marian context. The violet-flos humanitatis means a flower of humility linked with Our Lady the Virgin Mary. For St. Augustine it was also a symbol of widowhood (Kobielus 2006: 71-72). It is quite problematic whether those most evident sacred references to the medieval symbolism of flowers may be taken into consideration in the context of their appearance on the accessories for the game of chess which was often perceived as an idle entertainment not infrequently criticized by church.

On the other hand it is worth noting that there are exclusive copies of chess pieces known from the territories of the 13th century Latin Europe on which the whole biblical scenes were presented thus creating in such a set the extensive Christian narrative (Kluge-Pinsker 1997: 31, 47), and the previously mentioned archdeacon of Gniezno cathedral – Janko from Czarnków, did not see anything indecent in praising chess. Therefore, it is quite likely that the pawn comes from the set of a complex floral

ornamentation relating to the rich plant symbolism. Another suggestion as to the character of the flower applied here may be the shape of the presented petals. This was exactly the way a rose was pictured in Middle Ages, a five-petal-form. The rose had many cultural references. Firstly, we find it in the sacred aspect associated with the cult of the Virgin Mary or even more frequently as an attribute of martyrs – a martyr rose (Godula 2004: 107).

Secondly, it appears in the images of gardens of love becoming the basic sign of court love thus an element of chivalry culture. It is worth emphasizing here that also chess pieces were one of its more important elements (fig. 8). The chess figures adorned with the scenes from chivalric epics are an example of how the form itself of a chess piece was becoming a field of introducing themes of knightly ethos to the fight on the chess board (Kluge-Pinkster 1997: 31). A set with such a symbolism must have been a decoration in many a knightly living room. A rose being a symbol of love pictured together with a chess board is known in many iconographic presentations. One of the examples are the, so called, *Birth boards* (Master of Charles 1410) given to a mother in confinement and known on the territory of the 14th-15th century Italy or England (one side represents a woman with her new-born baby in a court room the other side shows a drawing of five-leaf-roses accompanying a chess board on which she was able to play a game of chess thus having a rest after hardships of giving birth). A wide range of dating possibilities of the pawn, also for late Middle Ages, allow to perceive some analogies to presenting a rose in heraldry (Małecki, Rotter 2007: 25). Five petals in exactly the same arrangement as on the pawn appear in Poraj-Różyc coat of arms (represented also in Gniezno), though the use of a separate rose without a shield excludes heraldic identification of this ornament[1] and the lack of a possibility of the insight into the form and decorations of the other figures in the set or undoubtedly ornamental chess board accompanying them does not allow to confirm this observation. If we assume the possibility of dating the pawn for modern times then, it is worth pointing out the analogy to the presentations on the cases for the so called, Brettspiel game, made in a famous workshop producing this type of furniture, in Czech Cheb (also known under the German name Eger). In the second half of the 17th (or beginning of the 18th century) the leading artists of this workshop – brothers Haberstumpf-Johann Carl and Johann Nicolas created characteristic folding cases for games (they served three types of games: the inside designated to play trick-track and the outer chess board used to play either chess or draughts). The squares made in the technique of multicoloured relief intarsia present flowers and are a characteristic feature of the above mentioned manufacture (fig. 7g). The pawns belonging to those cases have not been preserved but it seems quite likely that the same motif was also copied on the chess pieces (Stempin 2012: 113).

The other of the pawns found in Gniezno possesses a form of a massive cone with a heptagon basis, 2.3 cm in height and a very high quality of craftsmanship (fig. 7, 13a). It was discovered in 2005 in the north-eastern part of Mieszko I stronghold on the Lech Hill in the mixed leveling layers hence its chronology is difficult to determine (Sawicki 2016: 216, 220). Undoubtedly, this particular pawn comes from an exclusive chess set. Pawns shaped in this way were known on the territory of Latin Europe within a wide spectrum of time from the 11th-12th up to the 15th century which does not help determine the time range of the pawn from Gniezno. The closest analogies can be found in the French castle in Mayenne (11th-12th century; Grandet, Goret 2012: 73) and in a famous chess set from Lewis island (Hall in this volume). They are also known in Lower Saxony from the excavation stand in Stade (Finck 2008: 218-219, fig. 88: 10) and in Switzerland (Eptingen 11th-12th century and Ailt-Tierstein 10th-11th up to 15th century; Kluge Pinsker 1997: 115, 117, 127). A similar in shape pawn comes from the research carried out in 1961 at the outside of the city walls settlement of another important centre of the Piasts State – Santok (fig. 7f). Here, a pawn was discovered which, with high probability, can be described as the chess one, made from deer antlers, formed from antlers block with an octagonal basis and the width of a wall of about 0.9 cm. The walls are faceted from eight sides, strongly rubbed down and their edges are finely polished. The basis is also finely polished al-

[1] I wish to thank Prof. Paweł Stróżyk for kind remarks and his counsel.

most ground. The height of the artifact is 2.3 cm and the width of the basis is 1.75 cm. The pawn can be dated on the basis of stratigraphic context for the 13th-14th century[2]. A similar chronology can also be attributed to another pawn recognized as a chess piece and discovered during archaeological research on the Old Market in Poznań in 2015[3]. A hexagonal basis can also be seen here. Similarly shaped accessories were used in exclusive chess sets and were usually accompanying the figures in the naturalistic style. It is worth emphasizing that during the excavations on the Old Market in Poznań a chronologically close unique and precious tournament diadem was also discovered which together with a chess piece constitutes a group of objects belonging to chivalrous culture. The game of chess was an element of education in wealthy circles and in the 14th century it found itself in a group of skills to which rich townspeople aspired. The Dominican monk from Genova – Jacobus de Cessolis in about 1300 used chess in his morality play entitled *Libellus super Ludo Schachorum* to compare the game to an ideal society in which each figure referred to particular classes. The model of social relationships was mainly used in sermons and became particularly popular in the 14th-15th century towns to serve preachers (Karłowska-Kamzowa 2000).

Some other pawns which on the basis of the analogy with the above mentioned finds and which with great likelihood should be associated with chess were discovered in Międzyrzecz. In the layers of the inside of the stronghold from the turn of the 13th/14th century two wooden items were registered, one with faceted walls on the hexagonal basis whereas the other one with three round running carvings (Kurnatowski 2015: 230-244, fig. 88. 9-10, 352).

In 2004 in Warszawa, during excavations conducted in the main courtyard of the "Tin-Roofed Palace", a team of archaeologists of the Royal Castle came across the remains of a shaft of the castle built in the first half of the fourteenth century. In the layers of dumped rubbish that, immediately preceded the construction of the shaft, a chess piece was found (fig. 3m; 9b; Moczek, 2007: 39-88). It is a rook or castle piece, made of antler in the abstract style. On one side it is decorated with engraved, delicate lines that emphasize its outline. Identical examples of such chessmen are illustrated in the manuscript of king Alfonso X "the Wise" of Castille and Leon (fig. 9a; Alfonso X 2009: 106, Fol 17v). The example from Warszawa has an incised, framing line running around the body of the piece, paralleld on similar rooks found in Lübeck. The deliberate notch in the center of the rook/castle is also known from the chess rook from Svisloch (Belarus) and on other rooks in Northern Europe.

The next piece is a fourteenth century example from Pomerania and its founding city of Gniew. It is a bone knight piece in the form of a horse, dated stratigraphically to the second half of the thirteenth century (fig. 3l; 10). It was found under the wooden walkway of a street (Choińska-Bochdan 199: 25, fig. 28a). The head and mane of the horse are clearly and simply delineated with striking effect and on the neck there are carved schematic elements that suggest elements of a harness (the reins?). It is broken across the base, and the surviving height is 4 cm, with a width of 1.5 cm. It has a smooth, all-over polish.

The last example of the medieval chess figure from Polish collections comes from a hanseatic town of Elbląg and is dated back for the first half of the 15th century (fig.11). The Elbląg piece is lathed in the shape of a cone clipping with characteristic small wings placed symmetrically. It was made from an exclusive raw material, however the lack of a detailed analysis makes it impossible to determine whether it was ivory, walrus tusk or whales teeth. The attempt to identify this piece encounters great difficulty as it has not been fully preserved.

Initially it was interpreted as a rook of Arabic type (Marcinkowski 2003: 331, fig. 2). A more detailed analysis however, shows that it should be interpreted as a bishop or knight (Stempin 2006: 255-261). In this particular case we deal only with a "skeleton" of the appropriate piece with an additional element placed between the side wings- most probably made either of gemstone or metal. Simi-

[2] Many thanks to Dr. Kinga Zamelska-Monczak from the Institute of Archeaology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (a Branch in Poznań) for making available an unpublished museum piece and for giving detailed information of the documented research.

[3] Many thanks to the author of the research Kateriny Zisopulu-Bleja Archaeological Museum in Poznań for making available an unpublished museum piece and for providing comprehensive information about the circumstances of its discovery and chronology.

Fig. 8. Manuscript *Romas of Aleksander* – fragments with scenes chess game (http://bibliodyssey.blogspot.com/2009/09/romance-of-alexander-great.html)

Fig. 9. a – Alfonso X, Libros de dados… (after Alfonso X 2009:106 il. Fol 17v); b – Chess Rook from Warszawa. Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 10. Chess knight from Gniew. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 11. Chess figure from Elbląg. Photos by P. Silska

lar measures are known from exclusive sets from the territories of Western Europe made from rock crystal set in, e.g., silver. The practice of combining various raw materials in chess pieces was aimed at enriching their attractiveness thus enhancing the prestigious role of their owner. In English judicial records many mentions have been preserved which prove that the artistically made chess boards and pieces mostly made from precious materials became the objects of desire and were looted (Bubczyk 2005: 102). Small drillings appearing symmetrically on both "small wings" of the chess piece in question, yet not having the function of a whole prove an original form of the decorations. Most probably at those points the piece was incrusted (most likely with a gemstone or a glass bead). The chess piece of Elbląg comes from a rich set made at a very high level of craftsmanship, probably outside the boarders of today Poland and the fact that it was discovered in a hanseatic town confirms extensive trade contacts of the townspeople of those times.

This contribution has focussed on the chess pieces from the published collections of Polish archaeological and historical museums.

Summary

The penetration of chess into early medieval Poland seems to have been under way by the first half of the eleventh century and concentrated in the southern regions of the Piast's country. The oldest examples so far known all come from the stronghold of Wrocław. The continuity of their occurrence in the consecutive, medieval chronological levels alongside their preservation of stylistic changes under the influence of Latin Europe is significant. It seems that the reception of the game in Wroclaw and Gniezno, was associated with the nobility and their commercial and diplomatic contacts, with knowledge of the game mainly transmitted via the Ottonian Empire and through relationships with the Czechs.

The archaeological evidence indicates that the spread of chess through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with chess pieces found in Kruszwica, Milicz, Inowrocław, Gniezno and Kraków. In Milicz, Lower Silesia, archaeology has revealed Poland's first antler workshop where chess pieces were manufactured. That chess equipment was being manufactured indicates that the game was fully known in the area by no later than the early thirteenth century. The excavations carried out by Museum of London Archaeology in Northampton in 2014 revealed a workshop from the same period, including unfinished/incomplete chess pieces. The workshop in Milicz was no doubt part of a broad trend in the popularization of chess in Europe at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The majority of the chess pieces discussed in this paper are in the abstract Arabic or more correctly Islamic style. The attractiveness of this form was based on simple geometric shapes which facilitated not only their dissemination by players and learners of the game but their relatively easier manufacture by carvers. The abstract form seems likely to have contributed to the rapid spread of knowledge of the game, not least because of the ease with which simple pawns could be made with whatever material was easily available (including wood). From surviving examples antler appears to have been the most popular material of manufacture: apart from the missing ivory piece from Kra-

Fig. 12. Chess knight from: a – Wrocław; b – Milicz. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

kow and late Elbląg figure (exclusive material) and one example of a clay figure (Radlice) most known Polish examples are made of antler.

From the thirteenth century on, pieces made in an anthropomorphic, figurative style appear in Poland (e.g Kraków, Wrocław and Radlice). Two factors, the raw material (walrus ivory in the case of the Kraków piece) and the highly accomplished craft skill in their manufacture (especially the Wrocław pieces) strongly suggest that such sets were the exclusive preserve of the country's social elites. They may also become, through their human symbolism, a prompt to launch a discussions on the problem of using chess pieces during the twelfth – fourteenth centuies to visualize contemporary or, historical conflicts played by their owners in the privacy of their own homes. In such a perspective the conflicting parties would be portrayed on opposite fields of chessboard (a point also made by Kristina Lavysh in her contribution to this monograph). With respect to the pieces discussed in this paper on the Polish examples, such a function of playing chess can be hypothetically discerned both in the figurative and the abstract pieces. (for example, the kneeling figure from Wrocław and the abstract King and Vizier from Inowrocław).

In the end it is worth emphasizing that admittedly the presented material does not constitute the overall picture of the findings of chess pieces on the territory of Poland. Many stands on which such interesting findings of gaming pieces may be expected are still waiting to be researched and properly identified. The examples are strongholds in Opole, Poznań or early medieval Gdańsk. All of them were important hubs of the early medieval Polish State.

Fig. 13. Medieval chess pieces from Gniezno. Photos byT. Sawicki

This exploration of the archaeological recovery and analysis of chess pieces from medieval Poland has allowed the determination that the game of chess arrived much earlier in Poland than was previously understood from the written sources alone. The review of the pieces and their archaeological contexts has also allowed us a fresh appreciation of the complex web of interactions between people from any lands and cultures all linked by the game of chess.

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Dariusz Niemiec

Did Conrad of Mazovia Play Chess on Wawel?

This paper presents a verification of previous statements and views concerning the dating and origin of an anthropomorphic chess piece (probably a rook) unearthed in 1912 in Kraków Stradom. Analysis of the piece has shown that, in terms of stylistic features, the figurine is similar to chess pieces found in territories ranging from the Scotland through Norway to Belarus. It was pointed out, however, that the figurine from Kraków must present local features of a Mazovian warrior, which is attested by an imitation of a pavise-shaped shield. In a Polish context, this type of shield appeared for the first time on the seal of Conrad I of Mazovia in 1228. The suggested interpretation therefore is that the chess piece from Kraków was created in the first half of the 13th century in Mazovia, or in the neighbouring territories of Rus' (Volhynian Polesie), probably under the patronage of Conrad of Mazovia, who resided twice in Wawel palace, when he controlled the capital, Kraków.

In the year 1912, in Kraków, during a raising of the ground level by the addition of imported soil, in the vicinity of Koletek Street, in the suburb of Stradom, a unique chess piece in the form of a medieval warrior was discovered (fig. 1, 2; Jamka 1960: 5; cf. Demetrykiewicz 1914: X; Jamka 1963: 209; Radwański 1975: 245; Żygulski 1975: 94; Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 84; Sachs 1984: 37; Sachs 1985: 105; Zaitz 2001, fig. r; Medvedeva 2005: 16; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 42). The account of its discoverers (Jan Zarzycki and Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz) indicates unequivocally that this relic must have indeed come from the Wawel Hill, because it was found in Stradom in a "secondary deposit", within earthwork rubble mounds removed from Wawel (Jamka 1960: 5; 1963: 105; Zaitz 2001: 119, fig. 4; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 76).

The current whereabouts of the Wawel chess piece is unknown (see below) but surviving depictions show it has the form of a fully armoured medieval warrior and is probably made of ivory (fig. 1, 2; Demetrykiewicz 1914: x; Jamka 1960: 5-6; 1963: 209; Radwański 1975: 245; Żygulski 1975: 94; Sachs 1985: 105; Hensel 1987: 703, fig. 524:1; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 76; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 42). The figure is depicted in full armour, with a helmet and a long, pleated robe with sleeves and a slit in the front (fig 1, 2; Jamka 1960: fig. 1a-d; 1963: fig. 94; Kajzer 1976: 140; fig. 28e; Sachs 1985: fig. 1, 2; Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: fig. 1a-b; Zaitz 2001: fig. 4; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: fig. 9a). In his right hand be holds a sword, resting it against his arm. In his left hand, he holds a shield covering his torso. A sheath for a short sword (or a dagger), a type of hammer-shaped axe (a so called "knight axe"), and a moneybag hang from his belt. He wear's a flat-topped, one-piece helmet. The rim of the casque is carved in the shape of a relatively narrow band from which a coif hangs. It has a face opening, and hangs down to protect the neck, the shoulders, and the upper torso. The construction of this protective collar, serving the role of a coat of mail, is schematically presented in the form of circular notches with the marked central part. Below the line of the collar, three rows of armour scales are depicted, reaching below the waist. The knight's rectangular shield has a convex bar in the middle and represents a type of the so-called "small pavise" (Żygulski 1975: 94; Nowakowski 1980: 113, n. 9; Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 84; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77). According to Jamka (1960: 6), the chess piece measured up to 8 cm (see also Sachs 1985: 105). In medieval chess sets, warrior pieces depicted in full armour most often served the role

Fig. 1. Photo of the Kraków ivory (?) chess piece (probably a rook) representing a Mazovian warrior, 1200-1250. After Jamka 1960: fig. 1a-d

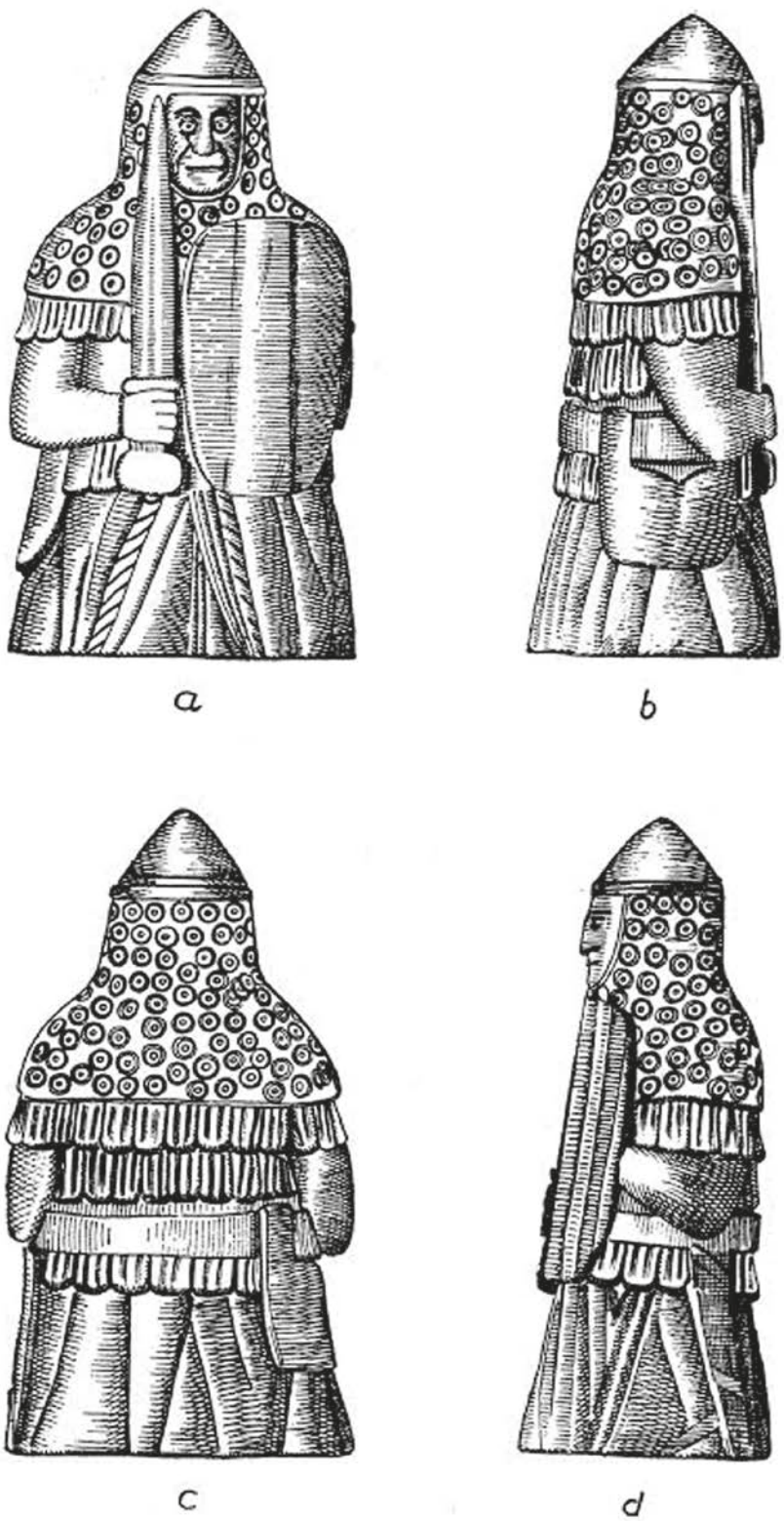

Fig. 2. Drawing of the Kraków ivory (?) chess piece (probably a rook) representing a Mazovian warrior, 1200-1250. After Jamka 1963, fig. 94, drawings by R. Ledwos

Fig. 3. Seals of Mazovian princes bearing images of pavises: A. Seal of Conrad of Mazovia from 1228 (after Piekosiński 1899: 63, fig. 49); B. Seal of Trojden of Mazovia from 1341 (after Thordeman 1939: 272, fig. 264); C. Seal of Siemowit of Mazovia from 1343 (after Thordeman 1939: 272, fig. 265)

of rooks and sometimes of pawns (cf. Pastoreau 1983: 103-4). Directly after the discovery, the chess piece from Stradom was kept in the Archaeology Museum in Kraków, but it disappeared during the pillaging of Krakow by Nazi invaders (Jamka 1960: 5; 1963: 209; Sachs 1984: 37; 1985: 105; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 42).

Jamka (1960: 7-9, fig. 2-5) suggested that the Stradom chess piece was 12th century in date. He based this on a relatively narrow range of iconographic analogies to particular elements of the piece's armour, including the scene from the quarters of the so-called Nowogród Gate and a coin of Jaksa from Kopanica. This dating was broadly followed by Kajzer (1976: 140, fig 28e), Sachs (1984: 37; 1985: 105) and Zaitz (2001: 119, fig. 4). Z. Żygulski (1975: 94), without presenting any arguments, suggested that the "Stradom" chess piece was made in the 13th century. Sachs (1984: 37; 1985: 105) linked the piece with a group of Scandinavian chess pieces from the end of the 12th century. Nowakowski, Orłowski (1984: 87-88) proposed a significantly different date for the piece, linked to the construction phases of the Wawel, arguing for a date at the turn of the 13th-14th centuries. They based their case on the piece's disctinctive shield type, the so called "small pavise" (cf. Radwański 1975: 245; Hensel 1987: 703, fig. 524: 1; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 76; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 42). Such an attempt to specify the chronology of the chess piece is fairly arbitrary however and relies on a single representation of Prussian warriors from a Malbork Castle column capital, thought to have been created c. 1300 (fig. 4; Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 87; cf. Nowakowski 1980: 111-12, fig. 11; 1994: 81, 143, fig. 36). Further, they also underestimate the archaic stylization of the sword. Although they admit that typological criteria show it was not created later than the end of the 12th century (Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 86), they go on to conclude that the schematic presentation of the sword is not useful in the consideration of the figurine's chronology (Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 88). Accepting the schematic stylization of the sword, it cannot be ignored that similarly shaped swords and some armour elements (except for the pavise and the thorny coif) are found represented on late 12th century chess pieces from the Isle of Lewis, Scotland (Glenn 2003: 156-9, 172-7; fig L1a, b, I, j, k; Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 161, fig. 6 d, g). Nowakowski and Orłowski (1984: 88, fig. 1c) admit that the "similarity of these pieces to the relic from Kraków, both in their character and armour type, is striking". These aspects aside, it must be admitted that Nowakowski, Orłowski are right to see the representation of the pavise as implying a date slightly later than the 12th century and into the first half of the 13th century. The oldest image of a pavise is

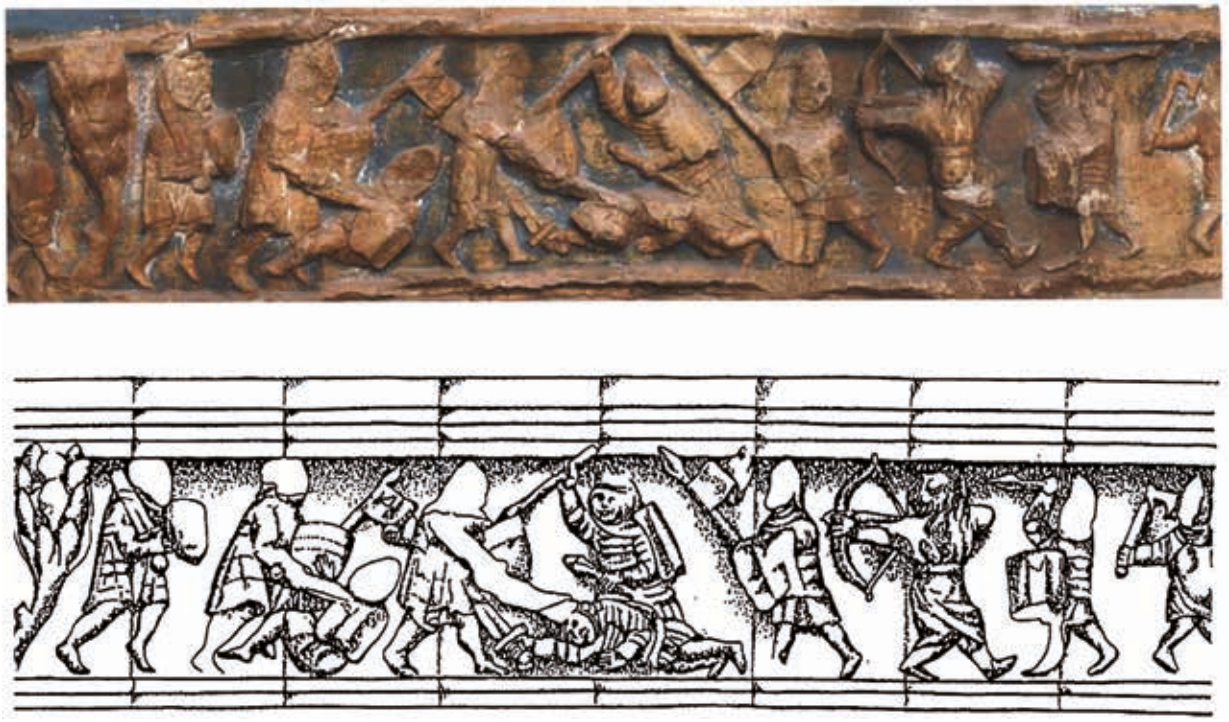

Fig. 4. 13th-14th c. carved column capital from Malbork Castle showing Prussian warriors with 'pavise'-type shields. Photo after Rynkiewicz-Domino 2004: 69, picture after Nowakowski 1994, fig. 36).

known from the 1228 seal presenting the standing figure of Conrad I of Mazovia (fig. 3A). Somewhat later images are also connected with the Mazovian line of Piast princes and they appear successively on the seals of: Bolesław I of Mazovia (1229) and Sandomierz (1241), Casimir of Łęczyca and Cuiavia (1252), Siemovit of Czersk and Mazovia (1262), Siemomysł of Inowrocław (1284), Wacław of Płock (1336), Trojden of Mazovia (1341; fig. 3B) and Siemovit of Mazovia (1343; fig. 3C; Piekosiński 1899: 63, fig. 49; Thorderman 1939: 272, fig. 264, 265; Nadolski 1974: 168, fig. 1-3; Żygulski 1975: 94; Kajzer 1976: 54, 62; Nowakowski 1980: 113; 1991: 103; Nadolski 1994: 134; Piech 1993: photo 91, 93, 96; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 34).

Although pavises were used for a long period of time (in Poland, at least until the 15th century; in Lithuania, until the 16th century; Nadolski 1974: 165; 1994: 134; Nowakowski 1980; 1984: 94), it is still possible to narrow and specify the datating range of the chess piece from Kraków, by taking into account its stylistic similarity to late 12th century chess pieces from various North European sites. This factor allows us to focus on the early phase of using this type of shield, currently estimated to be in the first quarter of the 13th century (before the year 1228). On this basis, we can cautiously conclude that the chess piece from Stradom was made in the first half of the 13th century.

From the very moment of its discovery, the Romanesque style warrior figurine carved in ivory has been considered a chess piece (Demetrykiewicz 1914: X; Jamka 1960: 6). Jamka, when determining the function of this artefact, paid attention to the fact that the artisan creating it did not model its legs in order to provide a broad base for the figurine, inferring it was clearly intended to be set vertically (Jamka 1960: 6; Sachs 1985: 105). He dated its making to the 3rd quarter of the 12th century (Jamka 1960: 7-9; Sachs 1984: 37; 1985: 105). Sachs (1984: 37-38; 1985: 105) attempted to link this relic with a group of late 12th century chess pieces found in territories encompassed by Scandinavian settlement expansion. According to him they represented Viking warriors, so-called berserkers. The most famous group of such pieces have already been mentioned, those found in 1831 on the Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides, Scotland. These were mostly carved in walrus ivory in the late 12th - early 13th century, we do not know where, but a strong candidate is Trondheim, Norway (fig. 5, 6; Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinsion 2009: 165, 168-171, 197). The

Fig. 5. Several of the chess pieces from the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces (late 12th – early 13th c.) Found on the Isle of Lewis in 1831. Photo: courtesy of The British Museum.

closest comparitors for the Krakow piece are two of those from the Lewis hoard, one 83 mm high and the other 93 mm high. Both represent Scandinavian warriors wearing pointed helmets, with swords lifted in their right hands and their torsos covered with shields of elongated, triangular shape (Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 88, fig. 1c; Glenn 2003: 176-177, fig L1k; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77, fig. 10; Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 161, fig 6d,g; cf., Caldwell, Hall 2014). Production of such exclusive chess pieces with anthropomorphic representations has been proven as a result of archaeological excavations carried out in Bekkvika, on Hitra Island, near a fiord on which Trondheim is located (McLess 2001; 2009: 315-317, fig. 5). Further confirmation comes from the finding of an unfinished king piece (of whale tooth, probably sperm whale) on Hitra. It is suggested to date to the 13th century (fig. 7; McLess 2001; 2009: 317-319, n. 23, fig. 6, 8). The majority of such Scandinavian chess pieces that survive are made from the ivory tusks of the walrus. This valuable material, like narwhale tusks, was obtained on a large scale by the Scandinavians in Greenland, in the 12th-13th centuries,

Fig. 6. Anthropomorphic chess pieces from the Isle of Lewis. Collection of the National Museums Scotland. After Glenn 2003

and imported to Europe through Norwegian harbours in Bergen and Trondheim (Diamond 2007: 213-215; McLess 2009: 315).

Antropomorphic chess pieces of Scandinavian type from the 11th-13th centuries are also known from the territories of the Old Rus State, especially from the areas of modern Belarus, Volhynia, and Volhynian Polesie (fig. 8). Specific examples include those from Brest on the Bug (Rus. *Брест*, *Берестье*), Grodno (Rus. *Гродно*), Volkovysk (Rus. *Волковыск*), Slutsk (Rus. *Слуцк*), and Lukoml (Rus. *Лукомль*) (Plastyka Byelarusi 1983, catalogue numer 3-7; Zvyaruga *et al.* 2000: 484; Medvedeva 2005: 14-20; Medvedeva 2006: 71; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 141-149). A pawn in the form of a lightly armed infantryman (cf. Pastoureau 1983: 103) was found in Volkovysk (fig. 8A; Plastyka Byelarusi 1983: catalogue number 4; Zvyaruga *et al.* 2000: 313, Fig 82: 3; Medvedeva 2005: 19, fig. 2: 2; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 148, fig. 1: 2). King pieces were found in Brest-on-the-Bug and in Slutsk (fig. 8C; Plastyka Byelarusi 1983: catalogue number 6; Zvyaruga *et al.* 2000: 484; Miadzvedzeva 2005: 14-16, fig. 1; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 145, Chart XXVII: 4; fig. 1:1). A single queen piece (also called fierce – from a Persian word meaning „vizir", see Pastoureau 1983: 103) comes from Lukoml (fig. 8D; Plastyka Byelarusi 1983, catalogue number 7; Zvyaruga *et al.* 2000: 484; Medvedeva 2005: 16-17, fig. 1: 1; Medvedeva 2006: 71, fig. 1: 1, Photo 1; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 147, fig. 1: 3). An utterly unique chess set is represented by two figurines of armed oarsmen, Varangians, in a boat. They were found in Grodno and Volkovysk (fig. 8B; Plastyka Byelarusi 1983: catalogue number 2, 5; Zvyaruga *et al.* 2000: 313, fig. 82:1.2; Medvedeva 2005: 17-18, fig. 2: 3, 4; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 147-148, Chart. XXVII, 5, fig. 9) and they were most probably used as rooks (cf. Pastoureau 1983: 104; Kuchinko, Okhrimienko, Sawits'kiy 2008: 147). In the context of the figurine from Kraków, it should be noted that the four chess pieces from modern Belarus, specifically from Grodno, Volkovysk, and Brest on the Bug, were all found close to the part of Poland under the rule of the Mazovian princes.

A. Nowakowski and T. Orłowski aptly paid attention to the fact that the particular form of the presented shield (so-called "small pavise") might be useful in specifying the chronology of the artefact in question. Accordingly, they proposed, somewhat arbitrarily, because on the basis of a single analogy, that it was created at the turn of the 13th and the 14th centuries. (Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 84-88; a similar date was suggested by Radwański 1975: 245; Hensel 1987: 703, fig. 524: 1; Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 77; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 42).

Fig. 7. Half-product made of sperm whale dentine (?) in the form of an unfinished chess king figurine (13th century) discovered on Hitra Island, near Trondheim in Norway. Photo: after McLess 2009, fig. 6

Nevertheless, the scholars ignored the obvious similarities between the artefact and the North European chess pieces from the end of the 12th century (cf. fig. 4, 5; Glenn 2003: 156-159, 172-177, fig. L1: a, b, i, j, k; Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 161, fig. 6d, g;).

To conclude, it should be noted that in order to specify when the Kraków chess piece was made, the dating of the earliest known pavises has to be taken into account – and stratigraphic analyses indicate that the beginnings of this type of shields pertain to the first quarter of the 13th century (before the year 1228: Nadolski 1974: 168, fig. 1; Nowakowski 1980: 113; Nowakowski, Orłowski 1984: 94; Nowakowski 1991: 103; Nadolski 1994: 134; Piech 1993, photo 91, 93, 96; Sarnecki, Nicole 2008: 34). Adding to this the dating of other stylistic comparisons with Scandinavian chess pieces, one can conclude that the chess piece from Stradom in Kraków was made in the first half of the 13th century. The characteristic armament of the warrior carved in ivory should be related mainly to Mazovia and possibly to the Baltic territories (cf. Nadolski 1974: 168, fig. 1; Nowakowski 1980: 113, n. 9; Nowakowski and Orłowski 1984; Nadolski 1994: 134; Nowakowski 1994: 81, 143, fig. 36; Sarnecki and Nicole 2008: 34). One can assume that the alleged Scandinavian (Norwegian? Old Rus/Varangian?) prototypes inspired the horn artisan working for Mazovian princes to create a unique figurine revealing references to the endemic, very local Mazovian warriors outfit. The discovery of such an object in Kraków may have a more direct connection with the senior rule of Conrad of Mazovia and the presence of his court on Wawel. Historical sources attest two episodes of the prince's rule in Kraków: from 1241-1243 and from 1246-1247 (Grodecki, Zachorowski, Dąbrowski 1995: 280; Tyszkiewicz 1998; Wyrozumski 1999: 205, 225-226; Samsonowicz 2008: 83-84). In the first half of the 13th century, the lost chess piece from Kraków was a component of an

Fig. 8. 12th-13th c. anthropomorphic chess pieces from Belarus and Volhynian Polesie (after Plastyka Byelarusi 1983, catalogue no. 4-7): A – Pawn representing an infantryman in light armour (discovered in Volkovysk); B – Rook representing armed oarsmen (Varangians) in a boat (discovered in Volkovysk); C – King discovered in Brest on the Bug; D. Queen discovered in Lukoml

elegant chess set belonging to a prince residing on Wawel, because such exclusive chess pieces from the 12th-13th centuries are most often linked with princely and royal court furnishings, and could be potentially moved to cathedral or monastic treasuries either as gifts or following the death of their owners (cf. Pastoureau 1983: 103 and 2006: 297-320; Iwańczak 2001: 454-455, 458-459; Bubczyk 2005: 77-90, 94-104; Bubczyk 2009: 94-109, 112-117). This paper's discussion of the chronology, the origin, and the prestigious character of the late Romanesque chess piece discovered at the turn of the 20th century in Kraków authorize us to give an affirmative answer to the question contained in the title of this paper.

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Sandomierz, St. James Church. Portal

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The Sandomierz Chess Set from St. James's Hill, Sandomierz: Reflections on the 1962 Excavations and a Report on the Re-Exploratory Excavations of 2014-2015

In 2012 half a century will have passed since the discovery in Sandomierz, Poland, of a mediaeval chess set. It has been housed in District Museum in Sandomierz since 1980 and is one of its most valuable archaeological exhibits. The Sandomierz find is thus one of the few stunning discoveries, not just because it comprises two almost complete sets (with only three pieces missing) but also because it was made during regular excavation work and is fully documented. Thus on October 9, 1962, in the south-western corner of the homestead, a unique chess set was discovered by Jerzy Gąssowski together with Eligia Gąssowska, on behalf of the then Institute of the History of Material Culture Polish Academy of Sciences But for three missing pawns the set was complete and made of antler in the abstract Arabic or Islamic style. For more than fifty years the site where the chess set was found has not been researched archeologically. Following on from the successful 2012 conference celebrating the discovery of the chess set it was recognised that there was both a chronological and contextual problem which barred a fuller understanding of both the site and the place of the chess set within it and furthermore that these critical issue could only be addressed through further excavation. Thus, the re-excavation of the site began in 2014 under the auspices of three institutions: the Institute of Archeology of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poznań Archeological Museum and – for the first season only - the District Museum in Sandomierz. The excavation works were preceded by a geophysical survey, used to determine the location of the excavation trenches. The excavation revealed significant, new stratigraphic information, illuminating the changes that took place on that part of the Hill in relation to both the original topography and the complexity of the local chronological sequence.

The chess set defined as "Sandomierskie" was unearthed on the site designated no. 7 in Sandomierz on the so called, Old Town Hill, also known as the St. James's-St. Paul's Hill's, after the dedications of the churches situated there (fig. 1). According to the tradition recorded by the Polish chronicler Jan Długosz (1415-1480), the Hill was considered to be the oldest part of Sandomierz (Kiryk 1994: 120), where the first town was founded in the first half of the thirteenth century (Buliński 1879: 391; Kalinowski *at al.* 1956: 8-9; Gąssowski 1969: 467; Lalik 1993: 57). St. John Baptist's Church was founded here by the late twelfth century. Tradition suggests it is one of Sandomierz's oldest churches and related to the first phase of Conversion (Kiryk 2006: 105). With time other churches were constructed in this region, notably St. James's Church in the twelfth century (passed to the Dominicans in 1226) and St. Paul's church, founded in 1226, eventually becoming the parish church for this part of Sandomierz. Because of these early origins, the Old Town Hill has been a constant focus of interest for researchers exploring the early stages of Polish state formation. Excavations have been conducted there since the mid-nineteenth century. During 1928-29, a vast inhumation cemetery was excavated, along with the remains of the Early Medieval settlement (fig. 1. 5; Żurowski 1928: 198-192; Gąssowski 1969: 399-402). Detailed excavation resumed after World War II. Between 1958 and 1968 systematic excavations were conducted on various parts of the Hill, by Jerzy Gąssowski together with Eligia Gąssowska, on behalf of the then Institute of the History of Material Culture PAN (Gąssowski 1967: 183-184; Gąssowska 1969: 293-294; 1970a: 216-218; 1971: 37-39). In 1962 excavation took place adjacent to St.James's church , in anticipation of finding evidence relating to the early phases of St. John's church (fig. 1. 1). Tradition has always acknowledged St. John's as one of the oldest of Sandomierz's churches but its precise location was lost sight of after the church was demolished in 1736.

Though the excavation proved futile in elucidating the location of the church in other respects they proved to be of huge significance. The first season recovered evidence of a sunken dwelling and in the following season this was more fully explored. Thus on October 9, 1962, in the south-western corner of the homestead, a unique chess set was discovered (fig. 2). But for three missing pawns the set was complete and made of antler in the abstract Arabic or Islamic style. It was christened "The Chess of Sandomierz" (Gąssowska 1964: 148-196). This is exciting discovery has remained of high significance for both the medieval history of chess in Poland and in Europe. The area under excavation was not explored further because of the tight timetable for finishing the works and so the context was concluded to be a small, very modest sunken hut with the singular find of a chess set buried in the floor. None of the other material found matched the chess set in status and value. This other material included twelfth century ceramics, several, highly corroded iron items (including a small arrow head, a key, and an arched flint and steel), an antler object (perhaps a harness fastening), and a glass ring. This description of the finding of the chess set dominated the professional literature for many years, fuelling many hypotheses and speculations on the reasons why the chess set was found in such an unexpected place. The hypothesis that held most favour suggested that the hut in which the pieces were found was part of a market square settlement thriving from the end of the eleventh century, and itself built on top of a burial ground that went out of use in the 1080s AD. The market settlement continued to develop until the mid-thirteenth century, until terminated by the Tartar invasion of January 1260 (Florek 2005: 36). However, the small (approx. 3 x 3 metres), incompletely excavated hut was the only building revealed by the excavation and so not apparently part of a larger settlement; as a singular feature it was difficult to interpret, making the presence of the chess set there even more difficult to understand.

For more than fifty years the site where the chess set was found has not been researched archeologically. Following on from the successful 2012 conference celebrating the discovery of the chess set it was recognised that there was both a chronological and contextual problem which barred a fuller understanding of both the site and the place of the chess set within it and furthermore that these critical issue could only be addressed through further excavation. Thus, the re-excavation of the site began in 2014 under the auspices of three institutions: the Institute of Archeology of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the Archeological Museum in Poznań and – for the first season only - the District Museum in Sandomierz. The excavation works were preceded by a geophysical survey, used to determine the location of the excavation trenches. During the project's two seasons to date, 2014 and 2015, an area of 210 square meters (fig. 3) was examined. The excavation revealed significant, new stratigraphic information, illuminating the changes that took place on that part of the Hill in relation to both the original topography and the complexity of the local chronological sequence.

The features and finds excavated revealed that the settlement of the Hill began in the early Neolithic (Malice culture) and continued down to Modern Times, with strong evidence for the Early Iron Age (Pomeranian culture), the Roman Iron Age and the Early Middle Ages and beyond. Within the focus of this paper the critical point is that the majority of the evidence is connected with the early medieval occupation of the Hill between the eleventh to mid-twelfth century (fig. 4). The evidence recovered tells a story of dwelling places supported by a very large farming and production base. Over this period of two centuries occupation was intensive an uninterrupted, with much destruction of earlier buildings. Indeed the intensity was such that it created a very complicated stratigraphy the phasing of which is still being finalized and so the conclusions presented here are only of a preliminary nature.

One of the most interesting discoveries made is the presence of two furnaces (one complete, one fragmentary) for the smelting of lead and the smelting of silver out of lead ore. The fragmentary nature of the second, fits the format of the first. The complete furnace comprised four sunken, loessic rock-bed chambers, circular in cross-section and tapering to a chimney shaft (fig. 5). Each was connected by a separate outlet to the common centre. Two of the furnaces had bottoms laid out with the tamped down clay, whilst the other two had base layers several centimetres thick, comprisings fragments of

Fig. 1. Sandomierz, Wzgórze Świętojakubskie (St. James Hill)

A: 1 – Location of the discovery of Sandomierz chess pieces – site 7; 2 – St.James's Church; 3 – The Castle; 4 – The town's Old Market; 5 – The Retired Priests House; 6 – The Vistula; 7 – The Cathedral. Photo by J. Wieczorek

B. Sandomierz. Graphics from *Civitates orbis terrarum*, Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg, 1617. After Wódz 2001

Fig. 2. The Chess set of Sandomierz. Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

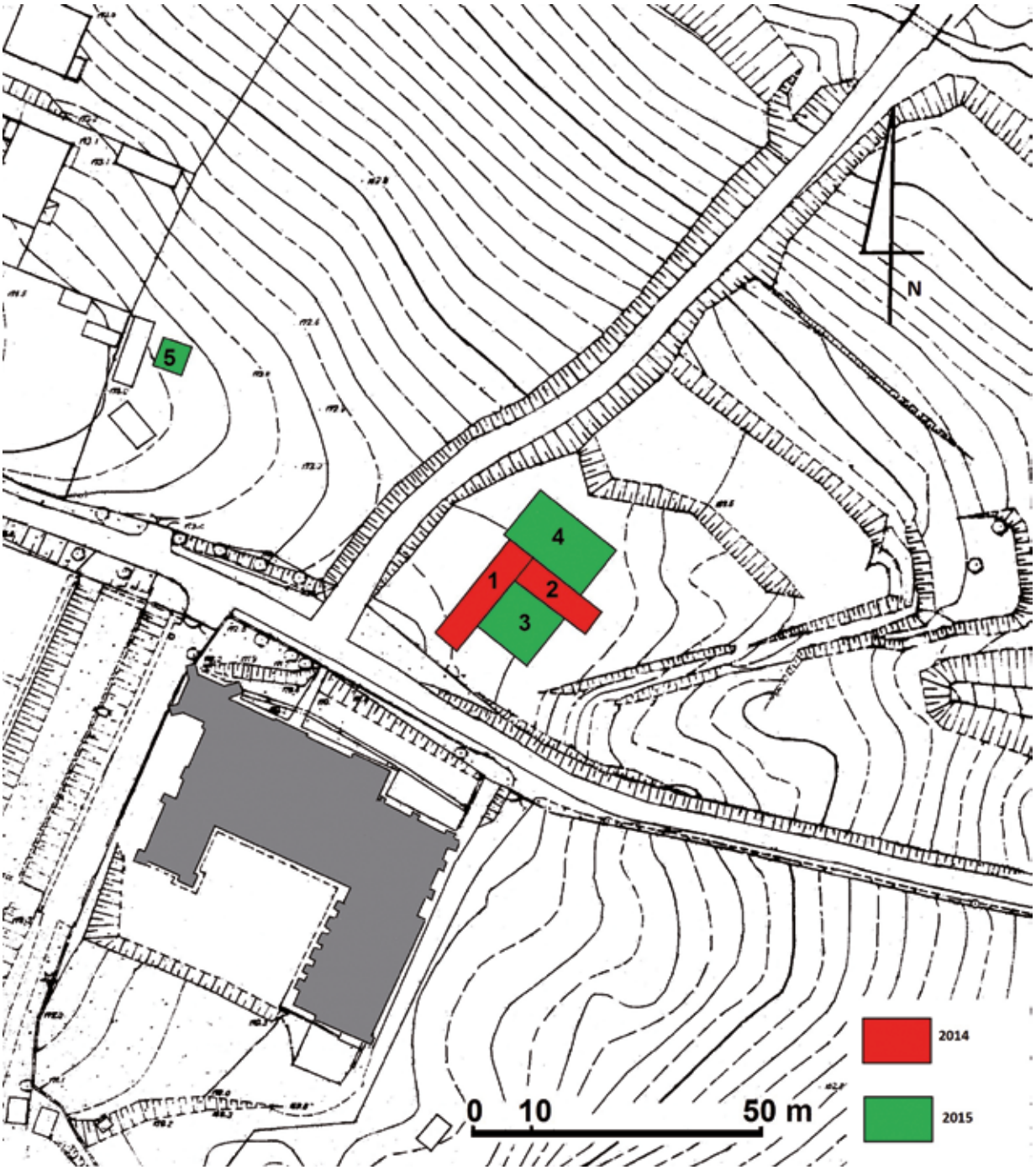

Fig. 3. Location of the excavations during the research of 2014-2015. Drawing by M. Florek and A. Stempin

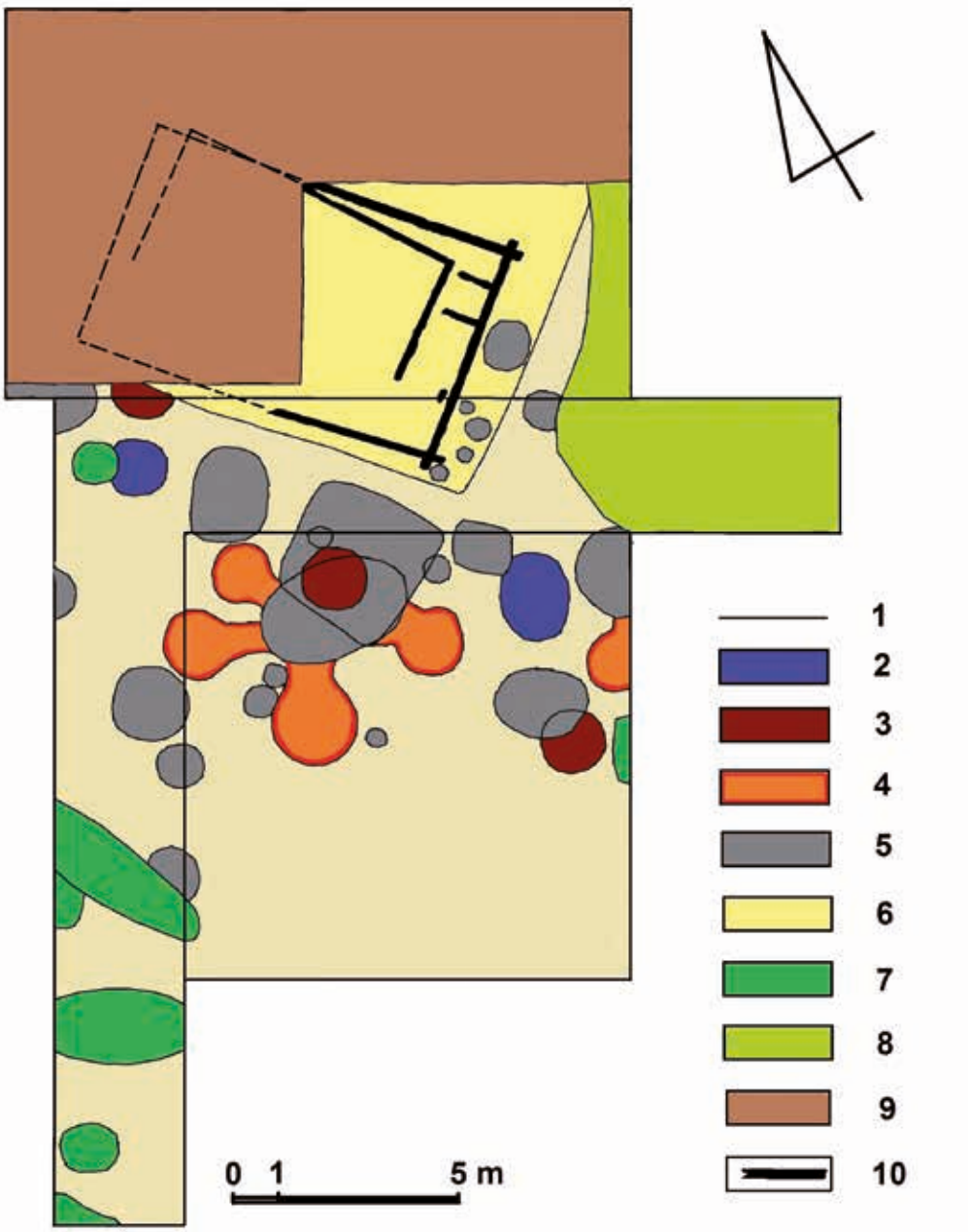

Fig. 4. Layout of the discovered objects: 1. the limits of the excavations; 2. prehistoric objects; 3. early medieval objects (early 11th c.); 4. furnace for lead smelting (11th -12th c.); 5. early medieval objects (12th c.); 6. the ground leveled for hut construction; 7. objects from modern times; 8. leveling hills area; 9. area of archaeological research from 1962 and later; 10. outline of a "chess hut". Drawing by M. Florek

Fig. 5. A group of early medieval stoves and a cross section of a furnace. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja and A. Stempin

Fig. 6. A pit located under the stove. Photo by A Stempin

clay vessels, crumbs of iron slag and some lead, left over from smelting, all covered by a floor of tamped down clay. One of the furnaces had two such layers, the other one three. The full analysis of the extensive and complex smelting evidence will be the subject of a separate monograph now in preparation.

Understanding the chronological relationship between the industrial complex and the settlement is a crucial issue in the development of the Hill as an occupation focus. The stratigraphic context reveals that the smelting activity was not the oldest stage of medieval activity on that part of the Hill. The furnaces were built on top of earlier occupation layers, which partially survived in the form of a pit with a pear-like cross-section, in which a damaged axe was found accompanied by an antler comb case (fig. 6). This feature, based on the artefacts found within it, dates back to the eleventh century and together with two other similar deep, pear-like pits recorded represents the oldest, so far confirmed, stage of the medieval settlement on the Hill. The ceramics with which the bottoms of the furnaces were laid out is also likely to have come from the eleventh century and suggests that the change from a domestic dwelling focus to an industrial one in this part of the town on St. James's Hill commenced in the eleventh century. It is worth underlying that these discoveries challenge the long-held hypothesis (outlined above) that sees the settlement near St. James's church as established only in the very late eleventh – early twelfth century, following the abandonment of the cemetery that preceded it.

With respect to the discovery of the chess set, the recent excavations also uncovered a large building cut into the north-eastern slope of the hill, which included an are of disturbance in its western end. The regularity and sequencing of this disturbance confirms that it is most probably the trench excavated in 1962 and then interpreted as a small hut. The much larger trench shows that the 'small hut' was in fact part of a much larger building, measuring 5 x 7 metres. The scale of this building taken with the range of objects recovered from it (see below) suggests it is in fact a manor house. The stratigraphy of this building and the 1962 intervention is complex and still undergoing analysis but provisionally we can say that there appears to be a sequence of two buildings, both destroyed by fire, with the second immediately replacing the first on a cleaned stance with a slight, eastward shift of focus. The lowest layer of foundation beam from the first building was observed in the construction trench of the new building and the walls of both buildings were constructed using the skeleton technique: foundation beams of oak supporting pine uprights covered with clay (fig. 7).

The range of artefacts recovered from this large building all signify the presence of an elite household. They include iron military items (a prick-spur, a spearhead, three arrowheads, and a thirteenth cen-

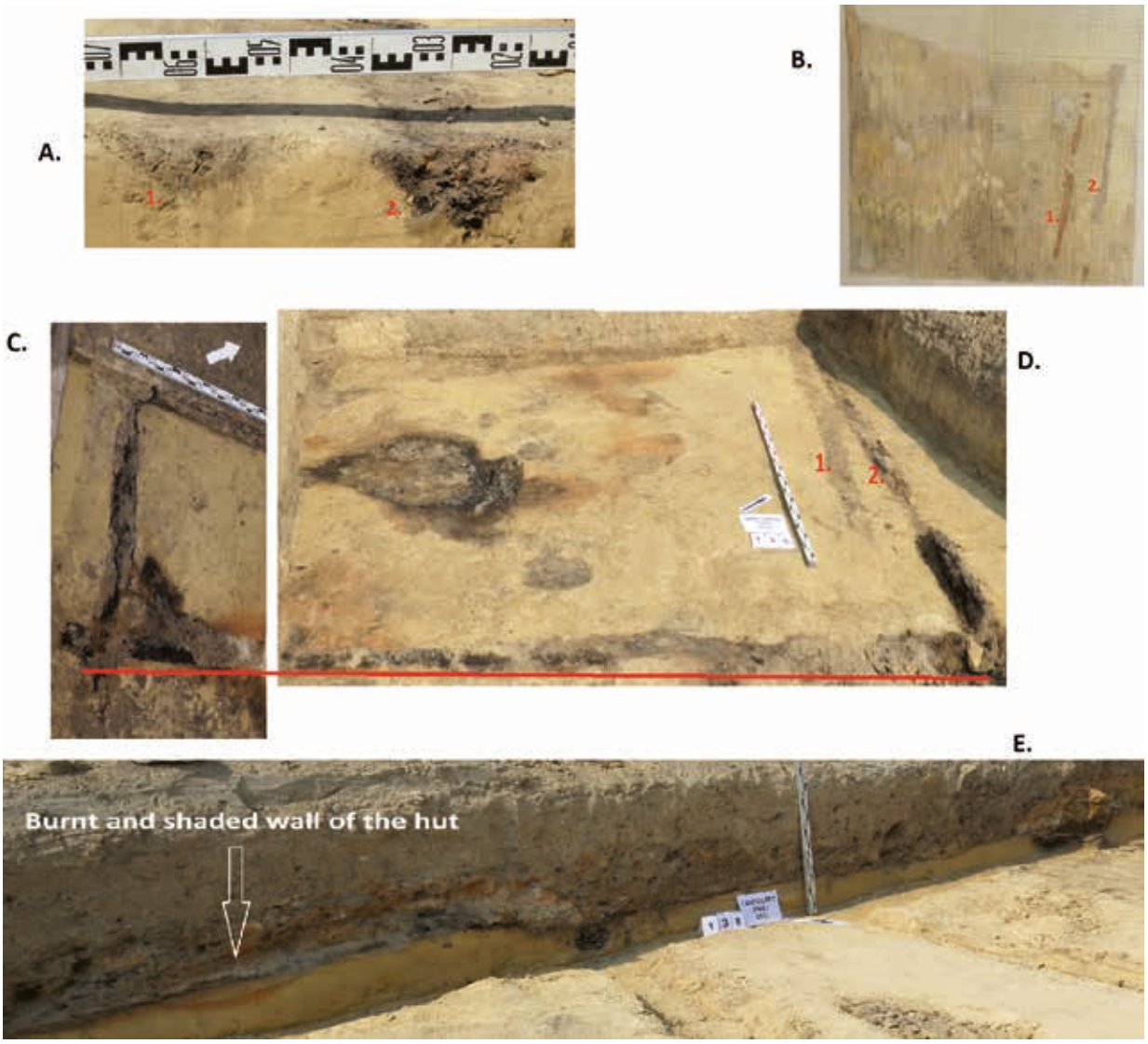

Fig. 7. Pictures from the exploration of a hut – a continuation of the construction where Sandomierz chess pieces were discovered in 1962. Photos (A, C, D, E) by A. Stempin and K. Zisopulu-Bleja and drawing (B) by A. Śliwowski

A – cross-section of the walls of the "Hut with chess": 1. older; 2. younger

B – Plan of the archaeological research (from 1962, E. Gąssowska, J. Gąssowski). Noticeable outlines of two walls

C – South-eastern corner of the hut (excavations from 2014)

D – North-eastern corner of the hut (excavations from 2015)

E – Southern profile of the hut. Noticeable burnt and overturned wall

tury knife), jewellery (four glass rings, glass beads, a tinned or silvered copper alloy *lunula* (fig. 8a), and fragments of silver and bronze jewellery) and a richly decorated ceramic vessel (probably a local imitation of Pingsdorf ware) of unknown usage, in a form untypical of the medieval ceramics usually found in Sandomierz (fig. 8c). In the upper (mixed) layers of the house a considerable number of lead weights (c. eleventh-thirteenth century in date) were found along with some silver coins - the so called cross-type denarius of the tenth-twelfth century. Some of these artefacts suggest intensive contact with Kyiv Rus, notably a fragment of Drohiczyn steel (fig. 8b), stone spinning whorls made from Volynian stone, glass and silver jewellery and a clay knobbed rattle with traces of glazing. The exclusive character of the items uncovered both from the house and its vicinity certainly suggests we are dealing with a high-status dwelling (a manor house?) rather than a low-status dwelling place.

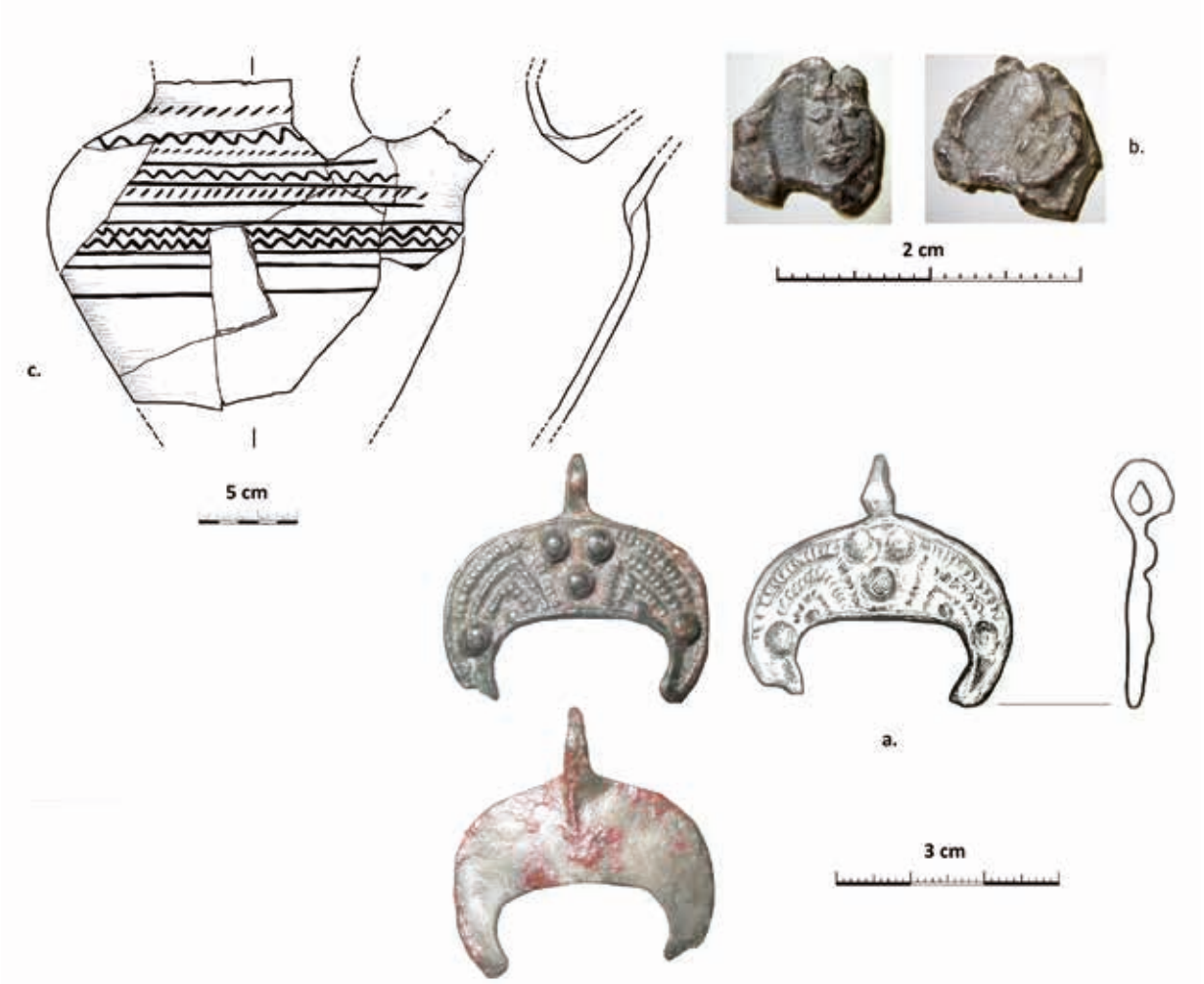

Fig. 8. Artifacts discovered in the research season of 2015

a – tinned or silvered copper alloy lunula; b – fragment of Drohiczyn steel. Photo by A. Stempin; c – richly decorated ceramic vessel with a bow. Photo and drawing by A. Stempin and M. Florek

The ceramics found in the house area are pending a full analysis and at this preliminary stage it can only be stated that within the complex no greyware ceramics were found; such pottery in the territory of Sandomierz is an indicator of chronological changes in the second half of the thirteenth century (Buko 1981: 195). It is the other ceramic tradition characteristic of this area, white-ware (Florek 2000: 251; Buko 2003: 113-156) which dominates (over 50%) in the material recovered and whose substantial, over 20% share, was previously only recorded for the thirteenth century (Buko 2005: 32). The conclusion of the evidence presented here is that the termination of early medieval occupation on St.James's Hill should indeed be dated to no later than the beginning of the second half of the thirteenth century. Most likely it was connected with a fierce fire evidenced by an extensive burning layer excavated on the site of the large house. The cause of this termination of occupation remains to be proven but a strong likelihood remains the Tatar invasion of January 1260 (Gąssowska 1971: 67; Florek 2007: 36-37.). The precise chronological implications of the phasing of the site have yet to be determined but the results of those and other analyses will hopefully give answers to the many crucial questions which stand to shed a new light on the history of this part of the Old Town Hill.

Finally, what, in summary, are the implications for our understanding of the archaeological context of the chess set? The discovery of two closely succeeding, large houses adds further complexity to the interpretation of the chess finds. The earlier house burnt-down (an accident?) and was cleaned-up to

Fig. 9. St. James's Hill – the view of the archaeological site of the 2015 research season. Photos by M. Florek and A. Stempin

provide a suitable stance on which to build the soon-erected second homestead, with a slight eastward shift. The majority of the artefacts recovered we are provisionally relating to the occupation of the second house, and such a dating – the end of the twelfth century at the earliest – receives confirmation from the analysis of the forms and the workmanship of the chess set (see Stempin's chapter "Sandomierz Chessmen Revisited" in this volume).

As a result of the destructive impact of the Tartar invasion and the re-founing of the twon in 1286, on it present location, the Old Town Hill lost its significance. It did not however vanish completely: the 2014-15 excavations revealed various Late Medieval/Modern pits and artefacts suggesting sporadic, further occupation. Much of the time this comprised cultivation (including the so-called Skorupski's Gardens). In the stratigraphic sequence numerous levelling activities (connected with either raising or lowering the ground level) are clearly visible, which have negatively affected the preservation of traces of human activity on this site.

Although both seasons of excavation focussed on the area traditionally occupied by St. James's

Fig. 10. Artifacts discovered In the research season of 2014-2015. Photos and drawings by A. Stempin
a – Arrowhead; b – Lyre-Shaped Buckle; c – Bone comb-case; d – Iron ax; e – Lead weight; f – Fragment of clay glazed rattle; g – Iron spur; h – Horseshoe-shaped Buckle; i. Copper ring

church, no remains were found which could be related to it or its presumed surrounding cemetery. Moreover, the number and condition of the recovered medieval objects appears to exclude the existence of even a small church and cemetery. It seems unlikely that their putative remains should have been totally destroyed so as to leave no trace and such complete destruction would also have removed the twelfth-thirteenth century objects that have survived. We conclude that the location of the church should be searched for elsewhere.

The excavation of site no. 7 in Sandomierz during 2014-15 (fig. 9) has allowed the elucidation of some key issues connected with the nature and sequence of the occupation of St. James's Hill. Most important are the discoveries connected with the Hill's occupation in the Early Middle Ages, particularly the discovery of a the totally unexpected, large smelting plant. The discovery of a vast homestead/manor house which was burnt down around the mid-thirteenth century and which may have been the seat of the local elite was also very surprising, and offers a new opportunity to interpret the long-recognised puzzle of why the Chess of Sandomierz was found in this place. The determination of chronological dependencies among the emerging complexes of objects, a detailed material analysis and the planned professional analysis are all ongoing and will permit the fuller discussion of the interim conclusins presented in this paper.

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Sandomierz, Chess Pieces

Agnieszka Stempin

Sandomierz Chessmen Revisited

The discovery of early medieval chessmen in Sandomierz caused a great sensation among medievalists and scholars engaged in the study of the city's history. Great surprise was occasioned by the discovery because of the rarity of such finds and the unexpectedness of discovering anything further on a well-excavated site (St. James' Hill). At the time of discovery only one other early medieval chess piece from Poland was known: that from Kraków. Other pieces were identified as chess pieces but all were proven by successive studies to be *hnefatafl* pieces. In addition, the Sandomierz pieces were the first recorded examples of the abstract, Islamic/Arabic style of chess pieces discovered in Poland.

Interpreting the Chessmen 1964-2011

The absence of a settlement context in the relevant portion of the site and taking the feature where the chess pieces had been found to have been a modest, shallow, pit house made the pieces hard to interpret. Attempts to explain their provenance focused on a local origin. The material they were made of – deer antler – was a known, local material in the medieval period and their ring-and-dot ornamentation was regarded as characteristic of early medieval Sandomierz. Although neither of these elements was unique to Sandomierz and could be described as pan-European still it was felt they suggested a local provenance (Gąssowska 1964: 160). A common material such as antler was associated with local activity and suggested, in turn, that chess was played by the simple folk of Sandomierz, not connected to those in power, who would have used pieces comparable to the exquisite chessmen originating from the lands of the German Empire or following Arabic forms, carved in ivory or rock crystal and considered to be genuine foreign goods (Gąssowska 1964:163). The game of chess was believed to have been brought to the town by crusaders. In this context, Prince Henryk of Sandomierz (1130-1166) was often mentioned as he was an enthusiast and participant of a crusade (1154). Other hypotheses explained the origin of the Sandomierz chessmen by the merchant character of the settlement, especially its proximity to the trade route crossing Małopolska and continuing further east to Kievan Rus (Giżycki 1972: 14ff.; Gąssowska 1964: 167).

The small size of the chessmen (table 1), the fact that they were hand-made and a rather plain and common ornament gave the appearance of a crudely made, inelegant set (Gąssowska 1964: 160).

In her first analysis, Eligia Gąssowska (1964: 148-168) in great detail described the appearance and size of the chess pieces, dividing them into two sets[1], rightly observing that although all the pieces were decorated with incised circles and lines, differences in ornament distinctiveness were readily noticeable. Of the two sets, one consisted of both pieces and pawns bearing distinct and deep ornaments, whereas the other set had analogous ornaments but far more delicate and shallow – at times almost unnoticeable and covering only the back-line pieces (pawns had no ornament at all). In set "a", pawns were ornamented but three were missing, while set "b" had nine pawns (one too many). One pawn, although unornamented like all the others in this set, was much larger, which in terms of size made it fit with set "a". It was considered a spare chessman or one made to replace a missing item. An analogous situation was observed in the case of a knight – it was taller and more slender than the others (Gąssowska 1964: 150).

[1] I assume that the chess set comprises two subsets (currently black and white) - the player „a", and player „b"

Table 1. the size of chessmen in both sets

Chessman	Set "a"		Set "b"	
	Base in mm	Height in mm	Base in mm	Height in mm
King	16×12	23	17×14	25
Queen	17×12	18	16×11	20
Bishop	16×10	17	17×11	18
	16×10	18	17×10	20
Knight	18×10	22	15×11	20
	15×11	18	16×11	18
Rook	16×11	20	18×10	21
	14×10	20	17×10	19
Ornamented pawns	13×10	18	none	
	13×11	19		
	13×10	18		
	13×10	17		
Unornamented pawns	13×11	19	9 items	
			about 12×10	from 15 to 17

The Sandomierz chess pieces are very small: the largest – a king – is only 25 mm tall, while the others are below 20 mm in height (table 1; fig. 1). Such small chessmen are much rarer among early medieval finds than larger sized pieces. It is very likely that they were a travelling chess set, which did not occupy much space and was easy to carry. Hence, the set could have been used by a person who travelled frequently. It has also been argued that the small size of some early medieval chess pieces was a consequence of the need to minimize on the use of raw material. Certainly, the need to economize was justified in the case of an exclusive material, including ivory, walrus tusk or minerals such as rock crystal or jasper. However, it is noticeable that chess pieces made of these precious materials are mostly large and their role was rather to draw attention to their owner's status. Actually, their primary purpose might have been to show off wealth and membership in a specific social group. Alternatively, they could be an exquisite gift with their usability being of only secondary importance (Iwańczak 2001: 454, 456; Annales Pegavienses 1859: 240). This utilitarian rather than economic argument is strengthened by the relatively large numbers of smaller bone and antler chessmen found in European castles. The use of a widely available and inexpensive material in "miniature" must then have followed from the purpose the chessmen were made for. Owing to their small size, such chess sets occupied little space in a traveller's luggage or among a warrior's gear, did not cause much damage when lost and individual items could be easily replaced when damaged or lost.

The Sandomierz chess set was probably carried in a leather purse, possibly with the outline of a chessboard stitched or painted upon it. However, the possibility ought to be considered that the chessmen were originally kept in a wooden box with iron ferrules. In a trench dug in 1962, at the same depth as the chessmen, three unidentified badly corroded fragments of some metal items were discovered, possibly the fittings for such a box. The remains of such a box were found in association with chess pieces and tablesmen in excavations at Loughor Castle, Wales (Redknap 1993: 150-158).

In terms of size, the closest analogies to the Sandomierz chessmen are offered by three pieces from French castle sites: a rook from Freteval, Loir-et-

Fig. 1. The chess of Sandomierz as compared to other chess pieces from the territory of Poland. Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Cher, and a knight and a rook from Rougemont, Doubs (Grandet, Goret 2012: 121, 141) and by a recent find from Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK.[2] In Poland, no other early medieval chessmen of such a small size have been found to date, although the numbers of Islamic abstract-style chess pieces found on Polish sites has risen significantly.

These initial interpretations arising from the earliest study of the Sandomierz chessmen were supplemented in subsequent years by studies refining the chronology. These largely relied on the on the description of pottery. Gąssowska (1970: 551) suggested an early 11th century date. Prof. Andrzej Buko (1995: 170-173) contested these findings, arguing in favour of the 12th century provenance of pottery from the "hess hut", specifically the youngest ones within that assemblage of ceramics.

The Sandomierz chessmen bear no traces of colouring[3]. They are ornamented with incised lines and ring-and-dot circles made with a compass. Two different sets can be distinguished by comparing the ornament: in the first set, it is made carefully using deep lines, while in the second, lines are shallow, almost unnoticeable in places (Gąssowska 1964: 151). The absence of colour is no exception among early medieval chessmen, especially in the case of the oldest sets. Drawing attention to the possibility of distinguishing between them by comparing the depth of relief was, however, a new hypothesis. The more so as the authors of the investigations submitted for consideration also other explanations, e.g. that the chessmen had been made in different workshops, by different craftsmen or that one set had been more often and more intensively used than the other.

Re-interpreting the Chessmen 2012-2015

In 2012, the Archaeological Museum in Poznań undertook to re-conserve the chess suite[4] and this also gave the opportunity to re-examine their pro-

[2] I wish to thank Mark Hall for the information on the latest and as yet unpublished find.

[3] At present there is no evidence of the coloring of Sandomierz chess. But science of detecting colour has moved on considerably since the 1960s. Also absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence and it may be that the colour has all been worn away. Taking new research may change the current position

[4] The cleaning and re-conservation of the chessmen was performed at the Artefact Conservation Lab, Poznań Archaeological Museum.

duction context. The initial step comprised the removal of a resin protective coating, applied to the chessmen in the 1970s, as well as the traces of plaster left when moulds were made to cast numerous copies of the chess set. This white plaster tarnish, visible underneath the protective coating, was wrongly interpreted as traces of colouring (Kluge-Pinsker 1991: 138; 1992: 75). Once the chessmen had been cleaned, it was possible to examine them under a microscope. The examination revealed many interesting details concerning the crafting of the Sandomierz chess suite.

Microscopic analysis 1. Ornamentation

The Sandomierz chessmen are decorated with two different types of ornament. The first motif consists of bands of incised lines running around the full circumference of the lower and upper parts of the bodies. In the distinguished sets [5](a, b), the incisions differ in depth – line distinctiveness – and the number of rows. Set "a" has three clear, deeply incised parallel grooves running around both the lower and upper portions of the chessmen (fig. 2, 2a). In contrast, group "b" is decorated with very fine lines (mostly two, occasionally three). The very shallow relief is not a result of greater wear. Microscopic examination reveals that the edges of the shallow grooves are sharp, which would not be possible if the ornament were worn down by a frequent contact with the hands of players. It seems that – as it was suggested immediately after their discovery (Gąssowska 1964: 151) – the relief depth was a deliberate choice, possibly to distinguish sides in a set. This is also an indirect proof of the travelling character of the chess sets, because the differences in ornaments are so subtle that can be seen only in bright surroundings or in daylight. That there existed chess sets which provided amusement during travel or a military expedition and which were used outdoors can be deduced from The Song of Roland (laisse VIII, lines 111-122) where "…The Emperor sits in an orchard wide (…) The cavaliers sit upon carpets white, Playing at tables for their delight: The older and sager sit at the chess, The bachelors fence with a light address" (The Song of Roland 1910: 98).

[5] The term of "the sets" should be understood as two groups of opposite figures on the chessboard. (set "a" and set "b")

The second ornamental motif is that of ring-and-dot. The overwhelming impression is that they were made using different compasses in the case of the two different groups. However, this is simply an illusion created by the difference in the pressure applied by the same instrument – a delicate stroke in group "b" and a firmer, more robust one for group "a" (fig. 3). Moreover, some rings on group "b" pieces have been made by applying one-sided pressure of the compass, which has given them a semi-circular rather than circular appearance. The number of rings on the pieces varies – generally they are arranged in twos or threes – with successive impressions often overlapping. This, in turn, may suggest their rather routine and crude execution. (fig. 4).

Microscopic, use-wear analysis further showed that group "b" pieces had been polished after the ornament had been incised. This is particularly evident on one of the vizier pieces (fig. 5), where overly gentle and shallow circles almost disappear. Possibly, polishing was applied where the original incision was deemed to be too forceful, spoiling the entire scheme of distinguishing between the groups in a set or across sets?

Microscopic analysis 2. Production traces

The near completeness of the Sandomierz chess set affords the opportunity to examine the entire production process of all its elements. Further microscopic analysis was therefore undertaken so as to compare the individual pieces, seeking to ascertain how they were manufactured and attempting to determine if all the pieces had been made at the same time.

The search for any traces of marks left by craftsman's tools was made very difficult by the pieces having been smoothly polished. Most revealing is the all of rook piece. In its inner portion, clear traces of cutting have survived fig. 6), revealing how the craftsman first shaped the side surfaces with a single skilful stroke of a knife (1), and then made two oblique cuts (2) and (3). This methodology and its skilful execution testifies to the craftsman's perfect knowledge of this type of chess piece, its identification characteristics, and its recognised method of manufacture. The confidence in guiding his tool – single forceful strokes without notches or repetitions – suggests that the piece comes from a professional, accomplished workshop. Comparisons for the Sandomierz rooks include

Fig. 2. Comparison of Sandomierz chess pieces between chess sets. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

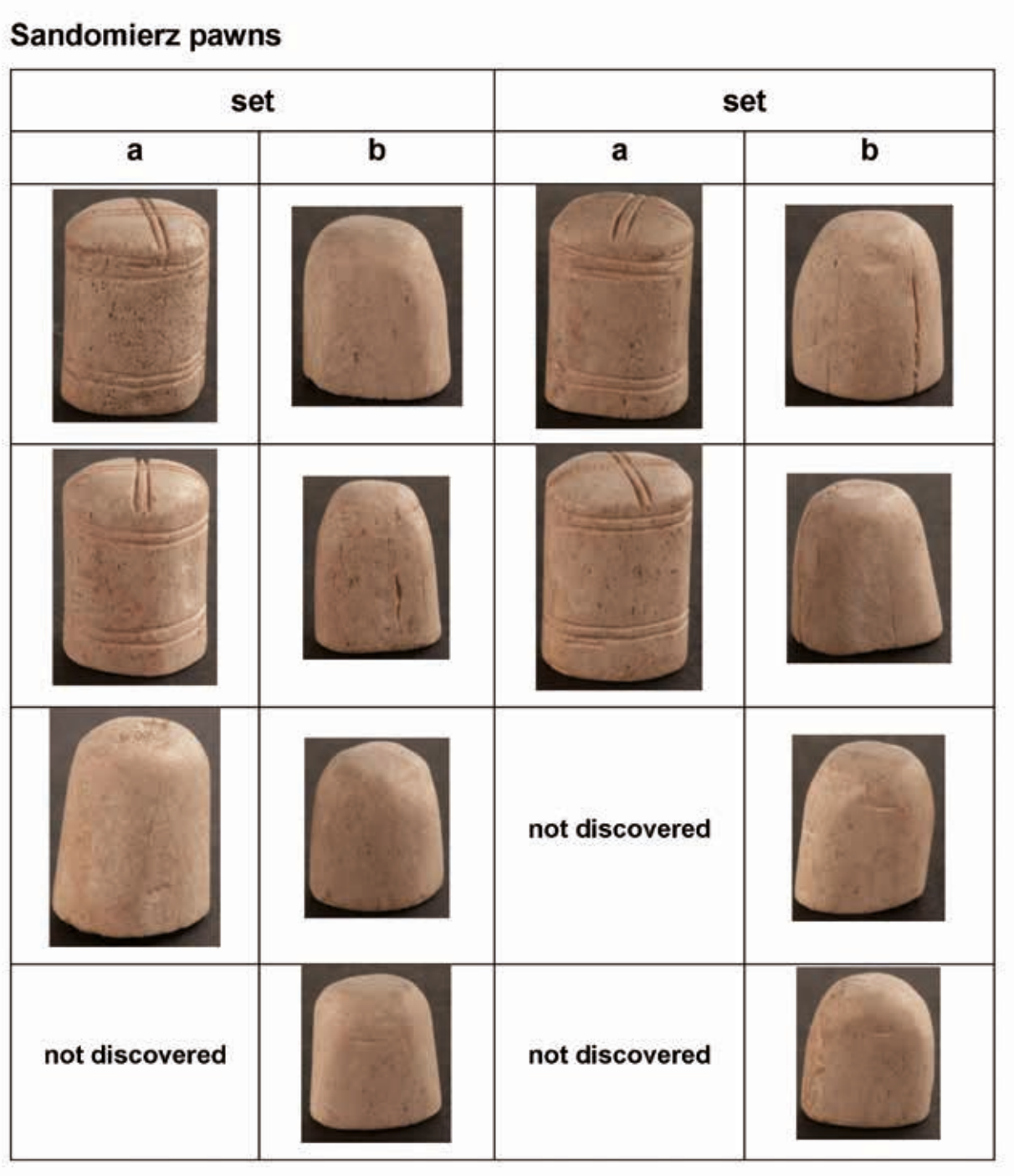

Fig. 2a. Comparison of Sandomierz chess pieces between chess sets. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 3. Eyelet ornament (a microscopic picture magnified 10x). Photos by A. Stempin

examples from France - Freteval Castle (Leymarios 2001: Pl. XIV; Grandet, Goret 2012: 121); Douai (Grandet, Goret 2012: 118) and Pineuilh (Grandet, Goret 2012: 137) – and Italy – Lagopesole (Giovannuci, Peduto 2000: 37) (fig.7), and Albano (Cassano 2007: 176-186). All these analogies show similarly shaped characteristic incisions, well and deliberately executed. This helps to counter the long-held assumption that in the case of the all of Sandomierz rook it is proof of crude execution: the incisions intersecting in the middle have been interpreted as mistakes revealing poor craftsmanship. In fact this element appears to be the most distinctive characteristic of the Sandomierz chess set. A high incidence of pieces manufactured according to the perceived rules for fashioning rooks (all of them made of antler or bone) in the Arabic style is encountered in Italy and appears to be a stylistic feature characteristic of workshops to be found in northern Italy. For this reason, it is highly probable that the Sandomierz chess set comes from such a workshop.

The fact that all but two (a pawn and knight discussed below) of the Sandomierz chess pieces appear to have been made by the "one hand", i.e. by a single craftsman, is borne out by the analysis of the queens pieces (fig. 8c). Particular groups of pieces were made according to the same scheme; the craftsman used forceful cuts of a knife in a consistent order. His work plan can be traced by studying particular groups of chessmen (fig. 8). In the case of pawns, their height was set by several short cuts applied to their entire series (fig. 8b). Above the line thus formed, marking the same height, there are only rounded tops. One pawn stands out from the rest, it is made of antler rather than bone and bears a cut or line much lower down the body.

A different craftsmanship can be observed in the case of knights (fig. 8a). One, as has long been recognised, clearly stands out from the rest. Microscopic examination suggests that a different tool kit was used on this particular piece than on all the other pieces. This is true for both the tools used to shape the piece and a compass used to apply the ring-and-dot ornament. This particular knight is smoother, taller and more slender and conical than the other chessmen. Comparing the compass impressions (fig. 9) it bears, there is no doubt that it is a piece from a different set.

Fig. 4. The queen (set A). Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 5. The queen (set B) with the marked line of intensive polishing. Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

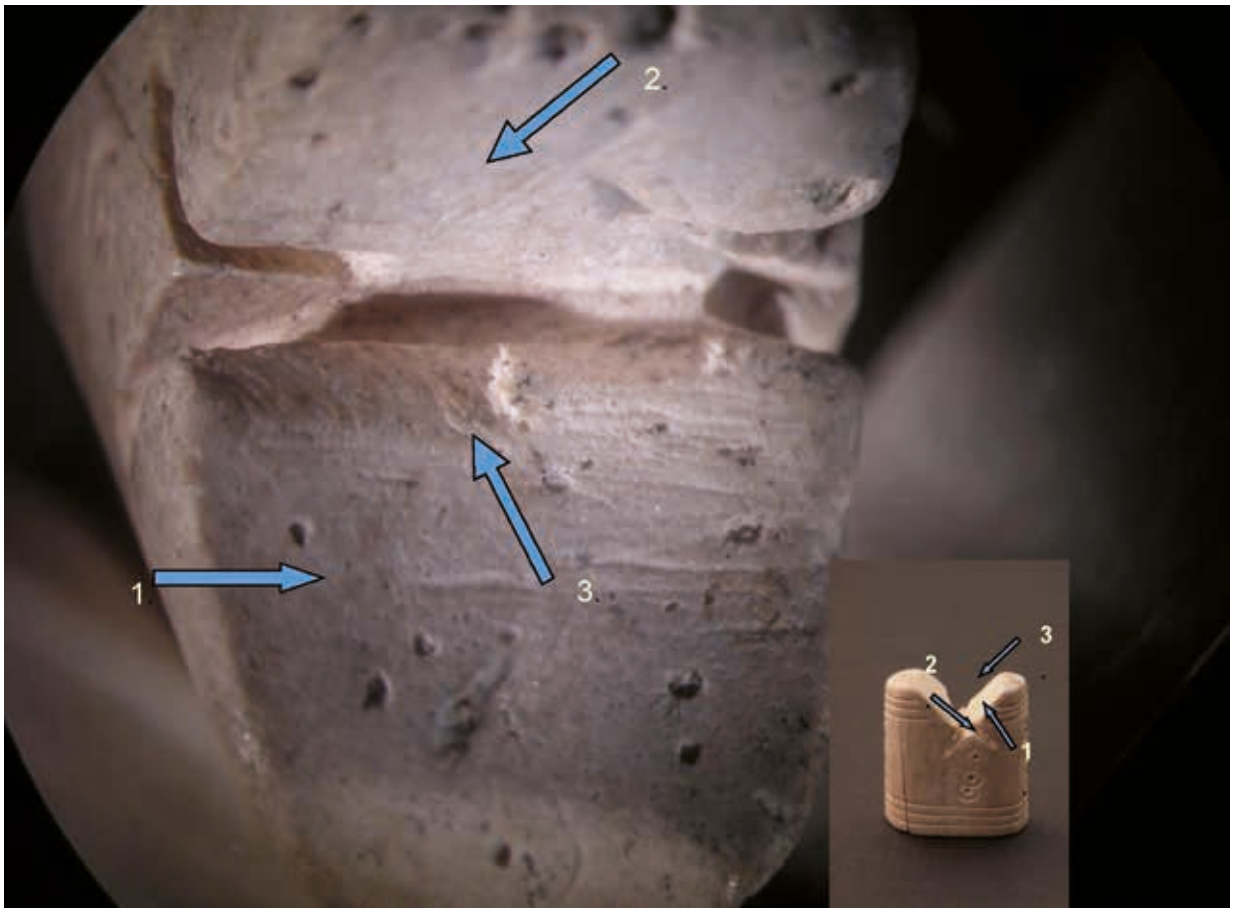

Fig. 6. Manufacturing traces (a rook magnified 10 X). Photos by A. Stempin

Fig. 7. Chess pieces from Lagopesole (Italy). After Giovannuci, Peduto 2000: 37

This author believes that the dissimilarity of the knight and pawn from the other pieces is not a result of locally making up for the lost chessmen. If this were true, they would have been made in a similar style and decorated in the same manner. Given their size, decoration and manufacturing technique differences it seems more probable that these two pieces are not as old as the rest of the set and that they were added to the set at a later time. The knight in particular has traits that testify to up-to-date knowledge in the style and making of chess pieces, notably the carving of the horse's mouth. In this context, a conjecture may be ventured that the owner of the whole set bought the piece as a replacement for a lost chessman. He or she acquired it from a workshop specializing in chess pieces and in which craftsmen working in antler knew the latest ornamentation fashions and so chose a piece that most closely resembled the existing set (fig.10).

Conclusions

Who made the chess set?

The Sandomierz chessmen exhibit traits that justify tracing the ideas behind their manufacture to Western, Latin Europe of the late 11th – early 12th centuries, possibly even to the early 13th century. The chessmen do not all come from the same period: at least one piece and one pawn were added to the suite at a later time. The craftsman making the whole set was up-to-date with fashions in manufacturing chess pieces, understanding the significance of individual pieces and making them skilfully with forceful strokes and giving them their final appearance by smoothing their surface. They appear to have been fashioned by groups (of pawns, of rooks, of bishops and knights and of queens and kings), which testifies to planned, routine activity, probably in a specialized workshop. Early medieval bone/antler workshops manufacturing chess sets are known from both the British Isles (Northampton) and France, Germany or Poland (see Stempin in this volume).

To try and more fully answer the questions around the manufacture of the Sandomierz pieces requires broad-ranging comparative research, bearing in mind that many European finds show craftsmanship similarities in both ornamentation and manufacturing techniques (see Kluge-Pinsker 1991: 148-149). In this context, it is worth noticing the analogies emerging upon a closer scrutiny of the Sandomierz pieces and those discovered at Lagopesole Castle. The Italian chessmen include only three pieces (two bishops and a rook), thought to represent the two opposing sides of one set. The rook, as with one of the Sandomierz rooks, bears characteristic incisions in the middle and also ring-and-dot ornament that is very shallow and unclear as with several of the Sandomierz pieces. The ornamentation of the bishops is far deeper and clearer, with one probably bearing traces of colouring (?).

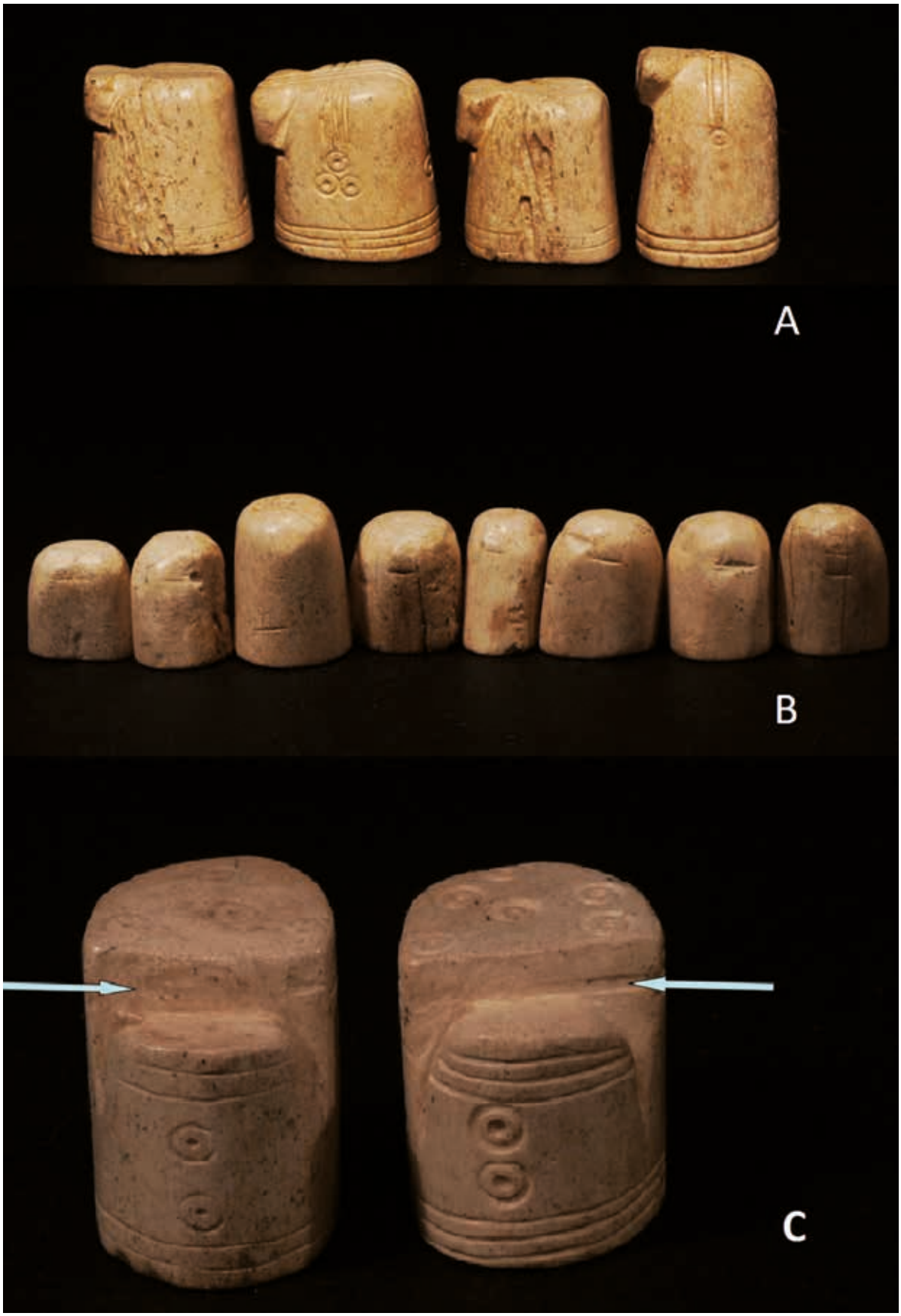

Fig. 8. Juxtaposition of chess knights (a) and pawns (b). Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

Fig. 9. Comparison of the eyelet ornament form on the chess knights pieces (prints of compasses). Photos by A. Stempin

Who owned the chess set?

The Sandomierz chess pieces belonged to a person (or persons?) who used it for a long time, competently replacing destroyed or lost chessmen with others selected from among ones that display newer motifs. Despite clear differences, the younger chessmen (a knight and a pawn) are made in a similar size and style, which may show that they have been manufactured in a similar workshop or even in the same one, but a considerable time after the initial acquisition of the chess set. By reason of their size, it can be reasonably assumed that they are of a portable character. They may have belonged to a person who travelled a lot, perhaps a merchant, diplomat, pilgrim or a knight (or a combination of some of these). The facility of making up for missing chessmen suggests that their owner might have known a workshop specializing in this type of production and relatively often had an opportunity to visit it. Furthermore, all the observations and analyses of the chessmen suggest that the Sandomierz pieces belonged to a person who enjoyed playing chess often. Any speculations about a workshop manufacturing chess sets in Sandomierz must be considered disproved. In spite of the undeniable presence of early medieval craftsmen working bone and antler in Sandomierz settlements, there is no evidence that it was in fact they who had made the chessmen in question.

When and how did the chess set reach Sandomierz?

This is the most difficult question and one to which there is no clear answer and which requires further consideration once the date derived from the recent scientific analyses has been fully processed. There are, however, certain arguments raised here that justify tracing the provenance of the chess set to western Europe, specifically to northern Italy.

At first sight, the chessmen do not look compellingly valuable or appealling. They are tiny, inconspicuous and their value could be appreciated only by a person who knew their purpose. In the older discussions on this aspect of the chess pieces, two options were suggested. The first assumed that the person living in the Sandomierz hut had learned the game and consciously came into the possession of the chess pieces and the second option treated the chess set as spoils ac-

Fig. 10. Sandomierz chess set. Photos by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

quired when plundering another locality. Bearing in mind the necessity to revise our knowledge on the function of the "hut" or dwelling unit, which now appears to have been a manor house, these interpretation options need to be re-visited. It is worth stressing in this context that the similarly-sized French and British chessmen mentioned in this paper come from castles. This, in turn, suggests that using the size of chess pieces as an indicator of exquisiteness may be wrong, or certainly not a universal maxim. Similarly, the opinion on the use of raw materials must be revised. Antler and bone chessmen are continually found at castles and magnate family seats; hence the association with common and inexpensive raw materials alone can hardly serve to assess the material status of their users.

Fifty years after their discovery the presence of the Sandomierz chess pieces in a newly understood urban context begins to make fuller sense. St. James' Hill, at a certain time in the Middle Ages – at least from the middle of the 12th century to the middle of the 13th century – is very likely to have been the seat of a magnate family. Questions still remain about the nature of this settlement, particularly the connection with the first St. James' Church and the still undiscovered St. John's Church? Did the chess set belong to strangers or to the Sandomierz elite? These questions open a new chapter in the study of this still enigmatic find. The research that will help to illuminate these and other questions is still waiting to be thoroughly processed. The renewed international interest in the chess pieces demonstrated by this book and the recent excavations encourage the publication of those additional results sooner rather than later.

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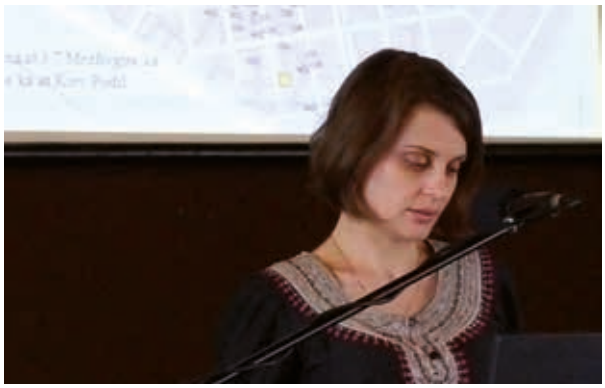
Sandomierz, „The needle's eye". Gate in the city walls

Archaeology of Chess – Between East and West

David Caldwell

Mark A. Hall

Kristina Lavysh



Natalia Khamaiko

David Caldwell, Mark A. Hall

The Hoard of Gaming Pieces from Lewis, Scotland: The Context and Meaning

The Lewis hoard of gaming pieces is possibly the most iconic find of medieval material culture discovered in the British Isles. They are more plentiful, more elaborate (combining both figurative and abstract pieces) and more opaque in their find circumstances than the pieces from Sandomierz, but like them appear to have been deliberately concealed. The Lewis hoard, like the pieces from Sandomierz, remains pivotal to our understanding of the social spread of chess between the 11th and 13th centuries. The Lewis hoard comprises 93 pieces, 82 of which are in the collections of the British Museum and 11 in the collections of National Museums Scotland. Of the 82 British Museum pieces, 78 are what are known conventionally as chess pieces, one is a buckle and 14 are rather plain tablesmen. The 11 pieces in National Museums Scotland are all chess pieces. The majority are made of walrus ivory but the long-held view that all the pieces were ivory was disproved by a joint technical analysis by the British Museum and National Museums Scotland, which showed that four warders and two pawns had the compact cellular structure typical of whales' teeth. Recent research (Caldwell, Hall and Wilkinson 2009 and 2010; Caldwell and Hall 2014) has established that there remains much to learn and debate about the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces and this contribution presents a summary of progress so far. We explore the alternate find spots for the hoard, favouring the one at Mealasta (rather than the traditional one of Uig bay), we look at who may have owned the pieces and the link to the cultural context of the Lordship of the Isles, we summarise the facial analysis of the pieces and other factors that help us to determine a chronology of production and assembly of the hoard, we explore their role as heirlooms and the different games that the pieces represent and finally we make an assessment of the on-going cultural impact of the hoard in books, film and television.

The Hoard and its Origin

The Lewis hoard of gaming pieces are possibly the most iconic finds of medieval material culture found in the British Isles (fig. 1). They are more plentiful, more elaborate (combining both figurative and abstract pieces) and more opaque in their find circumstances than the pieces from Sandomierz, but like them appear to have been deliberately concealed. The Lewis hoard, like the pieces from Sandomierz, remains pivotal to our understanding of the social spread of chess between the 11th and 13th centuries. The Lewis hoard comprises 93 pieces, 82 of which are in the collections of the British Museum and 11 in the collections of National Museums Scotland. Of the 82 British Museum pieces, 78 are what are known conventionally as chess pieces, one is a buckle and 14 are rather plain tablesmen. The 11 pieces in National Museums Scotland are all chess pieces. The majority are made of walrus ivory but the long-held view that all the pieces were ivory was disproved by a joint technical analysis by the British Museum and National Museums Scotland, which showed that four warders and two pawns had the compact cellular structure typical of sperm whales teeth. Recent research (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009 and 2010; Caldwell, Hall 2014) has established that there remains much to learn and debate about the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces and this contribution presents a summary of progress so far.

Found in Uig – but where?

The conventional story of the hoard's discovery tells us they were found in 1831 and that having been beyond the resources of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 82 chessmen, 14 tablesmen and one buckle were, by January 1832, sold to the British Museum by antique dealer J. A. Forrest (Madden 1832; Taylor 1978; Stratford 1997; Robinson 2004). However he had already sold 10 pieces to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, a Scottish antiquary. These 10 pieces were eventually acquired by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1888 bought at auc-

Fig 1. A selection of the Lewis chessmen. British Museum

tion from the collection of the late Lord Londesborough. A further piece was acquired at a later date.

Several tales circulated as to their finding, which resolve around two main contenders for the finds-pot. The best known and long-favoured of these is that of Uig Bay on the west coast of Lewis (fig. 2a). The recently erected wooden sculpture of a Lewis king figure (see below) is within the area of the supposed find-spot at Ardroil. Less well known is the site of Mealasta a few miles further down the coast, which went by the name of the "House of the Black Women". There is no evidence (documentary or otherwise) to indicate a nunnery and previously we have taken the view that this attribution has the feel of a folkloric, post-reformation explanation for the ruins there (possibly entangled with ownership of the land by a more distant nunnery). We are now a little more circumspect, noting that the putative early nunnery on the Isle of Benbecula (also in the Western Isles) is known in Gaelic as Baile nan Cailleach (literally "farm of the old women") and in English as Nunton. So we retain an open mind about the nature of the site at Mealasta, something that bears clarification through further excavation. According to the Ordnance Survey field workers this site was where the pieces were found, some 70 years before the time they were working in Lewis in the early 1850s. The ruins at

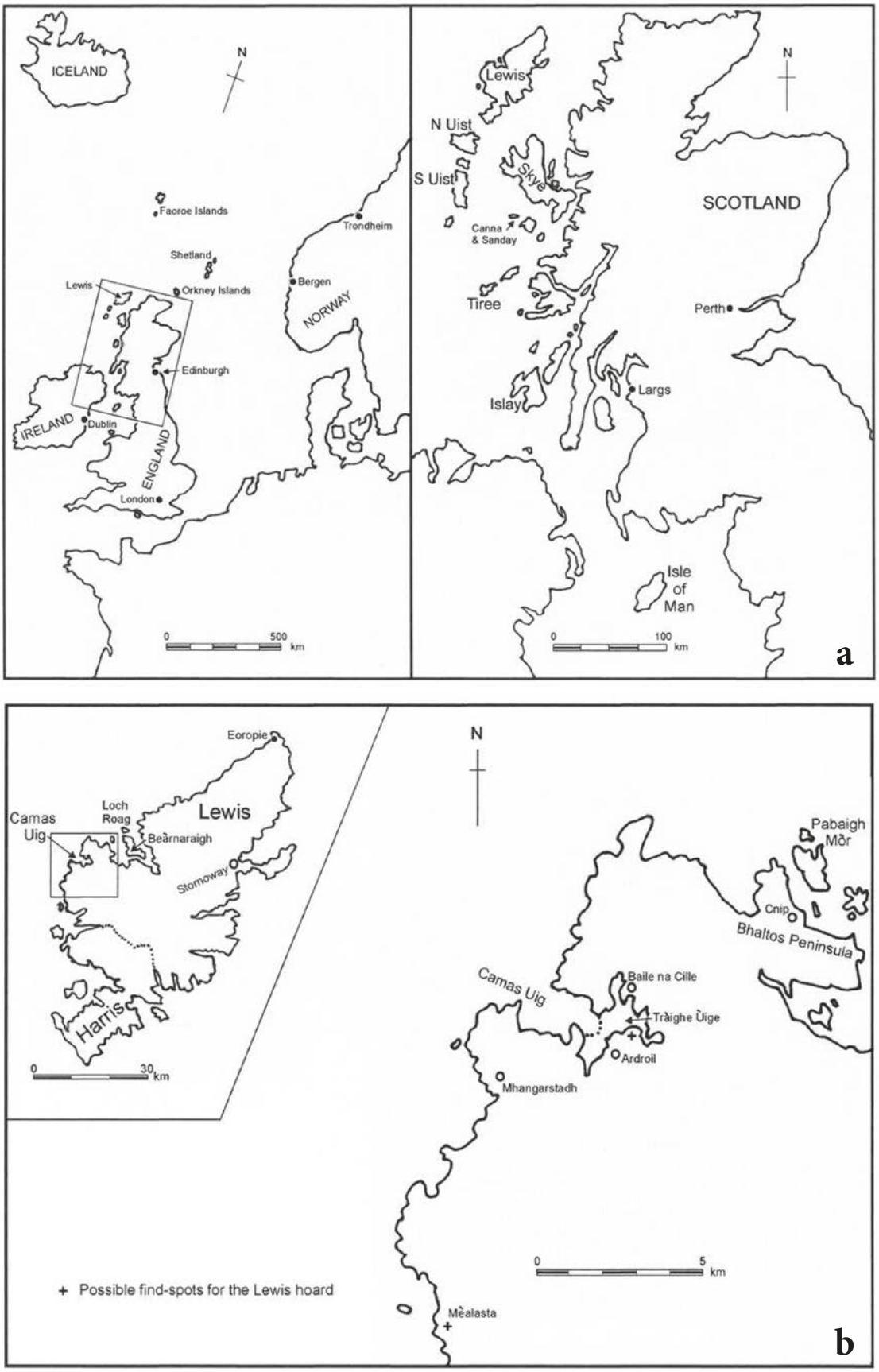


Fig. 2. Location maps: a – Scotland in a North European context; b – the Isle of Lewis and possible find spots

Mealasta are multi-period, certainly medieval and later, and include a late medieval chapel and cemetery. In the 1860s a souterrain (an underground chamber) was excavated at Mealasta, the stones reused for building purpose, which could match the stone chamber said to be where the chessmen were found at Mealasta. Eroding onto the small beach is a midden from which medieval artefacts have been recovered, including a copper alloy finger ring of late 12th-early 13th century date. From the several reports about the discovery of the hoard these salient conclusions can be drawn (fig. 2b):

- None of the writers of the published reports appear to have visited the findspot or have had any familiarity with Lewis
- There is no information of any value we have been able to trace back to the alleged discoverer of the hoard, Malcolm MacLeod
- There are two separate provenances given for the hoard - an underground stone structure at Mealasta and the sand-dunes on the south side of Uig Bay
- The source of all the Mealasta information, with the possible exception of that supplied to the Ordnance Survey, was the Roderick Ririe who took the pieces to Edinburgh. He may have helped to recover the pieces or been closely related to someone who did.
- The source of the information on the Uig Bay provenance was the manuscript of a local storyteller, Donald Morrison, and just possibly the local minister, Rev Alexander Macleod as well. The latter's brief statement, however, looks like it might be derived from Morrison's manuscript or a published extract of it.

The Lost Kingdom of the Isles and the Hoard's likely Owners

The broader political and cultural context for Lewis in the 12th and 13th century is Scandinavian. The local context is the Kingdom of the Isles with a dynasty of kings based in the Isle of Man. Norse was perhaps the main language spoken in Lewis as late as the mid-13th century. Whether speaking Norse or Gaelic the leaders of local society in the 12th and 13th century belonged to the Scandinavian world. The immediate church authority for Lewis was the bishopric of Sodor, centred on the Isle of Man from the 1230s. Prior to that the bishops were peripatetic, with the major churches visited in tune with the year's major festivals. Bishops travelled with a retinue of clerics and warriors and lived off the tithes collected at episcopal centres. One of these centres may have been St Moluag's church, Europie, in the north of Lewis. The church is not well understood but its extra-parochial character suggests high status (fig. 3). It is comparable in size to the cathedral at Gardar (Igaliko) in Greenland. Ecclesiastical or royal/noble progress would have required hospitality and entertainment and the latter would certainly have included board games. The 13th century Chronicles of the Kings of Man records a number of Norwegian military interventions in the Isles, including in 1098, 1230 and 1263. There are also several references to kings of the Isles visiting Norway to pay homage to its king. After 1266 the bishops of the Isles remained under the authority of the archbishops of Nidaros (Trondheim). As remote as Lewis seems today, back in the Medieval Period it was well connected on the North Sea super highway, with strong links to the rest of Scotland, to Ireland and to the rest of the Scandinavian World. Indeed, as has been long recognised, the Lewis hoard probably journeyed there from Trondheim, Norway.

Trondheim, Norway, is currently seen as the most likely place of manufacture. Nidaros or Trondheim Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace – founded in 1152/3 – boasts a range of cultural parallels for the gaming pieces and their decorative features, costumes and weapons. There is a clear gaming context in Trondheim, expressed most clearly in three pieces in particular: a now lost fragment of an ivory chess queen (McLees and Ekroll 1990), a chess king made of whale's tooth (found recently on the island of Hitra, close-by Trondheim: McLees 2009) and the wooden chess king excavated in the 1970s. These pieces are less well executed than most of the Lewis pieces and in less luxurious materials but share stylistic traits. They probably date to the 13th/14th century. Comparable architectural details of Nidaros Cathedral include the late 12th – early 13th century east-end blind arcading and the cathedral also boasts a marble tombstone with a Lewis chessman-style kettle-hat (a helmet like a pudding bowl) and similar helmets on the St Olav altar frontal. All of this combines,

with details of the ecclesiastical costumes, the weapons, the presence of those related chess pieces and several other elements to suggest Trondheim as the workshop and a production date in the late 12th or early-13th century.

Making Faces

The power of the faces of the figurative elements of the Lewis hoard have long been recognised and as part of our analysis we invited forensic anthropologist, Caroline Wilkinson (then based at Dundee University, since 2014 at Liverpool John Moores University) to make a study of the features of the faces to see if it revealed anything about the numbers of craftsmen involved. She used measurements and magnification to assess facial morphology and facial proportion, i.e. of mouths, noses and eyes, of the 59 facial pieces in the hoard.

This produced viable results for 50 of the 59 face pieces, identifying five groups with similar facial characteristics. The nine pieces that were not amenable to this analysis were either too damaged and indistinct or too different from the identified groups to be included. The five groups identified are:

Group A (11 pieces), characterised as the long-straight nosed group; Group B (10 pieces) characterised as the bulbous-nosed group; Group C (15 pieces) characterised as the defined philtrum (column-like hollow between the nose and upper lip) group; Group D (11 pieces) characterised as the wide-faced group and Group E (three pieces) characterised as the defined-nose group. In conjunction with other evidence the facial analysis carried out supports the idea of there being the elements of four sets and at least five craftsmen, probably working within a single workshop.

Chronology and Hoard Assembly

Exploring a range of other features enabled an assessment of the chronological range of the pieces and so again deconstruct the notion of a merchant's lost, single stock. It is preferable to see the hoard as an accumulation of pieces overtime. The mitres worn by the bishops, for example, can be divided into three groups. Group I comprises cylindrical caps with low peaks and no decoration. Typologically they are nearer in form to the simple round caps from which mitres developed and might tend

Fig. 3. Front view of the Kilmichael Glassary bell shrine, created in the first half of the 12th century to enshrine a much earlier saint's bell. It helps to define the artistic output of the Kingdom of the Isles and contextualise the use of the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces. National Museums Scotland

to be earlier in date, but no earlier than the mid 12th century when the fashion for wearing mitres with horns front and back first arose. Group II is more clearly defined, with peaked or 'triangular' forms, invariably with decorative bands, especially vertical ones, front and back, but with vertical sides like group I. These compare well with depictions of mitres on seals, paintings, etc., of the late 12th century. Group III exhibit low sides, with relatively higher peaks and with the bottom edge raised at the front. They are decorated front and back with vertical bands. We traced no exact parallels for group III mitres but they seem to have more in common with representations of 13th century mitres (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 192-193).

The shields depicted in the hoard can be similarly divided (fig. 4). All the knights and warders carry large, kite-shaped shields. Typologically, the earliest form (type I) represented is broad with a rounded top. Such shields remained in use in Europe until c. 1200. From the middle of the 12th

Fig. 4. A selection of the faces of the Lewis chessmen. National Museums Scotland

century the curve at the top of the shield became much less pronounced - type II - like many represented in the Lewis hoard. They are also much narrower than type I shields. At the beginning of the 13th century narrow forms with a straight top edge – type III – began to appear, of which there are some examples in the Lewis hoard. Another of the elements that suggests we need to extend the dating of some of the pieces into the 13th century is the carinated form of the kettle-hats worn by one of the knights and one of the warders. That none of the pieces need be later in date than the early 13th century might indicate that the date of deposition was not much later (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 193-196).

The hoard does appear to contain what we have taken to be probable replacement pieces. Indeed one king has a face so different from the rest that it is clearly a good candidate for the product of another workshop.

This is not the place to go into the several further lines of enquiry we have undertaken in relation to the hoard, including the colouring and the proto-heraldry of the pieces (Hall 2014) and a more detailed examination of the kingdom of the Isles context (Caldwell 2014). Here we concentrate on aspects of medieval gaming and the impact of the Lewis pieces in more recent times.

"To you he left … his brown ivory chessmen": heirlooms and gaming choices

This quote is significant in several ways. It comes from a mid-13th century praise poem to Aenghus Mor of Islay, son of Donald and a great-grandson of Somerled, 12th century princely ruler of the Isles. The poem also describes Aenghus as king of Lewis – flattery, perhaps, as part of the poet's aim to persuade Aenghus to do his kingly duty and settle his father's debts, hence the poem's long listing of possessions he inherits from his father, including his ivory chess sets. The poem then is an acknowledgment of the importance of chess and board games as an elite pursuit, as an indication of elite status and as carriers of social identity across familial generations. But the quote also refers to colour and so is eminently suitable to the theme of colour as symbolic value and sensory perception (see Hall 2014). The quote refers to ivory chessmen and on the face of it this rather suggests ivory chess pieces of natural unadorned colour. The Gaelic term translated as chessmen is *foirne donna de/a*d or "ivory, brown sets of chessmen". The word for chessmen is *foirenn*, originally meaning "a number of people, band, company" and thence a set of chessmen and in fact could mean any set of playing pieces, including for *hnefatafl* (the Scandinavian variant of a game widely spread over northern Europe and deriving from a probable Roman original: Hall and Forsyth 2011). In fact the poem uses the plural, *foirne* so it must refer to sets of chessmen.

The colour word is *donn*. The *Dictionary of the Irish Language* says this means generally, dun or brown, apparently a light brown inclining to yellow or red, though it is often used of darker subjects like oak trees. It could describe the natural colour of ivory in which case it may suggest not so much that the pieces had no colour applied to them but that this had largely worn off and the heirloom chess sets had reverted to their natural colour. There is also a second possible meaning for *donn*, that of "lordly, noble", though the poem's most recent translator, Thomas Clancy (1998: 288-291), doubts that this is the meaning being referred to here we should acknowledge that such a meaning would be a very apt description for the chess pieces as a king's property and would also fit well with the fact that multiple sets are being referred to (something that was an important aspect of high status gift giving) and of course could also describe the make-up of the Lewis hoard. Such sets of playing pieces may have been handed on for several generations within families – their use over such an extended period would inevitably lead

to wear and colour loss, and loss might also come about through the paying off of family debts.

The wider gaming context for the pieces from Lewis includes the 13th-14th century figurative tablesmen from the Western Isles and the Orkneys and the few other figurative chess pieces from Scotland, including the now lost king piece from Dunstaffnage castle and the 13th century knight, possibly from Skye (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: 178-181). Previously (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2010) we had accepted this as a rook (Glenn 2003: 180) but a re-examination suggests that identification as a knight is just as, if not more likely (and is supported by Glenn's own analysis of the heraldry on the shields of the two knight's depicted, Glenn 2003: 178-181). The Lewis hoard also dates from a time when there appears to have been a transition from *hnefatafl* as the most popular game to chess as the most popular game but this does not mean the latter straight forwardly replaced the former. The plain and abstract pawns are equally usable as *hnefatafl* piece or chess pieces and there is no inherent reason why some of the pieces could not have been used in both games and their variations. In various Scandinavian pieces for *hnefatafl* and chess this transition from one game to the other with a clear implication of interchangeability is suggested. The unprovenanced Scandinavian king piece in the Louvre, Paris (Wichmann 1964: 298, pl. 44) of 12th-13th century date has a similar sitting and sword-holding pose to the Lewis kings. The main difference is that it is a bearded figure, with the beard held by the right hand. This links the piece back to a series of figures in amber, bronze, whale bone and walrus ivory from across the Scandinavian world, all of male figures usually sitting (but not on thrones) and always holding or pulling their beards (the general observation was first made by McLees 1990: 32, 57-9 and 167 and summarized in McLees 2009: 319). The pieces include examples from Iceland (Baldursheimar), Denmark (Rohalte), Sweden (Rällinga and Lund) and Ukraine (Černaja Magila) (Rosedahl, Wilson 1992: cat. nos 71, 77, 182, 602 and 182 respectively). All the pieces are 10th-11th century in date. Their function as gaming pieces is not contradicted by their other interpretation as deity figures, usually Thor but also Freya (ibid: cat. no. 182) and this would also have aided their function as amulets. The move to chess kings as opposed to hnefatafl "king" pieces would thus seem to be paralleled by an emphasis on Christian kingship (the throne and the sword) and a move away from Scandinavian deities and beard-pulling (a symbol of growth and fertility). The interoperability of the Lewis pieces across more than one game (and by analogy the interoperability of all playing pieces) is reinforced by the ivory discs in the Lewis hoard (fig. 5). These are always classified as tablesmen – and tables is a group of games not just the one we think of from its modern survival as backgammon (Murray 1941) – but they could equally have been used in a game of merels or mill (a position-and-capture game, the simplest version of which is noughts and crosses and the most complex twelve men's morris: Hall 2009: 137-138; Parlett 1999: 196-204).

Fig. 5. The gaming discs or counters from the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces. These would have been useable for both tables (or tric-trac), mill/merels and alquerque games. British Museum

Re-imagining the Lewis Chessmen and Women

The fixed, popular identity of the hoard is evident in the many replica chess sets widely available for purchase, the souvenir replicas of individual pieces and their inclusion in, and inspiration of, other forms of cultural endeavour, including films, TV and children's literature (fig. 6-9). Two films set in the 12th century – *Becket* (UK 1964) and *The Lion in Winter* (UK 1968) – deploy Lewis-style chess sets, red and white in the former (the property of King Louis of France, who plays one of his noblemen) and black and white in the latter (played between Philip II of France and Henry II's son, Geoffrey). The 1959 French film, *Le Bossu*, is set in the late

Fig. 6. *Above* – the Japanese version of the film poster for the 1967 British crime thriller *Deadlier Than The Male*, a giant, metallic, automata Lewis chessman can be seen top right. *Below* – The film's climactic confrontation takes place on the giant Lewis chessmen board. Sourced online via Creative Commons.

18th century and includes a chess set modelled on the Lewis pieces, played by two noblemen. Most recently, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (US 2001) also deployed red and white pieces in a game played by Harry and his friend, Ron. Here the game is called Wizard's Chess and the pieces move themselves at the command of their players. This trope (without the form of the Lewis pieces) derives in part from the holographic, 3-D chess in *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* (US 1977) the roots of which go back to the "live" chess in the 1960 US film adaptation of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1725): *The Three Worlds of Gulliver* and to the *John Carter Warlord of Mars* series of Edgar Rice Burroughs (particularly *The Chessmen of Mars* [1922]). The same trope cropped up more recently in *Alice in Wonderland* (US 2010). The earliest apparent depiction of the Lewis chessmen on film takes an a-chronological approach, situating the pieces in the 14th-century tale of the Black Death, *The Seventh Seal* (SWE 1957). Even more anachronistic seeming at first glance is their appearance in the Western *Silverado* (US 1986). There a corrupt English sheriff in a mid-western town has a set, which serves as a metaphor for his self-perceived superiority of intelligence. The story is set well after the discovery of the Lewis chessmen so in reality it is perfectly feasible for copy sets to have been made on the back of their popularity as a news story. More recent films to adopt the chessmen include *Kingdom of Heaven* (US 2005) and *Day of Wrath* (HUN/UK 2006), in both of which they are seen in use by key characters so that the chess game acts as an underscoring metaphor for the plot and serves as an analogy for political power-play. In *Black Knight* (US 2001), a modern re-working of Mark Twain's novel, *A Connecticut Yankee in the King Arthur's Court* (1899), the time-travelling hero is seen to loose at a game of chess with Lewis-style pieces, played against the chief villain, as a foreshadowing of a physical combat to come: being the hero he is able to overturn this predicted future and beat his enemy. Board games as predictors or manipulators of the future are at least as old as the eighth-century and Paul the Deacon's *History of the Langobards* (Paul the Deacon 1907) in which he recounts an episode of a lazy king who plays a board game whilst his army loses a battle. Paul appears not to have understood, or refused to recognise, that the king was playing on the board to try and influence the outcome of the battle (see also Bubczyk this volume). Paul, as a man of the church, may have preferred God to determine man's fate rather than allow man to make his own luck. In 2012 the Lewis pieces made their first animated film appearance, in the Pixar/Disney pro-

Fig. 7. The Lewis chessmen are co-opted into race and social politics in the 2001 Hollywood comedy *Black Knight*. Screen-shot by M. A. Hall

Fig. 8. The Lewis chessmen way out west in the 1985 Hollywood Western, *Silverado*. Screen-shot by M. A. Hall

Fig. 9. Beer label for *Berserker Export Pale Ale*, brewed on Lewis by the Hebridean Brewing Company Ltd. Photo by M. A. Hall

duction *Brave* (US 2012), where they again served as a metaphor for political instability and are characterised as a children's game.

That doyen of children's literature, Rosemary Sutcliff, wrote her *Chess-Dream in a Garden* (1993) around the Lewis pieces. On television, and subsequently in book form, they inspired the classic children's animation *The Saga of Noggin the Nog*, as described by one of its creators, Oliver Postgate (2000: 219-20):

> At different times both Peter Firmin and I had visited the Edward VII Gallery at the British Museum, where we had both noticed a set of Norse chessmen from the island of Lewis. What had impressed us was that, far from being fierce and warlike, it was clear that these were essentially kindly, non-belligerent characters, who were thoroughly dismayed by the prospect of contest... it occurred to Peter that the chessmen... could well have been called Nogs, that their prince was a Noggin and that the wicked baron... could be their... uncle, perhaps a Nogbad

This is a revealing comment both on the depth of artistic inspiration and re-telling that museums and medieval material culture can fuel, and in its description of facial expressions and gestures. The Nogs were born in the late 1950s and aired on BBC TV in the early 1960s and on many occasions thereafter. The Saga was published in book form (four vols) in 1968, with a collected hardback edition in 1992. Additional published material in *Nogmania* (Postgate and Firmin 1977: 44-45) extended the use of the chessmen imagery, where they are depicted as giant statues of heroes.

Since writing our paper for *Medieval Archaeology*, additional sightings of the chessmen on holiday in the 20th and 21st centuries have been made or brought to our attention, including children's book *Maisie Digs Up the Past* (Paterson 1994) and for older children *The Chess Piece Magician* (Bruton 2009) and the Dr Who novel, *Dark Horizons* (Colgan 2012). They have had a supporting role in the adventures of *Hellboy*, a cult comic book character, where they are linked to a re-imagining of the medieval Wild Hunt legend (Mignola & Fegredo 2010, 2012) and a pivotal one in the manga comic book *Professor Munakata's British Museum Adventure* (Yukinobu 2011), in which an international plot to steal and repatriate many of the British Museum's treasures sees the real Lewis chess pieces stolen and replaced with replicas. The thief uses the real pieces as clues to other thefts. For adult readers, the *Lewis Trilogy* of detective stories (May 2011-2012) are set largely in Lewis and have their background and sub-text informed by musings on the chessmen ranging across their discovery, mythology and folklore, museum collections, replica sets and 'based-upon' gifts.

Of course we could not discuss the modern day impact of the chess pieces without reference to popular culture's widespread embracing of the chess-pieces as icons, which is further demonstrated in a range of locality and identity signalling manifestations, including music, beer and food. The title track of Scottish folk-musician and singer, Dougie Maclean's 1994 album, *Marching Mystery*, was inspired by the Lewis chessmen; indeed the track was dedicated to the hoard, about which Dougie said in the CD notes, "these figures have a special quality, vigour and even humour – their mystery endures." The Hebridean Brewery Company of Stornoway currently brews "Berserker Export Pale Ale", its pump-clip illustrated by one of the so-called Lewis

shield-biting "berserkers". The Western Isles Beach Clean-up Group illustrated its recipe book, *A Taste of Uig, A Collection of Recipes from Uig, Isle of Lewis, Scotland* (A Taste of Uig n. d.), with images of the chessmen. Also in Lewis, a giant wooden statue (the work of Stephen Hayward) of a king piece was erected in 2006 in what has long been held to have been the find-spot for the pieces, the dunes at Ardroil, Uig Bay, by the Ardroil Grazings Committee. In the succeeding years this has been followed by several other examples dotted strategically about the island – guarding the airport, Uig school and museum and the new distillery. A different sort of artistic endeavour vouchsafed the chessmen as great works of art whose maker would never be known by incorporating several bronze versions of the chessmen in the eponymous, centre-piece ship sculpture of Grayson Perry's 2011 exhibition at the British Museum, *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman* (see for examples Perry 2011: 185-99).

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to summarise recent work on the Lewis hoard of gaming pieces (for the full details of which see Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009 and Caldwell, Hall 2014) so that it might sit informatively alongside discussion of, and contribute to the wider context of the Sandomierz discovery. We hope that it might also help to forge closer links between the archaeological and historical study of chess and other board games in Western and Eastern Europe. The pieces from Sandomierz are fewer in number and smaller than those from Lewis and are of entirely abstract form. But like the Lewis pieces they appear to have been deliberately concealed and in a place that, whilst seeming remote today, was in medieval times a well-connected place and with significant political and ecclesiastical links. Both research projects, on Lewis and Sandomierz, demonstrate the crucial value of re-examining and re-evaluating examples of seemingly well-known and fully understood medieval material culture. In the case of Lewis, exploring both the pieces and their discovery has released new narratives about the games the pieces might represent, about the kingdom of the Isles context which demonstrates that the gaming pieces were not in Lewis by accident, and about the continuing relevance the pieces have in contemporary cultural practice, adding to their biography in several ways and in several media.

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Alessandro Sanvito

The Venafro Chess Set Before and After 1994

Among the numerous archaeological chess finds of the 20th century, the Venafro chessmen probably constitute the most controversial because of the heated discussions they have promoted as a result of the early, Late Antique, dating long suggested in some quarters. The stalemate was decisively broken in favour of a more conventional, early medieval, date by radiocarbon dating in 1994. The Sandomierz conference, in encompassing the wider cultural impact of chess, is an opportune moment to review the controversy sparked by the Venafro discovery.

The main objective of this brief paper is to reconstruct and clarify, as far as is possible, the discovery and post-discovery history of the chess set. The story then begins in 1932. It was then that a private well was excavated in Venafro, a town on the right bank of the Volturno, in the Campobasso province of the locality of Chiaione (formerly ancient Campania). In the well human bones were found and supposed to have been placed there in a wooden box that had decayed away in the damp environment.

Amongst the other burial items was found a group of 18 pieces of bone and ivory, at a depth of three metres (fig. 1). The clear similarity with Islamic or Arabic style abstract chess pieces was noted and found to be surprising.

When the landowners found themselves in possession of human bones, they immediately informed the honorary inspector of the location, Giuseppe Cimorelli. He intervened, collecting the pieces and sending them, as required by the law, to the National Museum of Archaeology in Naples. Here the pieces remained in storage until, on the suggestion of archaeologist Maiuri, Doctor Olga Elia studied them and published the illustrated paper, "The game of chess in the Roman age", in the *Bullettino del Museo dell'Impero Romano* in 1939. The news of the discovery was taken up in 1940 by Professor Raymond Lautier, conservateur du Musee des Antiquités Nationales, Paris, France, in a short article that appeared in the *Revue Archiologique*. In 1941, the pieces were again studied, this time by Heinrich Fuhrmann in the *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, who made new comparisons with pieces apparently discovered in the Roman catacomb of Saint Sebastian in Rome. On the basis of this paper, the Dutch journalist Hendrick Leopold wrote, in 1943, a long article in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*. Finally Doctor Gerard Oskam, in 1946, drew the attention of chess players to the Venafro find, quoting the previous articles, in his Preface to Catalogus van de schaakboekerij van Dr. M. Niemeijer (Wassenaar, Nederland). However, in spite of the fact that these archaeologists were in agreement in assigning a 3rd--4th century AD date to the Venafro pieces, the news of the discovery seemed to pass unnoticed among chess historians and others.

It was not until 1950 that the discovery became known in international chess circles, following a series of articles written by Dr. Adriano Chicco, published in an Italian chess magazine (*La Scacchiera*). Working on the assertions of the archaeologists, Dr. Chicco formulated a new hypothesis, to try to understand how it was at all possible that chess pieces of evident Arabic shape had ended up in a tomb of the Roman Age. This hypothesis can, of course, be either shared or refused, but Dr. Chicco's merit in dealing with such an important discovery, missed by the majority of the scholars for many years, cannot be denied.

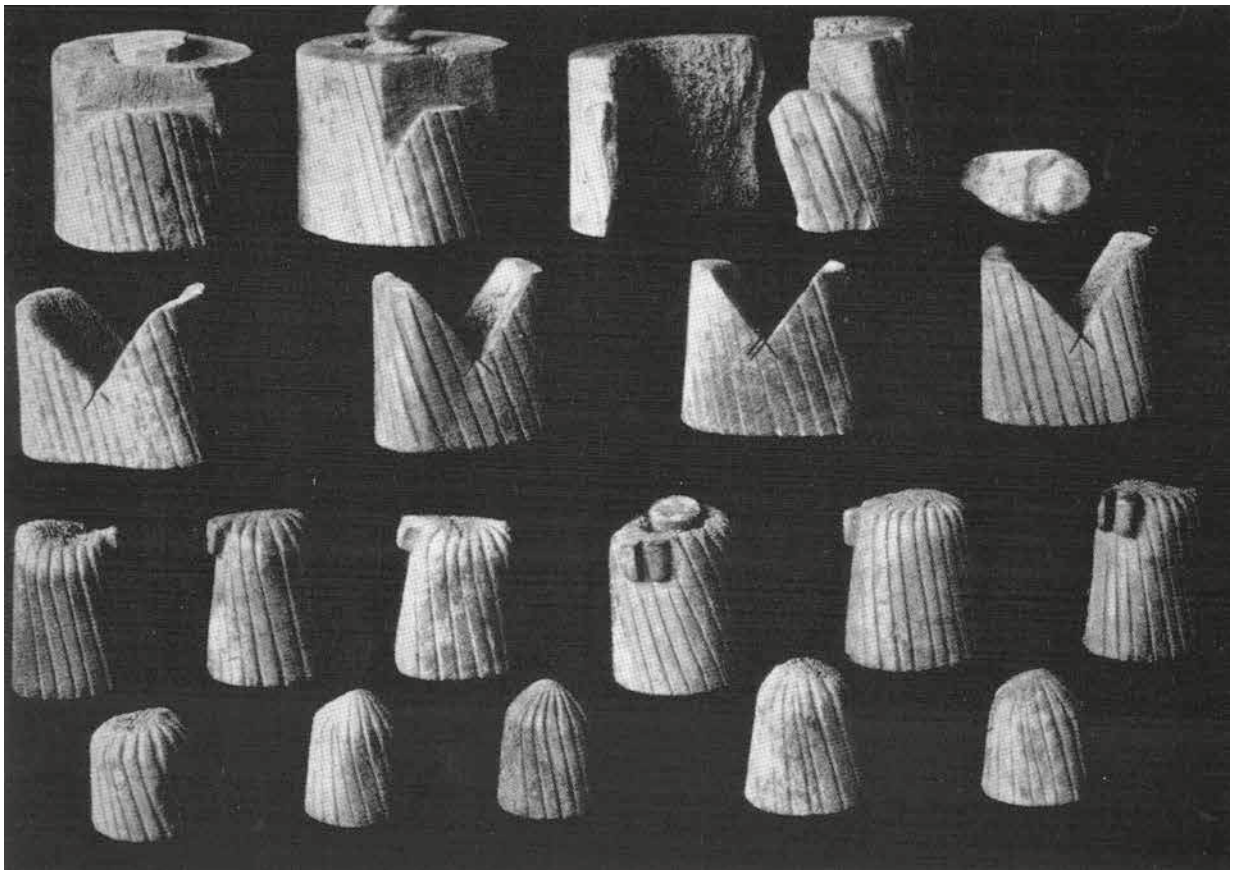

Fig. 1. Chess pieces from Venafro. After Kluge-Pinsker 1991:103, fig. A1

The news of this discovery shook the chess world because it so clearly conflicted with the accepted understanding that the game of chess was created around the 6th century AD , in India or China and did not reach Europe until the 10th century at the earliest. There could then be no possibility of a Late Antique Roman chess set. Chicco's hypothesis echoed that of Dr. Elia's article in suggesting a chess set of the Roman period, and induced some people to think that the Italian scholars had the intention of revindicating a Roman origin for the game. To try and solve the irreconcilability, two alternatives were put forward: to either deny their Roman dating, or to deny their effectively being chess pieces. Professor Elia, in her article, did not consider the second option, not being a chess authority but she had excluded the possibility that the layer might be subjected to a different, non-Roman dating. She was approached to reconsider this and in a handwritten letter she responded that "A different dating, both due to the nature of the discovery, and to the layer of deposit, is to be excluded. Venafro has a well-determined Roman archaeological zone". She re-affirmed that from the position of the human bones and the *olla* (a form of amphora), it was possible to determine that the corpse and the funerary items must have been originally placed in a box, probably a wooden one, destroyed in the making of the well. In this connection, one of the great scholars of chess history, H. J. R. Murray, cast doubt that the human bones, found with the pieces, had been placed in a wooden box, because of the general Roman practice of cremation. This is not a conclusive line of argument because the Romans also employed inhumation as a burial practice. It was actually habitual for the lower classes and was to become almost common after the advent of Christianity. In the simpler graves (not those of the wealthy stone sarcophagi), as a first container a wooden box simply called *sepulcrum* was usually used. Murray did not accept the dating, because "to ascribe them to the Roman period just doesn't make sense". Murray certainly accepted that the pieces were for chess and commented in that same letter: "The pieces are undoubtedly chessmen of the shapes current in Europe in the 11th, I2th centuries..." and tactfully

concluded that, "I shall pursue my enquiries with an open mind".

Other scholars soon expressed the deep scepticism they shared with Murray. The unresolved objections of those who questioned the dating of the pieces can be summarised as follows:

1. The absence of any initial written report for the casual discovery of the well and its finds
2. The time that had elapsed from the date of the discovery to the date of the study of the pieces
3. The fact that the National Museum of Archaeology, Naples, made no inventory of the pieces
4. The fact that no other photograph was to be found apart from the one taken in 1939
5. The lack of a carbon-14 test;
6. The fact that the pieces weren't always on view and accessible to study in the Museum

As part of the long-term research for this paper I contacted the registrars of the Archaeological Museum in Naples in the 1980s, their response is summarised here, with some additional material from other sources:

1. The lack of an initial verbal account of the discovery is an insignificant objection since such a state of affairs is customary during systematic excavations, but impossible in the case of casual discoveries by private persons. These only have the obligation to notify the find to a local official, which occurred, but the compilation of a verbal is not foreseen.
2. The seven years which passed between the find and the study of the pieces is an irrelevant lapse of time if we consider that in the deposits of the Museum there exist many archaeological finds which still have not been fully studied.
3. To my inquiry about the inventory numbers the Museum registrars replied with letter #6503 dated the 17th March 1987: "Concerning your letter from the 16th February last, it is to be stated that the so-called «chessmen» discovered in 32, in Venafro, in the locality of Chiaione, are to be found in the National Museum of Archaeology in Naples, filed with the following inventory numbers: 192348-192356, 216219-216227"
4. To obtain new pictures in black and white and in colour, plus slides, I had to overcome several bureaucratic obstacles, which for a non-Italian scholar would have been very difficult.
5. Concerning the carbon- 14 test, a test to which the Venafro pieces, in the 1980s had not been subjected, I have personally contacted the people in charge of the London Museum and those in charge of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art both of which look after some ancient chess pieces. The curators of both replied that their chess pieces had not been subjected to the carbon-14 test either. On the contrary, they were dated using the methods based on the study of the context in which they were found and, when possible, analyzing other objects found with the chessmen. It is not clear as to why this method, considered valid by the English and American archaeologists shouldn't be considered acceptable by the Italian and German ones. In any case, I have been informed, by the people in charge of the Neapolitan Museum that, in relation to the scientific discoveries of the last few years, it is the management's intention to subject the Venafro pieces to more detailed tests, in order to try to establish their dating with greater certainty.
6. Lastly, as for the fact that the pieces aren't always on view to the public and one has to be lucky to see them, the Museum have offered no other explanation other than that they chose to prioritise other material over the chess pieces.

As far as my investigations by 1988 had shown I was prepared to accept the controversial view that the chess pieces were indeed of Roman date but concluded that it should be further investigated and that there was scope for new studies to resolve the dating in particular of the chess pieces.

The paper can now conclude properly because, under the direction of Professor Pratesi it was decided to pursue the radiocarbon dating of the Venafro chess set. The samples were analysed in two separate laboratories, in Sydney, Australia and Naples, Italy. In 1994 both laboratories independently demonstrated that the chess pieces dated to the 10th century (Terrasi *et al.* 1994 and date of 885-1017 with a 68 per cent confidence level). Thus the controversy was finally put to bed and the chess pieces can now be understood in their proper cultural context.

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Olga Medvedeva

The Spread of Chess in Medieval Belarus

The chronological spread of the game of chess in Belarus between the 11th-18th centuries is evidenced by 88 chess pieces recovered from archaeological excavations. The pieces, some of them unfinished blanks were mostly made of bone and horn, with 15 of them made of wood and 3 of them of stone. Chess pieces have been found at 25 sites throughout the territory of Belarus. The majority were found in the Polotsk region, including in Polotsk, Vitebsk, Minsk, Drutsk and Zaslavl. In the Turov region the find-spots include Turov, Brest and Slutsk. In the region around the Nemans river basin, Grodno, Volkovysk, Novogrudok, Slonim and Lida have all produced pieces, and in the Dniepers river basin examples have been found at Gomel, Mogilev, Rogachev, Mstislavl and Svisloch.

Chrono-typology of chess pieces

The chess-pieces can be divided into two types:

- Figurative, with a date range of 11th-13th century and of which there are 8 examples recorded, and
- Abstract, with a date range of 11th-18th century and of which there are 80 examples recorded.

Figurative pieces

Most of the figurative examples were found as single specimens in one specimen. Most of the chess-pieces are of local origin and so almost all are made of materials found widely in Belarus: animal bones (domestic and wild), elk and deer antler, and wood. Many figurative and blank pieces were found at the sites with bone-carving workshops, or in parts of cities where the craftsmen had lived. The distinguishing feature of Belarusian chess-pieces is circle-linear ornament. Wooden chess-pieces were also carved by local artisans.

Figured (realistic) and symbolic (abstract) chess-pieces existed in Belarus in 11th-13th centuries. They belonged to highly artistic sets, where each piece had corresponded to its name. For example, the king and queen had represented the people, rook had been made like the real boat, horse had depicted as realistic figurine of horse, and pawns had been made as little men. Each figure from a realistic set of chess is real miniature sculpture which reflects feelings of bone-carver. Chess sets had been carved by hand in a realistic manner by talented artists. Those sets had been highly valued and had belonged to representatives of the upper classes of society. Figured chess-pieces are the products of arts and crafts to this day. In Belarus eight realistic chess-pieces, or as they are called differently, figures «with faces» were found. This is one of the most impressive collections of this type of chess in Eastern Europe. Moreover, almost all the pieces were found safe and well preserved. Two kings of chess sets (Brest, Slutsk), two queens (Lukoml Chashniki, Vitebsk region; Solonoe Zhlobin, Gomel region), two rooks (Grodno, Volkovysk), the horse, the pawn (Volkovysk), were found; lacking only a bishop. Each of the figures belongs to a single chess set, so we can say that in Belarus were found pieces of eight sets of figured chess. All of these figures had been carved by hand out bone and horn, only Grodno rook and queen from the village of Solonoe made of stone.

The king piece from the excavations of the Slutsk citadel is stratigraphically dated to the end of the 11th/beginning of the 12th century and is carved from elk antler (fig. 1: 1; photo 1; see Kalyadzinski 1995: 36; Koledinsky 1994: 138; 2009: 81-83, fig. 1: 4; 2011:

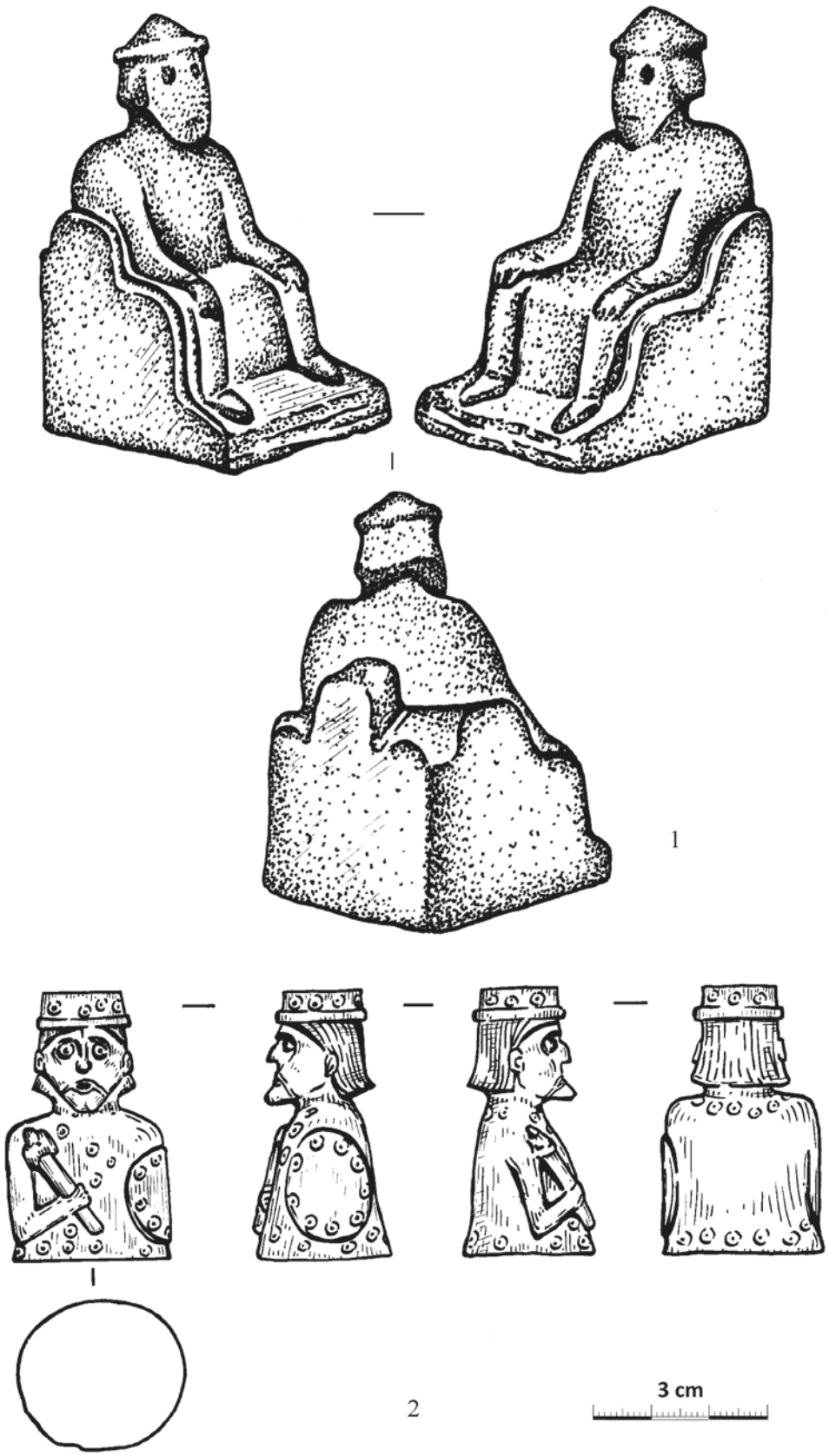

Fig. 1. Figured chess of 10th-13th c.: 1 – king (Slutsk), 2 – king (Brest) (antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

75; Medvedeva 2004: 150, fig. 1: 1; 2005: 16, fig. 1: 1; 2006: 43-45, fig. 2; 2011a: 417, photo 5). The piece weighs 65 g and is 6.8 cm heigh with a base diameter of 3.2-3.3 × 3.5 cm. It looks like a man sitting on a throne, wearing a cap, his hair cut short. Although his face is not well preserved, the beard and mustache are clear. His hands rest on his laps and he wears high boots. The size, figure-type and the throne on which he sits all proclaim this is as chess king. The chess-piece appears to be unique and so far no exact parallels have been identified though there are similarities with the king pieces from the Isle of Lewis, Scotland and from Trondenes, Norway (Reymert 1977: 38).

The king piece from the citadel of Brest was found in a layer dating to the 12th – early 13th century (fig. 1: 2; photo 2), though Lysenko believes the piece was made at an earlier date (Lysenko 1985: 285-286, fig. 197; 1989: 112-113; Linder 1975: 72, 91). It measures H4.6 cm in height, with a diameter of 2.5 × 2.8 cm and is made of elk antler. The king is depicted realistically as a noble warrior, with a rounded face, round eyes (with pupil points) and a hooked nose above a drooped moustache and a wedge-shaped beard. The ears are small and skirted by shoulder length hair beneath a flat cap. The cap is decorated with circular ornament that is repeated on the shield that covers the left arm. His bent, right arm holds a symbol of royal authority – scepter, the rod or mace. The base of the figure is slightly expanded for stability. The realism and rich detailing characterize this figure as a masterpiece of bone-carving (Medvedeva 2004: 150, fig. 1: 2; 2005: 14-15, fig. 1: 2; 2006a: 43, fig. 1, photo 4).

The second most significant piece on the chess set is the queen, of which there are two clear examples from Belarus. The example of elk antler was found in the citadel of the former city of Lukoml (fig. 2: 1; photo 3) and is dated stratigraphically to the 12th century (Shtyhay 1968: 32; Shtyhov 1969: 321). The height of the chess-piece is 4.7 cm and its, base-diameter is 2.2 × 2.5 cm. The base itself is typically oval in form and shows signs of wear from long-term usage. Chess represents a man sitting with legs folded in eastern fashion and arms crossed. There is something like a bracelet on one hand. On the head he wears cap or helmet (because rows of rivets are traced) from under which hairs is

Photo 1. The figured king (Slutsk, 11th-12th c.).
Photo by L. V. Koledinsky

Photo 2. The figured king (Brest, 12th-13th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

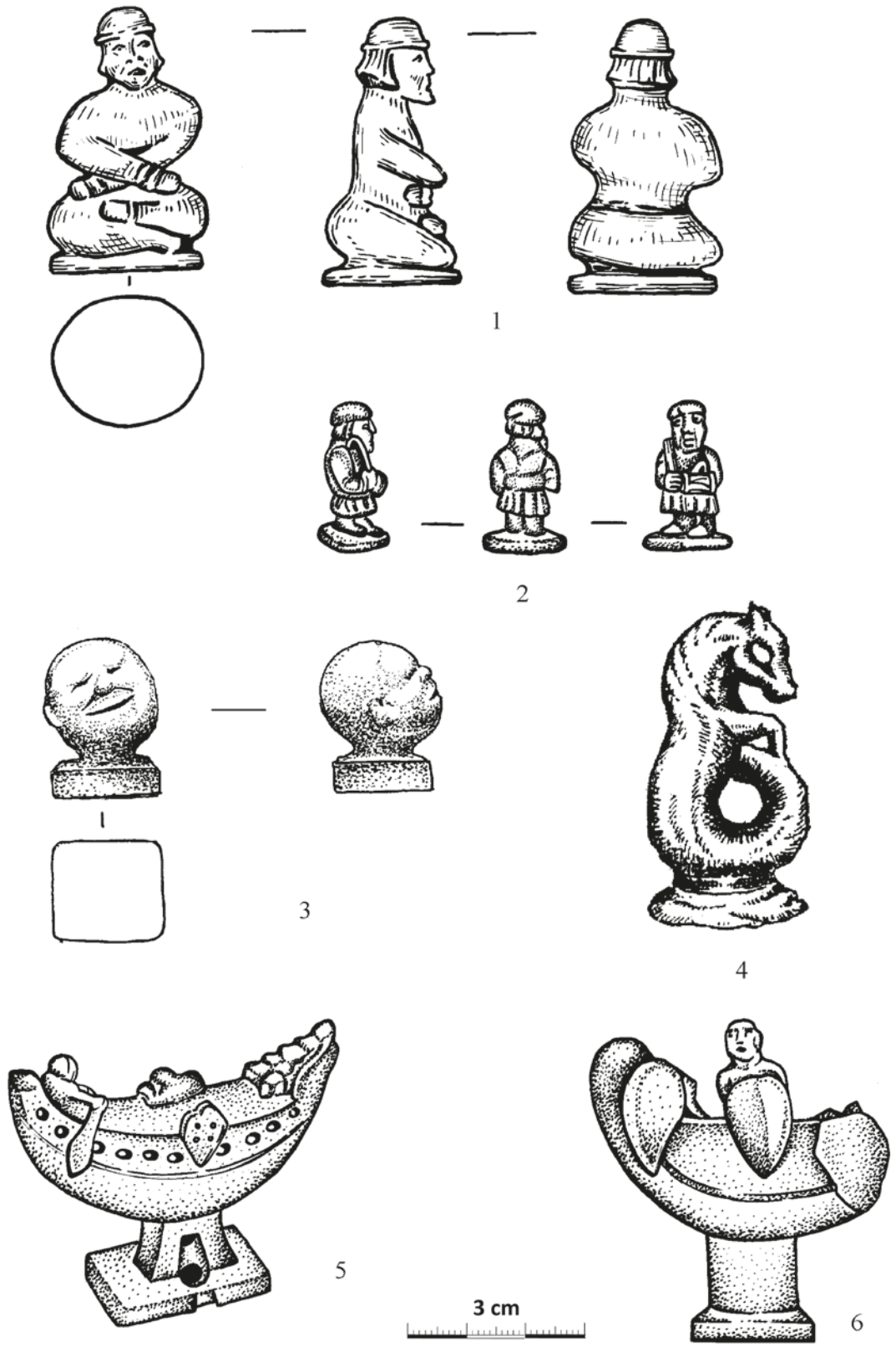

Fig. 2. Figured chess of 11th-13th centuries: 1 – queen (Lukoml); 2 – pawn (Volkovysk); 3 – queen (Solonoe); 4 – horse; 5 – rook (Volkovysk); 6 – rook (Grodno) (1, 2, 4, 5 – bone, antler; 3, 6 – stone). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

hung. Facial features are not clear, chin is put forward, and nose is flattened, no beard and mustache. In all features calm and authority are seen. There are not analogies of this chess-piece (Medvedeva 2004: 150, fig. 2: 1; 2005: 16-17, fig. 2: 1; 2006a: 44-45, fig. 3, photo 2; 2006b: 71, fig. 1: 1).

The second queen piece was a chance find from the village of Solonoe, by chance by a local resident on his kitchen garden (fig. 2: 3; Medvedeva 2008a: 258-260). It is made of stone in the form of an oriental male head on a small base. Its stands 2.7 cm in height and the head, diameter is 2 cm. There head is bald, tilted to the right, and with its low neck visible. The eyes and nose are small and the mustache hangs down, his ears are small and tightly pressed against the head. The style and form all suggest a chess piece but identificationas a queen is problematical fact that this figure is a chessman proves its stand and size, which are typical for chess. Interpretation of a figure as a queen is also possible, because only kings and queens had been made in the form of people. It could not be a Chess king, because there are no symbols of power and the figure has not royal look. It is difficult to determine the chronology of the figure. Rather, it was a chess set imported from some eastern countries, as evidenced by the oriental type of head. It has some vague resemblance to chess from Greece (16th-18th c.) and Birma (19th c.).

The rook from Grodno was excavated at the Old Castle (fig. 2: 5; photo 5; Voronin 1954: 76, fig. 37; Linder 1975: 93-94; Medvedeva 2004: 152, fig. 2: 4; 2005: 17, fig. 2: 4; 2006a: 45, fig. 4, photo 1; 2011a: 417, photo 6). It is uniquely well preserved, carved out of a single piece of pale yellow stone with gray-green veins and finely polished. It is shaped like a boat, placed on a high stem with a square stand, which has a round hole. The boat is 5.5 cm long, 1.5 cm wide and 4.3 cm heigh. The boat has a pointed prow and stern and along the sides are rows of round holes for oars. There are four soldiers on the deck: one each near the prow and stern, and two in the middle at both sides of the boat. On each side a row of almond-shaped shields is placed. Carved in a realistic manner, the boat presents the type of real riverboat in use in the middle of the 12th century and which was common in the lands of the Eastern Slavs. The type of ship dates the chess piece to the 12th century and according to the Rus-

Photo 3. The figured queen (Lukoml, 12th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

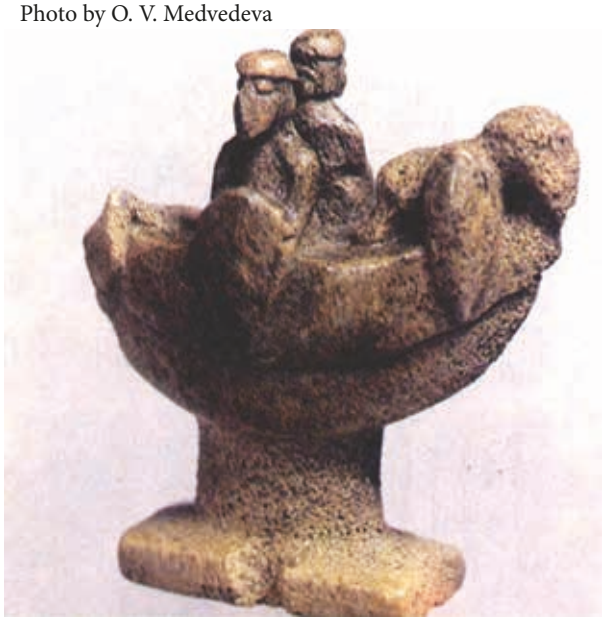

Photo 4. The figured rook (Volkovysk, 11th-12th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

Photo 5. The figured rook (Grodno, 12th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

sian scholar N. Voronin, the piece was a component of a luxurious, artistically accomplished chess set (Voronin 1954: 76).

Another chess rook in the form of a riverboat was discovered during archaeological investigations in Volkovysk, at the hillfort named "Swedish Mountain" (fig. 2: 6, photo 4) (Medvedeva 2004; 152, fig. 2: 3; 2005: 18, fig. 2: 3; 2006a: 45, fig. 5, photo 5; Tarasenko 1957: 275, 278). It is made of elk-antler and stratigraphically dates to the 11th/ early 12th century. The piece is very worn, possibly through long-term use. Its height and length are each 5.5 cm and its diameter is 2 cm. It is mounted on a stand with a round stem on a rectangular base. Three of the four warriors on deck survive, the fourth is missing (apart from a shield fragment) from the stern. The two soldiers at the sides are well preserved. They have no beards or moustaches and they wear small, flat caps, and wear their hair long and straight. The almond-shaped shields are placed on the boards of the boat before the soldiers; such shields are also placed on the prow sides. Russian researcher V. Darkevich has suggested that the two pieces are so similar that they could have been made by the same carver (Darkevich 1962: 107).

The only knight piece so far recognised carries no contextual information and it is not known where it was found; its date remains uncertain. It is made of bone (fig. 2: 4; Tsyarohin 1984: 188, fig. 2: a).

A single example of a figurative pawn is known, from Volkovysk and found near the nbot-rook discussed above and with a suggested date of late 12th – early 13th century (fig. 2: 2; photo 6) (Tarasenko 1957: 275, 278, fig. 14). The pawn is 2.5 cm heigh on a base measuring 1.2 × 1.5 cm. It is a finely carved depiction of a foot-soldier drummer. He wears a knee-length belted dress, a cap on his head, and long hair. A drum (tambourine) is hanging over his shoulder on a throng; in his right hand he holds a curved mallet to strike the drum. This drum resembles the tambourine percussion instruments depicted on a miniature in the *Radivillovska chronicle*, in which the games of the Slavs are described. This drum is similar to modern examples, including a cord too tighten the leather membrane. The drummer is very similar to the soldiers depicted on the boat-rooks described above (Medvedeva 2004: 152, fig. 2: 2; 2005: 19, fig. 2: 2; 2006a: 45, fig. 6, photo 3).

All the above, stylistically similar chess pieces date to the 11th-13th centuries. They belonged to luxurious, high-status chess sets. Shtyhov has suggested that all such chess pieces were made by talented local artists rather than in one central place and distributed, a view shared by Gurevich (Shtyhov 1982: 33; Gurevich 1982: 43), who suggests that the Grodno and Volkovsk figures (to which we could now add those from Lukoml and Brest) indicate specialist workshops for chess pieces operating in Belarus. For Gurevich the critically determining factor is the belted shirt typical of East Slavic clothing, which the figures are depicted as wearing. All the realistic, figurative chess sets demonstrate a high level of cultural taste and production during the 11th-13th centuries.

Abstract pieces

Abstract (symbolic or stylized) chess pieces, adopting various geometric shapes, first appeared in the Muslim world, in response to the religious prohibition of making images of living creatures (especially humans). This style of piece spread from the East into Europe, including Belarus. Gurevich (1989: 15) suggests that «Belarus was the region where the symbolic chess pieces which had been made by local craftsmen of wood or bone, had been more common than in other ancient lands». From the 11th century they are found in use alongside the figurative sets but also have a wider distribution. Simplicity of design, a comparatively easier method of manufacture, and a presumed lower cost are thought to have aided their distribution beyond the social elites. The popularity of the game, particularly using the abstract pieces, promoted several localized production centres. Initially the pieces were made in the imported, Islamic style but over time the local carving schools introduced their own features.

The abstract chess pieces found in Belarus encompass the whole range of pieces needed for a chess set, all with their differences. Kings and queens for example are very different from the rest of the figures in their configuration of line and angle but similar enough to each other that it can be difficult to distinguish a king from a queen. To date 80 abstract pieces are known from Belarus, with a date range spanning the 11th-18th centuries. They are generally classified as Eastern (Arabic) pieces of the 11th-13th centuries, Old Russian pieces of the 13th-15th centuries, and

as the new abstract style of the 16th-18th centuries. The range includes 19 pawns, 17 rooks, 14 bishops, 5 kings, 7 queens, 7 fragments, 8 blanks and 3 horses, variously made of bone and wood, with a height range of 2-7 cm. The vast majority of the pieces were sufficiently distinct to suggest that each came from a different set. In this paper only an outline can be given, the whole range will be covered in detail in a forthcoming monograph.

The Arabic or Islamic style of chess piece is evidenced in Belarus by 32 examples, comprising 2 kings, 8 rooks, 3 horses (or knights), 5 elephants (or bishops), 6 pawns and 8 blanks. The two, wooden kings were found in Polotsk and Minsk and distinguished by their typical larger size and shape. The piece from Polotsk was found in the 12th century house of a jeweler (fig. 3: 1). It is shaped like a fir-tree, with a base and three tiers in the form of upside-down bowls. It measures 6 cm in height with a base diameter of 3.5 cm. (Myadzvedzeva 2004: 154, fig. 3: 3; 2005: 22, fig. 3: 1). The Minsk king (fig. 3: 2) was found in the yard of a house, also of a jeweler, and dating to 1150-1220. It was found with several other wooden pieces – 2 rooks and a pawn (fig. 4: 5-6) – probably from the same chess set. The king is cone shaped, belted at the middle, with a height of 4.5 cm and a base diameter of 2.3 cm. The site excavator, Zagorulsky, suggests the owner of the property had made the pieces, hand carving them with a knife and that this context of use and production demonstrates the wide popularity of the game (Zagorulsky 1982: 251-253, fig. 157; Medvedeva 2004: 153-154, fig. 3: 4; 2005: 22-23, fig. 3: 2).

The rooks were found in Minsk (2), Brest, Grodno, Volkovysk, Slutsk Kopys and Svisloch. The ancient Persian word from which "rook" derives is *rukh*, which is not the fabulous bird of legend but means "chariot". The abstract boat form of the rook in Eastern European and Russian lands takes the form of a rectangle with two prominences at the top and a square base. The top projections are often individually stylized. The example from the hillfort of Kopys in the Orsha district of the Vitebsk region is dated to the 12th-13th centuries (fig. 4: 1; Shtyhov 1978: 94, fig. 3: 8; 1982: 33, fig. 2). It was found in a bone-carving workshop alongside other completed objects, blanks and working-waste. All strong evidence of local chess production. The Kopys piece

Photo 6. The figured pawn (Volkovysk, 11th-12th c.). Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

measures 3.8 cm in height, 4.5 cm in length and 2 cm in width (Medvedeva 2004: 158, fig. 4: 6; 2005: 23-24, fig. 4: 1; 2006a: 71, fig. 2: 1).

A rook and a pawn, both of wood and probably from same 11th-12th century were found during the excavation of the Upper Castle in Slutsk (fig. 4: 4; photo 10). Koledinsky, the excavator, describes it as being made of buckthorn with tinted black alder cones (Kalyadzinski 1995: 36; Koledinsky 1994: 138; 2009: 81, fig. 1: 3). It is 4.3 cm heigh with a base diameter of 1.3 × 2.6 cm. The piece has a distinctively

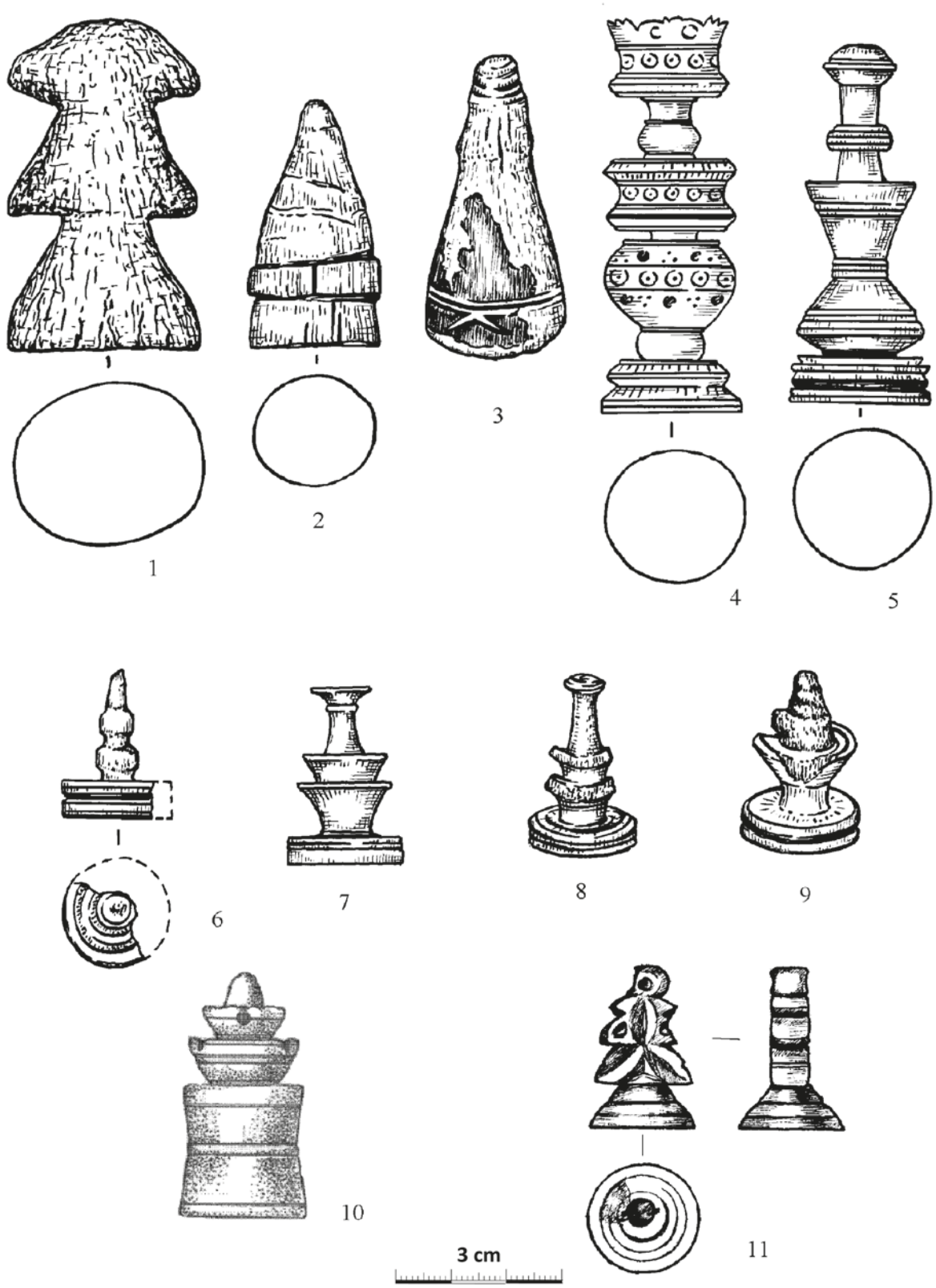

Fig. 3. Abstract chess of 12th-18th centuries: 1, 4, 5 – kings (Polotsk); 2 – king (Minsk); 3 – king (Vitebsk); 6 – queen (Lutshno); 7 – queen (Drutsk); 8–10 – queens (Polotsk); (1-2 – wood; 3-11 – bone, antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

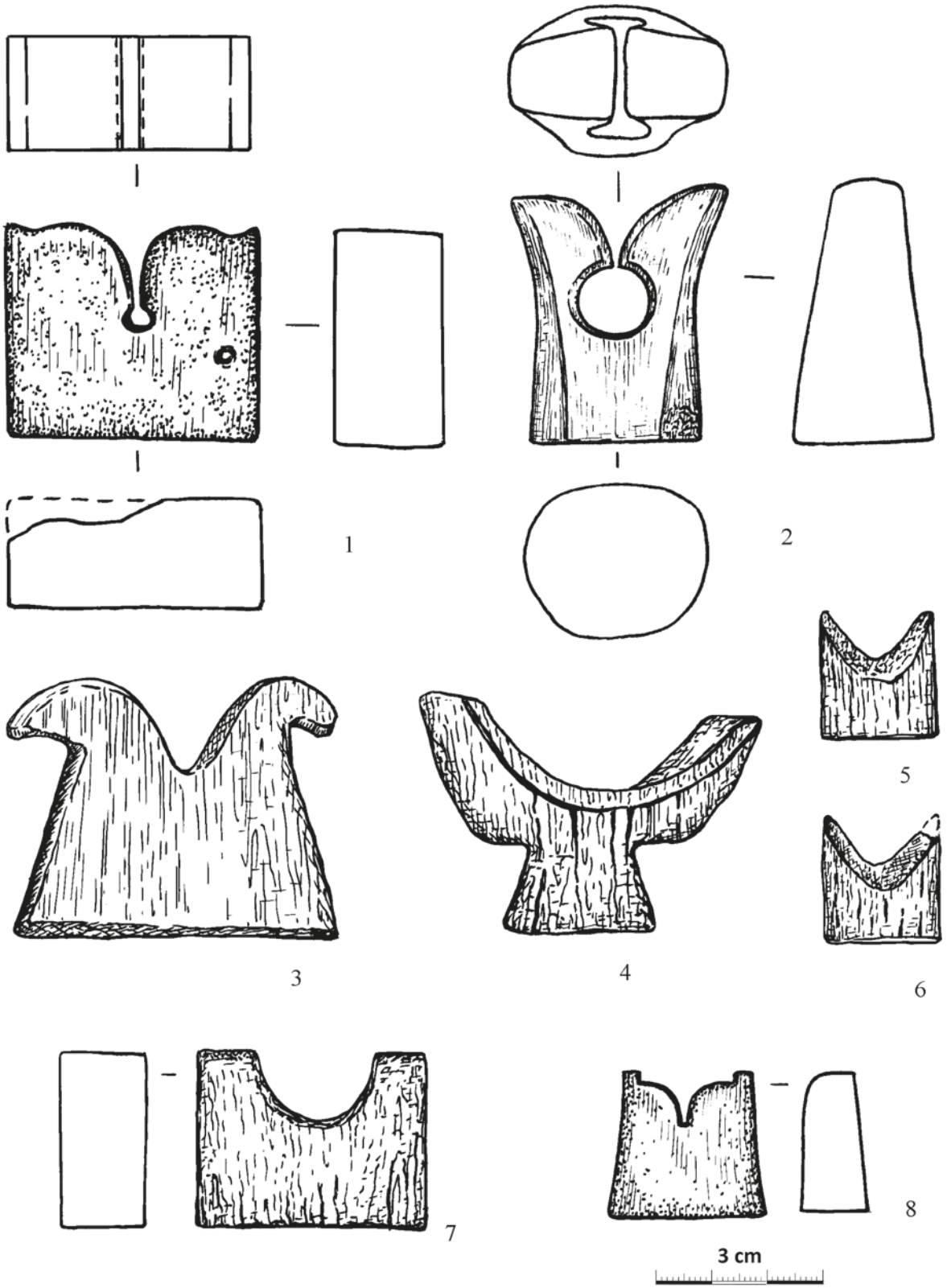

Fig. 4. Abstract chess of 11th-13th centuries. Rooks: 1 – Kopys, 2 – Svislotch, 3 – Grodno, 4 – Slutsk, 5, 6 – Minsk, 7 – Brest, 8 – Volkovysk (1-2, 8 – bone, antler; 3-7 – wood). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

Photo 7. The abstract king (Polotsk, 16th–17th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

local shape that is unlike that of the Islamic and Western traditions (Medvedeva 2004: 159, fig. 4: 11; 2005, 25, fig. 4: 4; Rybina 1991: 99, fig. 6: 23). Also excavated at a hillfort location is the 12th-13th century elk-antler rook from Svisloch, Osipovichi district, Mogilev region (fig. 4: 2). It has a round base and the typical upper bifurcation and a large round through hole through the middle. It is 4.5 cm heigh, 4 cm long across the top, with a base diameter of 2.5 × 3 cm and a hole diameter of 1.2 × 1.4 cm (Myadzvedzeva 2004: 158, fig. 4: 7; 2005: 24, fig. 4: 7; 2011a: 417, photo 8). Analogies for this Arabic style rook are known from Kiev, Novgorod and Smolensk (Astashova 1993: 77, fig. 7: 4; Rybina 1991: 94, fig. 4: 35; Sergeeva 2011: 105, tabl. 49: 4).

Bishop pieces were found in Drutsk, Turov and Slutsk (fig. 6: 1-3). The form of the abstract chess bishop comprises a cylinder surmounted by two lateral projections, symbolizing originally the rudiments of elephant tusks (and later, in a Western context, the points of a bishop's mitre). They have a round, oval shape and are attached to the body with two small, round sticks. The first bishop-piece found in Belarus comes from the citadel of Drutsk (near Tolochin, Vitebsk) and was recovered from the excavation of an ancient well. It dates to the 12th--13th centuries. (fig. 6: 1; photo 12; Alekseev 1966, 234, fig. 68: 10). This particular bishop takes the form of a small truncated cone with two prominences at the top. Its height of figure is 3.2 cm and its base diameter is 1.9 cm. According to Linder "The shape of the bishop is so characteristic of the Arabic style chess set of the early Middle Ages that it can be attributed to XI – XII centuries." (Linder 1975: 79). This chess-figure is presumed to be of local origin, as it was found in a part of citadel where craftsmen had lived (Medvedeva 2004: 160-161, fig. 5: 1; 2005: 26, fig. 5: 1). A 13th century abstract bishop-piece was found on the hillfort near Slutsk. It takes the form of a flat-topped cone around which two oval tusks are placed (fig. 6: 2; photo 13; Kalyadzinski 1995: 36; Koledinsky 1994: 138; 2009: 80, fig. 1: 1; Medvedeva 2004: 161, fig. 5: 2; 2005: 27, fig. 5: 2; 2011a: 417, photo 9). It measures 3 cm (height) x 2.7 cm (diameter) and is very similar to the piece described from Drutsk.

There are similar abstract bishops in the chess sets from Sandomierz, Poland, and from Vilnius Castle, Lithuania (Tautavichyus 1995: 219, pav. 174; Gąssowska 1964: 148-169).

The horse or knight pieces of Belarus were found in Novogrudok, Turov and Gorodishe village, Minsk (fig. 6: 4-6). In Belarus only one type of knight piece has been found to date, that of the abstract Arabic style of a cylinder with an upper prominence. On the hillfort near the village Gorodishe (the location of the original Minsk) an 11th century knight was excavated (fig. 6: 6; Medvedeva 2004: 163, fig. 5: 12; 2005: 28, fig. 5: 6; 2008b: 61, fig. 2: 1; Shtyhov 1978: 67, fig. 43: 3; 1982: 33, fig. 1). It is made of elk-antler and measures 3 cm (height) x 2 cm (diameter). This piece is the oldest known chess piece from Belarus, indeed from the whole of Kyiv Rus (Rybina 1997: 113, fig. 79: 32). The example from Novogrudok dates to the second half of the 12th century (fig. 6: 4; Gurevich 1981: 71, 142, fig. 55: 10; 1982: 43-44; Linder 1975: 78-79, fig. 3a; Medvedeva 2004: 163, fig. 5: 10; 2005: 27, fig. 5: 4; 2006b: 72, fig. 2: 2). It is made of elk-antler and measures 4.3 cm (height) × 2.7 × 3 cm (diameter). It has the typical abstract form with the addition of a Slavic trident on its side, which Gurevich (1981: 71) suggests signifies its lo-

cal origin. Comparbale Arabic style knight pieces are known from excavations in Novgorod, Smolensk, and Kyiv (Rybina 1997: 113, tabl. 79: 22-23, 31, 55-56; Sergeeva 2011: 104, tabl. 49: 2).

Chess pawns have been excavated in Drutsk and Mstislavl, Mogilev (fig. 8: 1-3). The pawn is the simplest of the abstract forms, usually a small cylinder or truncated cone with a rounded or truncated top. Sometimes they are decorated with a pattern of straight lines. Their size varies from 1.5 to 3 cm. Two pawns were found at Drutsk (fig. 8: 2-3; Alekseev 1966: fig. 68: 11-12; Linder 1975: 79, fig. 5: a-b). The pawn from the hillfort of Mstislavl was found together with a fragment of a chess piece, dating to the 13th century. It has the form of a cylinder with a slightly concaved sides and a hemispherical top (photo 14; Medvedeva 2004: 164, fig. 6: 14-15; 2005: 29, fig. 3: 4-5; 2011a: 417, photo 7). Close comparisons for these pieces are known from Arabic style sets from Novgorod, Moscow and Riga (Gaidukov 1992: 89, fig. 74: 17; Kolyzin 1998: 120; Celmiņš 1996: 45, 9. att.: 8; Wichmann: 1960).

Photo 8. The abstract king (Polotsk, 16th-17th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

Old Russian style pieces

This style of chess set appeared in Belarus around the late 12th – early 13th centuries, as in the rest of Kyiv Rus. It continued to spread through to the 15th century – by which time they were the predominant form – and relied on a bone-turning lathe, a considerable innovation in working-time per job. The use of the lathe also reduce the angularity and use of projections found with Arabic style pieces. The technological advance resulted in chess pieces of more rounded form with complex tiered arrangements. From Belarus, to date, there are 36 examples of these so-called "Old Russian" pieces, comprising 4 queens, 5 rooks, 10 elephants (or bishops), 10 pawns, 5 fragments and 2 blanks.

Queen pieces were found in Polotsk, Drutsk and Luchno (all Polotsk district; fig. 3: 6-9). The Drutsk citadel example (fig. 3 7; photo 9) is 13th century and measures 3.3 cm (height) × 1.9 cm (diameter) (Alekseev 1966: fig. 68: 9; Medvedeva 2004: 156, fig. 3: 8; 2005: 33, fig. 7: 1; 2007: 753, photo 1; 2011a: 417, photo 4; Linder 1975: 119-120, fig. 1: a). The two queens from the Upper Castle of Polotsk date to the late 13th – early 14th century (fig. 3: 8-9; Linder 1975: 117; Rybina 1991: 99, fig. 5: 5; Shty-

Photo 9. The abstract queen (Drutsk, 13th-14th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

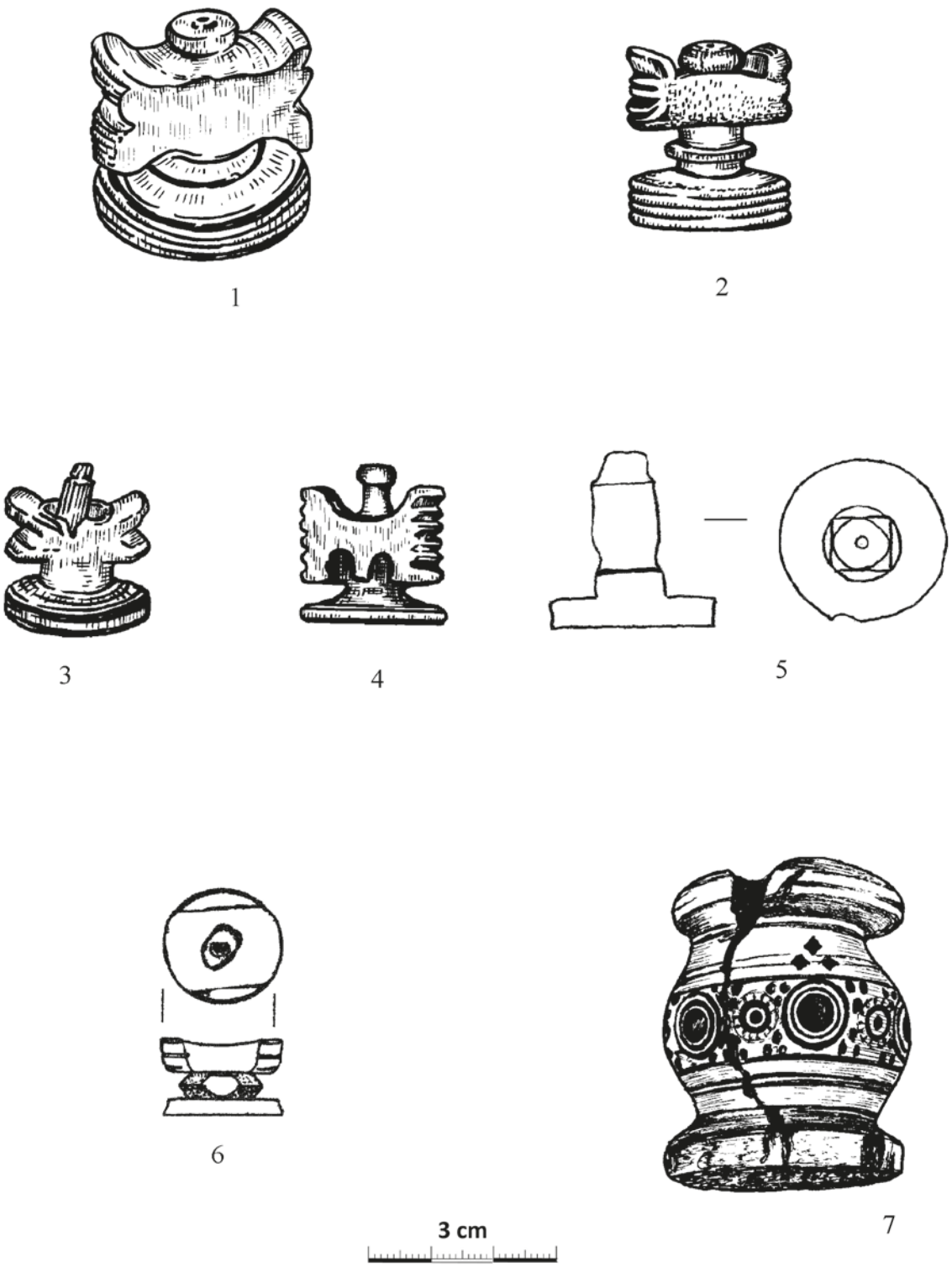

Fig. 5. Abstract chess of 13th-18th centuries. Rooks: 1 – Lida, 2, 3 – Vitebsk, 4 – Mstislavl, 5 – Kopys, 6 – Polotsk, 7 – Mogilev (1-7 – bone, antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

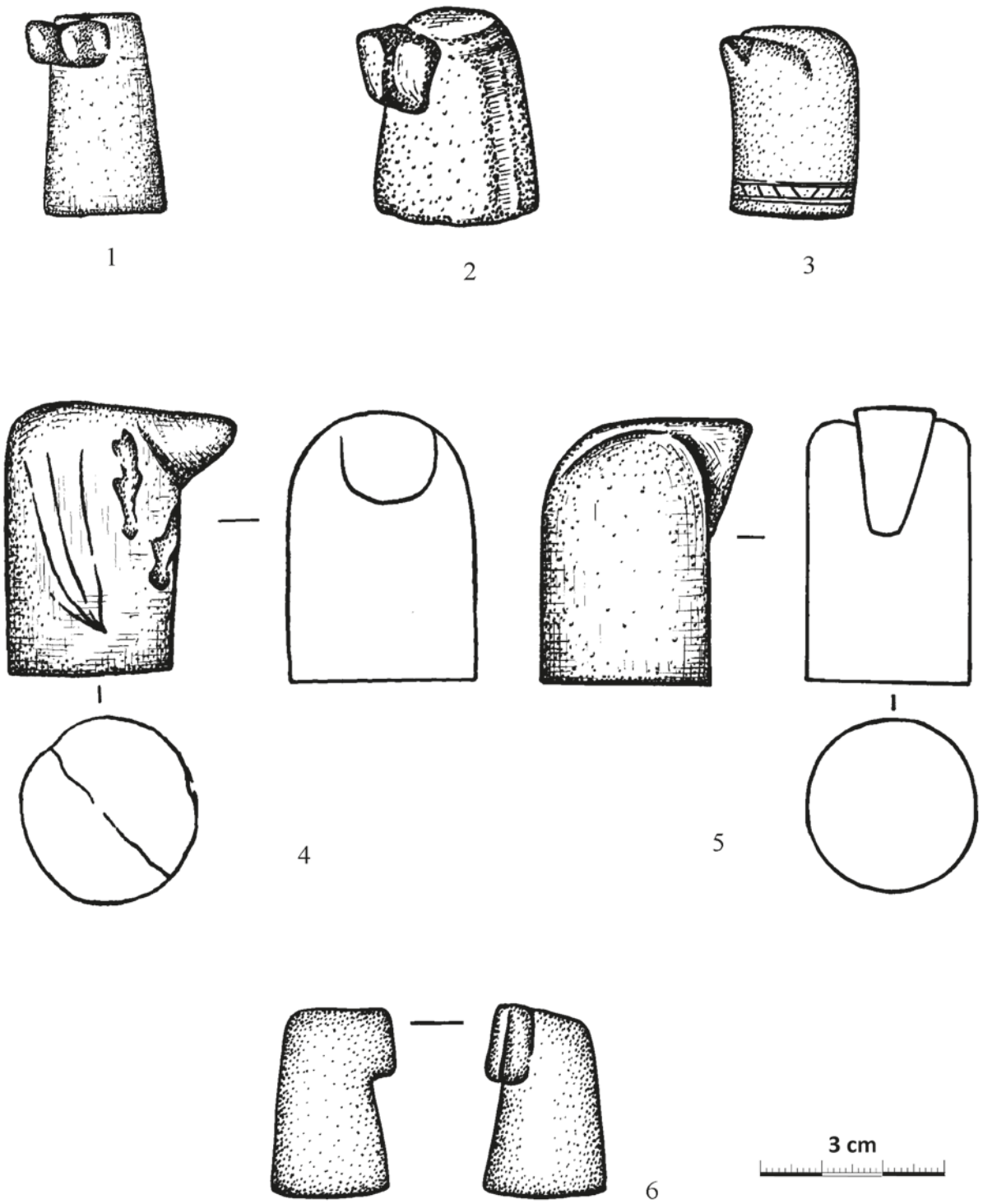

Fig. 6. Abstract chess of 11th-13th centuries: 1-3 – bishops (Drutsk, Slutsk, Turov), 4-6 – horses (Novogrudok, Turov, Gorodistche) (1-6 – antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

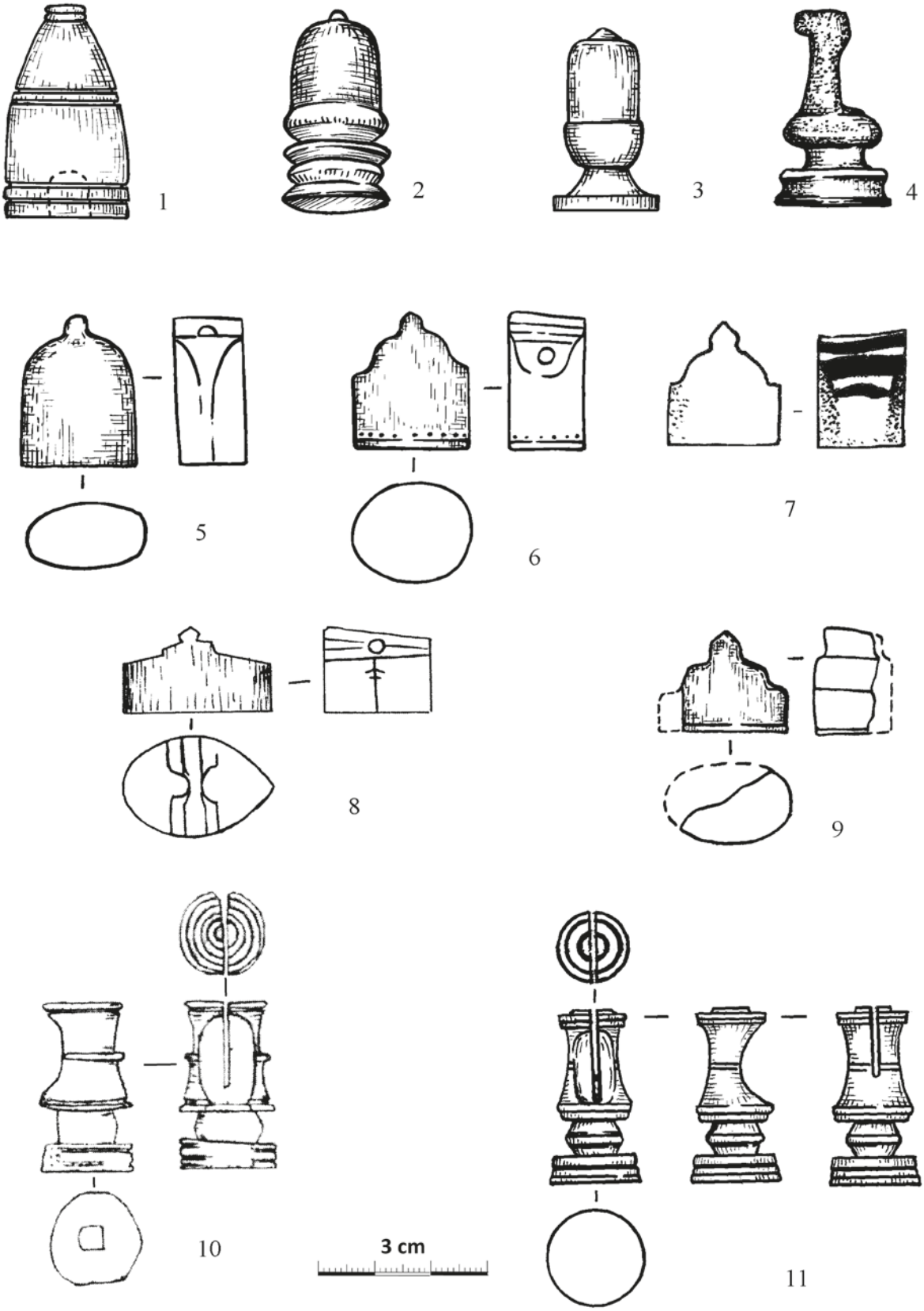

Fig. 7. Abstract chess of 13th-17th centuries. Bishops: 1, 2; 10 – Grodno, 3 – Slonim, 4, 7 – Polotsk, 5-6 – Minsk, 8, 9 – Ratjunki, 11 – Minsk (1–11 – bone, antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

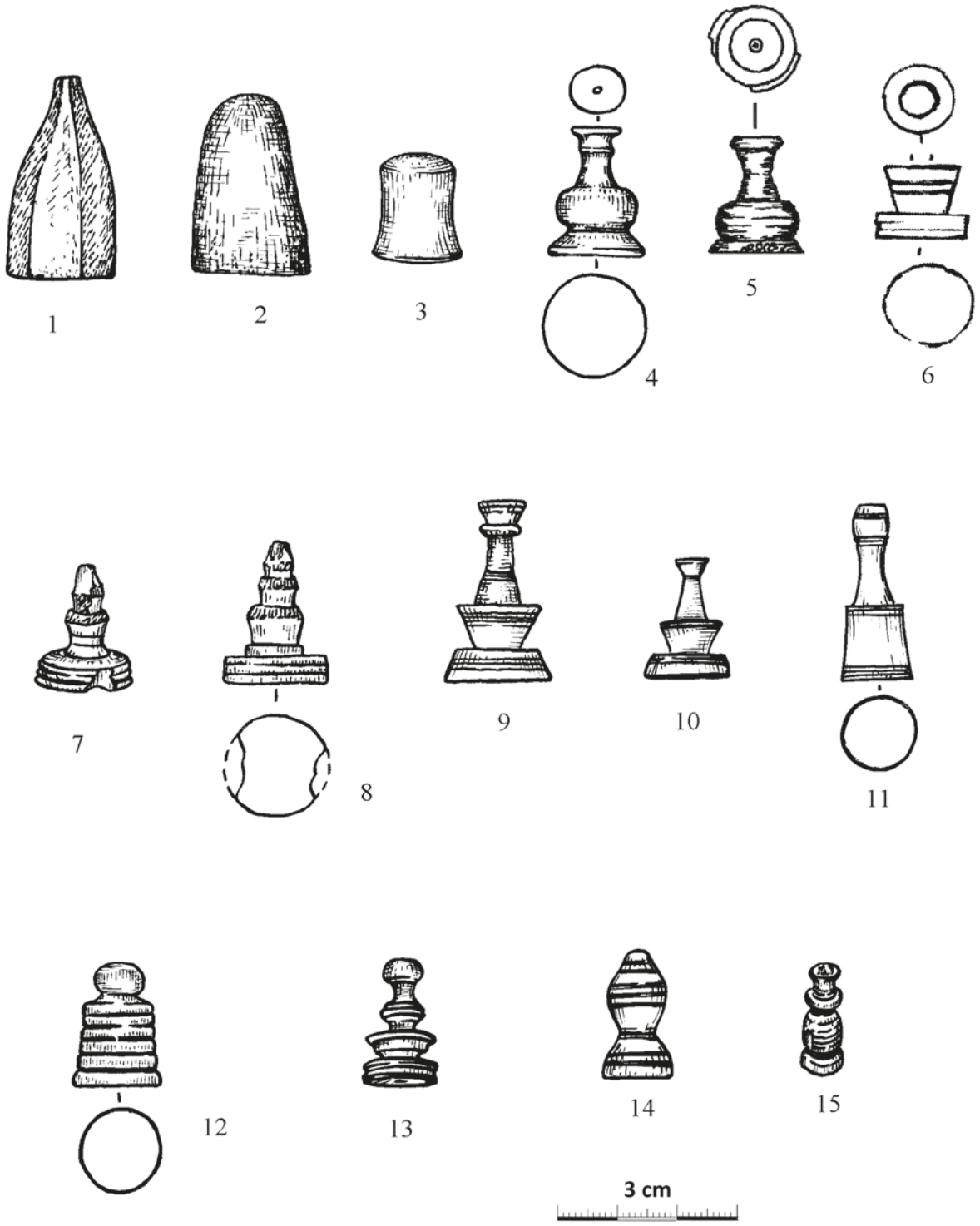

Fig. 8. Abstract chess of 12th-17th centuries. Pawns: 1 – Mstislavl, 2–3 – Drutsk, 4 – Kopys, 5 – Minsk, 6–8 – Polotsk, 9 – Drysvjaty, 10–11 – Novogrudok, 12 – Zaslavl, 13–15 – Vitebsk (1 – wood, 2–15 – bone, antler). Drawings by G. D. Molotkova

Photo 10. The abstract rook (Slutsk, 11th-12th c.).
Photo by L. V. Koledinsky

Photo 11. The abstract rook (Vitebsk, 13th-14th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

hov 1975: 94, fig. 48: 25). Both are very similar in size (approx. 3 x 2 cm) and shape, with a conical frame and bowl-shaped tiers decorated with linear designs (Myadzvedzeva 2004: 115-156, fig. 3: 6-7; 2005: 33, fig. 7: 2-3; 2006b: 72, fig. 1: 2-3; 2011b: 225, fig. 1: 4-5). Comparbale pieces are know from Novgorod and Kyiv (Artsikhovsky 1949: fig. 44: a; Sergeeva 2011: 156, fig. 58: 4).

Rook pieces were found in Vitebsk, Kopys, Lida and Mstislavl (fig. 5: 1-6). Typically they have a circular base supporting a cylindrical body with a protruding top. The two examples from Vitebsk, of the 13th-14th century are a little unusual (Shtyhov 1982: 33, fig. 4). One was found in the Lower Castle (fig. 5: 2) and the other in the Upper Castle (fig. 5: 3). They follow the typical size (approx.. 2.4 x 2.8 cm) and shape but with the addition of a hole in the middle of the top in which a wooden rod was inserted, a feature not known elsewhere (Medvedeva 2004: 159, fig. 4: 2; 2005: 34-35, fig. 7: 6-7; 2011a: 417, photo 3). This feature aside, comparable rooks in this style are known from Novgorod and Mangazeya (Russia), Vyshgorod (Ukraine) and Sēlpils (Latvia) (Belov 1981: 43, table 45: 5-6; Dovzhenok 1950: table VII: 4; Rybina 1991: 96, 98, fig. 5: 12-17; Šnore, Zarina 1980: 82, att.: 19)

Bishop pieces have been found in Grodno, Minsk, Polotsk, Ratyunki Braslavsky and Slonim (fig. 7; photo 14). This new form of bishop piece took the form of a cone without upper ledges. The type has two sub-types. The first has an incision in the top to symbolize the tusk prominences, echoing the Arabic style projections, which could not be replicated on a lathe. The Belarus corpus exhibits an example of this type from the Castle Hill, Grodno (fig. 7: 10; Voronin 1954: 75, 173, fig. 36: 5, 93: 5). The set is dated to the 13th-14th centuries. (Medvedeva 2004: 159, fig. 4: 1; 2005: 37, fig. 8: 5; 2011a: 417, photo 1). The second sub-type is demonstrated by two 13th-14th century bishops from the Minsk citadel. Both have a general conical shape, with a jagged top for one and a hole through the top (fig. 7: 6) and a pea-like top for the second, also pierced through with a hole (fig. 7: 5; Medvedeva 2004, 166, fig. 6: 11-12; 2005, 38, fig. 8: 6-7; 2008b, 61-62, fig. 2: 2-3). Similar bishop pieces have been found in Novgorod, Trakai (Lithuania) and the hillfort of Nikola-Lenivets (Kaluga, Russia) (Nicolskaya 1962: 239, fig. 11: 7; Rybina 1991: 99, fig. 5: 9; Linder 1968: 37-40).

Old Russian style pawns exhibit a change of form and the addition of linear patterns of decoration (fig. 8: 4-13). The form has a four-part division comprising a cylindrical base, above that a cup-tier) and a tapered frame with a thickened top finished with a shallow depression (fig. 8: 6-11, 13). They vary is size from 1.8-3 cm (height) x 1.2-1.7 cm (diameter) and examples have been found in Polotsk (3), Novogrudok (2), Minsk, Vitebsk, Zaslavl, Kopys and Drisvyaty. A variation on the form described possessed a spherical middle layer (fig. 8: 4-5; photo 15). A so far unique example

from Zaslavl, of 14th-15th century, takes the form of a truncated cone with a pea-like projection on the top and decorated with concentric circles (Medvedeva 2005: 39-43, fig. 9).

New abstract pieces

The further refinement of abstract style produced a variant form popular during the 16th-17th centuries and typified by many-tiered figures. Queen and king pieces of bowl-tiered forms disappeared and bishops also lost their well-defined features. Though the size of the pieces still varied, the form was unified (especially for kings, queens, rooks and pawns). To date 12 chessmen of this new type have been found in Belarus, all from different chess sets. They comprise three kings, from Polotsk (2) and Vitebsk, two queens, from Polotsk and Minsk, two rooks, from Polotsk and Mogilev, two bishops from Minsk, two pawns from Vitebsk and one fragment from Grodno. All the pieces are lathe-turned in horn and bone. The ever-increasing demand for chess among the people of Belarus led to the emergence in the 16th-17th centuries of a new craft speciality, that of chess-makers (where previously chess was made locally but as part of arrange of other objects). In the 16th century Belarusian chess-makers from Vitebsk had been engaged in manufacturing of chess sets in Moscow for the tsar and his court because of the perfection of their technical skill..

The king pieces generally have 5-6 elements, made in the form of decorated hemispheres or cones. One of the Polotsk kings (fig. 3: 4; photo 7) measures 7.2 × 2.6 cm and has a circular base upon which rises a frame supporting three large tiers. The lower tier has the form of a hemisphere, the middle is of cylindrical shape, and the final resembles a crown. The figure is decorated with circular-linear patterns inlaid with traces of a yellow metal (gold?; Medvedeva 2004: 153, fig. 3: 1; 2005: 46, fig. 11: 1; 2007: 753, photo 10; 2011: 225, fig. 1: 1). The second Polotsk king was found in the Upper Castle (fig. 3: 5; photo 8) and made of lathe-turned horn, measuring 6.5 × 2.6 cm. On this base two massive tiers separated by three belts are placed. On them two small tiers with waists rise and a flattened circle with waist completes the configuration. Tarasov, the excavator, interprets this piece as a queen (Tarasay 1991: 25). I suggest however that it is also a king piece, from

Photo 12. The abstract bishop (Drutsk. 12th-13th c.). Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

Photo 13. The abstract bishop (Slutsk, 13th c.). Photo by L. V. Koledinsky

Photo 14. The abstract pawn (Drutsk, 12th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

Photo 15. The abstract pawn (Minsk, 12th c.).
Photo by O. V. Medvedeva

a second set, given the size of the figure, the number of tiers and the height of the base (Medvedeva 2004: 153, fig. 3: 2; 2005: 46-47, fig. 11: 2; 2007: 753, photo 11; 2011b: 225, fig. 1: 2). Similar Russian pieces are known from Pskov and Moscow (of 14th-16th century date) and Mangazeya (of 17th century date) (Belov 1981; Rabinovich 1955, 79, fig. 26: 4) and there are similar bone pieces from Poland of 16th-17th century date (Kowalski 1993: 123, tabl. 19, 23). The king from Vitebsk is a cone with prolonged top, decorated with circular ornament and made of black-tinted bone (fig. 3: 3). At the bottom of the cone is a linear geometric pattern in the form of zigzags, filled with red ocher and linear patterns also decorate the upper part of the piece (Myadzvedzeva 2004: 153, fig. 3: 5; 2005: 47, fig. 11: 4).

The queen piece is stylistically similar but not identical to the king and is smaller, comprising a base, two bowl-shaped tiers and a conical top, generally 3-4 cm in height. An example was excavated in Polotsk (fig. 3: 10; Duc 2007: 196, fig. 81: 4; Medvedeva 2004: 156, fig. 3: 11; 2005: 48, fig. 11: 3; 2007: 753, photo 12; 2011b: 225, fig. 1: 3). Made of lathe-turned deer antler, it measures 4.3 (height) x 2.4 (diameter) cm. Its bowl-shaped tiers are massive and wide and are pierced with holes (four on each one) and decorated with linear patterns. An almost identical piece was found on Mount Kiselevka, Kyiv and of 14th-15th century date. It measures 6.5 x 3.5 cm and Linder describes it as a king (Linder 1975: 121, fig. 2: в; Sergeeva 2011: 156, fig. 58: 8; Shovkoplyas 1965: 199, fig. 2: 9). Could it be a queen, like the Polotsk example? The queen piece from Minsk, excavated by Rusov (fig. 3: 11; Rusay 2000: 169) is made of lathe-turned elk antler and rather resembles a fir-tree in overall appearance, surmounted by a pea-like head with two apertures. It measures 3 cm (height) x 1.9 cm (diameter). To all appearances this queen was probably from a traveling chess set, belonging to a board with peg holes (Medvedeva 2004: 156, fig. 3: 10; 2005: 48, fig. 11: 5; 2008b: 62, fig. 2: 4). It remains a unique find.

The new abstract form of rook piece has been found in Mogilev and in Polotsk, both made of elk antler (fig. 5: 6-7). The excavator interpreted the piece as a "boat" type of rook from the 17th century (Marzalyuk 1998: 49, 119, fig. 51A: 7; Myadzvedzeva 2004: 159, fig. 4: 13). The figure has a round barrel

torso ending with a semicircular flatted head. The middle of the figure is decorated with a geometric pattern of circles and lines. It measures 5 (height) x 3.8 (diameter) cm (Medvedeva 2004: 159, fig. 4: 13; 2005, 49, fig. 12: 1). This is not a traditional boat rook but an example of the new abstract type, very similar to the Western European rook in the shape of a tower.

This form of bishop piece is represented in Belarus by an example from the Upper Town, Minsk and made of elk antler (fig. 7: 11). It is fully described by the excavator Rusov (Medvedeva 2004: 161, fig. 5: 6; 2005, 48, fig. 11: 5; 2007, 53, photo 13; 2008b: 62, fig. 2: 5). It measures 3.2 (height) × 0.6 (diameter) cm and is decorated with linear ornament. Several similar bishops from Belarus were found in Grodno and also in the hillfort at Nikolo-Lenivetz (Kaluga, Russia), dating to the 12th-13th century, from Novgorod, dating to the 14th-15th century, and Trakai (Lithuania), dating to the 14th-15th century (Linder 1975: 87, fig. 2a, c. 123-125, fig. 4, 5; Nicolskaya 1962: 239, fig. 11: 7; Rybina 1991: 99, fig. 5: 9, 10).

Two pawns of the new abstract form were excavated in the Lower Castle of Vitebsk. Both were made of lathe turned elk antler and date to the 17th century. One is composed of three sections, of which the upper section has broken away (fig. 8: 14). The height is 2.2 cm and the diameter 1.2 cm. It is decorated with linear patterns (Bubenko 1984: 9; Medvedeva 2004: 165, fig. 6: 8, 10; 2005: 50, fig. 12: 3). The second pawn (fig. 8: 15) measures cm (height) × 0.8 cm (diameter). It is coloured black, indicating it was part of a set of two different colours. Its small size and hole on the underside of the base suggest it was made as part of a travelling set on a pegged board – ther eis similar example amidst the 16th century set from Mangazeya (Belov 1981: 44, tabl. 45: 11).

It should be noted that the ever-increasing demand for chess among people had led to the emergence in the 16th-17th c. new speciality of craftsmen – chess-makers. In the 16th century Belarusian chess-makers from Vitebsk had been engaged in manufacturing of chess sets in Moscow for the tsar and his court. Their skill and technical education had been perfect. Chess-pieces from archaeological excavations in Belarus demonstrate the high value placed on chess by the people of Belarus, across several social classes. The cultural achievement of the medieval and post-medieval society of Belarus was fully in tune with and on a par with that of her European and Russian neighbours.

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Old Rus Chess Pieces of Bone and Antler from Kyiv and the Kyiv Region

Chess was one of the most well-known games in Old Rus. Its popularity was reflected in the epics (Lipets 1969: 274–278; Linder 1975: 126–144) and attested archaeologically (Linder 1975: 54, 69–76). Chess pieces made of bone and antler were found throughout all the regions of Old Rus, including Kiev and settlements in the Kiev principality. These chess pieces were made by native craftsmen and, therefore, they are examples of Old Russian bone carving products. Accordingly, they represent not only the development of the forms of chess pieces in Kiev Rus, but also the professional skill of the local bone carving craft. This Kievan context of chess in Old Rus is the focus of this paper.

The spread of chess in Kyiv Rus.

According to the written sources, chess was rather popular in Old Rus, at least, among the urban population. In epic narrative, chess was usually associated with the elite strata of society (Lipets 1969: 274). Nevertheless chess pieces are not numerous, causing particular surprise in the case of such a large city, as medieval Kyiv was. Typically they were made from antler. Only single items of antler are known outside Kiev, in other towns. It is possible that wooden chess pieces prevailed in the South of Rus, as it was shown after researches in Novgorod, where many wooden products were preserved (Rybina 1997: 112). However, because of the poor preservation of wood in the acidic soils we have no information about the wooden chess pieces in Southern Rus (Linder 1975: 54) assumed that chess reached Russia in the 9th-10th centuries. According to Rybina (1991: 100; 1997: 112), reliably dated chess pieces from Novgorod did not appear until the thirteenth century. In Kyiv, the oldest reliably dated chess pieces come from the layers dated to 11th-12th century. A fragmentary figurine, probably a chess piece, was found during excavations on the 14 Patorzhinskogo St., in 2000. It was in a pit, which the excavators dated to the 11th century (Movchan, Borovskiy, Klimovskiy 2000: 13-14). Three chess pieces (fig. 1: 7, 9, 10) were found during excavations in 1981 on the 9 Polina Osipenko St. (now Stritenska St.) on the site of a large building of the 12th century (Borovskiy, Sahaydak 1985: 43, fig. 10). The chess pieces that were found during the first half of the 20th century on Mount Starokyivska and Mount Kyselivka (fig. 1: 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11) could not be reliably dated because of the lack of documentation relevant to their finding. By comparison they can be dated to the Old Russian period. The full range of pieces from Kiev has been catalogued in detail elsewhere and I refer the reader to those sources (Khanenko, Khanenko 1902: pl. XXXIV: b; Shovkoplyas 1965; Shovkoplyas 1973: fig. 5: 3; Linder 1975; Borovskiy, Sahaydak 1985: 43, fig. 10; Sergeeva 2011: pl. 49: 1-9, 12, 15).

The most common form of chess piece from medieval Kyiv and its territory was the abstract one. Only one of the Kiev chess pieces is biomorphic, taking the form of a realistic looking horse (Movchan, Borovskiy, Arkhipova 1998: 117, fig. 6). It is identified as a knight, and was found in 1993, on Volodymyrska St. It is possibly unfinished, suggesting it can be identified as the work of a native craftsman (fig. 1: 1).

The figurine of horse in question stylistically differs from other Old Russian figurative chess pieces, therefore, a question may arise about its real purpose. Old Russian objects of carved bone are gener-

ally scarce. Accordingly, they were expensive and were, to a certain extent, of status character. Thus, the interpretation of the figurine as a toy could not be accepted. For the Old Russian time the facts of manufacturing expensive toys carved from bone are generally unknown. The treatment of the figurine as a decorative item is also unlikely, given the lack of analogies. Thus, the interpretation of the finding as a chess piece is only suitable. It should be noted that a figurine of horse as a chess piece dated back to the 13th century also comes from Novgorod (Linder 1975: 94). The horse figurines found in Old Russian towns give reason to suppose that the East Slavic name of the chess knight that is a chess horse already appeared in Old Rus. In this regard, it should be noted that Western figurative chess knights were always portrayed as riders corresponding to their European name.

The abstract chess pieces from Kiev echo the form of Arab chess pieces of the 8th-10th centuries, and are a common form throughout the medieval period. They have many analogies in other Old Russian cities, as is clearly seen from the table compiled by Rybina (1997: pl. 79). The same style of chess pieces was also common in Western and Central Europe, as demonstrated, for example, by the set from Sandomierz (Gąssowska 1964). The queen and knight pieces within the Sandomierz set are similar in form to the abstract examples found in Kyiv. It supports the supposition that Kyiv bone carvers used well-known models for their products. The exception seems to be the biomorphic horse piece. Figurative chess pieces in general can be considered as the result of individual creativity of separate masters and a new local element. Chess of the Islamic or Arab mode, the form of which underlies early European items, has a fairly simple shape. Its core was a cylinder. All the pieces have in common a cylindrical base to which additional details are added to create the distinctive range of pieces. A king and a queen had cuts at the top of the cylinder, the main distinction of a knight was a ledge at the top, and that for the bishop was a forked lug. The pawns were the simplest figures. Two pawns excavated by V. Chvojka (Shovkoplias 1965: fig. 2: 6, 7; Sergeeva 2011: pl. 49: 6, 7) look like cylinders without additional parts and with the upper part cut in the form of a tent (fig. 1: 5, 6).

The rook had a different method of carving, comprising a rectangular base and two knobs on its top (fig. 1: 10). As a rule, researchers associate the Arabic name of this figure (rookh) with the name of a mythical bird and believe that the shape of the figure symbolizes its wings (Linder 1975: 29; Lavysh 2008: 103-104). Another interpretation of the name of this chess piece was suggested by Gorbach (2001: 134), who indicated that rokh in Arabic and Persian means a battle elephant, complete with a canopy saddle-tower and archers within it. It is quite right to assume that this interpretation is more logical if we relate it to the names of the other chess pieces, all connected with military terminology. We should then expect the rook name to reflect its gaming function. In any case, it is hard to believe that Old Russian bone carvers had any information about the real significance of a rook, but that they tried more or less exactly to replicate oriental models. In the Slavic cultural tradition the form of a rook soon came to be associated with a ship, and this meaning was attached to the chess piece in question.

According to Linder (1975: 84-85) in the 12th-13th centuries new symbolic forms of chess pieces appeared in Old Rus, of European rather than Eastern origin. The rook found in Kyselivka is an example of this type (fig. 1: 11; fig. 2: 1). It preserves in general the shape of the traditional symbolic rokh, but is more complicated and carefully carved. The upper portion is pierced by a centrally placed, small hole. Unfortunately, this chess piece cannot be accurately dated. Archaeological research on Mount Kyselivka took place in the late 19th and in the early 20th centuries but were not properly documented, making it difficult to attribute reliable dates to the finds. Linder has dated it to the 12th or 13th centuries, but this dating remains hypothetical.

Another rook (fig 1: 12; fig.2: 2), made in this style, but without central hole, was found near Kiev in Vyshgorod (Dovzhenok 1950: pl. VII: 4; Shovkoplyas 1965: fig. 2: 2). Its date also could not be exactly determined. The context of discovery permits the assumption that the chess piece in question dates from Old Russian times, probably the 12th-13th centuries. New symbolic shapes appear in post-Mongol times (13th-14th centuries). The examples of chess pieces of this type are the bishop from the Mount Kyselivka (fig. 3: 1) and the king from Mount Starokyivska (fig. 3: 2).

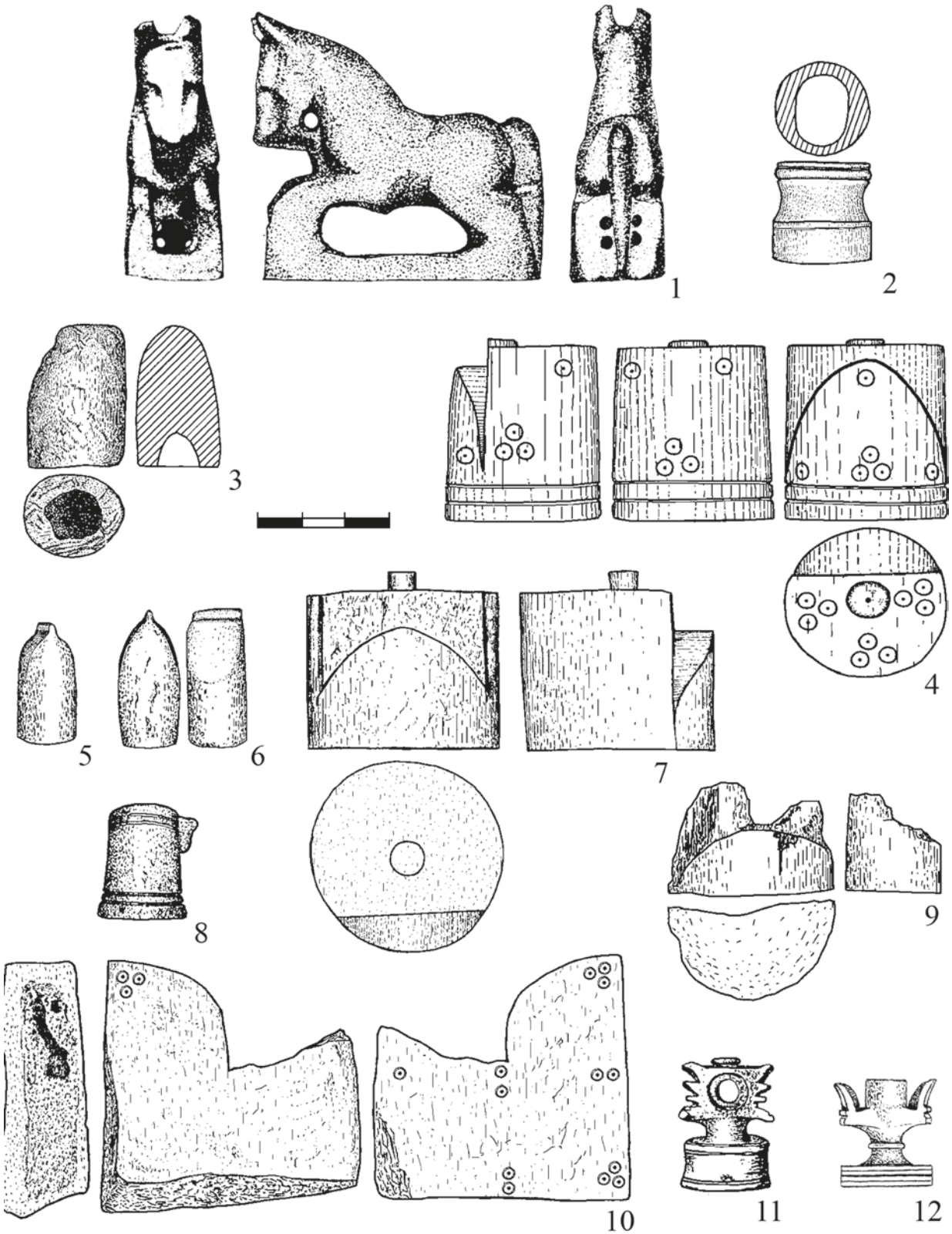

Fig. 1. Chess pieces from Kyiv (1 – 11) and Vyshgorod (12). 1 – after Movchan, Borovskiy, Arkhipova 1998: fig. 6 ; 12 – after Dovzhenok 1950: pl. VII: 4 ; the rest after Sergeeva 2011: pl. 49

Fig. 2. A new symbolic form of a rook: 1 – Kyiv, 2 – Vyshgorod. Photo by author

Fig. 3. The chess pieces from 13th-14th centuries. Kiev. Photo by author

Fig. 4. Specimen from Lyubech (Chernihiv region), supposedly a game piece. After Rybakov 1958: fig. 58

Another artifact that is worthy of mention in connection with chess is a piece made from polished deer antler, found at St. Michael's Monastery in Kyiv (fig. 1: 3). It was found in one of the Old Russian graves (Sergeeva 2011: tab. 49, 9). The upper part of this piece is completed on two faces to form a conical shape; the base has a centrally place, conical hollow with a diameter of 13 mm, and a depth of 7.5 mm. Its simplicity and plainness have encouraged its interpretation as a chess pawn. Its form resembles that of the pawns from the excavations by V. Chvojka. But the relatively large dimensions of the item from St. Michael's Monastery (its height is 33 mm, and its diameter is 20.5 x 23 mm) make such an interpretation somewhat questionable. The presence of a hollow on the base perhaps encourages another function of this specimen, although its application as gaming piece (not necessarily chess) is possible.

Another subject that researchers following I. Linder interpret as a chess piece is a hollow cylinder of bone crafted and polished very carefully (fig. 1: 2). This is the only example of a chess piece made of bone found in Kyiv. Whilst it is certainly possible that this may be a chess piece, it is far from certain and it may well be something else, such as part of a handle or an enclosing ring.

I want to also mention the very interesting type of piece made of antler, which raises some questions about their interpretation and dating. These items have oval bases, declivous shoulders and a ledge at the top. Haphazard notches are sometimes cut on the base. Sometimes they are pierced through with holes. The shape of these objects supports a gaming function, but some of them could have been made or used for other purposes. For example, flat specimens are sometimes interpreted as the details of composite handles of knives or other tools (Lysenko 2004: 69). These include a specimen from Lyubech in the Chernihiv region (fig. 4). Nevertheless, the relationship of at least some of these items with games is possible and chess is the preferred supposition in such scenarios. Such an interpretation is not proven but is acceptable, especially in the case of those pieces with flat, circular bases, such as those from the Chornobyl settlement near Kiev, dated from 12th-13th centuries (fig. 5). This settlement was excavated in 2004-2008 (Pereverzev 2008).

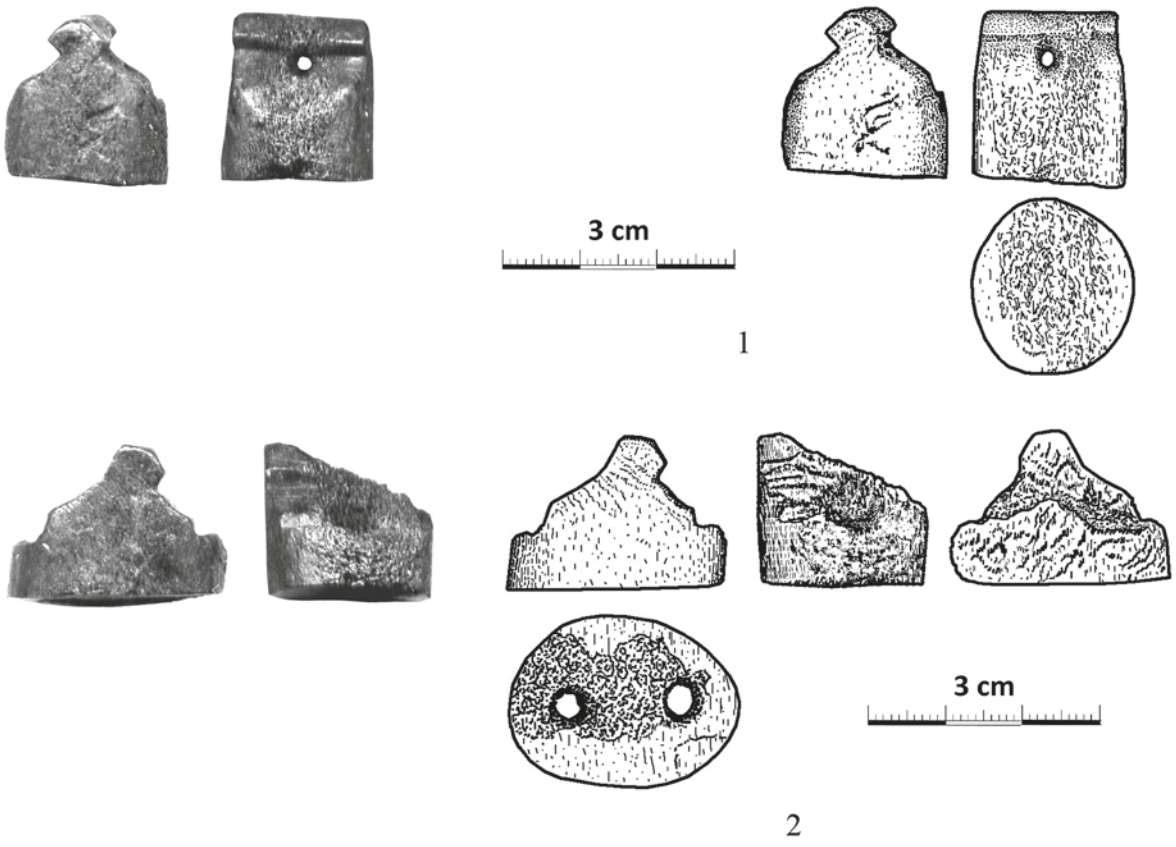

Fig. 5. Chess pieces from Chornobyl settlement. Photo and graphic by author

Two specimens mentioned above are as yet unpublished, so require more detailed description here. Both have a similar form, consisting of a cylindrical lower part, declivous shoulders and a ledge at the top. They share a similar height of around 20 mm. One of the items in question has a rounded base, 21-22 mm in diameter, and in the central part of its top is a horizontal through hole (fig. 5: 1). The other piece has an oval base 30 x 23 mm in size, and cross-cutting parallel, vertical holes (fig. 5: 2). Both items were knife-carved from antler.

Items of this specified shape are known among the medieval antiquities found in Eastern Europe. The area of their distribution includes the Old Rus territory of Belarus (Medvedeva 2005: fig. 8: 6, 7; fig 9: 9; Medvedeva 2006: fig. 1: 4, 5); the Middle Dnieper area (Smilenko 1969: fig. 10: 1; Sergeeva 2011: pl. 49: 12); and Bulgaria on Volga (Zakirova 1988: fig. 103: 6; Rudenko 2005: pl. 19: 383-385). The meaning of the pieces of this type remains under discussion. Rudenko (2005: 74), publishing subjects of similar type from Bulgaria on Volga, believes them to be pawns. A similar piece found in Minsk was identified by O. Medvedeva as a bishop (Medvedeva 2005: 38; 2006: 72). The same author treated another specimen from Belarus (from settlement in Ratsunki), with differing proportions and no holes, as a pawn (Medvedeva, 2005: 43).

The chess pieces described above can be dated within wide chronological parameters. According to Medvedeva the items from Minsk (Belarus) should be associated with layers of 13th-15th centuries. The piece from the Ratsunki settlement came from the level dated to the 11th-13th centuries. Medvedeva (2005: 43; fig. 9: 9) also associates this item with the characteristic pieces from the 13th-15th centuries. We have at least three specimens from the Middle Dnieper area, which could date from the 12th-13th centuries. One item comes from the settlement of Kichkas, which is now within the precincts of Zaporizhia (Smilenko 1969: fig. 10: 1), and two items are from Chornobyl hillfort. Both settlements could date exactly from the 12th-13th centuries. It thus appears that this form of

chess piece and those of the new symbolic pieces of European origin overlapped chronologically.

In general we can say that the distribution pattern of chess across the wide area of Old Rus was caused by the intensive cultural contacts between the populations of different regions of Europe and the East. A result of these contacts was the cross-cultural adoption of various practices, including board games. Chess probably reached Rus from the Arab world, through Bulgaria on Volga (there is no reason to deny this proposition by I. Linder). Present evidence shows that the chess pieces excavated in Novgorod are no earlier in date than the 13th century whilst chess in Kiev seem to appear from the late 11th century. This suggests a distribution pattern throughout Eastern Europe which moved from south to north. Within this general pattern we see variaitons, including types of chess piece characteristic of Rus and Bulgaria on Volga. This variation may have resulted from the same, wider spread from South to North or they may have spread South into Bulgaria from Old Rus as a result of merchant and cultural contacts. This is currently an unproven hypothesis, its proving requires further research fuelled by fresh excavation and finds.

Making of chess pieces in Kyiv Rus

Making chess pieces required specialized tools and an expenditure of labour. Kyiv chess pieces were made mainly of antler, which afforded the best workable qualities to creating the necessary shapes. A turning lathe was used to make the abstract chess pieces, with the exception of the rook, because of its form. The additions characteristic for every kind of chess pieces, (as described above), somewhat complicated the process of turning the pieces and required certain skills in processing a raw material.

The rook piece has a shape which assumes the use of a knife or chisel. A lathe was used only for making the bases of the pieces of the new symbolic mode. The rook from Vyshgorod can be seen as an example of professional work of high quality, including the very qualitative turning of its base. This piece could be a product of one of the Kiev workshops, but equally we cannot rule out carvers from Vyshgorod. To date a bone carving workshop has not been excavated in Vyshgorod, but the range and number of artistic bone artifacts from this town permits the supposition that native carvers were at work there.

More complex figurative images required specialized cutting instruments, as for the chess knight from Volodymyrska St. For the making of this figure a drill was also used. Holes were drilled in untreated parts of the figurine (Movchan, Borovskiy, Arkhipova 1998: 117), perhaps they were of auxiliary significance for the further treatment of details.

Sometimes the chess were ornamented with carved lines cut around the base. The knight from Mount Kyselivka and the rook from Vyshgorod were ornamented during turning. Equal lines could be made only in such way. The lines, which we can see on the base of the rook from Mount Kyselivka are somewhat crooked and less carefully carved, suggesting they were made without the help of a turning lathe. Some items have circle-and-dot ornament made with a special tool. The item from Mount Kyselivka has a round, transverse hole in the center, which was carefully made with a drill. Around it is an ornamental line carved with a knife or chisel.

Kyiv bone carvers then used a full set of special tools and implements, including a lathe, for making chess pieces. The distinction of most of the chess pieces made by Kiev bone carvers is their high quality of manufacture and product processing. They were clearly made by highly professional craftsmen.

H. Shovkoplyas (1965: 199) suggested a connection between some of the finds of chess pieces from Kiev with already known bone carving workshops. To date at least seven bone and antler working workshops have been identified in Kyiv (Sergeeva 2011: fig, 1). However the lack of reliable documentation concerning the finding of the chess pieces does not allow any certain connections to be made between the finds and the excavated workshops. The closest thing to a certain connection is between the two pawns from the excavations of V. Khvojka, which were found very close to the bone-carving workshop on Mount Starokyivska (also investigated by V. Khvojka).

Two gaming pieces from the Chornobyl settlement differ from the Kyiv items. They are quite crudely carved from antler with a knife and their shape is somewhat crooked and non-symmetric. It seems that the two items were probably made by

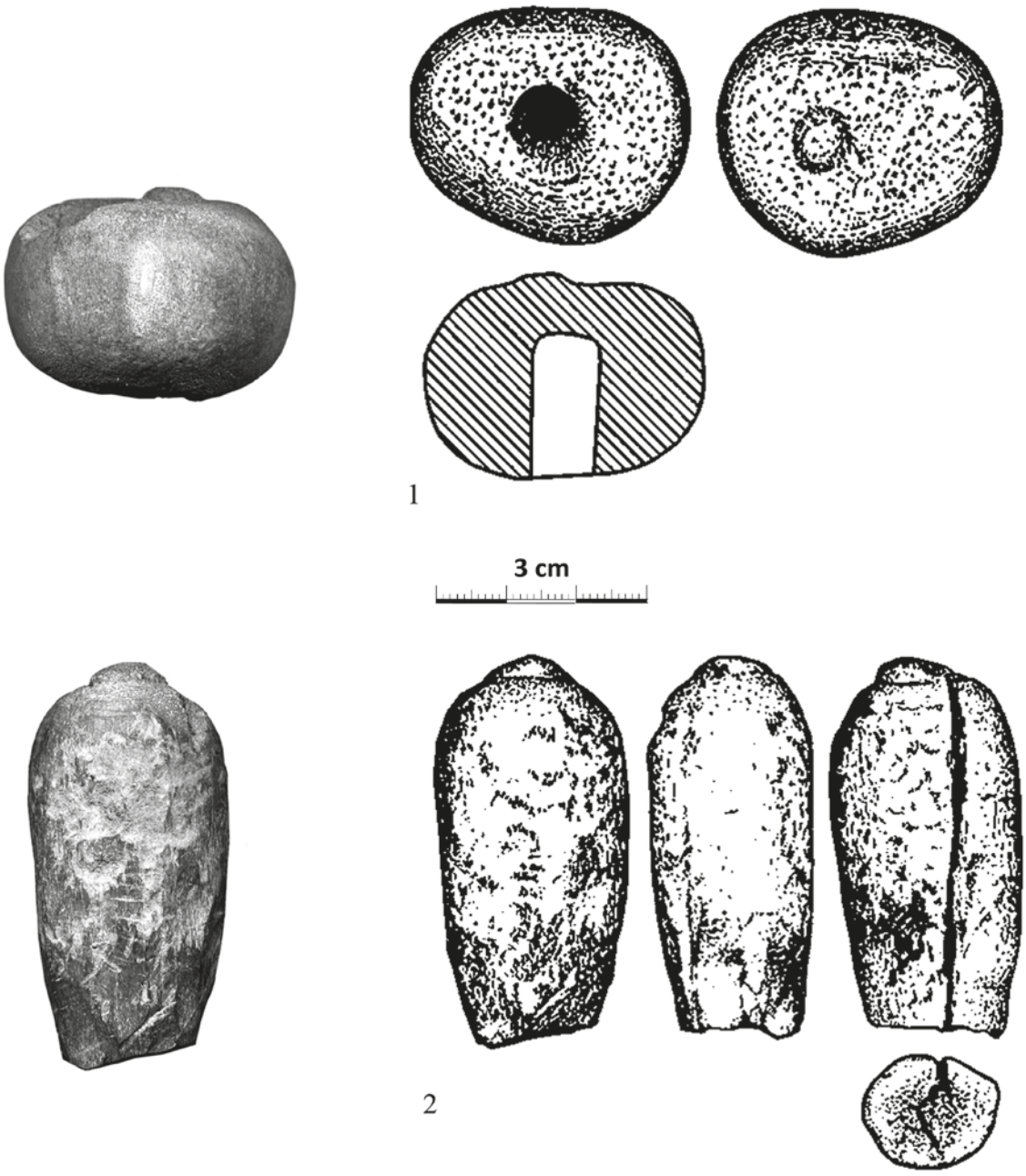

Fig. 6. Unfinished objects, supposedly semi-manufactured gaming pieces. Photo and graphic by author

one person. It should be noted that no traces of bone carving workshops within the Chornobyl settlement have yet been found. Professional bone carving products are absent in the assemblage of excavated materials from the settlement. So, these two specimens should perhaps be attributed to the product of ancillary home crafts. It is possible that the carver made them for his own immediate needs.

In connection with the production of chess or other game pieces we should pay attention to two unfinished objects of deer antler coming from the Podil area of Kyiv (fig. 6). Both can be dated from 12th century. One was found in 16 Voloska St. (excavated in 1988). It is ovoid, with a slightly flattened top. Its surface is polished and it has a small knob on top (fig. 6: 1). On the base is a small hole 9 mm in diameter and 20 mm deep. Within the yard where this specimen was found there were some other remains of bone carving, including blanks, semi-manufactured goods, and waste products. This complex has

already been considered and attributed to sporadic short-term manufacture of an auxiliary character because of the relatively small number of artifacts associated with bone carving (Sergeeva 2011: 17). The second, unfinished object was found during excavations in 2004 in Nizhniy Val St. This item is cylindrical or drop-shaped, and also has a small knob on the top. It measures 55 mm in height with a base diameter of 19 x 20 mm. The final intended shape of the piece was roughly outlined with a knife. On one side is a deep fissure, suggesting the piece was abandoned as defective (fig. 6: 2).

These two specimens are noteworthy because of their possible meaning as semi-manufactured gaming pieces (probably for chess for possibly for hnefatafl or another game). One of them was connected to small-scale bone carving within a workshop not primarily for that activity whilst the other may be a piece of domestic production. As with the Chornobyl items, these two unfinished objects from Podil evidence the manufacturing of gaming pieces not only by professional carvers in stationary workshops, but also by persons whose bone carving practice was auxiliary and a sporadic occupation. This fact, in its turn, can be considered alongside the evidence for the spread of chess and other games. This was evidently not restricted to the elite strata of society, but was also played amongst urban (and may be rural) populations in general. Moreover, the citizens could use not only simple wooden chess pieces, but also more expensive items of bone and antler.

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Kristina Lavysh

A Vizier from Lukoml and a Pawn from Volkovysk: on Imported and Locally Manufactured Products Among the Finds of Figurative Chessmen in Rus

Figurative chessmen are seldom found in Old Russian towns. So far, it is known about 12 finds, and half of them have been found in the territory of Western Rus. They are made in a realistic manner and furnish information about the arms and everyday life of that time. All of them are highly artistic specimens of applied arts. Researchers usually associate the figurative chessmen with the Western tradition, however, there are known Spanish-Arab, Iraqi and Central Asian figurative chessmen.

A queen found in Lukoml represents a man with a Negroid appearance, sitting cross-legged. A figurative pawn found in Volkovysk is carved in ivory and represents a dismounted warrior with a tembrel and a curved stick. A tembrel with a curved stick was not used in Old Rus, but it was used in Byzantium, rarer – in the West, as evidenced by pictorial sources. According to the manner of manufacture and the costume details (especially, the headwear), a chessman from Volkovysk is similar to the warriors, carved on the rook, also found in Volkovysk. In its turn, the rook from Volkovysk is very similar to the rook found in Grodno. These observations allow raising an issue of imported origin of the chessmen under consideration or at least about a strong foreign impact on their manufacture.

Figurative chessmen are seldom found in Old Russian towns. E. A. Rybina has registered 9 chess pieces: two from Volkovysk and one each from Brest, Lukoml, Grodno, Slutsk, Novgorod, Staraya Ryazan and Belaya Vezha (Rybina 1991: 90-91). To this must be added the chessmen found in Chernihiv in 1991, in Kyiv in 2000 and in Pskov in 1991 (Ignatenko, Kovalenko 1993: 38-39; Kovalenko 2006: 91, 101, fig. 5; Stepanov, Yakovleva 1994: 98, fig. 2: 3; cf. Khamajko 2017). Of this total of 12 pieces, six have been found in the territory of Western Rus. All are made in a realistic, artistically accomplished manner and furnish information about the arms and everyday life of that time. The figurative chessmen sets were very expensive and only persons of elite status could afford to own them. Researchers usually associate the figurative chessmen with the Western mediaeval tradition. However, there are known mediaeval Spanish-Arab, Iranian, Iraqi and Central Asian figurative chessmen.

Some of the figurative chessmen found in Rus were undoubtedly imported, including the bishop from Sarkel-Belaya Vezha (Artamonov 1958: 75, fig. 51: 1; Pletneva 1996: 43-44, 153, fig. 16) and the king from Chernihiv (Kovalenko 2006: 91, 101, fig. 5), both carved in ivory. However other pieces give rise to strong doubts about their Old Russian origin. I wish to explore two of them here: a vizier (queen) from Lukoml and a pawn from Volkovysk.

The vizier (queen) from Lukoml was found by G. V. Shtykhov in the fortified central part of the early medieval city (citadel) during the archaeological excavation in 1966. It was found in the north-east corner of the square No. 21 at a depth of 115 cm, in the layer of the 12th century (Shtykhov 1969: 321, fig. 18). It is 4.7 cm high, with an oval base measuring (typically for chessmen) 2.2 by 2.5 cm. It is in form of person seated in the „Turkish way" (cross-legged), with arms crossed across the breast (fig. 1: 1). There seems to be a bracelet on his arm. There is a round cap on his head or possibly a helmet as it appears to have a row of rivets, and one can see the hair hanging down from under the cap/helmet. The face has a protruding chin, a flat and wide nose, and is, perhaps surprisingly, clean-shaven. The Negroid-like facial features are rather rugged, but his appearances express confidence and authoritativeness. The pose, the costume details (es-

Fig. 1. Chess and Hnefatafl pieces.

1 – Chessman vizier (queen) or hnefatafl piece. Elk antler. 12th century. Found in Lukoml. Excavations by G. V. Shtykhov. Minsk, National Historical Museum of Republic of Belarus. After Vysotskaya 1983: fig. 7. Drew. Medvedeva 2004, fig. 2: 1

2 – Chessman (king?). Ivory. Found in Afrasiab (?). Sankt-Petersburg, the State Hermitage. V. N. Kastalsky's collection

3 – Chessman (rook). Antler. 13th century. Found in Wrocław. Wrocław, Institute of Archaeology of the Wrocław University. After Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: fig. 8)

4 – Hnefatafl king piece. Bronze. Late 10th century. Found in Černaja mogila (Chernihiv). Moscow, the State Historical Museum

5 – Hnefatafl king piece. Jet. Found in Suffolk (no provenance). Photographs provided by Mark Hall, originating with Caroline McDonald, Ipswich Museum, Suffolk, England

pecially the arm bracelet), the manner of manufacture and the whole character of an unarmed figure suggest that the craftsman who had made the chess piece wanted to represent a noble man, girded with power. The vizier is carved from elk antler which reveals its local production, however, its overall oriental character calls attention to itself - it represents a man with a Negroid appearance in the oriental dress and pose – seated cross-legged.

The man's pose, appearances and his costume cast some doubt on its local manufacture (Rybina 1991: 91). It is worth noting that presumably the king from the Hermitage collection (V. N. Kastalsky's collection) is sitting in the similar pose, with his leg tucked under himself (fig. 1: 2). The origin of the chessman is unknown, but it may be related to the finds from Afrasiab (Buryakov 1980: 167-168, fig. 3b). This piece is carved in ivory and shows a sitting man, with his, now damaged, right leg tucked under himself and his left leg straight. His left arm rests on his knee, the right arm is lost. He appears to be wearing a turban-like piece of headgear. He wears a big necklace. At first this figure was thought to be a pawn, but later researchers see the figure as representing a noble, unarmed man, which is proved by the type of his figure with a broad chest and a slim waist. The man's belonging to the gentlefolk is emphasized by his big necklace. In early chess sets the only unarmed figure was the king. In this case it now seems impossible to identify this chess piece as a pawn (Buryakov 1980: 169).

The closest known analogy in relation to pose, the costume details and the manner of manufacture is a chess piece found in Wrocław in 2001 (fig. 1: 3). It was found in a well dated to the late 13th – early 14th century archaeological context. (Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 76-78, rys. 8). The piece is represented realistically as a warrior, with an almond-shaped shield in his left hand and some kind of weapon in his right hand. This was possibly a sword, but it is not well preserved, most of it and also the right hand are lost. The pose of this piece is similar to that of the piece from Lukoml – he is sitting on his haunches. Also similar are the headwear and the hair cut – there is a round cap or helmet on his head and one can see the hair of the same length hanging down from under the cap. The key difference is that the piece from Wrocław has a beard and a moustache. Like the Lukoml piece, that from Wrocław is made of antler. The chessman from Wrocław is considered to be a rook because of the similarity to Scandinavian rooks represented as a warrior with a sword and shield (Wachowski, Witkowski 2005: 80). The Lukoml piece is more likely to be a vizier (queen) because it represents an unarmed, noble man.

Another possibility for the Lukoml piece is that it was a king figure from a hnefatafl gaming set.[1] A bronze male figure found in one of the best known pagan burial mounds in Early Rus, Černaja mogila, is represented in similar seated pose with cross legs (fig. 1: 4). The figure was found with other gaming pieces of the same, non-figurative, conical form but in two colors – black and white. The seated figure and the conical pieces probably represent a hnefatafl gaming set. While the pose of the figure from Černaja mogila is similar to the Lukoml piece, its appearance and costume are different – the figurine depicts a man holding his beard in his right hand and with a broad belt around his waist. It has many parallels in Scandinavia and possibly represents the god Thor (Roesdahl and Wilson: 308, no 309).

Another hnefatafl analogy is a possible king piece from Suffolk. This figure is also related to the Lukoml piece through its seated pose of tucked-under leg but the appearance and costume are different (fig. 1: 5). The piece is 5.5cm high and made of a heavy black material, probably jet. There is no provenance for it – it came from a mixed lot in a county auction in Suffolk, England. It is a sitting male figure; his seat is a pad of stone rather than a stool proper, with a slight taper away from the figure. Frontally his legs are clearly defined below the knees but then a third foot is clearly visible projecting from beneath his right leg as if he were sitting cross-legged. His left hand is closed and rests on his knee, his right arm is raised, with the index finger touching below the bottom lip – the other fingers are much shorter as if broken off rather than closed and he was probably pulling his beard. He has a narrow, flat nose and two large, well-defined eye-sockets with pupils that are slit across the middle horizontally. The head is bare but for shortly

[1] My acknowledgment to Mark Hall for his consultation and prompting of analogies.

Fig.2. Chess piece (pawn). Ivory or walrus tusk. Late 11th – early 12th century. Found in Volkovysk. Excavations by V. R. Tarasenko. Minsk, National Art Museum of Republic of Belarus. Photos by N. P. Melnikov

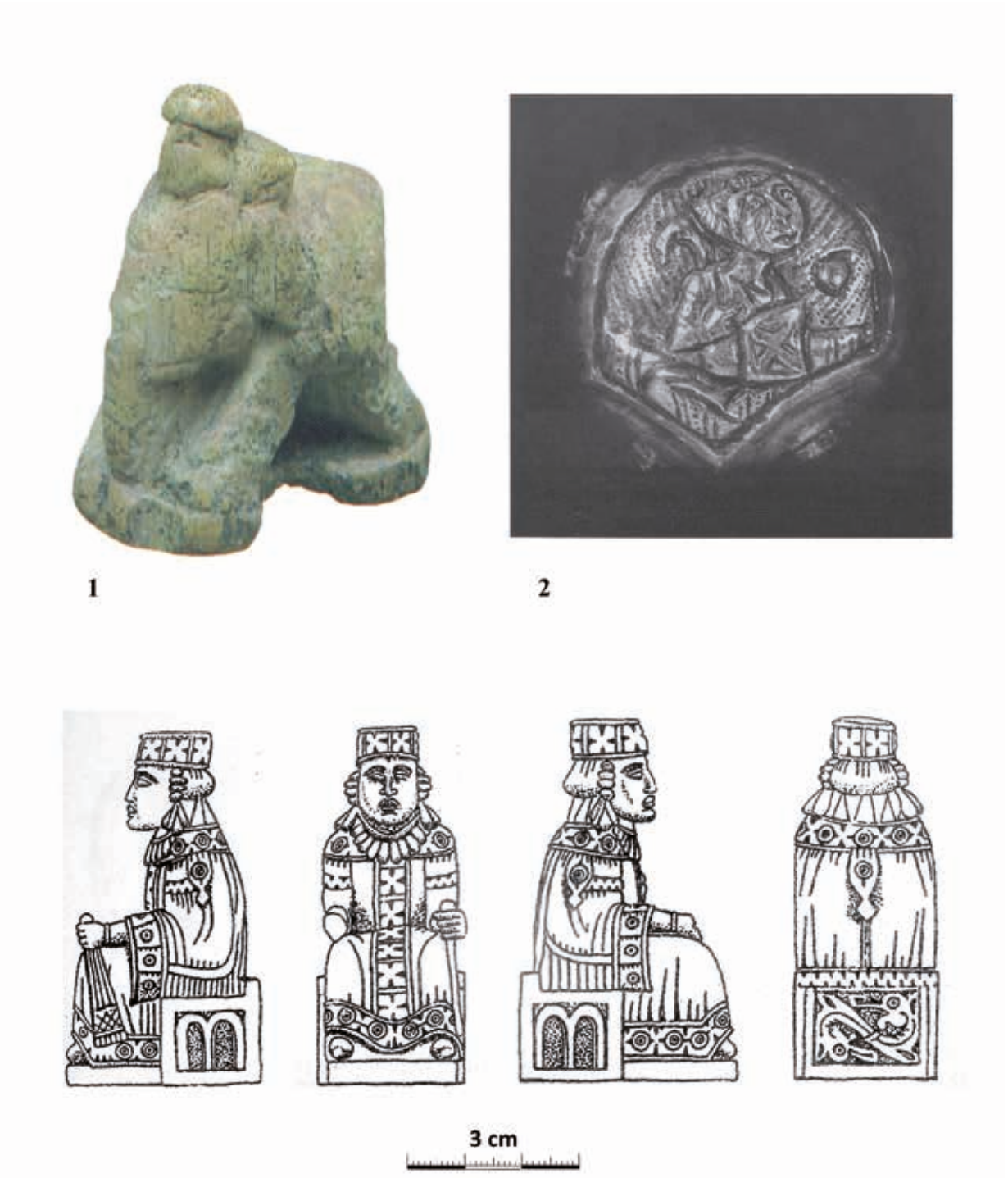

Fig. 3. Costume and everyday life details in chessmen and toreutics.

1 – Chessman (bishop). Ivory. 7th c (?) or 11th c. (?). Found in Sarkel-Belaya Vezha. Excavations by M. I. Artamonov. Sankt-Petersburg, the State Hermitage

2 – Border scene of the cup. Byzantium. Silver, repousse, engraving, gilding. 12th century. Found in Berezovo (Shumikhinsk region, Kurgansk oblast (Trans-Urals). Sankt-Petersburg, the State Hermitage. After Darkevich 1975: 90, fig. 130

3 – Chessman (king). Ivory. Late 12th – early 13th century. Found in Chernihiv (citadel). Excavations by I. M. Ignatenko, V. P. Kovalenko. After Kovalenko 2006: 91, 101, fig. 5

cropped hair and the whole of the head above the ears is covered with ring and dot motifs. Ring and dot is also applied to the visible surfaces of the pad-stone seat and the area between the lower legs. The figure appears to be wearing a full length cloak or tunic (description by Mark Hall).

The figurative pawn from Volkovysk was found in 1954 during V. R. Tarasenko's archaeological excavation on the "Swedish Hill" hillfort, in the layer of the 11th – beginning of the 12th centuries (square No. 19, 1.25-1.50 m deep). The pawn is 2.5 cm high, the dimensions of the base are 1.2 x 1.5 cm (Tarasenko 1957: 275, 278, fig. 14). The chess piece represents a dismounted, marching warrior with a drum and a curved baton, posed as if giving the signal for the start of battle (fig. 2). He is stumpy and has a big head, irregular facial features, and a big wide nose. His clothes are knee-length, with a belt, and his head supports a round flat cap, below which his hair is hangs down. Over his shoulder, there is a drum hanging on the belt, in the right hand he holds a curved baton with which to strike the drum. A drum with a curved baton was not used in Old Rus, but it was used in Byzantium, (and more rarely in the West), as evidenced by pictorial sources.

In Byzantine pictorial sources a curved baton is represented more often than not, as for instance, in one of the border scenes on the Byzantine silver cup of the 12th century from Berezovo (fig. 3: 2; Darkevich 1975: 90, fig. 130). In western pictorial sources however, a curved baton is seldom depicted, a straight baton being preferred (Povetkin 1990: 140). In Povetkin's opinion (1990: 157), the image of the drummer comes laden with "all-European elements with an evident Byzantine impact rather than Old Russian elements". Perhaps, the figurine from Volkovysk was part of a chess set in which one side depicted the Byzantine army? It is known chess piece of Scandinavian manufacture found in Chernigov which represents Byzantine Imperator (fig. 3: 3).

The Volkovysk piece is made from an exotic material, ivory, but no scientific analysis has been carried out to determine whether it is walrus tusk ivory, elephant ivory or mammoth ivory. Based on visual examination Ya. G. Zverugo favours elephant ivory and A. A. Razlutskaya favours walrus tusk.

According to the manner of manufacture and the costume details (especially, the headwear), the chessman from Volkovysk is similar to the warrior-boat rook piece, also found in Volkovysk. In both cases the warriors are without beards and moustaches and their hair hangs down from under the round flat caps they all wear. It is interesting to note that the same cap is worn by a male figure sitting on an elephant (fig. 3: 1), identified as a chess bishop, from Sarkel (Artamonov 1958: 75, fig. 51: 1). Pletneva (1996: 43-44, 153, fig. 16) dates this to the 7th century (?) whilst Linder (1964: 67) suggests it may date to the early 11th century. On board the boat from Volkovysk there are three armoured warriors with almond-shaped shields, one of them is lying on the fore-deck and is looking ahead, the other two are sitting in the centre near the broadside, the fourth warrior who was sitting astern, is damaged, with only a fragment of the shield remained. In its turn, the rook from Volkovysk is very similar to the rook found in Grodno, carved not in ivory but from a light-yellow stone. On the boat there are four warriors: a warrior on the fore-deck and a warrior astern and two warriors at the broadsides, the latter are lost. On the broadsides of the boat from Grodno there are circular holes for oars and almond-shaped shields. The chess piece is remarkable for its fine carving and evident high level of skill. Both the boats look like river-boats with warriors on the fore and astern, fixed on a foot. The shape of the boats is reminiscent of a special type of boat, which was well-known in the 12th century in Rus and referred to in annual chronicles, the so-called "nasad". This was a broad-bottomed vessel with high boards, used for battles on narrow rivers, where the oarsmen were protected from the enemy arrows by the deck, on which there were only four armoured warriors. This type of vessel is connected with Scandinavian tradition.

The above observations raise the issue of the imported origin of the chess pieces under consideration or at least about a strong foreign influence on their manufacture.

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Natalia Khamaiko

Gaming Pieces from Recent Excavations of the Kyiv Podil

Several gaming pieces have been found during last years in archaeological excavations at the Podil of ancient Kyiv. They belong to different games: chess, backgammon, hnefatafl. The finds were discovered in the trade and craft manors date back to the 12th and perhaps 13th centuries. One of them was made of stone, three of antler and another three of walrus tusk. That is not ordinary for Kyiv, where usually gaming pieces were made of antler. Probably that was a reflection of trade dealings of ancient Kyiv Podil.

The Podil district (Lower Town) of Kyiv was an important part of the ancient capital of Old Rus'. 50 years of archaeological excavations there have revealed traces of a large urban settlement, which was founded in the late 9th century and prospered until the Mongol-Tatar invasion. Podil was the focus for the craft and trade activity that provided the economic basis of the fast developing city (Tolochko 1972: 129-147; Hupalo and Tolochko 1975: 40-79; Hupalo 1976; Tolochko 1981: 265-378; Sahaydak 1991; Sahaydak 2005).

Recent excavations (2000-2011) in Podil by the Center for the Archaeology of Kyiv (under the direction of M. Sahaydak) discovered several gaming pieces, dating to the 12th and perhaps the early 13th centuries. They comprise a mixture of some well-known types, recognizable from previous excavations in Kyiv, and some types not previously recovered.

The stone chessman (fig. 1) was found in 2000 at 3/7, Mezhyhirska Street, Kyiv in the context of mixed layer. It is made of sandstone and depicts a standing bearded man wearing a conical helmet with a knife or short sword on his chest near (but not in) his right hand. The hands simply executed and the facial features schematically depicted: round eyes, eyebrows-lines, the straight projection of nose and the simple lines of the mouth and the mustache. Traces of black colouring are preserved in the lower points on the surface of the figure (fig. 1), sufficient to suggest that the whole figure was painted black. The base of chess piece is oval and it measures 60 mm in height, with a diameter of 24-35 mm.

In Old Rus'ian anthropomorphic chessmen are rare and the Podil example can be compared stylistically to three excavated examples from other sites: a 12th-13th century king-piece from Brest (Lysenko 1974; Lysenko 1985: 285-286, fig. 197; Lysenko 1989: 112-113; Medvedeva 2005: 14-15, fig. 1: 2); a 12th century "queen"-piece from Lukoml (which looks more like an oriental-style chess figure, a "farzin" or vizier) (Shtyhau 1993: 376; Shtyhov 1982; Medvedeva 2005: 16-17, fig. 2: 1) and a late 11th – early 12th century pawn from Volkovysk (Tarasenko 1957: 278, fig. 14; Vysotskaia 1993: 223; Medvedeva 2005: 19, fig. 2: 2). The 12th – early 13th century piece from Chernihiv (Ignatenko, Kovalenko 1993: 38, 147, fig. 7: 2; Kovalenko 2006, 91, fig. 5), and the late 11th – early 12th century example from Slutsk (Kaliadzinski 2006a; Medvedeva 2005: 14-15, fig. 1: 1) are not considered as analogies for the Podil chessman because they are depicted sitting on a throne. The Slutsk piece in particular looks like a king observed in life: he wears a beard, sits on a throne and rests his hands on his knees (fig. 2: 5). The Chernihiv example is also shown sitting on a throne but he is beardless and holds an unrecognized object in his left hand and the right hand is broken. The figure wears a decorated crown and clothes redolent of expensive Byzantine fashions. The throne is carved with fauna in Ro-

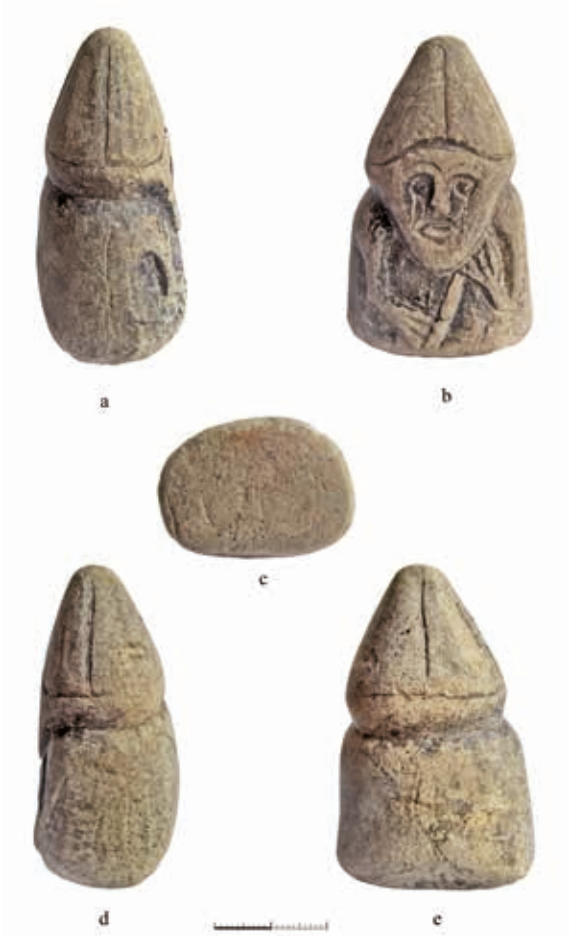

Fig. 1. Chess piece, warder. Kyiv, Podil, 12th – early13th century. a – right side, b – front, c – base, d – left side, e – back. Photo by N. Khamaiko

manesque style (fig. 2: 4). Both examples are similar to Northern European chess pieces, including the late 12th century kings from both the Louvre Museum, Paris and the Lewis hoard from the British Museum, London and the National Museum of Scotland, and also the piece of ca. 1200-1250 from the Metropolitan Museum, New York (fig. 2: 1-3).

All the pieces described above exemplify different types of piece with the closest comparison the king piece from Brest, which differs in wearing a headdress rather than a helmet and in holding a shield and something that looks like a scepter or mace (fig. 3: 6; Linder 1975: 91; Lysenko 1989: 12-113; Medvedeva 2005: 14, fig. 1: 2). A closer comparison is the early 13th century warrior piece from Kraków, Poland: a standing armed man wearing a helmet and a hauberk and holding a sword in his right hand (Niemiec 2011, fig. 1, 2). The key difference is that the Kraków chessman holds a shield in his left hand (fig. 3: 4) whilst the Podil figure has no shield. The style of the Podil chessman can this be seen to be much closer to the warders of North European chess-sets, notably the well-known examples from the Lewis hoard (Caldwell, Hall, Wilkinson 2009: fig. 6c-i, 7a-e). They are depicted as bearded men wearing helmets and holding swords and shields. All of them are standing watchmen or warders (fig. 3: 1-3). The Kraków and Brest chessmen (fig. 3: 4, 6) were interpreted as kings by Niemiec (2011; see also Linder 1975: 91; Medvedeva 2005: 14-15), but their form suggests they too should be identified as warders.

The Old Rus'ian analogue for the warder is the rook or "ladia", which takes the form of a boat and so is even more different to the Podil piece. Examples are known from Grodno (12th century) and Volkovysk (late 11th – early 12th centuries) (Voronin 1954: 76, fig. 37; Tarasenko 1957: 275, 278; Linder 1975: 93; Miadzvedzeva 2005: 17-19). They represent a boat with people on board, a concept clearly rejected by the maker of the Podil piece, probably produced as a local copy of the North European style of warder.

During 2007-2008 and 2011 excavations on 35, Spaska Street, Kyiv recovered several bone pieces for various board games. Six gaming pieces and one die were found in the layers of the middle and late 12th century and partly in the mixed layers (Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008; 2009: 265-267; Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Komar 2015: 29). The formation of those horizons derived from the activities carried out in two yards and the range of finds includes several that point to both trade (imported glass and pottery, coins, weights) and craft working (traces of the goldsmithing and glass, bone and amber working). Two gaming pieces were preserved in horizon 5 in yard 2, building 6, dating to the second half of 12th century. Building 6, like the rest of horizon 5, was destroyed by fire, which also burned the two gaming pieces. They were piriform, pegged pieces, lathe-turned and made of large mammal tooth, probably walrus tusk (fig. 4: 1-2). One has a domed head with a pointed top and a raised collar whereby the head is separated from the neck. A round, drilled hole perforates the center of a flat base (fig. 4: 1; 5: 1). The piece is 35 mm in height, 24 mm in diameter (max.), and 4 mm in diameter across the base hole. It was cracked into seven frag-

Fig. 2. Chess kings: 1 – Louvre Museum, OA5541, late 12th century (photo: Marie-Lan Nguyen (Wikimedia Comons, CC=BY 2.5); 2 – Lewis collection, 1831,1101.78, British Museum (after MacGregor 2010: 61), late 12th century; 3 – Metropolitan Museum, 1978: 494, ca. 1200–1250; 4 – Chernihiv, 12th – early 13th centuries (after Kovalenko 2006: 91, fig. 5); 5 – Slutsk, 12th century (after Kaliadzinski 2006b: 39)

ments. The second piece was strongly calcined and slightly damaged. It has different shape, without of a moulded finial. Its flat sides have no traces of breaking and the edges of the piece are very smooth. So we can suppose that it was fractured earlier and then polished for convenience of using or perhaps more likely to be a result of frequent handling to play the game. Its proportions are slightly different at 23 mm in height, 31 mm max diameter, and 5 mm in diameter across the base hole. Its appearance is much wider and squatter (fig. 4: 2; 5: 2). Both pieces are typical of the game *hnefatafl*. This game is traditionally ascribed a Scandinavian origin. Whilst Mark Hall does not dispute a Scandinavian game with this name he has observed the need to remember that this was but one variant of a group of games popular across Northern Europe and adapted from the Roman game *Ludus Latrunculorum* (Hall 2007: 13, for pre-Viking, Pictish examples from Northern Britain; Hall, Forsyth 2011). Nevertheless, the style and context of these two pieces arrived in Kyiv in the 12th century via a northern trade route. Walrus skull fragments, discovered in horizons 5 and 6, may serve as evidence of this trade route. One fragment is the front part of the skull, including the nasal and sinus

Fig. 3. Chess warder: 1-3 – Lewis collection, AN0 1831,1101.78-144; 1831,1101.120; 1831,1101.122, British Museum, late 12th century; 4 – Kraków, Poland, early 13th century (after Niemiec 2011, fig. 1); 5 – Kyiv Podil, Ukraine late 12th – early 13th centuries; 6 – Brest, Belarus, 12th-13th century (after Lysenko 1993: 98)

Fig. 4. Hnefatafl game pieces from Kyiv Podil, late 12th century. Photos by N. Khamaiko

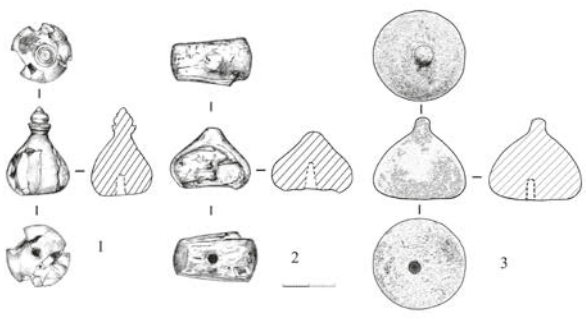

Fig. 5. Hnefatafl game pieces from Kyiv Podil, late 12th century. Drawings: 1, 2 – after Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008: fig. 2; 3 – by N. Khamaiko

areas of the upper canines. There are several cut marks indicative of the extraction of the tusks and the cutting away of the flesh. Tusk fragments were also found in horizon 5, in the workshop of a goldsmith and merchant occupying a neighbour's yard. Of the three fragments, one has a round cut-mark and a second had been fashioned as a round plate, both indicative of on-site working. Walrus tusk is amongst the rarest and most expensive of raw material for carving handicrafts. In Novgorod their total mass amounted to 6% of all the treated animal bones, an only 5% of total waste belong to the walrus tusk carving (Smirnova 1999: 124). Most of this high value material was found in the wealthier yards of Novgorod. The most active period in the treatment of walrus tusk is the late 11th – early 13th centuries (Smirnova 1998). Novgorod spread its influence to the northern lands in the late 11th century, facilitating the acquisition of walrus tusks along those new routes. The Hypation Chronicle, for the year 1160 year includes it in the list of Prince Rostislav Mstislavovitch's gifts to Prince Sviatoslav Olgovich, along with the skins of polar foxes and wolves (Ipatievskaja Letopis 2001: 504).

The third gaming piece from the Spaska excavations is also a piriform, pegged example. It measures 36 mm (height) x 32 mm (max diameter) x 4 mm (base hole diameter) (fig. 4: 3; 5: 3). It was found, like the walrus skulls, in Yard 2, in Horizon 6, a non-fire layer dating to the middle 12th century. It is made of antler, one of many antler artefacts and pieces of working debris from Horizon 6 of the homesteads. It is further evidence for the local, on-site production of gaming pieces. Such piriform pieces were used for the Scandinavian variant of tafl, that is, hnefatafl. The known gaming pieces from the Old Rus territory were analyzed by G. F. Korzukhina (1963) and included examples made of glass, bone, stone, amber and ceramic, found in various places including Ladoga, Gnezdovo, Timerevo, Sedniv, Chernihiv, Shestovytsia and Kyiv. Some Old Rus' barrows of the 10th century contain finds with Scandinavian elements, including hnefatafl sets. The set from Chorna Mohyla consists of two kinds of pawns and one gilded copper alloy king. This king piece is sometimes interpreted as a statuette of a Scandinavian God (Thor?; Samokvasov 1908: 199; Rybakov 1949: 43; Pushkina 1984; Petrukhin 2007: 63, 70, fig.

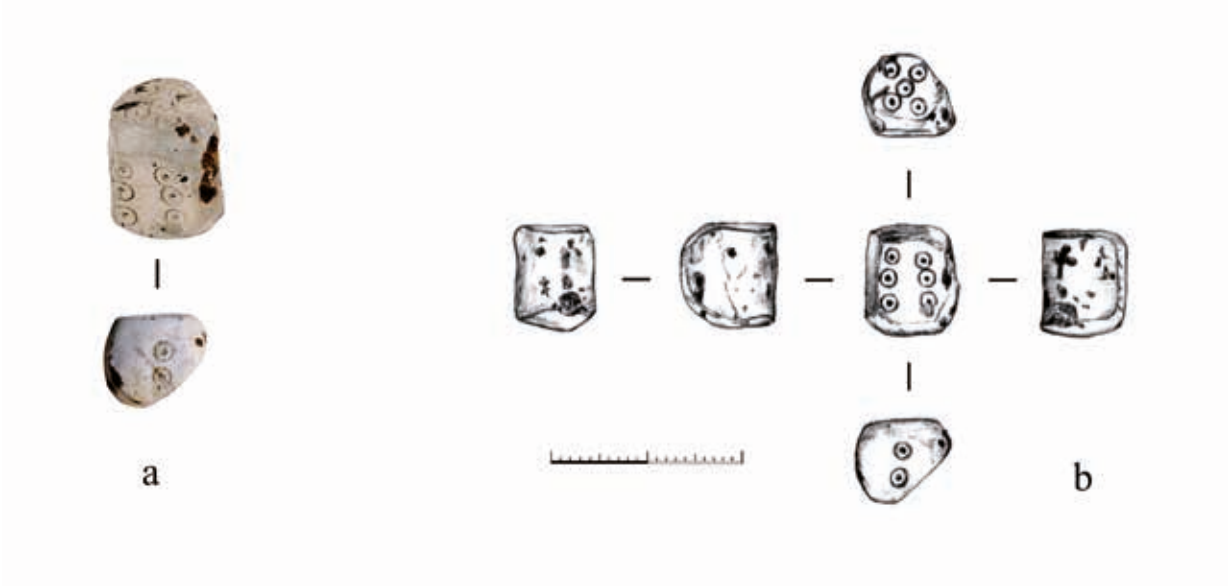

Fig. 6. Die from Kyiv Podil, late 12th century. Photos (a) by N. Khamaiko and drawings (b) after Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008: fig. 2

38; Duczko 2004: 240, fig. 70d), but it undoubtedly belongs to the anthropomorphic type of *hnefatafl* king pieces (Khamaiko 2012: 286-288).

Current understanding recognises two different types of bone *hnefatafl* gaming pieces cognate with two chronological episodes read as two waves of Scandinavian influence into Rus'. Thus the set from Chorna Mohyla in Chernihiv has been dated to 950-970, whereas the piece (and its implied set) from the Spaska excavations is dated to the mid - late 12th century.

The bone pieces from Ladoga, Gnezdovo, Gorodok upon Lovat are not like the piriform, pegged gaming piece from the Spaska excavations, which has no close analogues in the Old Rus'ian area. Rather, the analogues are all examples from North Europe. An unprovenanced set of walrus ivory is in the Curle collection, which was bought in Gotland, and undoubtedly connected with Scandinavian culture (Kidd, Thunmark-Nylén 1990: 170-171, fig. 22). Archaeologically provenanced examples include those from Fröjel, Gotland, dated to the 7th-12th century (Carlsson 1999: 85); Dublin, dated to the 11th century, Trondheim to the early 12th century and Sandnes, Greenland, to the 12th century (Roesdahl, Mohen, Dillman 1992: nos 595, 572, 342); York, dated to the 12th to the mid-13th century (MacGregor, Mainman, Rogers 1999: 1981-1982, fig. 940, nos 7888, 7889) and Jarlshof, Shetland (Curle 1954: 21, fig. 5).

Gaming pieces from Spaska excavations have holes for peg at the base. Grettis saga tells about gaming pieces with pegs, using for the game *hnettafl* (Boer 1900: 251). Board of Gokstad (Murray 1952: 58, fig. 22) or Trondheim (Roesdahl, Mohen, Dillman 1992: no 572) types can't be used for playing gaming pieces with pegs. For these purposes can be suitable only board with holes, like famous Ballinderry board from Ireland (O'Neill Hencken 1941: 5-6, fig. 2).

The die from Kyiv was found in the burnt layer of horizon 4A at 35, Spaska Street. The burning layer resulted from the destruction by fire of a large wooden Building 7/27 at Yard 1, linked to jewellery production in the late 12th century. This deposit is chronologically very close to Horizon 5 of Yard 2. The die is incomplete but sufficient survives to indicate that when complete it was of parallelepiped form. It is made of mammal tooth, probably walrus tusk. The surviving faces of the die carry the ring-and-dot numbering 2, 5 and 6. It measures 11 × 9 × 9 mm (fig. 6). Dice are common finds in Old Rus'ian area. They were used not only in dice games but to control the moves in board games including backgammon, tafl variants and even some kinds of chess (Golladay 2007).

The final category of gaming equipment for discussion here is that of the counter or tableman type of gaming piece. Three have been found in the recent Kyiv excavations of which two are well preserved

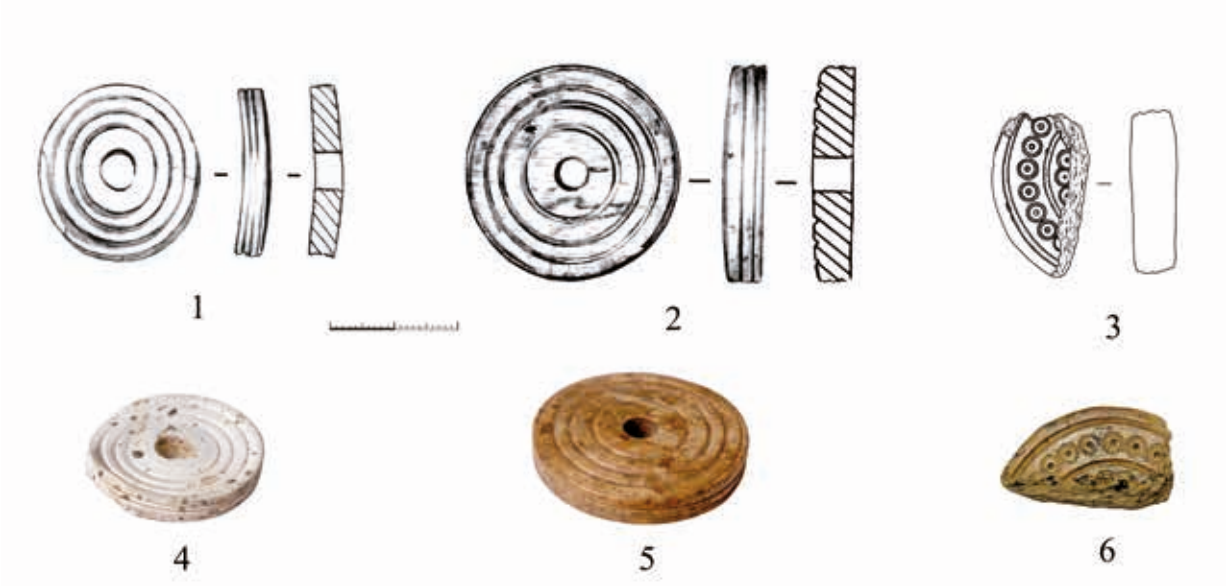

Fig. 7. Counters from Kyiv Podil, late 12th century. Drawings after Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008 (1, 2) and by N. Khamaiko (3); photos (4-6) by N. Khamaiko

and complete and the third is only a fragment. The two complete discs have a central, through perforation. One has its surface decorated with three incised concentric circles and two incised, parallel grooves around the outer edge face. Visual identification as antler is uncertain because the counter has been calcined and slightly deformed as a consequence of being caught in a fire. It measures 25 × 27 mm in diameter, with a thickness of 4mm and a hole diameter of 6 × 7 mm (fig. 7: 1, 4). It was found in the remains of a burnt building of the mid-late 12th century (Horizon 4B) at a depth of 1.85 m in the filling of the Bilding 1A of Yard 2 (Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008: 137, fig. 2: 5). The second, complete counter was obtained from a redeposited layer. Its' surface rises almost imperceptibly to its centre and is decorated with four concentric circles, and two parallel, edge-face grooves. It is made of (deer) antler and measures 33 mm (diameter) × 5 mm rising to 6 mm (height) × 5.5 mm (hole diameter) (fig. 7: 2, 5; Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008: 138, fig. 2: 4). The fragmentary third counter is of more elaborate type. Its size and shape (27 × 15 × 8 mm) suggest an original diameter of 35 mm. The surviving decoration indicates at least two widely separated concentric circles interspersed with space-filling ring-and-dot ornament (fig. 7: 3, 6).

All three counters are typical for Old Rus'. More usually they are made of bone and with the same forms of decoration, examples including counters from Kyiv (Dytynets' or Upper Town), Luchesk, Vitebsk, Polotsk, Novgorod and Sarkel (Sahaydak, Khamaiko, Vergun 2008: 140, fig. 3). This type of gaming pieces was common across the whole of Europe and most obviously associated with the game of *tabula* or tables (which survives today as the backgammon variant) (cf. Murrey 1952: 113-115; Bell 1969: 34-37; Midgley 1975: 22-25; Bell 1983: 90-91). This type of gaming pieces seems to appear in the archaeological record of Rus' at the turn of 10th-11th century, after the Conversion, and was in use for this game for a long time afterward. Consequently they have been linked to the northerly flow of imports from the Byzantine world. Such gaming pieces are widely spread in the Byzantine world and were also found in large numbers in the Crimean province of Chersonese. Such counters were not exclusive to the tabula group of games (for examples of which see, several illuminations in the *Libro de los juegos* of Alfonso X and the *Carmina Burana* manuscript, dated back to 13th century, see Golladay 2003: f. 73v-77v; Carmina Burana: bl. 91um.) but were also used for the merels group (including nine men's morris) and the later medieval game of draughts. The term "draughtsmen" is often applied anachronistically to such counters – i.e to any disc even if they predate the game draughts; a consequence of the huge popularity of draughts in the 18th and 19th centuries.

These latest discoveries of gaming pieces have changed some of the existing ideas about board games in ancient Kyiv. Until recently only the abstract type of chess piece was known in Kyiv but now we have, with the warders (or rooks) discussed here, the figurative type too. This adds a more Northern dimension both in the parallels with the Lewis chessmen and also the Scandinavian-style hnefatafl pieces. Conventional archaeological opinion suggests that all artefacts from Southern Rus made of walrus tusk were produced in Northern Europe or in the Novgorod area. But the finding of fragments of walrus skulls and walrus tusk debris in the same layers of the Spaska excavations as some of the gaming pieces does suggest local, Kyiv production of these objects. New finds of gaming pieces from Kyiv's Lower Town definitely reveal influences and direct connections with Northern and Western Europe. The Old Rus'ian culture is usually associated with Scandinavian influence only in the 9th-10th century but these latest discoveries extend that horizon to at least the 12th century and place the emphasis on trading activity. Chief amongst the trading contacts was that with Gotland, which culminated in the late 12th – early 13th century with the signing of separate trade treaties with Novgorod and Smolensk. Rus' merchants dealing with Gotland brought back not only goods and raw materials, but also foreign traditions and games, reflections of which we observe in the merchants's and craftsmans's yards from Kyiv Podil.

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Terminology and Image of Chess in Medieval Written Sources

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Ludus inhonestus et illicitus, or Why the Game of Chess Came in for Criticism in Medieval Europe

Despite the popularity which the game of chess received in the high and late Middle Ages all over Europe, this leisure activity also became the subjects of a large amount of criticism and even acts of violent reactions. They occurred on the side of some ecclesiastical representatives, in their treatises, statutes of Church councils, synods, and in other legal regulations. Moreover, this condemnation of the game could also be observed in some secular literary works, whose authors presented a number of reasons why they considered this pastime as undesirable or even harmful. This paper focuses on such hints of criticism of mediaeval chess, and the aim of the analysis conducted by the author is to answer the question why such an intellectual pursuit, which chess certainly was, provoked so much ardent opposition.

The game of chess was among those tools of entertainment whose practical role in educating aristocratic feudal society was emphasised by numerous authors, as can be observed in their works in the field of literary fiction, handbooks and philosophical treatises. On the other hand, the attitude of a certain group of men of letters who wrote about board games and games of chance, as well as of some law makers, was not always favourable towards these games. Disapproval and condemnation of chess and other board games was expressed by authors of epic poems and books of instruction, as well as by the representatives of secular and ecclesiastical authorities: in their treatises, synod statutes and in other church rules and regulations. This essay investigates such criticism of chess, to try and answer the question why did such a popular medieval pastime encounter such strong opposition.

The most vociferous detractors of chess were the clergy, especially of the monastic persuasion. Vivid disapproval was expressed by the English cleric, Robert Mannyng (or Robert de Brunne). A Gilbertine monk, Robert lived in the monasteries of Sempringham and Sixhills, both in Lincolnshire, England. He was a chronicler but his most well known work, from 1303, was Handlyng Synne. There he criticised chess and tabula in particular, arguing that one should not pursue such pastimes before noon, as engaging oneself in such activities might lead to losing all track of time and, in consequence, neglecting a morning service in church[1].

The same dangers of immersion in board and dice games were cautioned against by the Scottish author, Rait, of the 15th century work called *Ratis Raving*. He addressed his text to an imaginary young reader acquainted with board games and games of chance, but cautioning against their pursuit because they might absorb the mind of the player so much that they became so engrossed that they missed church services as a result (Rawson ed. 1870, v.: 1112-1745, 1243-1248).

Criticism of chess and other games rarely makes an appearance in the type of didactic literature known as *specula principis*, i.e. mirrors of princes, where board games were presented as valuable indicators of status and education. However, there is a notable exception to this rule: *Konnungs Skuggsjá* ("King's Mirror"), written anonymously in Norway during the reign of King Hakon IV (1217-1263). The author may have been a mendicant friar linked to the Norwegian royal court, possibly Ivan Boder, the tutor of young Hakon, who stayed at the court of

[1] „Wyth hasadoure,/ Hauntyst tauerne, or were to any pere/ To pleye at the ches or at the tablere,/ Specially before the noun/ Whan Goddys seruyse oghete to be doun,/ Hyt ys azens the comaundment/ And holy cherches asent/ Zyf thou be infra sacros." (Furnivall ed. 1862: V,34).

king Inge (1204-1217), Hakon's predecessor. Whilst the content of the work is clearly influenced by the *Disciplina clericalis* by Petrus Alfonsi, it differs in one significant regard, on the value of chess. In the *Disciplina clericalis* chess is considered one of seven knightly skills, whereas in *Konnungs Skuggsjá* it is an activity which one should beware because it presences the Devil. The author claims that the games of chess and dice are equally evil and lead to sin[2].

Criticism of chess is also prevalent amongst monastic clergy towards the end of the Middle Ages. In In Trinity College, Dublin is a mid-15th century manuscript, probably written in the English monastery of Sheen, Surrey. The work includes the vision of a monk whose dream makes him an ardent opponent of the game of chess. In it he meets three visitors: a squire, a cook and a clerk. Each tries to persuade our monk to leave the monastery and serve God in the outside world. The monk goes on to see the following temptations: tennis balls, archery, a chessboard and pieces and a half-naked woman and a golden crown – the attributes of carnal temptations and avarice[3]. For our purposes what is most significant here is the association of chess with the work of the Devil and so a threat to Christian faith.

The above detailed examples of the monastic criticism of chess, reveals how negatively the game was perceived amongst this group of ecclesiastics. We should recognise however that this was not a fixed response and it did vary. Chess often balanced on the verge of the Church's consent, and the attitude of senior clergymen as well as secular dignitaries towards it was inconsistent and varied. Caution and suspicion of the game may have been prompted, in part, by an awareness that the game had stemmed from the Islamic world and so unchristian. On the other hand, chess was also seen as a sophisticated intellectual adventure. These variant medieval views involved the game in fundamental disputes between faith and reason. There is no doubt that the intellectual character of the game combined with its popularity among the feudal aristocracy made chess increasingly attractive and brought on new adherents, including amongst the clergy, many of whom were recruited from among aristocratic families. Senior prelates often adopted the way of life of a secular landlord and all its attributes, including chess-play.

One such example of an active and even consuming interest some monks took in the game of chess is the late 10th century work entitled *Versus de scachis*, written in the monastery of Einsiedeln (southern Germany). For the most part it contains information about the rules for playing chess. There is no doubt that the anonymous author was a strong admirer of the game, stressing that chess was an honest activity, free from any deception and gambling. The author was clearly distinguishing between chess as beneficial and dice[4] as not.

The ambivalence and inconsistency of the church and secular authorities towards the game of chess is reflected in the case of the bishop of Florence. In 1061 Pope Alexander II received a letter from the Cardinal and Bishop of Ostia, Peter Damian (1007-1072), seeking from the pope that he impose a penalty on the Bishop of Florence for playing chess. The defendant pleaded not guilty claiming that chess (*scachus*) should not be equated with dice (*alea*), having nothing in common with gambling. The Cardinal, however, sustained his accusations. According to him both games were included in the term "alea",

[2] „A further, there are certain things which you must beware of and shun like the devil himself: these are drinking, chess, harlots, quarreling, and throwing dice for stakes. For upon such foundations the greatest calamities are built; and unless they strive to avoid these things, few only are able to live without blame or sin" (Larson 1917: 6-57, 83).

[3] „And aftyrward I sey manye fendys icome for to brynge you out of yuore ordyr, and some of hem profrede you tenyse ballys and some bowe and arowys and some tables and ches and othyr sueche harlotrye. And aftyrward I seye a foule deuyl most and vglyest of alle stande in a pulpytt, and he hadde a woman in hys armys and schewede you here nakede brest down to the bawyl and seyde that ye shuld go wyt hym. And thane I saw youre prioure and the couent come wyt many smale cordys and fastnede hem aboute you and conseylede you wyt fayre suete worde for to abyde wyt hem. And so they taryede you. But for al thys ye wolde not abyde. And also I sey two of youre brethryn in blake mantyllys as ye were hauynge on here hedys too fayre crownys of glod. And I sey a fayre yonge child stoned beside you holdynge a fayre crowne in hys handys and profred yt to you" (the text published by: Colker 1984: 104-105).

[4] „Si fas est ludos abiectis ducere curis/ Est aliquis, mentem quo recreare queas./ Quem si scire velis, huc cordis dirige gressum,/ Inter complacitos hic tibi primus erit./ Non dolus ullus inest, non sunt periuria fraudum,/ Non laceras corpus membra vel ulla tui./ Non soluis quicquam nec quemquam soluere cogis;/ Certator nullus insidiosus erit./ Quicquid damnoso perfecerit alea ludo/ Hic refugit totum simplicitate sui." (The complete treatise was published in: Murray 1913: 512-514).

which for the Cardinal meant gambling in general and as such was forbidden by the Church[5].

The abovementioned examples demonstrate that from the earliest years of the presence of chess in Christian Europe, the Church did not adopt a uniform attitude towards it. Different types of text are often contradictory, depending on the tradition of the genre within which they function. It is also noticeable that the official line of the Church, expressed in canon law and synod statutes usually promote a negative attitude to the game, despite its toleration and endorsement by other sectors of society.

As the Middle Ages rolled on the balance moved significantly towards condemnation of the game alongside many others, particularly from the 12th century onwards. According to Jacques Le Goff this was related to the social and economic transformations taking place across Europe. The dissemination of the commoditising monetary economy led to an increase in cash flow, which began to spread outside local markets. Those who possessed cash – great lords, increasingly tended to turn their backs on pious endowments, allocating money to entertainment (Le Goff 1997: 253). Such practices must have raised concerns among Church officials and led to the exacerbation of traditional rivalry and conflict of values with the feudal aristocracy. Thus chess and other games became a pretext to enter into ideological disputes, but also were victims of them.

Bans on board games, including chess and *tabula*, and also games of chance, were introduced mainly by provincial Church authorities and addressed to the clergy in general. However, they also influenced actions taken by secular rulers, who established their own laws limiting access of their subjects to games, especially gambling games. Thus in 1190 the Anglo-French crusade to the Holy Land banned all the members of the Christian army who were not knights from gambling. Knights and clergymen were allowed to indulge on condition that the sum of cash lost in the game would not exceed 20 shillings a day. These restrictions applied to all except the leaders of the crusade, the English king, Richard the Lionheart, and French monarch, Philip II Augustus (Ashton 1899: 13).

Some other royal bans on board games will be discussed below, but at this stage let us continue the review of the stances which were adopted towards games by representatives of the Church. The bishop of Paris, Odo de Sully, who lived at the turn of the 12th century, criticised chess in terms that equated it with dice games, just as Peter Damian had done. In one of his decrees issued at the synod in Paris he banned not only the playing of chess and dice, but also their possession[6]. A milestone in the Church's policy of restriction towards games was the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, where important decisions concerning some games were taken. The clergy was prohibited not only from participating in games of chance but also from observing them[7]. These statutes formed the foundations and inspirations for further actions taken by local Church authorities across

[5] „Nam, ut turpiores attexantur ineptiae, pudore sussundor, videlicet venatus, aucupium, alearum insuper furiae, vel scachorum, quae nimirum de toto quidem sacerdote exhibent mimum, sed praecipue oculos, manus et linguam, quasi mimum verum simul efficiunt, sicque conditos, et qui suauius sapiant, cibos daemonu mensis apponunt. Hic plane, si quid mihi de venerabili Florentinae sedis Episcopo contigerit, recolo, alienum esse ab aedificatione non credo. Dum aliquando sibi essem comes itineris, vespertinu tandem subeutes hospitium, ego me in Presbyteri cellam semoui, is autem in spaciosa domo cum commeantium turba resedit. Mane autem facto, a meo mihi Agasone significatum est, quod praedictus Episcopus ludo prefuerit scachorum. Quod profecto verbum, velutsagitta, cor meum acutissime pupugit et indignationis vulnus inflixit. Hora autem, quae mihi videbatur electa, conueni hominem et acriter inuehor. Hoc igitur initium sermonis arripiens, aio: Librata manu virgas exero, plagas infigere quaero: si fit, qui rerga subijciat. Et ille, inferatur, inquit, culpa, non recusabitur poenitentia, Recte ne, inquam, tuique erat oficij vespere, in scachorum vanitate colludere, et manum Dominici corporis oblatricem, linguam inter Deum, et populum mediatricem, sacrilegi ludibrij contanimatione foedare? Praesertim cum canonica decernat auctoritas, ut aleatores Episcopi deponantur. Et quid prodest ei, quem efficaciter auctoritas damnat, etiam si iudicium extrinsecus non accedat? Ille autem ex diversitate nominum, defensionis sibi faciens scutum, ait: aliud scachum esse, aliud aleam. Aleas ergo auctoritas illa prohibuit, scachos vero tacendo, concessit. Ad quod ego: Scachum, inquam, scriptura non ponit: sed utriusque ludi genus aleae nomine comprehendit. Quaproper dum alea prohibetur, et nominatim de scacho nihil dicitur, constat proculdubio utrumque genus uno vocabulo comprehensum, unius sententiae auctoritate damnatum." (Cramoisy ed., 1610: 44-45).

[6] „Prohibetur districte sacerdotibus ne habeant secum prolem quam in sacro ordine genuerint propter scandalum. Et ne in suis domibus habeant scacos vel aleas vel decios omnino prohibetur." (Les Statutes synodaux francais 1971: 82).

[7] "Clerici (…) ad aleas vel taxillos non ludant, nec huiusmodi ludis intersint," (Baron, Pietras 2003: 254-255; Fijałek 1997: 39-40; Dohar, Shinners 1998: 21-22).

Europe. In England, for example, games of dice and chess were put on the list of those activities that were forbidden to the clergy according to the directive issued by the Synod of Worcester in 1240 (Ashton 1899: 13). The Archbishop of Canterbury, John Peckham, in one of his letters of January 1281, was full of indignation when he condemned the game of chess as a vile activity of the monks in the monastery of Coxford, in the county of Norfolk. We learn from this correspondence, which was addressed to the local prior, that he himself and his fellow-monks had learnt to play chess from a man called Robert de Hunstaneston. The archbishop, outraged over this fact, called chess and similar games "clownish activities", and categorically demanded that the monks should stop playing the game. Any possible violation of the archbishop's order would lead to the following consequences: each culprit must not enter the church, should be suspended in all legal rights and would have to fast for three days (abstain from all food apart from bread and water)[8].

At the same time as these attempts to ban chess were being passed, it remained a favourite pastime of some representatives of the English clergy. Bogo of Clare (d. 1294), the younger son of Richard of Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Hereford, was among admirers of chess and gambling games, which he was able to indulge in because he could received a large income from his Church estates. These included a deanery in Stafford and canonries in Exeter and Chicester. As of 1287 he appeared in sources as the chancellor of the church in Llandaff, Wales. The accounts written by his treasurer, Walter of Reyny, reveal that on a Sunday in 1285 the clergyman assigned three shillings for the game of dice. Bogo of Clare also played chess. He is known to have received an inexpensive chess set (*familia ad scaccarium*) worth two pence when he was in residence in Thatcham, Essex (Giuseppi 1920: 1-56; for the biography of Bogo of Clare see: Altschul 1965: 176-187). Bogo of Clare is an example, and not an isolated one, of a clergyman who showed the attitude of a typical secular aristocrat towards different kinds of entertainment, and at the same time did not attach much importance to ecclesiastical bans on some of them, imposed by the institution he himself represented.

The example of Bogo is one of no doubt many that illustrate the existence of a certain discrepancy between the promoted model of an ideal priest and the reality created by the numerous circumstances of cultural and social behaviour in everyday life. There is no doubt, as is shown in the context of documentary sources, that the problem existed and was clearly noticeable, and that the institutional Church tried to tackle it through the application of different methods.

In the late Middle Ages games were subjected to criticism from the friars-preachers. One such critic, Robert Rypon of Durham monastery, preached against board games at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries. He stigmatized the game of chess and tabula in one of his homilies, where he named them as unnecessary and useless occupations. When they are played at night, writes the monk, they steal time of those who need it to rest from their daily duties. Thus those who indulged themselves in such iniquities deserved to suffer disasters[9]. John Wycliffe (1328-1384) remarked with indignation in his treatises that it was clergymen themselves who devoted themselves to games of chess and tabula in inns[10].

[8] "Cuius rei gratia facias officum omnes repetere et reddere juxta consuetudinem ordinis nescientes. Scaccorum autem ludum et consimilia scurrilia solatia vobis omnibus, occasione Roberti de Hunstaneston, perpetue inhibemus, quod si ipse vel vestrum aliquis contrarium praesumpserit attemptare, ipsum ad ingressu ecclesiae et omni actu legitimo suspendimus, donec tribus diebus in pane et aqua jejuneverit, omni dispensatione circa hoc cuilibet subditio nostro penitus interdicta," (Martin 1882: no. CXXXVII).

[9] "Also, right as a man may synne in over erliche etinge and drinkynge, right so he may synne in over late soupers. Wherfore thilke men and women that useth to soupe late and longe, to wake on the nyght and waste the tyme in ydelnes and vanitee, wast and nicete, late goth o bedde and late aryseth, thei synneth in many maneres. ffirste for thei wasteth the tyme in grete ryot and foly, and turneth the tyme agenst kynde, that is to seie, the nyght in to the day and the day in to the nyght... But men schulde spende the day in good werkes and the nygt in the reste of the body, as nede asketh, and the remenant in prayer, worschippynge and thonkynge of God... Also, in such wakynges, men useth many vanytees, as playenge at the chesse and the tables, and in tellynge of many yvel tales, also lesynges and bakbitynges, and thus thei leseth her tyme and deserveth maugre (misfortunes), and noght onliche greeveth God but also her owne soules," (see: The British Library, London, manuscript, cat. no. MS Harl. 4894, fol.183 v.; this sermon was printed by Owst 1961:363, 443-444; a bibliographical note on Robert Rypon Owst 1926:.54).

[10] "That thei haunten tauernes out of mesure and stiren lewid men to dronkenesse, ydelnesse and cursed swerynge and chydynge and figttynge; for thei wolen not traueilen faste

A similar, negative attitude towards board games was adopted by the most famous Czech Church reformer, Jan Hus, in his 15th century commentary to the *Decalogue*, yet it has to be stressed that his view of this problem was not always consistent. The criticism which games of chess and dice received from Hus was shared by other Czech preachers (Iwańczak 2001: 460-462).

The wave of criticism against some games, which swept through late medieval sermons, was accompanied by the regulations issued by the institutionalized Church in the form of diocesan legislation. The formal, highly critical attitudes towards games, especially those where gambling was involved, were taken by bishops and prelates. Sometimes their voices of criticism were directed at chess, and this was recorded in the statutes of synods.

Returning to England, the 1364 Synod of Ely, under bishop Simon of Langham, imposed not only a ban on playing chess and dice, but also on spending time in the proximity of those who do pursued such pastimes. In his commentary to this ban the Bishop of Ely argued, referring to the Fathers of the Church, that such practices distracted priests from God and led them to offer their holiness to demons (Hart 1846: 115).

The Polish medieval Church also implemented instructions issued by general councils and the directives of Popes against chess, tables and dice., though again there was a certain diversity of opinion among different clergymen on the subject. It was the game of chess that received the least criticism and in some circumstances its play was permitted. On the other hand, no excuse was permitted for those gambling with.

in here gostly office after crist and his apostlis, that ful bisili hath taught hem, therfore thei fallen to nyse pleies, at tables, chees and hasard, and beten the stretis, and sitten at the tauerne til thei han lost here witt, and than chiden and stryuen and figten sumtyme (...), see: (Wyclif, 1880: 152); cf. another treatise: Prestis also sclaundren the peple bi ensaumple of ydelnesse and wauntounnesse, for comynly thei chouchen in softe beddis whanne othere men risen to here labour, and blabren out matynys and masse as hunteris with-outen deuocion and contemplacion, and hien faste to mete richely and costly arayed of the beste, and then to slepe, and soon a-noon to tablis and chees and tauerne and betynge of panement, and that speken of lecherie, of deprauynge of goode men, that wolen not sue here companye," (see: Wiclif 1880: 168).

In the 14th century chronicle written by the Archdeacon of Gniezno, Janko of Czarnkow, there is a passage which proves that he himself played chess together with the other members of the chapter in Gniezno Cathedral[11]. Clearly the archdeacon considered the game of chess to be legal, otherwise he would have avoided such an activity, or at least would have not informed his readers about it. It must be remembered that the chronicler, holding one of the most important offices in the cathedral chapter, was responsible, among other things, for maintaining discipline among the clergy of his diocese (Szymański 1959: 46-47; cf. Wyczawski 1989: 153) and would have had no choice, as archdeacon, but to set a good example of moral behaviour.

In the codification of the diocesan law of 1423, announced by the Bishop of Płock, Jakub of Korzkwia Syrokomla (1396-1425), where he referred to the regulations of previous synods, there is an article concerning games played by clerics. It states that games of dice are not a recommended activity as they belong to the group of disgraceful pastimes. On the other hand, the same statutes allow for the situations when chess and games of chance can be played: during meal time and only for entertaining themselves[12].

The review of the contents of other 15th century diocesan statutes suggests that the attitude of the Polish Church towards games of chess and dice became increasingly critical. It is all *ludi inhonesti et illiciti*, among which games of chance for profit are listed, that receive widespread condemnation. Following the resolutions of the Synod of Łęczyca in the early 15th century (made under Bishop Nicholas Kurowski), those clerics who played dice were to be fined or even imprisoned (Abraham 1920a: 26). These regulations inspired another senior Church official, Bishop of Chełm, Jan Biskupiec (1417-1452), who used them copied them to form article no. 43 of his statutes, entitled *De non potando et ludendo cum laicis* (Sawicki 1948: 86, 165).

[11] "(...) cum feria sexta proxima ante nativitatem Christi ego [Janko of Czarnków] et alii in Zneyna scaccos lusimus (...)" (see: Joanis de Czarnkow 1872: 652).

[12] (...) ludos taxillorum vel alearum et alios quoscumque inhonestos non exercere nisi aliquando inter se pro recreatione vel pro cena simul facienda aleam vel scaccos luderent. (Sawicki ed., 1952: 226-231 (statute no. 20).

Quite similar were the bans on dice and other illicit games issued in 1415 by the Synod of Przemyśl Diocese under Bishop Maciej (1392-1419; Sawicki 1955: 136)[13]. The Bishop of Poznań, Andrzej Łaskarz of Gosławice (1414-1426), who was the author of the statutes issued at the synod of 1420, based his regulations on the statutes of Gniezno from the early 15th century, which he emphasised in the preface to the statutes (Statuta Synodalia 1877: 19, 25). Also the Archbishop of Gniezno, Nicholas Trąba (1412-1422), forbade the monks and nuns living in his diocese to play chess and dice as well as to maintain contacts with those who gambled and all those "ad que pertinent omnis carnalis concupiscentia"[14].

In addition to the above mentioned statutes, there were cases when in the first half of the 15th century lists were made by local secular and monastic senior clergymen of those who should not be granted the right to receive the Holy Communion. This included dice players and those who played chess for profit[15].

This review of the approaches of the Church authorities of medieval Europe suggests that both the game of chess, a game of skill, and other games, especially dice and tables, games of chance, were the subject of criticism and prohibition in some quarters whilst being tolerated and cherished in others. Apparently, there was no coherent and unambiguous moral and legal judgement of these games, and of the game of chess in particular, and the classification of this pastime caused difficulties that for the Church law-makers were not easy to overcome. Thus in Latin Europe one could find those adamantly opposed to chess next to those Church hierarchy who were in love with the game as they noticed no harm in pursuing their interest.

The criticism of chess, *tabula*, and dice, disseminated by the Church, prompted adequate actions taken by the representatives of secular authorities. The struggle of some European monarchs against different types of games, including chess, is visible mainly through legislative initiatives concerning gambling. Steps to eliminate gambling from the social sphere were taken, among others, by Saint Louis IX in France, and also by his son and heir, Philip III the Bold (1270-1285). In 1272 Philip ordered his officials to prosecute those who engaged in games, used prostitutes and swore (Richard 1994: 122). The uncompromising stance on games became in the French royal house a tradition continued by Saint Louis's successors. Charles V the Wise (1364-1380), forbade gambling in his ordinance but propagated hunting and other outdoor activities of skill: archery and shooting with a crossbow (Verdon 1998: 114). In October 1390 the King of Aragon, John I (1387-1396), followed the example of his French counterparts and forbade his subjects to play chess[16].

These few examples of negative attitudes of rulers towards board games, including chess and *tabula*, did not reflect, however, a general tendency observable among representatives of medieval social

[13] "The Lvov Provincial Statutes of the 1st half of the 15th century include an entry which probably refers to games of chance (where dice was used): Item in vigilia Nativitatis Christi prohibentur ludi et supersticiose opinionis (sic), que prohdolor in hac patria vigent," (see: Abraham, 1920, entry no. 15).

[14] Trąba 1951b: 64, statute no. 14: "Precipimus, ut abbates, prepositi, priores monachorum canonicorumque regularium necnon abbatisse, magistre et priorisse monialium tam in se ipsis quam in subditis, prout ad cuiuscunque spectat officium, vitam et conversacionem exhibebeant ab habitum deferant regularem, se ipsos ac suos subditos precipue in hiis, que ipsorum professioni obviant et ordinis honestati non congruunt, puta circa exquisitum ornatum vel notabilem excessum in vestibus, cibis et potibus, equitaturis et lectisterniis, anulis et similibus superfluitatibus seu taxillorum, alearum et scaccorum ludis et corearum lasciviis totaliter cohibentes, sed iuxta disposicionem sue regule et sacrorum caconum instituta sollicite providentes (...)." Trąba 1951: 83, statute no. 24: "Multa sunt negocia secularia, de quibus pauca perstringamus. Ad que pertinet omnis carnalis concupiscencia, quidquid iusto plus appetit homo, turpe lucrum est munera iniusta accipere vel eciam dare pro aliquo seculari questu, precio aliquem conducere, contenciones vel lites vel rixas amare (...), aleas amare, ornamentum inconveniens proposito suo querere et in deliciis vivere velle, gulam et ebrietatem sequi, pondera iniusta vel mensuras habere, negocium iniustum exercere."

[15] "In the benedictine monastery at the Holy Cross the following note was copied in 1431: Quibus prohibetur sancta Communio [...]. Lusoribus taxillorum, pylecznikom, cuglorzom [przekreślone], costarzom, aleatoribus scacorum pro pecunia, scrzypczom, pyssczczom, gączczom, iocu-latoribus, cuglorzom in arte demoniorum. On this and other bans" (see: Wolny 1969: 73-89; cf. Abraham 1889: 226), where punishment is applied to every "sacerdos vel clericus ludo alearum seu taxillorum aut allis ludis illicitis frequenter intendit."

[16] Hemos encontrado una orden de don Juan I mandando al. Baile de Valencia 10 Octubre 1390, que le compre para su cuarto un tablero de los medianos de los que se hacen en Murcia para jugar a tables y al ajedrez con sus juegos completes, see: (Brunet y Bellet 1890: 226, footnote no. 4).

elites to regard board games as significant means of education and meaningful pastimes. Thus, despite a certain number of cases when aversion was shown by some monarchs and church prelates towards chess and other board games, these pleasurable activities were ceaselessly present at European royal courts, in the palaces, castles and manors of aristocratic families and even in bishop's courts and abbot's monasteries.

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Sandomierz, Chess Pieces

Sylwia Konarska-Zimnicka

Chess: Gambling or Noble Entertainment? A View from the Medieval Sources

Medieval sources, yes about standard character (church and secular), as well as pastoral for us interests of the widely comprehended contemporary society in various entertainment, amongst which games led the way with the accompaniment of the music, dances and singings, frequenting inns, or finally practising various games and games which frequently hallmarks of the gambling carried are testifying. Jacks, balls, or skittles not only brightened the time up, but constituted the source completely considerable, and often simultaneously of dishonest income. Hence sharp in the ton of the critic of not only games, but also persons interested in them loud representatives of secular and church authorities expressed which. Unfortunately, in view of the popularity of entertainment of this type, those bans didn't bring expected results, the more so as very decision-makers frequently luxuriously devoted themselves to incriminated games. It seems, that amongst these one is deserving the particular attention. Chess because, because they are being talked about, universally were recognised too "noble entertainment" of particularly high-born persons. The interest of the so-called fourth state a burgesses was being regarded as which and the exit of the game of chess beyond walls of homesteads caused that also had been started perceiving this game as the source of the potential gain what was characteristic of games recognised gambling. Attempts made by the entire Middle Ages of this banning and other games of chance didn't cause expected results what we notice in many contemporary sermons, whether in synodical acts repeating the criticism. However chess effectively resisted this criticism and all legal restrictions.

People have always divided their time between work and the so-called leisure which often involved various, not necessarily decent in content and form, enjoyment. Medieval (not only written, but also printed) sources, both legislative (religious and secular) and pastoral, provide us with evidence for public interest in the very diverse pastimes, with music, dancing and singing, tavern-visiting and gambling games enjoyed the leading role. Whilst dice, balls, bowling and, at the end of the Middle Ages, cards made free time pleasant, they also generated huge moral concern through the social misbehaviour they genereated, especially gambling and the violence it encouraged (Kozietulski 1888; Ashton 1899; Jelski 1899; Caillois 1958; Kostrzewski 1962: 410; Hensel 1967: 188; Bystroń 1976: 204-215, 1947: 246; Borkowski 1995: 99-105). Some games attracted no, or at least significantly less, moral censure and notable amongst these was chess, not least because of its apparent social standing. It was regarded as a "noble entertainment", typical of the well-born and thus often referred to as the "king of games" or the "game of kings" in literature (Petzold 1986: 5, 54-96, 115-118; Fossier 2009: 256).

Such descriptions certainly reflect the history of the game as recorded in written texts, which often link it to royalty and aristocrats (Forbes 1860; Murray 1913; Giżycki 1960: 11; Wischmann 1960; 1964; Golombek 1976; Eales 1985; Giżycki, Litmanowicz 1986; 1987). Chess reached Europe in the 10th century, probably from India, spreading all over the continent at that time (Dembińska 1977: 314-316; Gąssowska 1964: 148-169, 1970: 548-554; Kiersnowski, Kiersnowska, 1970:106). According to Michael Pastoureau (2006: 297), chess travelled to western Europe along two routes: in the middle of the 10th century along the Mediterranean Sea route through Spain, Sicily and southern Italy, and in the early 11th century along the northern route with the Scandinavian merchants who conducted business with the Byzantine Empire, Ukraine and the Black Sea region countries. Tradition says that Charlemagne used to play using pieces which may have been gifted by the Caliph Harun al-Rachid (Karłowska-Kamzowa 2000: 5; Bubczyk 2005: 7; Pastoureau 2006: 300). Murray (1913: 408-415) quotes that in 1061 the outstanding theologian

Peter Damiani gave the Pope information about having seen the bishop of Florence playing chess. Stories circulated that William the Conqueror and his son Robert played chess duels, which on one occasion concluded with William smashing the chessboard on Robert's head because he lost the game (Fossier 2009: 256). The Emperor Frederick II apparently enjoyed playing chess at his Palermo court against the Muslim masters, invited to the royal court especially for that purpose. Castilian King Alfonso X, the Wise, willingly spent time playing chess and in 1283 ordered the production of a treatise on chess (especially chess problems) and other games. Alfonso was also interested in astrology and artfully combined reflections on how to play chess with his interest in the working of the universe, indeed one of the chess varieties was called astronomic chess which could be played by seven players (Giżycki 1960: 55-56). Murray (1963: 31) and Bubczyk (2005: 114) notes that Pope Gregory XI was an enthusiast of chess playing.

The game of chess proved so popular that it began to be used as a metaphor in didactic, moralizing treatises by various clerics. The treatises on chess playing and its rules had originated in the mid-10th century initially mainly in the Arab world. The oldest written reference to chess in Europe is the poem *Versus de scachi* of c. 990 and composed in the Swiss monastery in Einsiedeln (Giżycki 1960: 19-28; Brunel-Lobrichon, Duhamel Amado 2000: 63; Bubczyk 2005: 7). However, it was not until about the thirteenth century that a few particularly significant works devoted to chess had been produced like, *Moralitas de Scaccarios* by an anonymous author or *Breviloquium de virtutibus antiquorum principum* by John of Wales (Karłowska-Kamzowa 2000: 7-8). The most famous and the best known of these works, however, was that by the French Dominican friar Jacques de Cessolis: *Treatise on customs and duties of nobility as based on the game of chess*, which is a collection of examples and moral maxims built around social and moral metaphors rooted in chess. As well as a very attractive way of introducing moral teaching, chess was also a popular subject in literature, several examples of which are given in Girolamo Vida (1983: 41), Kochanowski (1966) and Kiersnowski (1977: 64-65). Essentially, chess was regardes as an excellent reference point for moralists who tried to present graphically the feudal hierarchy of society, with the alternating black and white cells of the chessboard serving to emphasize the social contrasts abundant in the medieval world, what Le Goff (2002: 428) describes as "chess feudalization". One should also mention the short parable titled On the game of chess found in the collection of anonymous Latin parables titled *Gesta Romanorum*, written probably at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which excellently and very expressively presents the medieval social ladder using the board and the figures moving on it (Hertz 2001: 154-158).

Most of the treatises were ornamented with coloured miniatures. Exceptional was the richly decorated manuscriopt of Alfonso X, the Wise, which boasts up to 150 coloured miniatures. Some of these provide us with important information on the game of chess as a female pursuit, which is confirmed by one of the famous miniatures of the *Manes Codex*, presenting a woman of noble birth absorbed in the game of chess. The fact that women used to play chess has been confirmed both by iconographic and written sources (Bubczyk, 2005: 125-126). Stempin (2012: 79-80) observed that the literary depiction of chess was not just about the violence of the Romances and that being an element of rich womens education "initiated a pleasant, family atmosphere". However, in the main, chess was a typically male game. Chess was viewed as teaching military strategy and could serve as a substitute to duels fought between warriors. It was thus an essential element of the education of young males (Łoziński 1974: 209) and widely regarded as "one of the rudimentary chivalric virtues" (Iwańczak 2001b: 455). The ability to play chess was listed as an essential one in the education of a knight, next to such important abilities as horseback riding, hunting with falcons, swimming or combat (Bubczyk 2003a: 4). Chess also enjoyed the reputation of a sophisticated game requiring knowledge of the rules as well as strategic and logical thinking. Due to these reasons the natural recipient of chess must have been a well-educated, well-born and wealthy representative of the so-called upper class including the knights, the nobles and the clergy. It seems that the knowledge of this unique game and the ability to maneuver the chess figures ennobled

the player to some extent and became „an integral component and indication of court culture" (Huizinga 1967: 97-99; Bubczyk 2005: 8, 19). Thus the game was seen to be so noble that skillful play, to quote George Giżycki, "was an honorable character trait of praised heroes" which during the whole Middle Ages constituted a very vital element of the culture of the Western knights (Giżycki 1960: 15). Huizinga (1967: 76) observed that "the physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual values," of chess were such that it was able to move from being regarded as a specific game to helping to define the culture in which it was played.

It should be noted that this trend is also observable amongst the aristocratic elite of medieval Poland. Heraldry provides good evidence for this because it quickly adapted chess symbols. Chess became a permanent directory of commonly used references and it was frequently used to present content not related to the game itself. In Poland, the first time the chess symbol was used happened probably in the year 1103, when the Duke Boleslaus the Wrymouthed gave the Wczele family a coat of arms bearing a depiction of a chessboard (fig. 1; Niesiecki 1842: 258-260; Semkowicz 1908b: 19-20; Szymański 1993: 285-286). The theme can also be seen on the coats of arms of the Legnica and Wroclaw Duchy. While describing the coats of arms of the Duke of Legnica and the Bishop of Włocławek Henry, Jan Dlugosz wrote: "He had the coat of arms with a shield with four fields. The two blue fields had the images of the black eagles on them, and the other two red fields had the images of the chessboard on them" (Długosz 1981: 291). This same theme can also be seen on the Silesian Polanians' coats of arms, or on the emblem of the old city of Kalisz. The coat of arms of Pierzchała bears a rook chess piece.. In *The Annals* we read: "Clement thus was [...] the gentry member, a Pole, of the Pierzchała home and family who has in his coat of arms a piece called Rook [...]" (Długosz 1975: 227; Paprocki 1858: 592; Pierzchała 1908: 33-35; Semkowicz 1908a: 5-8; Przeździecki 1932: 45-50, 69-78; Szymański 1993: 220-221). The shield of the Zabawa coat of arms bears a chessboard with red and black squares and may have symbolised an ability to engage the enemy on the battlefield until support arrives or success at playing chess duels. The same

Fig. 1. A copper sheet of arms with the image of the Wczele coat of arms, belonging to the coffin portrait of Jan Jerzy Prittwitz (1706). The Alf Kowalski Museum of the Międzyrzecz Region. Photo by K. Zisopulu-Bleja

analogy can also be found in the coats of arms of many other families including Klepzig, Wyszogota, Karęga (Lithuania), Kizinek, Szachman, Pudwels, Bużewoja, Borsznica (Szymański 1993 passim). Such a frequent reference to the symbols of chess was probably a result of the game's wide popularity, which is confirmed by the archaeological as well as the written sources. Several of these strands come together in Jan of Czarnków's *Chronicle* (end of 14th century). This mentions that both he himself and the Archbishop Jaroslav of Skotniki enjoyed playing chess together, calling "noble fun" (Joannis de Czarnkow 1872: 652). We can deduce from this that if the author of the *Chronicles*, being a minister, could declare so directly to his audience his interest in the game, then he was a knowledgeable and accomplished player of the game and that it had been an element of his comprehensive education. As this game was considered "the royal", it is not surprising that the King Ladislas Jagiello as well as the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vitovt (who was also familiar with dice games – Długosz 1985: 317), could boast of their ability at chess. Jan Dlugosz, the teacher of

Casimir's IV Jagiellon children says that even the king played chess and also the Prince Sigismund, who even had his own chessboard richly decorated with pearls (Wilska 1998: 148). "Sigmund's childhood friend", the Chancellor of the Crown, Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, who was responsible for keeping the books of the royal court (books numbers 29 and 33, from the years 1500-1506) during a few months of 1500 recorded expenses covering the repair of the said pearl-decorated board twice, suggesting its frequent use (Divéky 1960: 362; Hamerliński–Dzierożyński 1976: 9; Wijaczka 1998: 172-175; Konarska 2002: 189-190)[1].

These examples confirm the pursuit of chess as an elite game. To emphasise their privilege to play they used very expensive chess sets. Chess pieces were often made from luxurious and rarely available ivory and they were inlaid with precious stones and metals, as were the chessboards on which they rested. Sometimes thepieces were made entirely of gold and silver. In the fifteenth century, amber, rock crystal and coral became popular in the production and decoration of chess pieces. In the case of the board of Sigismund the Elder they were pearls and in the case of Charles the Bold and Frederick II of Prussia – the figures were real people (Pastoureau 2006: 307). It has been proposed that the purpose of such ornamented equipment was pure decoration rather than actual play. Bubczyk (2005a: 96, 99) and Pomian (1996 passim) suggest that the richly decorated chess pieces and chessboards had to be owned and presented to noble guests to „demonstrate the owner's membership to a feudal world and their high position in the social hierarchy". By contrast, pieces carved in, for example, whale bone, deer antler, cattle horn and wood were meant for everyday use and across a wider social spectrum.

Chess was a widely available among other social groups[2]. Burghers' (the fourth social class) interest in playing chess made it seem a potential source of profit through gambling. Thus this "inherently noble game" could lose its so-called nobility through the gamblers application of the "random contract" through which chance or cheating decided its outcome (Karczewska 2010: 473). Thus one should not be surprised by the decided criticism expressed by the secular and ecclesiastical councils not only of the game itself, but also of the people interested in it.

In fact throughout the whole of the Middle Ages starting with the moment chess was introduced into European courts, there were seen both practices proving its recreational advantages and practices proving its disadvantages. Wojciech Iwańczak, quoting an anonymous Latin verse legend on martyrdom of St. Wojciech (956-957) titled *Quatuor immensi* (The legend was written c 999.), drew our attention to the pejorative description of chess as a vanity game which the saint did not want to play "[...] nec studuit vanis vinci, vel vincere schachis [...]" (Iwańczak 2001b: 454). Moreover, the previously mentioned account of Peter Damiani writing to the Pope in 1061 about the chess playing bishop, reads as a complaint, even an accusation; clear evidence of the theologian's negative attitude towards the game of chess and its supporters. Many contemporary clergy expressed the same opinion. In 1128 St. Bernard made a strong statement, included in the rule of the Knights Templar, in which he suggested that they should "abhor chess as well as dice" (Giżycki 1960: 19; Hertz 2001: 160). The Synod Laws by the Bishop Odon of Paris announced in the same century forbade clerics to have or keep chess in their residential quarters, while in 1208 the Bishop de Sull of Paris completely forbade the clergy to play chess. King Louis IX, the Pious, expressed a negative attitude towards chess. On his initiative in December 1254 the so-called Great Ordonans, completely prohibiting any board games including chess, was issued. Chess was deemed as needing condemnation because of its susceptibility to gambling. Apparently, while traveling by boat from Egypt to Acre Louis IX witnessed his brother, the Count of Anjou, playing "signs" or backgammon (often likened to the game of chess via double boards). The king became so outraged that despite a weakening disease he tossed the board and dice out of the ship (Ptaśnik 1959: 268; Le Goff 2001: 176, 400; Geremek 2003: 236). It is worth mentioning that he was allegedly in possession of very beautiful, richly ornamented chess (Giżycki 1960: 17).

[1] AGAD, Rachunki Królewskie, ks. 29, k. 281, where we read: "pro schachownycza et sacculo ad observandum skaccos 6 gr".

[2] Samsonowicz 2001: 99, states that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, many wealthy merchants and artisans kept dice as well as "fairly common chess" in their trunks.

Unfortunately, due to popularity of board and dice games, prohibitions and injunctions were largely ineffectual (and certainly did not stop policy makers playing those games). To explain their interest in the pleasures criticized by the Church, people would apply statements made by recognized representatives of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church who, like St. Thomas of Aquinas, admitted that fun was essential in human life (Św. Tomasz z Akwinu 1928: pars 3, qu. 80, art. 6.). And those games were the pleasantest form of fun! However, the highest ecclesiastical authorities noticed the threat coming from indulging in these particular pleasures, and as a result, the act had been passed at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) which ordered the clergy to "neither gamble, nor participate in this type of entertainment" (Baron, Pietras 2007: 254-255). Therefore, strict rules had been applied to a wide range of games that even bore the smallest resemblance to gambling.

Similar orders and prohibitions can also be found in the Polish Synod legislation. It is important to notice, however, that in the vast majority of cases there was no direct reference to chess. What we frequently find is the prohibition on gambling, playing the games of chance, or what are generally referred to as "ludi inhonesti et illiciti". Dicing is mentioned most frequently by legislation, including the statutes of the Buda Synod that took place in 1279 under the leadership of the Bishop Philip of Fermo, and which stated that „ad aleas et taxillos non ludant". These statutes even banned pastors from keeping dice in their homes (Zakrzewski 1877: 428). A similar provision appears in the statutes of the 1331 Synod of Bishop Jan Grot of Krakow which reads: "Quam eciam penam incurrere volumus ipso facto clericos, qui […] pocius turpis lucri gracia ludunt ad aleam et quomodolibet ad taxillos" (Heyzmann 1875: 37). Other synod statutes from the end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries repeat these provisions. A quote from one of them, the well-known I Chełmno Diocese Synod statute, is sufficient to indicate the tone: "ut clerici non audeant ludere aleas, taxillos, globos et alios ludos nec talibus intersint sub pena synodali" (Sawicki 1948: 165; 1950: 258; 1952b: 149; 1963: 447, 471, 523; Bubczyk 2003b: 25-33; Zygner 2006: 170).

Sometimes even the circumstances in which the country pastors were forbidden to play dice were recorded. A good example is that of Archdeacon Stanislaus of Komorzna's regulations published during last years of the Włocławek Diocese (when Bishop Jan Kropidło held office, c. 1418/1419). These state that: "in tabernis cum rusticis conferre et comedere ibidem, imo et in alea ludere, vel taxillos pro cerevisia et pecuniis [...]" (Chodyński 1890: 12, 25). These problems, as it turns out, were of a "chronic nature," as evidenced by the codification of Jakub of Kurdwanów Plock, which was "the result of the process of codification of the years 1398-1423" (Zachorowski 1915: 2, who describes the Plock codification as one of the "finest monuments of medieval ecclesiastical law in Poland"; Zygner 2007: 51). It had been stated in the chapter *De habitu clericorum* while condemning the catalog of offenses committed by the clergy, well-known to us from previous synod statutes, that those representatives of the clergy who wished to live honestly should adhere to the principle of *ludos taxillorum* "ludos taxillorum vel alearum et alios quoscumque inhonestos non exercere nisi aliquando inter se pro recreacione vel pro cena simul facienda aleam vel scaccos luderent" (Ulanowski 1887: 43-44; Sawicki 1952a: 10, 15, 226–231). Chess was thus condemned by the Church in the same terms as it condemned dicing. It should be noted, however, that despite former condemnations of dice and chess, they were recognized as free of sin if played only for purely recreational purposes or for enjoyment during the evening mealtime. Thus the notion of intention was sometimes considered in the assessment of attitudes and behavior. It can also be seen in the statutes issued in 1411 in Kwidzyn by the Bishop Jan Rymann prohibiting "playing dice and cards [...] and these kind of games" for greed reasons (Statuty 2010: 250). The statutes of the Archbishop Nicholas Trąba (1420) also addressed the issue of gambling (including chess) as they prohibited doing "taxillorum, alearum, et scaccorum ludis" (Heyzmann 1875: 221). It is important to note that this prohibition was not to be found in the section addressed to the secular clergy but in the statute: De statu monachorum et canonicorum regularium and addressed to monks and nuns. This issue was also discussed in the statutes of the 1427 Synod of Sambia con-

ducted by Bishop Michael Junge in a fairly interesting way. The statutes ordered: "may the priests not play the lottery or play any games inappropriate to their vocation" (Statuty 2010: 239). It allowed a broad interpretation of the provision.

Casimir the Great's Wiślica Statute (second half on the 14th century) strongly condemned all forms of gambling, especially dice "or any other game" (Helcel 1856: 24, 28; Kubicki 1992: 34, 35, 39). Burdens placed on the losing party's family members were especially criticized. To try and alleviate this the law forbade playing the games with loaned money or waging with private property. Nonetheless playing with foreigners with ready money was completely legal on the condition of the foreigner's solvency (Huizinga 1967: 88–89; Podgórecki 1969: 166; Estreicher 1936: 42; Brückner 1923: 229+230, 232; Maciszewska 1993: 85).

Not only do these examples clearly prove the increasing popularity of chess (increasingly named amongst other games), but also the failure of legal prohibitions and injunctions with the result of a need for liberalization (BJ 2236: 296r-297r; Chodyński 1890: 12; BJ 2603: 271v272r). It also seems that, based on the sources of legislative nature which obligatorily impose certain attitudes and behavior, it is extremely difficult to determine whether paragraphs relating to games of chance were topical or simply repeating an established formula so as to maintian the established principles of the statutes.

Undoubtedly then a more reliable measure of public sentiment in the Middle Ages is the preaching works. These sermons included many references to bans on gambling. Examples include the rousing sermons of Štitny Thomas and John Hus, as well as of many native orators (Iwańczak 2001a: 623-634). One of the anonymous sermons from the first half of the fifteenth century teaches us that "aleatoribus scacorum pro pecunia" a person can be refused Holy Communion, which in the Middle Ages was a very severe punishment (Wolny 1969: 77). Unlike the legal statutes however, the admonitions and calls for the renunciation of sin (i.e. gambling) and a return to the path of virtue made by charismatic preachers often brought the desired results. In Krakow, for example, people influenced by the fervent preaching of Jan Kapistrano publicly burned chessboards and dice to symbolically renounce their gambling. Equally the sources prove that this was a short-term conversion (Drabina 1998: 136; Bubczyk 2005a: 115).

In all examples cited in this paper there is a clear reference to the game of dice. Michael Pastoureau believes that the negative attitude towards chess was caused by its close relationship with dicing. It is worth noting that the Bishop of Florence described by Peter Damiani, while making excuses for his passion for the game of chess fervently asserted that he never played with the die (Pastoureau 2006: 302-303). So the dice were clearly a key bone of contention.

The contention has a complex background. *The Chronicle* by Vincent Kadłubek (end of the 12th century) includes a significant note about a game of dice which was to take place between Casimir the Just and John, the court dignitary, and which the chronicler cites to give an example of the prince's virtues whilst also criticizing the dire consequences of gambling (Kadłubek 2010: 191). Randomness was a key concern. Unconditional trust in fate violated the principles of the Christian religion and was strongly opposed by Church theologians. Cheating through the use of false dice, which could be loaded with lead to land on a particular side, for example, was another type of sinful activity. Also concerning was the players' motivation with an easy, often dishonest gain. Fraud committed by the players resulted in fines, flogging, banishment from the city, loss of the office if the gambling enthusiast had such position, and in extreme cases, excommunication or infernal torment in hell (Jelicz 1966:158). An anonymous author of the fifteenth century verse poem titled *The Song of Sandomierzanin* about death comments on the gambler called kostyra (Linde 1951: 458–460) who blasphemed after losing the game :

„Zły to cynek kostyrze siadł,
Gdy po uszy do piekła wpadł.
Nie pomogą mu i dryje,
Już tam w piekle smołę pije"
(Vrtel-Wierczyński 1952: 54).

Gambling was also a threat because of usury, which at various games of chance became common. Lending with interest, prohibited by the canon and secular law, flourished when people gambled or played chess. Gambling, as a social phenomenon, was especially popular in the inns (Linde 1951: 175-176; Geremek 2003: 49-58). When chess duels

were played at the courts or in houses, the game was considered decent. Once chess became a permanent form of entertainment in pubs and taverns where alcohol was abundant and music and dance were freely performed, the decency limits were visibly crossed. The game of chess as well as other forms of entertainment available in the inns enhanced human passions which were difficult to control. It should be added, which is not without some significance, that the regulars and active participants to these places were the representatives of the artistic bohemia and the people of the so-called margins of society including the prostitutes, which only intensified the negative perception of chess and other games. Chess therefore, despite its nobility resulting from transparent and fixed rules applied to all players, became vulnerable to criticism due to the interplay of many dependencies.

"Gambling was, in fact, in the life of the medieval peasant society, especially in the cities, the basic form of «idleness»; gambling and visiting a tavern took almost all their time off, what is more, they became its synonym" (Geremek 1972: 220). And that constituted another reason for criticism. The way of thinking and the perception of reality determined by Christian religion made the time belonging to God a very important issue (Geremek 1985: 465). Each activity that could not be called work or otherwise something pleasing to God was doomed to disapproval and condemnation. The time spent on entertainment was seen as the time stolen from God and those who were so eager to practise such criticized forms of leisure were perceived as the ones who deprived God of his property (Kamienik 1979: 40-47; Cegna 1981: 7-24; Russocki 1985: 189-218; Iwańczak 1989: 17-39; 1995: 171-202; Samsonowicz 1996: 267-282). Moral preference required that free time be spent spent actively in reflecting and planning and not just in pursuing non-sinful pleasures (Golka 2004: 35). That non-sinful pleasure were permitted is probably why chess had an ambiguous status in the eyes of the Church, because its pure, non-gambling form was acceptable. This classic game, frequently played in court circles, was, in general, considered harmless and was relatively rarely criticized as such. It was regarded as a valid pursuit by and for those who spent most of the year hunting, fighting in battles, or taking part in tournaments (Murray 1913: 438) and as a valuable form of strenuous mental exercise, an excellent rehearsal for demanding tactical decisions in real-world situations.

Chess was considered difficult and complicated. It required the players to know the rules and have the ability to predict the movements of an opponent and even to analyze a few moves ahead, the unique and difficult to acquire ability. As a result, only experienced players were able to master its secrets. As rightly pointed out by Joanna Karczewska, insufficient knowledge of these principles as well as of the world could lead to the lack of understanding in inexperienced players and to the perception of chess as an "evil, magical invention" (Karczewska 2010: 478). Michael Pastoureau drew our attention to another equally important issue in understanding the criticism of chess namely, a complicated chess terminology. The names of particular chess pieces according to the Arab-Persian version (this game, though invented in India, evolved in Persia and was improved in the Arab culture) did not match either the medieval world in Europe or the contemporary society mind. Only adapting it to the realities of the European world and to the feudal society structure enabled its success (the queen, which was originally the vizier, became the councillor to the king, and the tower - rook, is the version of the chariot) (Pastoureau 2006: 310-311). The problem was also the chessboard itself. In the Middle Ages everything that was not uniform, especially if it was striped or checkered as in the case of a chessboard, was perceived wrong, evil and vicious. The stripes were considered especially scandalous, and checkered designs had always been strong symbols of abnormalities as they were characterized by diversity and could be stigmatized as such. In the Middle Ages culture it had been associated with impurity, immorality and a widely understood sin. Robert Bubczyk (2005: 132) also pointed out a major problem associated with the movements on the board performed by the individual pieces. While the movements of the king could take place in all directions (which was supposed to be a reflection of reality - the king could do anything because he was the law), the queen was attributed negative traits characteristic of women such as greed and injustice reflected in diagonal moves (what is im-

portant, a bishop also moved diagonally, which was to prove the clergy's greed and corruption in the real world). Numbers had also much significance. The number of fields on the chessboard hid the secret in 8x8 system, typical of India and Asia (64 is the square of eight and it is associated with the surface of the globe, symbolizing the eight directions – the four main ones and four indirect ones, eight gates which eight winds penetrate through, eight mountains, eight pillars connecting heaven and earth). These arguments, however, only intensified the fear of an already complicated game. Fortunately, in spite of considerable concern and criticism, chess effectively rejected all legal and social ostracism.

Chess, we have seen clearly attracted censure and condemnation, especially when connected to gambling and dicing. But it was also the board games that attracted the least controversy and in aristocratic circles was a key component of the education of knights. To quote Wojciech Iwańczak (2001b: 462), the "battle of two armies played on 64 fields of the chessboard attracted so much attention that neither bans nor criticism of moralists could discourage anyone".

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Maria Carmen Romeo

The Literary World of 15th Century Valencia: The "Scachs d'amor" Manuscript and its Three Authors

During the 15th century, the city of Valencia, one of the most important cities in the Kingdom of Aragon, enjoyed a growing cultural life, including intense literary and chess activity. In May 1475, three poets contemplated the strarry sky over Valencia. Their attention was drawn to a conjunction of three brightly shining planets. Their star-gazing lead to their being remembered forever, not only as poets and great man of the Kingdom of Valencia, but also as the authors of a poem that revolutionized the world of chess. Revolutionary, because it marked a new manner of playing that derived partly from a set of new rules for chess and partly from the introduction of the srbiter figure. The poem was inspired and written in honour of the Lady *par excellence*, the Catholic Queen, It was her inspiration that fuelled their invention of the most powerful chess piece, the Dama-Queen, which substituted for the "fers" (Sp. *alferza*) in the old game.

Author's shortened version dedicated to the participants of the interdisciplinary conference "The Cultural Role of Chess in Medieval and Modern Times", Sandomierz, May 2012.

Valencia's Rise

Around 1400, as the crisis of the Later Middle Ages took shape, the supremacy that Barcelona had previously exercised in the kingdom of Aragon passed to the city of Valencia. In the course of his 1494 visit, German traveller Hieronymus Münzer went as far as to call Valencia the "principal town in Spain". Another traveller, Nicolaus von Popplaw, observed in 1484-85 that the city "is much better and adorned with much more luxury that any other city in all the dominions of the king". Its demographic ascent is documented throughout the Late Medieval period. The world map was growing exponentially: the kingdom of Castile looked towards the Atlantic for its expansion and the kingdom of Aragon towards the Mediterranean. From the port of Valencia, ships followed the so-called "route of the islands" towards the Balearic isles, Sardinia and Sicily, and also sailed for the North African coast and the besieged kingdom of Granada in southern Spain. Valencia's cosmopolitan character saw Castilian merchants rubbing shoulders with Portuguese slave dealers and Galician or Andalusian sailors who spoke of travelling to new worlds.

Valencia's rise as a trading city started in the 14th century. It relied on its hinterland for the export of agricultural products (including rice, nuts, saffron, sugar), handicrafts (ceramics from Paterna and Manises, leather products and the highly important textile and dyeing sector) and Castilian wool, their export destinations creating a multinational trading network. From the end of the 14th century, Valencia was an important centre of immigration, and the flow of migrants grew incessantly, turning the city into one of the most highly-populated cities of the Mediterranean. Notary public Gaspar Eximeno, in his tax records for 1489, records the existence of 8,840 houses in the city and an approximate head count of around 40,000 inhabitants. A significant percentage of Valencia's population was Jewish: at the height of its glory, the Jewish quarter had close to 600 houses, sheltering some 3,000 Jews. After the edict of expulsion promulgated by the Catholic Monarchs, several ships weighed anchor from the Grao de Valencia at the beginning of June 1492. They were laden with large numbers of Jews heading for Italy. Those who remained were obliged to convert to Catholicism, if they had not already done so.

Another colony of special interest was that of the Germans. Their interest lies in the community's inclusion of a group of printers, who turned Valencia into a first-rate book production centre during the early years of printing. Successful allies included the merchant family of Jacobo Vizlant, famous for their paper imports destined for printing activities. Printing in Valencia (including editions in Valencian) achieved its high ambition, becoming both the publishing capital and the cultural and linguistic axis of the period.

Valencia's culture of literature and chess

During the second half of the 15th century, Valencia's prosperity enabled it to assume the role of Spain's cultural capital. This role saw the holding of frequent literary gatherings. Among them was a circle of very significant literati headed by Bernat Fenollar, key in denoting the 15th century as Valencia's period of poetic splendour. The situation of well-being and prosperity provoked the bourgeoisie of the period to take up literature as a source of entertainment. Within this entertainment, the Valencian satirical vein appeared in the framework of the 'Golden Age' as a counterpoint to the obligatory seriousness of daily life.

Another important component of Valencia's cultural renaissance was chess. The then recently invented new way of playing was perfectly adjusted to the mentality of the new era. It was well aligned with Renaissance thought, so much so that this modality of chess immediately established itself throughout Europe, rendering the medieval forms of playing obsolete. Chess and literature (though in this particular case not printing) came together in Valencia, which proved the decisive setting for understanding the symbolism of the chess manuscript Scachs d´amor. Its full title is: *Hobra intitulada Scachs d'amor feta per don Françi de Castellví e Narcis Vinyoles e Mosen Fenollar, sots nom de tres planetas ço es Marc, Venus e Mercuri per conjunccio e influencia dels quals fon inventada*.The game it describes was not played as such at any chess competition or tourney, but rather, as already indicated by the authors, was an imaginary game, composed so that the moves could serve as amatory passes in the form of an allegory read to an audience.

The performance of this work in verse probably took place at one or another of the floral festivals that may still be seen nowadays throughout the Spanish Levant. The authors, our three poets, took part, or intervened in one such performance in the following way: Francesch de Castellví played the pieces of Mars (red on the chessboard, equivalent to our white nowadays), Narcis Vinyoles played the pieces of Venus, (green on the chessboard, equivalent to our black), and Bernat Fenollar, as arbiter (Mercury), dictated the rules of the new chess, the Dama's Chess.

The manuscript bears no date (although current research favours 1475) and neither is the city in which the event took place named. But Castellví, Vinyoles and Fenollar were three very well-known members of a highly active Valencian literary circle at the end of the 15th century, and their important literary works were well-known in Valencia, so that city has to be the leading candidate.

After one of the literary gatherings that Bernat Fenollar frequently organized, these three young men (reflected in the woodcuts that Lope de Roca Alemany executed for *Lo procés de les olive*s, where two of them appear along with other authors from the period) were contemplating the starry dawn sky of Valencia at the end of May 1475. They observerd a conjunction of three brightly shining planets, something that was to lead to their being remembered forever, not only as poets and great man of the Kingdom of Valencia, but also as the authors of a poem that revolutionized the world of chess and marked a new manner of playing in honour of a Lady, the Lady *par excellence* in those days: the Catholic Queen of Spain.

Certainly, on those evenings after the Marian contest of 1474, besides discussing literature and poetry, people played chess, a common game amongst bourgeoisie, nobility and royalty.

We may think that perhaps there was a division of labour amongst the three poets, since only Castellví was a true chess player, whilst the other two were only good amateurs. Fenollar was perhaps the organizer and Vinyoles the person charged with compiling the sonorous verses in old Valencian that would come to form the 64 *stanzas* of the poem. We are assuming this license in distribution on the basis of the role that each would adopt

during the performance. Castellví represented Mars: he was to talk first and pronounced the last stanza, once victory had been won. Vinyoles would handle Venus' weapons and would be his worthy adversary, reciting verses of great beauty. Fenollar perhaps reserved the most significant role for himself: he would be Mercury, the first and only arbiter, who would dictate the rules and laws of the new chess.

However, above all, it should be recalled that we are in Valencia, one of the most important cities of the Kingdom of Aragon, a fief of the Catholic King, who was a fervent chess player, like the Queen of Castile, Isabella I. Through her biographies, we know that our poets maintained relationships with the court (this is the affirmation of eminent researchers – see below). Such contact would justify the Catholic Queen inspiring the novelty of their invention, the creation of the most powerful chess piece, the Dama-Queen, which substituted the "fers" (Sp. *alferza*) in the older game of chess. The Dama-Queen was a powerful piece which, in a beautiful poem, moves and fights its way across the board in a combat that not only obeys the rules of war in a struggle between two armies, but also symbolizes the love-play between knights and ladies for the favour of one or the other.

We continue to assume that the work was performed at one of the frequent floral games that we still find in the Spanish Levant. Following the performance in which our three Valencian poets intervened, the poem was kept and filed, and only the rules proclaimed by Mercury followed their path.

The Poem's rediscovery and reception

The unpublished manuscript was rediscovered in the 20th century. In 1905 (Casanova 1905: 32-34) archivist Father Ignasi Casanovas accidentally found the manuscript of *Scachs d'amor*, which had been kept for 430 years in the Royal Chapel of the Palau de Barcelona. It was almost unknown to all and initially undervalued by chess specialists, more interested in other manuscripts.

Until recently, the exact date when the poem was written had only been surmised. Calvo's 1999 study (Calvo 1999) gave an approximate date between 1470 and 1490, based on its being a manuscript and on the evident youth of its authors. Today, thanks to the study done by Garzón (2005: 345-352) regarding the watermarks on the paper the poem was written on and the calculation of the precise moment of the planetary conjunction of Mars, Venus and Mercury in Valencian skies, we can affirm that the poem is likely to have been written at a date close to the 30th of May 1475.

A second fundamental figure in the poem's rediscovery is José Paluzie y Lucena (1860-1938), who called attention to the presence and importance of the discovery in the specialized literature (Paluzie y Lucena 1912a: 121-123). Thanks to him, we know what the manuscript was like. He described it thus (Paluzie y Lucena 1921: 8-12): "a sufficiently well-preserved notebook measuring 29 x 21.5 cm with parchment bindings, containing 13 written unnumbered folios and, afterwards, 28 blank sheets; cursive script from the end of the 15th century". He continued: "notice that this game is played according to the reform that chess underwent at the beginning of the Modern Era, which is reflected in some verses (...) it is the oldest (game) known today that was played in the modern style".

More providential than fundamental is Ramón Miquel i Planas (1874-1950), who, apart from undertaking a study of vital importance (Miquel i Planas 1911-1914), had the foresight to photograph the complete poem, thanks to which we know its content and meaning, despite its having been lost. This photographic record is preserved in the Library of Catalonia and has been published by Calvo. Planas pointed out the poetic and allegorical aspects of this magnificent poem and recommended its study from the point of view of chess, but among scholars, until recently, the poem predominated and the game it described was neglected. Calvo analysed the three planes on which *Scachs d'amor* develops: the poetic, the allegorical and the game of chess itself. Within this universe, he points out that not only is it the first game known in modern "Dama's chess", but it is also the first time that the rules of this new version of chess (Calvo 1991; 2012; Calvo, Meissenburg 1995) are clearly outlined, proclaimed by Mossen Fenollar in his role as Mercury, the arbiter.

In the first stanza, the authors indicate that the poem is about a new game, and underscores the strength and importance that the queen is to have.

[I]

"Trobant-se Març ab Venus en un temple,
ensems tenint Mercuri [en] sa presència,
ordí hun joch de scachs, ab nou exemple:
Prenent Raó per Rei sense preeminència
La Voluntat per Reina amb gran potència."

Scachs d'amor is, above all, a poem of the love game category. In the poem, two gods, with obvious Renaissance demeanours, fight with each other. Mars and his pieces are presented with all the qualities that a gentleman should have to obtain the love of his lady (Reason, Will, Amorous Desire, Praise, and Amorous Thoughts and Services), whilst Venus has all the qualities that a lady should possess to enamour her knight in the game of love (Honour, Beauty, a sense of Shame, Disdain, Sweet Glances and Courtesies of the Gallant Game). And Mercury? His *stanzas* alternately follow those of the two leading gods. He establishes three levels for the game: that of the chess player, the amorous gallantry, and the laying down of the rules of chess. Mercury has the role of the arbiter who will explain how this competition should be played, this being the first time that this figure of the arbiter is evidenced in chess.

Mercury talks about the board as a simile of time, with nights and days like the colours of the squares, the number of these being equal to the number of stanzas. Immediately afterwards, he reveals the new rules, which will be preserved for the future. Limited space permits me to mention just a few of the new rules:

- that a piece touched must be played (*stanza* VI)
- that the king can move to a third square, recalling the Lombard rules to which Murray (1913) refers (*stanza* XV)
- the presence of an arbiter (*stanza* XXXVI)
- passant capture (*stanza* XXXIX)
- the different kinds of mates (*stanzas* XLV, XLVIII, LI)
- the kinds of movements for dames (*stanza* LIV)
- that a player cannot have more than one dama on the board (*stanza* LVII)
- that if the queen is captured the game is lost (*stanza* LXII) and
- that kings and queens cannot fight amongst themselves (*stanza* LX).

There remains to discuss the possible allusions to the contemporary politics of the Iberian Peninsula, implicit in some of the lines. Westerfeld, in his work written with Garzón (2004) notes this possibility, and not only in the first stanza quoted, which indicates "a king without pre-eminence and the will of a very powerful queen". He also notes that the (unaccountable) prohibition against queens fighting amongst themselves and capturing each other (*stanza* LX) could be related to the war with Portugal during the struggle for the throne against Princess Juana. On the 28th of April 1475, to prevent a struggle between two ladies, Isabella I granted absolute power, as a peer, to her husband Ferdinand II of Aragon, "the Catholic", who thereby became Ferdinand V of Castille. It is the date of this concession that would mark the allegorical significance of the stanza, effaced by the passage of time, but which would even more strongly confirm 1475 as the year that the poem was composed.

Whoever comes to the poem seeking a chess game of exceptional technical quality is going to be disappointed. The game depicted is an imaginary, invented one, from which no conclusion may be drawn regarding the chess skills of the players (Castellví and Vinyoles). As occurs throughout the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance, games as allegorical combats are pretexts for love and gallantry. They are played, of course, but in accordance with new rules. What is really important about the game of chess depicted is its creation of anew piece that would lend its name ot a new version of the game from that time on, Dama's Chess, symbolisin triumphant love that would have the last word.

Brief Biographies of the Three Poets

These three chess-playing poets enjoyed a noteworthy social prestige and great political influence in the Kingdom of Valencia during the last quarter of the 15th century. The three were related in one way or another to the circle closest to King Ferdinand II "the Catholic" Let us remember as well that both monarchs played chess – the king, according to some chroniclers, "excessively". Catalonian scholars have given the trio some attention (Guinot 1921: 132-143; Francés 1978; Riquer 1980: 181-194; Bataller, Narbon 1991: 45-74; Scachs d'Amor 1992: 21-46, 47-52) although not as much as they deserve.

This is largely because their works and lives are little known outside Valencia and partly because their poems were written in the vernacular. Their poems are rarely translated into languages of international diffusion, a recent exception being Schachs d'amour in June 2011.

Castellví

Of the three poets, „Caualler" Francesc de Castellví (†6-11-1508) is the one whome we know least about. The surname Castellví originated in Bourgogne, France. A branch of the family moved to Aragon, their coat of arms representing "a silver castle in a blue field, bordered in silver and blue" (Atienza 1948: 557) Castellví then, belonged to an aristocratic family from Valencia and was an acknowledged player of 'modern' chess. He was lord of several towns belonging to the area around Játiva, and acted as chamberlain to the prince and future King, and as steward and close counsellor in the Aragonese court of Ferdinand II, "the Catholic"' at least between 1476 and 1497.

We can divine some aspects of his personality from the peculiar literary expressions he devises. Francés speaks of his good literary technique and the authentic filigrees in some of his works, particularly in his contributions to the Obres e trobes en llaor de la Verge Maria. His attitude reflects a taste for struggle in the search for triumph and for the confrontation of difficulties. His expansive personality and vital character endowed him with contagious optimism. As a poet, Castellví mainly authors minor poems, collaborating with his co-authors of *Scachs d´amor*. His literary contributions often emerge as riddles and literary challenges, as may be seen in one of the poems published in Valencia in 1515, in Hernando del Castillo's Cancionero General. It consists of a "demanda adeuinativa", a riddle in which an attempt is made to guess the name of a certain lady, which consisted of seven letters and four syllables. The first two syllables were „one of the highest names that appear in the Passion of Jesus Christ" and the remaining two syllables correspond to a great prize.

Fenollar formulated the question in verse and Castellví and Vinyoles gave him the answer in brass band: "Elionor". Eli, Eli, sabactani del lamma is one of Christ's laments on the cross. "Onor" means honour. The silent "H" was used very erratically. In the *Scachs d´Amor* MS, words such as "Honor", "Obra" or "Honestat" sometimes appear with "H" and sometimes without. Vinyoles clarified further that the complete name of this lady included "de Corbera", an aristocratic family with a "speaking" coat of arms ("corb" is "crow" in Catalonian). Perhaps because of this, Castellví and Vinyoles call her "beautiful popinjay", "enamelled pagó" and "kind falcon" in the rhymed praises to the lady that followed. An aristocrat named Romeu de Corbera moved to Valencia as "Maestre" of the Order of the Knights of Montesa between 1410 and 1445. Elionor de Corbera could have been, in reality, the muse that inspired some amorous affair that our poets preferred to deal with in a delicate manner. And perhaps this story inspired Scachs d´amor.

Fenollar

Abbot Mossen Bernat Fenollar (mossen is a regional title for "Master" and also "Father") was born in Penaguila, near Alcoy, in the province of Alicante. He belonged to a noteworthy Valencian family and perhaps was a second son, among those who, during this period, were earmarked to join the Church (his coat of arms consisted of four sable bands in a gold field). He was probably born between 1435 and 1440 and he died in Valencia on February 28, 1516 (Grajales 1927: 214). He maintained relations with King Ferdinand II, after having served as his escribano de ración (equivalent to a Purser or Quartermaster in financial and economic matters) and in 1479, as chaplain, chapel supervisor and choirmaster of King Ferdinand himself.

As a priest, Fenollar held a post as choirmaster of the Cathedral of Valencia in 1467. In 1510, he was also a professor of mathematics at the University, under General Studies. Abbot Fenollar's important role in his activities as literary sponsor and organizer of cultural competitions in Valencia suggests that he was the soul of the trio. Hence, this was probably the reason why he appears in the manuscript assuming the role of Mercury, the arbiter. He also played an active part in the group of literati that met in the house of Berenguer Mercader, the circles where Mossen Fenollar moved being the same ones in which the first books printed in Valencia – and according to several sources, in all of Spain – emerged.

On 11 February 1474, he was called upon by Viceroy Luis Despuig and charged with holding a poetry contest on 24 March in which the mandatory theme was to praise the Virgen Mary. Out of this Marian contest emerged the first book printed in the Valencian language, in addition to being the first book printed in the entire kingdom of Spain: the oldest incunabulum entitled *Obres e trobes en llaors de la Verge María*, printed by Lambertus Palmart in 1474. This was a 60-page compilation of the poems presented at this poetry contest by the most select among Valencian poets. Fenollar acted as the secretary of the jury, with several contributions from Castellvi, Vinyoles and Fenollar himself, among many other writers.

Of special significance to chess is the printer Lope de Roca, known as "Alemany", because he was one of the printers who published *Lo procés de les olives* on 25 October 1497 (Fenollar 1988) a collection of satirical poems in which several contributions by Fenollar and Vinyoles appear. It also includes a woodcut that shows both together with several men of letters in the Valencian circle. Given the influence of Fenollar on literary activities in Valencia, Salvador Guinot suggests in his study that the general concept of the poem Scachs d´amor was to be attributed to Fenollar, the technical planning to Castellví (whom Guinot imagines an expert chess player, due to his playing the winning pieces of the game), and the verification to Vinyoles, who had a proven ability in these tasks.

Vinyoles

"The magnificent" mossen Narcis Vinyoles', as he was called in his later works, died in Valencia in 1516 at an estimated age of between 70 and 75 years, a few months after Ferdinand II "the Catholic". He would thus have been born between 1440 and 1445. He was a significant politician and writer, who came from a well-known family of jurists (so documented from the first decades of the 15th century) and during his long political career he occupied important positions in the city.

What is known of Vinyoles life indicates he is a concrete example of the well-known phenomena of the rise of the urban bourgeoisie into positions of influence. For several years, Vinyoles was the principal administrator of the Llotja or the "New Market" (1473, 1496, 1497 and 1516), a great success in an important trading city such as Valencia. Vinyoles enjoyed the favour of King Ferdinand II, being, in addition, a faithful servant of the royal policy of centralization.

In 1468 Vinyoles was appointed member of the City Council, a post renewable yearly upon the proposal of a parish. The parish of Santo Tomás appointed him for 1468, 1476 and 1492; the parish of San Andrés (which would have been the area where he was born, since his father Antoni Vinyoles lived there) in 1469; and the parish of Santa Maria in 1491. The parishes of San Salvador, San Bartolomé and San Juan appointed him to diverse positions in the consistory. Twice he was appointed to the important post of Civil Judge. In 1495, a letter from King Ferdinand praising Vinyoles recommended him for the position of Criminal Judge[1].

Upon merging the Kingdom of Aragon with the Kingdom of Castile, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella began to create a unified State and decided that linguistic differences were not desirable. However Ferdinand did not explicitly renounce Valencian-Catalonian until after Isabella's death in 1504 and the translation of Jacobus de Bergamo's Suplementum Chronicarum from Latin to Castilian in 1510. Today, there are still Catalonian scholars who consider Vinyoles a traitor to his own cultural roots, which would also explain why research on the works of Vinyoles is still relatively rare. Throughout his long life, Vinyoles occupied high political positions in the city. He could be defined as a losing chess-player and a winning politician. His works include a number of trivial, satirical or amatory poems but the majority of his works

[1] The text of this letter says:
"Lo Rey.- Cambrer e Batle general: Per la bona relació que tenim de la sufficiència, disposició, abilitat e probitat del amat nostre Narcis Vinyoles, ciutadà de aquixa nostra ciutat de València, per a regir e exercir qualsevol dels officis de aquella, vos diem, encarregam e manam quant estretament podem que si lo dit Narcis Vinyoles exira en hu dels tres redolins que us seran presentats lo sendemá de Sanct Tomas primer venidor per a la elecció faedora del offici de Justicia Criminal de la dita ciutat per a lany aprés inmediatament següent de Mill.CCCCLXXXXV, eligiau i nomeneu aquell per al dit offici axi com Nos en tal cas ara per favors lo elgim e nomenam…" ARV, Cancelleria Reial, „Diversorum": Ferdinand II, 1483-1496, dossier 2, vol. 8 F, CCLXIIII. Cit. by Ferranco Frances, l.c., fn. 11, p. 21.

relate to religious themes, including St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Christopner and those found in the literary competition in honour of the Virgin Mary (see above). In particular though we should recall the gravity of his sermon about Psalm 50 in verse and prose, *Miserere mei Deus, published in Nicolaus Spindeler's incunabulum* stamped 24 July 1499. It is preserved in the University of Valencia in a famous volume known as Lo Natzaré.

It is also this seriousness of the older Valencian high politician that reinforces our impression that Scachs d´amor is a work of youth. There is no other way of understanding the assumption of the role - as allegorical as this may have been - of the goddess Venus in an amorous dispute on the part of someone who, in his mature years, exercised the functions that "the magnificent mossen Narcis Vinyoles" would later perform. There are several other reasons. Schachs d'Amour is a manuscript and not a book. The first book printed (by Lambertus Palmart), Obres los e trobes en llaor de la Vergel María, appeared in Valencia around 1474, its contents including poems by Fenollar, Castellví and Vinyoles. Moreover, in the manuscript Schachs d'Amour the title "mossen" is not mentioned with respect to Vinyoles. This title, on the other hand, is given exclusively to Fenollar. Castellví, at least, has a "don" before his name, but Vinyoles signs exclusively with his name. He seems to have gained the nick-name 'the magnificent' in 1488, after a literary contest in honour of St. Christopher.

In 1490, a year of plague, Narcis Vinyoles fell ill. Faced with the possibility of death, he wrote a will indicating that he was a widower, and asking his administrators, in memory of his wife, to distribute 15 pounds for yearly masses for her soul, settling some debts that had to be paid, among them 5000 sous lent by D. Franci de Castellví. His wife was the 'honourable' Margarita, to whom he was married by 1468, but we do not know when or how she died. Not having children, he made his first cousin Berenguer de Floris (also his heir) and subsidiarily, Gaspar Desllava, the son of a first cousin (according to records 22560 and 22547 of the Notary Public Francesc Pintor, who was in turn the brother-in-law of Brianda de Santangel, Narcis Vinyoles' second wife, since he was married to Violante de Santangel).

The political activity of Castellví, Fenollar and Vinyoles and their good relations with King Ferdinand II and V indicate a possible link to Lucena and his clan. Indeed, it seems probable that the chess players of the Valencia literary circle were acquaintances of the Lucenas, if not as a group of chess players, as was possible, at least as a group of Valencian civil servants of a high rank. The contact with chess is not limited to the well-established relations with the printer Leonard Hutz, and relations between the Lucenas and the Valencian group may be supposed. If the point about having travelled "to Italy and France" with his father before writing his work, as remarked by Lucena, is true, then the port of Valencia was the most sensible route of departure for Italy.

Castellví had relations with converts, as the son of the „conversa" Violant d´Esplugues. Perhaps Fenollar was also a "conversa", to judge from some connotations of his name, whereas Vinyoles was related to another group of well-known "converters", the famous Santangel clan. Luís de Santàngel[2] was the most important banker in the Kingdom of Aragon, even in its Italian parts. King Ferdinand did not only trust his money, but also his advice, and it was Santàngel who financially supported Columbus' first expedition. Part of Vinyoles' political success, with particular regard to his second marriage in 1497, may perhaps be due to this intimate connection with the Santàngel family, since Brianda de Santangel was the niece of the great banker (Vinyoles had to ransom his wife, accused of "Judaizing", from the fury of the Inquisition (Ventura 1978).

The marriage seems to have been one of those dictated by political convenience, given the difference in age between Vinyoles and Brianda. The couple lived in the parish of San Valery in 1513. Vinyoles died in 1517, but Brianda was still alive in 1543, when she declared in her will that her marriage to Vinyoles had no descendants. This impression is reinforced by one of Vinyoles' love poems, when Fenollar poses a friendly riddle about the name of Brianda. Vinyoles' response was:

[2] Cf. Lluís de Santàngel y su época: un hombre, un mundo nuevo, 1492. – Valencia: Presidencia de la Generalidad 1992 (Exposición patrocinada); Lluís de Santàngel i seu temps. Congrés internacional Valencia 5 al 8 d'Octubre 1987. - Valencia: Ayuntamiento de Valencia 1992.

Hoynt tal nom, hoy cant de sirena

Fent-m adormir l'esperit sensual
Brianda, crech, es de tal font la vena
Y aquet dins mi, ab voluntat serena
Viu y viura lo terme natural".

Hearing that name, I hear a siren's song
that lulls my sensual spirit
Brianda, I believe, is the stream of this spring
that, within me, with a serene will
lives and will live its natural term.

Brianda was the daughter of Berenguer de Santàngel, Luis' brother. Her older brother, also called Luis, was abbot in San Giovanni di Fiore, in Naples in 1511. This branch of the Santàngel clan lived in Naples for several years, which would explain Vinyoles' Italian connections, observable throughout his entire literary production, thus establishing the connection between the circle of Valencia and southern Italy.

In fact, Vinyoles not only spoke Catalonian, Castilian and Latin but also wrote very fluent verses in Italian[3]. One of his poems in the 1474 competition in honour of the Virgin Mary was in the Tuscan language, and began with the line, 'Dilecta de Dio, obediente ançilla'. In the competition in honour of the Immaculate Conception (1486), Vinyoles writes another Tuscan poem that begins with the line, 'Non po sentire lo insensibili morto'". This would also explain the Valencian influence, up to now completely overlooked by scholars, on the works of the Italian chess treatise-writers from the period that were so important. It may even be possible to extrapolate this to Vida's famous Scacchia Ludus, where two Greek gods playing chess appear, the game Castellvi.

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[3] As Ramón Miquel y Planas already noted, 1915: 297, Scachs d'amor has some terms from the Italian language.

Krzysztof Pańczyk

Multilingual Chess Terminology – a Synchronic and Diachronic Perspective

Of all comparisons that might be imagined, the most fruitful is the one that might be drawn between the functioning of language and a game of chess.

Ferdinand de Saussure

This paper is an abbreviation of the fundamental research part of my master thesis (which shares the same title) written in the Institute of English Studies at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in 2009. The subject of this dissertation stems from the author's experience as an international master and a qualified coach in chess. For many years he was a professional chess-player and a frequent participant in both domestic and international tournaments. He is also the author of six chess books on chess openings published in London and over fifty theoretical articles in different magazines, mainly in the Dutch magazine New in Chess-Yearbook, published in English. The co-author of nearly all publications is Jacek Ilczuk.

Linking chess and linguistics

It might seem that an attempt at discerning connections between chess and linguistics is a little farfetched and that chess has no more than a peripheral place in the category of idioms, jargons or special languages. For, what can two apparently different things like chess and linguistics have in common? Such doubts are readily dispelled by browsing *Course In General Linguistics* by Ferdinand de Saussure (the so-called father of linguistics), which includes the following passage:

> But of all comparisons that might be imagined, the most fruitful is the one that might be drawn between the functioning of language and a game of chess. In both instances we are confronted with a system of values and their observable modifications. A game of chess is like an artificial realization of what language offers in a natural form (Saussure 1959: 89).

Scope of study

This study of the problem of the connections between chess and linguistics uses two different approaches: synchronic and diachronic. The former contains all the issues related to the use of typical chess terminology in general language and vice versa, including metaphors, chess idioms, chess jargon, sayings, etc. The latter approach contains etymological considerations, often studying the ways in which particular words reached the discussed languages and old chess vocabulary (e.g. names of pieces) etc.

This paper is generally restricted to four languages: English, Polish, German and Russian, though, in some parts of my thesis (where suitable materials were available) over ten languages (including Sanskrit and Persian) are compared in order to make some more general conclusions.

Chess terminology

This theme constitutes the main body of my thesis. Chess terminology in four languages has been juxtaposed in a sequence of tables. They correspond to particular issues of chess or linguistics. However, in view of the limited scope of this paper only some of the issues they raise will be dealt with here.

Machalski (1951) distinguishes three language layers in present-day chess terminology representing three different culture epochs: Indo-Persian, Arabian and European. Kleczkowski (1946: 78-80) states that the chess terminology of the Middle Ages (probably since the 14th century) and in the Polish Renaissance (Kochanowski 1966) contained German vocabulary, usually borrowed from Czech. An exception is the word *saki* "the old name of chess". The influx of Romance influence is much

later (some came into Polish via German). Eastern vocabulary is marginal and does not strictly relate to chess e.g. *słoń* (elephant).

The Most General Terms

The English word *chess* is a corrupted form of *checks* and derives from Persian *šāh*. It originally meant "kings". Chess sounds similar in a great number of languages. In addition to those words given in the table above (Polish *szachy*[1], German *Schach* and Russian *шахматы*) Wikipedia (entry: Algebraic chess notation (chess) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algebraic_notation_(chess)), for example, gives, among others: Belarussian *шахматы*, Bulgarian *шахмат*, Croatian *šah*, Czech *šachy*, Danish *skak*, Dutch *Schaken*, Esperanto *ŝako*, Finnish *Shakki*, French *échecs*, Greek *σκάκι*, Hebrew: שהמט "checkmate", Hungarian *sakk*, Italian *scacchi*, Irish *ficheal*, Latin *scacci*, Lithuanian *šachmatai*, Macedonian *шах*, Norwegian *Sjakk*, Rumanian *şah*, Serbian *шах*, Swedish *schack*, Turkish *satranç*, Ukrainian *шаху*. Most of them have "s" or palatalized "s" – "ʃ" as the first phoneme, then "a" or "e" followed by "χ" or "k" which may have undergone a change according to Grimms's Law. All the words are singular masculine or plural. Some languages (e.g. Belarusian, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Russian) retained the morpheme "mate" which also comes from the Arabic root *māta* and meant "died". Hence, for example, the Russian *шахматы* means "the king is dead". This reflects the key strategy of chess, to hunt for the opponent's king.

Spanish *pato*, which means draw (n), is the original word for *stalemate*. In most languages it sounds similar, e.g. Polish *pat*, German *Patt*, Russian *нат*.

Chess terms and expressions in general language

A large number of chess terms are used in general language. Let us look through some of them containing words from table 1.

Some sports commentators sometimes use the expression *piłkarskie szachy*, "football chess". Surprisingly, it is usually used when nothing special happens and the players kick the ball in the middle of the football pitch for a long time. Other expressions with pejorative connotations are common, including *refleks szachisty* "chess-player's reflex" or *myśleć jak szachista* "to think like a chess-player" and meaning "to have a very poor reflex" and "to be thinking very heavily and slowly" respectively. These expressions seem to ignore the dynamic, competitive character of chess and the hard work of a chess player who must think very clearly, logically and relatively quickly. However, language is not always governed by the strict rules of logic. Sometimes an expression when first created might well have reflected real life but then after centuries, and changing social and political conditions it can seem deeply conservative and almost impossible to understand. Not all fixed expressions, sayings and idioms are created by specialists in particular fields or by linguists and many are created by ordinary people. These may lack a certain amount of specialist knowledge but, on the other hand, they usually have quick minds, biting tongues and sharp wits. However, they often recognise only superficial facts, visible to a layman observer and consequently can draw inappropriate conclusions. Regardless of their creation context, they are coined and re-coined and so persist in a language for ages.

Gloger (1985: 301) states that at the beginning of the 17th century Polish chess terminology was vivid in general language. Such preachers as the Jesuit Piotr Skarga and the Dominican Fabian Birkowski often resorted to metaphors using chess terminology. He quotes also Lubicz, after Salomon Rysiński, who in the 17th century printed Polish proverbs in Lithuanian, including: *Szachem padać*[2] broadly meaning "to be defeated", *Albo szach albo mat* literally meaning "Check or mate", with the sense of "loss or profit", and *I w szachach przyjaciela poznać* "You can meet a friend playing chess". Krzyżanowski (1972: 369) adds *jak w szachy grał* literally meaning "like at chess playing" but conveying the sense of "with changeable luck".

Russian also has the calque of the last saying *как в шахматы играл*, which means, as in Polish "with changeable luck" and also "perfectly". Another Russian expression *в шахматном порядке* with the literal meaning of "in a chess order", suggest-

[1] Gloger (1985: 300) states that the Old Polish name of chess was *saki*. On the other hand, Karpluk (1980: 88) states that the name *saki* was wrongly quoted by Linde. She thinks that the word *saki* is related to *sieć* "net" and was another game.

[2] It has its lexical equivalent in Old Russian *падать (перед кем-то) шахом* meaning "to ask for mercy".

Table 1. Chess terms and expressions in general language

English term	Polish term	German term	Russian term
chess	szachy	Schachspiel, Schach	шахматы
check (n)	szach	Schach	шах
check (v)	szachować, dać szacha	Schach geben (bieten)	объявить/поставить шах, шаховать
checkmate (n), mate (n)	szach mat, mat	Schachmatt, Matt	шах мат, мат
checkmate (v), mate (v)	(za)matować, dać mata	Matt setzen/geben	поставить мат, матовать
chess-player, player	szachista, gracz	Schachspieler, Spieler	шахматист, игрок
stalemate	pat	Patt	пат

ing an order as on a chessboard. In general, Russian seems to have a lot of good connotations connected with chess. Many decades of great successes have made Russian chess-players respected in their land, which has its reflex in the language. Moreover, chess is treated in Russian not only as gambling but as art and something valuable.

The words *chess*, *check* and *checkmate* came into general language. *Checkmate* (v) has a figurative meaning "to thwart someone", or "to make them powerless and in check means 'under restraint" (Brewer 2002: 231). There is an idiom *to keep/hold somebody/something in check* which means "to control someone or something that might cause damage or harm" (Macmillan Dictionary 2006: 230). Calque idioms *trzymać kogoś w szachu* and *jemanden in/im Schach halten* are used in Polish and German, respectively, as well, however their meaning is a little different, namely "to restrict somebody's freedom, threatening something, to keep somebody in uncertainty". German *jemanden <einer Sache> Schach bieten* means "to oppose somebody/something" (Skorupka 2002: 257, Czochralski 2004: 422). The Russian calque *держать кого-то в шахе* has a similar meaning to the Polish analogical expression. Polish people sometimes say *szachować kogoś* literally meaning "to check somebody", in the sense of "to put pressure" on someone. Such expressions may be found in Professor Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski's[3] articles on political meaning in the context of strategic weapons and international relations (Pogonowski 2009b).

[3] Professor Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski is a historian and lexicographer who emigrated to the USA. He very often uses chess metaphors in his political articles written both in Polish and English.

A stalemate is a position in which a player who is to move is neither in check nor is able to make any legal move. Stalemate ends the game, which is then drawn. The chess term *stalemate* entered many languages as a deadlock, a situation in which progress is impossible. It has its equivalents in Polish, German and Russian, respectively: *sytuacja patowa*, *Pattsituation* and *патовая ситуация*, which all relate to military or political stalemate.

The Chessboard and its Elements

Let us return to the term chessboard (Diagram 1).

The Polish equivalent *szachownica* has also a metaphorical meaning. Skorupka (2002: 257) gives *szachownica pól*, *gruntów*, *łąk*, *ugorów*, *posadzki* or, in a literal translation "chessboard of fields, grounds, meadows, fallows, floor". There are also some slightly archaic expressions that use *szachownica* to refer to war strategy: *puścić się szachownicą*, "to attack in the formation resembling a chessboard", *rozwinąć (się) w szachownicę* "to move into a line resembling a chessboard" (Skorupka 2002: 257). In the past, Polish *szachować* meant not only "to check" but also "to divide a surface into squares". In the sixteenth-century Polish there was also an adjective from *szachy* "chess" – *szachowany* meant "in a pattern of squares or embroidered" (Reczek 1968: 480). There are also metaphorical expressions like *globalna/światowa szachownica* (Jasiński 2007; Jackowski 2008) with its Russian calque *мировая доска*, "global/world chessboard" with the sense of 'the area of important events'. One of Jackowski's sentences (2008) is very characteristic of this theme: "Today it is visible with the naked eye that the world is a huge chessboard on which pawns and pieces battle each other intensely over oil, gas, uranium, and other natural re-

Table 2. The Chessboard and its Elements

English term	Polish term	German term	Russian term
chessboard	szachownica	Schachbrett	шахматная доска
square	pole	Feld	поле
light	białe	weiβ	белые
dark	czarne	schwarz	чёрные
line	linia	Linie	линия
rank	linia pozioma	Reihe, Horizontale	горизонталь
file	linia pionowa	Vertikale, Linie	вертикаль
diagonal	diagonala, przekątna	Diagonale	диагональ

sources..." (my translation). Also Pogonowski often uses the word chessboard or the Polish equivalent *szachownica* in his articles as a metaphor for political and military events, e.g. "Poland (...) may be a sacrificial peon[4] on the world chessboard" e.g. "which [Poland] is treated as a pawn to be sacrificed on the world politics chessboard of the ruling financial elite" (Pogonowski 2009a: 2). Similar expressions can be found in Pogonowski 2009b and 2009c. German *er ist ein Bauer auf dem politischen Schachbrett*, "he is a pawn on the political chessboard" sound very similar. It is worth noting that these metaphors are typically military, contrary to the earlier examples which were more geometrical. A chessboard is here a battlefield and pawns and pieces - two sides of a conflict with their opposing forces.

The English words *chequer* (BrE), *chequered* (BrE), *checker* (AmE), *checked* (AmE) and *check* mean a pattern of squares. These words probably derive from the original meaning of *check* "king" (mentioned earlier), but later transferred to the pattern of the board. The Russian expression *расположенный как квадраты на шахматной доске*, "arranged as squares on the chessboard" represents the same idea, however, the connection with chess manifests itself still more clearly here.

The next rows of table 2 illustrate numerous incompatibilities between the English terms "square" and "light" and their equivalents in other languages. The term square has been associated with the shape of the smallest element of the board, whereas in the other languages it is an appropriate equivalent of *field*, which means in all languages an open area. It shows that the chessboard was perceived in different ways - as a set of geometrical figures or fields. Obviously, *field* and its equivalents in the examined languages are also terms used in geometry, but in this case they must be treated as a part of a great battlefield which is the whole chessboard. The latter term is much more compatible with the fact that chess is a strategic game.

Squares have two colours. Although the cited definitions according to *The FIDE Laws of Chess* gives alternative forms: light/white and dark/black, as a matter of fact, the terms white or black square occur extremely rarely in chess publications. The designations *light* and *dark* seem to be more precise since squares are hardly ever white and black (usually cream-yellow and dark-brown), possibly because black/white is too sharp a contrast that tires the eyes. Nevertheless, the Poles always call light squares – *białe* "white" and dark – *czarne* "black", independently of their real colours. As the same situation occurs in other languages, the author can only guess that in the past the colours of squares were exactly white and black.

The terminology connected with the term *line* deserves consideration. Hooper and Whyld (1987: 187) define it as "all the squares on any file, rank, or diagonal"[5], but this term is practically not used in English. The English language has two different words: *rank* for a horizontal row and *file* for vertical column (see *The FIDE Laws of Chess* art. 2.4). Analogously, Russian has *горизонталь* and *вертикаль*. German has calques of them, though, the term *Linie* "line" and *Reich* "rank" are also used. Polish

[4] The words pawn and peon have the same origin (see ODE 2006: 1292, 1304).

[5] It is interesting that neither Litmanowicz (1986: 525) nor Bönsch (1989: 57) regards diagonals as lines. Chess Codes of particular federations are official of *The FIDE Laws of Chess*, and therefore they cannot explain these problems.

uses the descriptive expressions given in table 3. The Polish words *rząd* and *kolumna*, which are the equivalents for "rank" and "file" are used only when describing a chessboard in chess notation.

Chessmen

Obviously, a chessboard can never be empty. Each player has initially 16 chessmen as shown on the diagram below and specified in the table 3. The vocabulary concerning the names of particular men is particularly rich and diverse as well as their origins (Diagram 2.).

There are some discrepancies in the opinions on what the general name of chessmen in Old Polish was. Karpluk (1980: 90) gives *szach* (n) which is the singular form of *szachy*[6] (chess). Wróbel (1951: 181), on the other hand, suggests using the word *kamień* "stone", which was a German calque of *Stein*, and only in the 1930s was it replaced by the Old Polish word *bierka*.

A piece is a general designation for a king, a queen, a rook, a bishop, or a knight. Chessmen are pieces and pawns. The queen and the rooks are major pieces, whereas bishops and knights are called minor pieces.

The exchange is "the capture of a rook by one player and a minor piece by his opponent. The player who captures the rook «wins the exchange»" (Hooper, Whyld 1984: 108). Obviously a player can lose the exchange, be the exchange up/down,[7] have compensation for the exchange etc. The other languages have calques of the word *quality*. Burkhard Granz's *Chess Vocabulary* in 16 Languages (http://chess.granz.de/ch_vocab.html) gives the equivalent words in all languages (except for English), they have the general meaning *quality* and nearly all sound the same, which proves that they derive from the Latin word *quālitās*. Such terms as *kwalitas*, *kwalitet* and *qualitas* were still present in Polish chess terminology in the interwar period. Hence, the word exchange is another example of some kind of isolation of English from other languages, even Germanic ones.

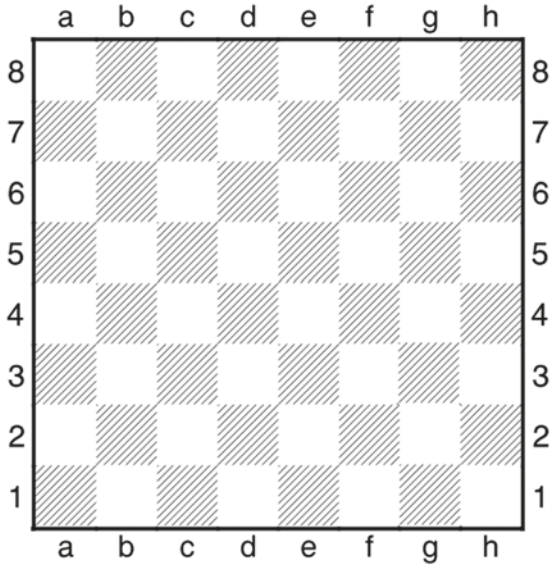

Diagram 1. Chessboard

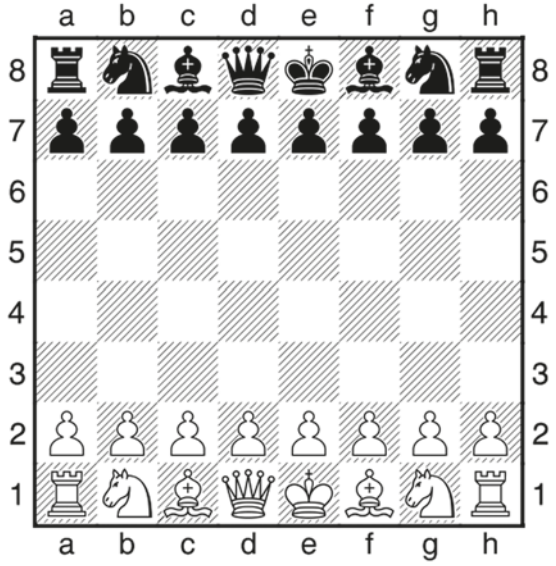

Diagram 2. Starting position

The difference between a chessman and a piece is flexible in particular languages, especially in the plural. The Polish term *figury* "pieces" is a colloquial synonym of *bierki* "chessmen". This name was used by Jan Kochanowski (1966) in his poem *Szachy*. The words piece, *bierka* ("chessman") and *Stein* ("stone") sound much more like tools compared with the humanlike *chessman*. Moreover, English names of pieces represent particular classes of medieval society. Russian does not distinguish between chessmen and pieces. However, if we juxtapose pieces with pawns e.g. *У белых*

[6] *Szachy* "chess" occurs only in the plural in present-day Polish.

[7] These chess expressions harmonise with Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive theory: "'More is up, less is down" Lakoff (1980: 15). The expression "to be something up/down" is typical of English. The other languages use construction like "to have something more" (cf subchapter 2.6.2.4).

Table 3. Chessmen

English term and symbol	Polish term and symbol	German term and symbol	Russian term and symbol	Chess symbols
chessman, man	bierka	Schachstein, Stein	фигура	
piece	figura	Schachfigur, Figur	фигура	
major piece	ciężka figura	Schwerfigur	тяжёлая фигура	
minor piece	lekka figura	Leichtfigur	лёгкая фигура	
exchange	jakość	Qualität	качество	
king K	król K	König K	король К	♔ ♚
queen Q	hetman H	Dame D	ферзь Ф	♕ ♛
rook/castle R	wieża W	Turm T	ладья Л	♖ ♜
bishop B	goniec G	Läufer L	слон С	♗ ♝
knight N	skoczek, koń S	Springer, Rössel S	конь К	♘ ♞
pawn	pion/ pionek*	Bauer	пешка	♙ ♟
White	białe	Weiβ, Anziehender	белые	
Black	czarne	Schwarz, Nachziehender	чёрные	

* A pawn sometimes had symbol 'P' in some Polish old notation systems.

три пешки за фигуру "White has three pawns for the sacrificed piece", *фигура* always means a piece, not a chessman.

Another difference deserves attention: the expressions major/minor pieces in the other languages have equivalents of heavy/light pieces.[8] Once again English differs from the three other languages.

It is worth noticing that the names of chessmen are not accidental and suggest that the game has an original strategic or even military character. The layout of the board, with two armies facing each other, with their commanders and various formations of soldiers underlines the point further.

Machalski (1951) gives the following Old-Arabic names of particular chessmen: *al-szach* "king", al-*firzan* "queen" (literally "sage", "learned" (n)), *al-roch* "rook" (literally "tower"), *al-fil* – "bishop" (literally "elephant"), *al-faras* "knight" (literally: "horseman"), and *al-beizaq* "pawn" (literally "infantryman"). Czarnecki (1980: 18) states that all these words are of Persian origin and gives *rukh* instead of *al-roch*.

The King

The king is most important piece in chess not because of his strength but rather his vulnerability[9]. As in a real battle, he usually needs a safe place. As mentioned, the name chess derives from king, thus in all languages the name of the piece means somebody who rules an independent country. The word *król* is believed to derive from the name of the ruler of the Franks, Charles the Great (Latin: Carolus Magnus or Karolus Magnus) reigning in the years 768-814. This means "belonging to the tribe or son of the tribe" (my translation) (Wermke 2001: 435) Anglo-Saxon *cyn* meant "tribe". Hence, after adding the suffix -ing *cyning* arose. The similarity to the German *König* is striking here. Also in other languages the word *king* sounds very similar e.g.: Old Saxon *kuning*, Swedish *konung* (Skeat 1993: 232). Kochanowski (1966) calls also the king *Pan*, "Lord"[10] It is worth mentioning that the term *carь* was used in Old Polish. It can be found in some seventeenth-century manuscripts (see Karpluk 1980: 92).

[8] Although McDonell in his dictionary (the Internet) gives two alternatives for *major pieces*: "heavy pieces" and "heavy artillery" they are rather rarely used.

[9] The king was in fact the strongest piece before the reform of chess rules.

[10] Not all words describing chessmen used by Kochanowski (1966) in his poem Szachy refer to the real names existing in the 16th century. The poet did not care for precision but treated them rather as heroes of a fight.

Other forms of the word are: Czech and Slovenian *král*, and Croatian and Serbian *králj*. The word did not get into Polish directly from French but through vulgar Latin (Proto-Roman) Carlius, Carleus (referring to the ancestors of Charles the Great) (Bańkowski 2000 vol 1: 824, Boryś 2005: 262). However, the Turkish name to designate the king is *şah*, referring to the Old Persian *šāh* mentioned above, which is the former name of monarchs in the Middle East. In a more ornate style annotators use also the name *monarch* with its equivalents *monarcha*, *Monarch* and *монарх* in Polish, German and Russian, respectively.

It is quite interesting that words that are semantically very close: *king*, *reign*[11], and *royal* have in English different roots whereas in some languages they are natural derivates e.g. in Polish, respectively: *król*, *królować*, *królewski*. Both *reign*, and *royal* come from Latin: *regere* "rule", *rex* "king". Analogously, in German there is a verb *regieren* "reign" with a different root than in the word *König*. In Russian a verb derived from король does not exist, either. However, there are two other words: *царствовать* and *царить*, which can be easily explained by another way of naming the country leader: *цар* "tsar". Nevertheless, the last two languages have adjectives derived from the appropriate calques of *king*: "königlich" and "королевский".

The Queen

This piece's name is much more diverse and changeable in time and in particular languages. Some chess historians suggest that the name "queen" may be connected with Isabella I who was queen of Castile and León between 1474 and 1504. Wikipedia gives (entry Isabella I of Castile https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella_I_of_Castile) "Isabella's basic education consisted of reading, spelling, writing, grammar, mathematics, art, chess, dancing, embroidery, music, and religious instruction". The same source quotes Andrés Bernáldez's opinion about the queen "She was an endeavored woman, very powerful, very prudent, wise, very honest, chaste, devout, discreet, truthful, clear, without deceit. Who could count the excellences of this very Catholic and happy Queen, always very worthy of praises" A powerful monarch interested in chess was a good pattern for the strongest chess piece following the reform of chess laws.

Hooper and Whyld (1984: 271) explain the story of the word queen as follows: "The use of the word queen was early and widespread, but the origin of the name is enigmatic. The Arabic *firz* or FIRZĂN «counsellor»[12] was never translated into any European language although it was adopted in various forms, changing its gender from masculine to feminine. Long before the modern game was introduced this ancestor of the queen was called *dame* and is still so called in France. Chess-players may have borrowed the word from the game of draughts which the French to this day call *jeu de dame*s. The transition from dame to queen would be a natural desire to pair the central pieces".

As a matter of fact, the word dame "lady"[13] is borrowed from French and originally comes from Latin *domina* (see Długosz-Kurbaczowa 2003: 98-99). In most languages queen is a calque of French *dame* or English *queen* (e.g. German, Spanish, Dutch, Italian). In fact the colloquial forms: Polish *królowa* or *królówka* (a deformed form of *królowa*), German *Königin* and Russian *королева* mean exactly the same – "queen". However, in some languages the root is different. Polish *hetman*, Turkish *vezir* Hungarian *vezér* have a similar meaning – "commander". The Russian *ферзь* can be added to the same group.

The word hetman comes from Middle High German *hētman*, *höuptman*, *houbetman* – "leader", "commander", hence Hauptmann (*haupt* – "head", *Mann* – "man") (Bańkowski 2000: 527). The word *hetman* was known as early as in the 15th century in the form *etman* (see Brückner 1970: 171). The German word *Hauptmann* was made up as a calque of the Latin *capitaneus* from *caput* "head". Czech *hejtman*, Ruthenian *ataman*, Slovenian *hegtman*, Polish *hetman* and Lithuanian (from Polish) *atmonas*, *etmonas* come from the same German word. The old national Polish name of the commander is *wojewoda*. It may be etymologically translated as "somebody who leads warriors" (*woj* is exactly "warrior"

[11] The verb to king means in English to make somebody a king and not to be a king and reign a country.

[12] Litmanowicz (1986: 347) and Giżycki (1984: 20) translate firzān as "vizier".

[13] The word *lady* is sometimes used instead of *queen* in present-day English chess jargon.

and *wodzić* meant "lead" in Old Polish). Each prince belonging to the dynasty of Piasts[14] was the first *wojowoda* as the commander of his knights. The main *wojewoda*, who substituted for the king, was called *hetman* (Gloger 1985: 248).

Nevertheless, in chess the name *hetman* appeared relatively late. The opinions concerning Old Polish names of the queen are divided. Different sources give: *królowa* "queen", which has been a more colloquial synonym of *hetman* up to now, *pani* "lady", *baba* "an augmentative form of woman"' *dama* "a more distinctive form of lady". Kleczkowski (1946: 79) adds: *żona* "wife", *małżonka* "spouse", and *królewska miłośnica* "king's lover". The date of the change of the name are also different: Litmanowicz (1986: 347) and Wróbel (1951: 182) give that it was in the 19th century, whereas Kleczkowski suggests it was before the 17th century. Litmanowicz states that the reason for the change was very practical: an improvement and a simplification of chess notation, since both *król* and *królowa* start with the same letter "k"[15], Wróbel (1951: 182), on the other hand, claims that it was a proposal by Krupski,[16] who suggested that *dama* "lady" should not be the strongest piece.

The English word queen has a different root than *king*, in contrast with the other equivalent pairs: *król – królowa*, *König – Königin*, *король – королева* in Polish, German, and Russian, respectively, a phenomenon that occurs in the above mentioned pair *king – reign*. The word *queen* is of Germanic origin and in most old languages meant *woman*, *wife* or *female*. The related forms are, among others: Anglo-Saxon *cwén*, Icelandic *kván*, Danish *quinde*, Swedish *quinna*, Gothic *kwens*, *kweins*, *kwino*, and Old High German *guená* (Skeat 1993: 384).

There are also verbs related to the name of the strongest piece: in English to *queen* means "to promote a pawn to a queen" whereas the Polish verb *hetmanić* meant in the past "to be a main commander, to hold the power of the main commander" (Holly, Żółtak 2001: 131).

The Rook

The piece that moves along the ranks and files is a rook. Although dictionaries give also the other term castle-[17]which was widely known in the 17th and 18th century in England (see Wikipedia, entry: Rook (chess) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rook_(chess), citing Sunnucks 1970: 427), it is rarely used in chess publications these days but it is still used in colloquial language. The chess rook is not to be confused with the same word meaning a black bird like a crow. These two words have a very different origin. Rook, as a chess piece, derives "from Old French rock based on Arabic *ruḳḳ* (of which the sense remains uncertain)" (ODE 2006: 1530). Skeats (1993: 406) adds Persian *rokh* which "is said to have meant «warrior»". The Wikipedia entry for rook gives Sanskrit rath and Persian rokh explaining both words as "chariot"[18]. Litmanowicz (1987: 1322) gives Arabic al-roch and Persian rukh taken from the Old Indian rukh which meant "chariot". He suggests that in early European terminology the name evolved from chariot to corner tower, or tower. In fact, in most languages rook is an equivalent of tower e.g.: German *Turm*, French *tour*, Italian *torre*, Hungarian *bástya*; Dutch *toren* or *castle* (as in English).[19] Russian also has a colloquial name тура. Although is not translated as tower, it sounds very similar to the previous few words and might have had this meaning in the past. Turkish kale has a similar meaning, 'fortress', 'stronghold', but also means goal in sport. Only Russian has an original name ладья, which is an Old Russian word derived from the Old Slavonic *oldъ* – "boat" (see Sitnikova 2004: 114). That is why that the shape of this piece in Ruthenian chess resembled a boat (Karpluk 1980: 96).

[14] The dynasty of Piasts reigned in Poland till the death of Kazimierz the Great in 1370. The half-legendary progenitor of the dynasty was Piast. The son of Piast, Siemowit, (9th century) became the prince of the tribe of Polans (Polish *Polanie*). The first ruler from the dynasty of Piasts whose existence has never been questioned was Mieszko It, Siemowit's great grandson, who died in 992 .

[15] The same situation does not hinder in English: *king* and *knight* start with the same letter. The pieces have the symbols K and N, respectively, in accordance with the first pronounced letters.

[16] Wróbel writes in his article: "in 1835 Krupski proposes in his chess textbook ....." I was able only to establish his first name - Kazimioerz in http://www.gabo.hi.pl/szachy/historias.htm"

[17] The etymology of the word *castle* is explained in the subchapter *Moves*, under item *Castling*.

[18] "Persian War Chariots were heavily armoured, carrying a driver and at least one ranged-weapon bearer, such as an archer" (Wikipedia, entry: *Rook*).

[19] Obviously, the word *tower* is associated with a castle. One of Ukrainian chess coaches who has been working in Poland for many years observed that small children often called the rook *zamek* – the Polish equivalent of "castle".

The Polish name *wieża* derives from the old form wèża, which meant "tent". Since the top of a tent is pointed, the name was transferred into a building, i.e. a conical tower (Boryś 2005: 698). In the sixteenth-century Polish the rook was called roch (Kochanowski 1966[20]; Litmanowicz 1987: 1323; Holly, Żółtak 2001: 318). It was a borrowing, from German via Czech (Karpluk 1980: 96).

The Bishop

The chess *bishop* has different names across the various languages. A bishop is, obviously, a hierarch of the Church. It can be depicted figuratively as a bishop in full ecclesiastical attire or when depicted in abstract form, the shape of the upper part resembles a bishop's mitre. It might have been a good way to Christianize chess, as well. In a more ornate style the piece is sometimes called *prelate*.

The word *bishop* comes from Greek *episkopos*, (Latin *episkopus*) and means overseer (Skeat 1993: 418). "The origin of the name [bishop as a chessman] is obscure, but it has been used in English-speaking countries since the 15th century when this piece took the place of the AUFIN used in the old game. The move of the bishop, so different from the aufin, is the same as the move of the COURIER in the game of that name introduced long before modern chess" (Hooper, Whyld 1984: 33). It is worth noticing that in some languages the bishop is called courier or messenger (Polish *goniec*) or runner (German *Läufer*, Hungarian *futó*). Italian has *alfiere* "warrant officer, squire, armour-bearer" whereas French has *fou*[21] "fool, clown, jester" and Russian has *слон* (elephant), which is the only name seeming to coincide with the ancient words *fil* (Indian), *pil* (Persian) and *al-fil* (Arabic) meaning "elephant". However, the stem of the Russian *слон* "elephant" is quite different. It derives from Slavonic *slonь* or *slonъ*, which was the name of an exotic animal and came from one of the oriental languages: compare the Turkish word *arslan* "lion", and Tatar, Azerbaijan and Kurdish *aslan*. In Polish the verb *słoń* has been known since the 15th century. As the Slavs of that time hardly heard of such exotic animals as a lion or an elephant, they were confused (Boryś 2005: 558). It is worth mentioning that elephants were sometimes used in ancient battles, e.g. by Indian, and so it can have a military connotation as a chess term. The other, colloquial Russian name of the bishop is *офицер* "officer". Hence, Russian names for the bishop piece look the most military in flavour.

The Polish word *goniec* meant "mounted messenger, a soldier carrying battle despatches". The old form is *gonьvъ* from *goniti* "chase". However, this meaning is not the original one, which seems to have been any mounted warrior. At times when mounted horsemen were not numerous in Slav armies, they were used for chasing after enemy's survivors. Mikołaj Rej uses the word *honiec*, as well (Bańkowski 2000 vol. 1: 454).

The German *Läufer* comes from Middle High German *löufer* from Old High German *loufari* and meant "messenger, courier, servant". In present day German the word *Läufer* has changed its meaning. Piprek (1972: 17) gives as many as eleven meanings of this word and none of them is connected with any service. However, it does not mean that there is nothing between the old words and the new meanings. What they have in common is an element of movement – a courier delivered messages. So it is no wonder that this word has been assimilated in sports terminology, namely, 'runner' in athletics, "mid-field player" in football, and "one of the rounders players"[22]. Hence, it may be said that in some way the word *Läufer* has kept its metaphorical sense into new modern contexts of use.

It is interesting that two languages retained the original pronunciation: Italian *alfiere* and Spanish *alfil* mentioned above (Litmanowicz 1986: 306). However, the former changed completely its meaning in general language and the latter does not have any other meaning except for a chessman.

In Old Polish terminology the bishop was called: *mnich* "monk", *kapłan*, *ksiądz* "priest", *biskup* "bishop", *pop* now "Orthodox priest" (but at the time when Kochanowski lived (1530-1584) also Roman Catholic priest), *chorąży* "warrant officer", *fenrych* (from German *Fähnrich*, also "warrant officer") *giermek* "squire". Most of these words are present in Kochanowski (1966). Karpluk (1980: 93-93) adds *delfin* "dolphin", *al-*

[20] Kochanowski uses the term słoń 'elephant' (and as a matter of fact the tower placed on an elephant) as well, however, it might have been a product of poetical imagination of the author.

[21] Instead of the abovementioned bishop's mitre the (chess) bishop could have a clown cap.

[22] A game resembling baseball.

fier "warrant officer", *strzelec* "shooter", *błazen* "clown", *szaszek* "piece". Since the 19th century until recently the word *laufer* (a borrowing from German) was used very often (Litmanowicz 1986: 306). In fact, the word *laufer* is still present in Polish, in particular among amateurs. What is interesting, this word was used in the nineteenth-century Polish as "a servant running in front of the vehicle of his master" (see Holly, Żółtak 2001: 189).

There is a very interesting phenomenon which occurs in the Polish inflection of the chessmen terms presented so far. The forms of the same words in some cases differ depending on whether they belong to the general language or are names of chessmen. *Król* "king" has the plural nominative form *królowie*. However, if we consider chess or card kings the plural form will be *króle*. In the plural genitive form the most usual form is *królów*, with one exception *Święto Trzech Króli* "Epiphany or the Feast of the Three Wise Men". The same form *króli* instead of *królów* will refer to chess kings and cards.[23] The plural nominative for *hetman* "main commander" is *hetmani* or rarely *hetmanowie* whereas *hetman* as a chessman queen has the form with a hard ending – *hetmany*. Also in the plural accusative it will be said *hetmanów* and *hetmany* for the general language and chess meaning, respectively. A similar difference occurs with the name *goniec*. The plural nominative form for "messenger" is *gońcy*, whereas two chessmen will be *gońce*. In the opinion of the author, some of these cases may be explained as the retention of the old paradigm of declension.

The Knight

The figure of the head of a horse is the typical abstract representation of the knight which in more ornate style is also called steed. The Russian colloquial name *рыцарь* also means "knight".

The knight represents cavalry. In the Middle Ages a knight was "a man who served his sovereign or lord as a mounted soldier in armour" (ODE 2006: 965). The word *knight* is of West Germanic origin (ODE 2006: 965). The old forms are: Anglo-Saxon *cniht* "boy, servant", Dutch *knecht* "servant", Danish *knegt* "manservant", Swedish *knecht* "soldier", German *knecht* "belonging to the kin or tribe" (Skeat 1993: 234).

In some languages the chess knight is still named as an equivalent of *horse*. Examples include: Russian *конь*, Italian *cavallo*, Spanish *caballo*, Polish *koń* and *konik* ("small horse"), German *Pferd*, *Rōssel* ("small horse") and *Roß* ("horse, steed") (the Polish and German terms are colloquial speech synonyms of *skoczek* "knight"), Slavic *Koń*, Czech *kůň*, Bulgarian *kon* (Długosz Kurbaczowa 2003: 238 and Boryś 2005: 248). The Proto-Slavic form is **końь* (Boryś 2005: 248) or **konjь* (Długosz-Kurbaczowa 2003: 238). Further reconstruction is uncertain, however the consonants "m" and "b" were likely to occur before n (ń) (Długosz Kurbaczowa 2003: 238 and Brückner 1957: 253-254). The authors mentioned give different Proto-Indo-European forms: **kábō(n)* (Boryś), **ek'uo-s* (Długosz-Kurbaczowa) which is retained in Latin *equus*.

However, the terminology was evolving into *horseman*[24] (Czech *jezdec*, Slovak *jazdec*) or *jumper* (German *Springer*, Serbian *skakač* and obviously Polish *skoczek*[25]) (Litmanowicz 1986: 459). The word *skoczek* refers to the moves of this piece on the chessboard. It is derived from the verb *skakać* "jump" from Proto-Slavonic *skakati* (Boryś 2005: 552). Sometimes the horseman became a mounted knight like in English and French – *cavallier*. Kochanowski (1966) also used the names *rycerz*[26] "knight" and *jezdny* "horseman".

The Pawn

Pawn is the least powerful chessman. Nevertheless, François Philidor called pawns the soul of chess[27]. The word derives from Latin *pedo* "foot soldier". The Old French form was *peon* (Brūckner 1970: 414). Some languages usually accepted this ancient name, as with French *pion* (another meaning of which is "form teacher in a dormitory"), Italian *pedone*, and Spanish *peon*[28], all meaning "infantryman", "walker" or "pedestrian". Russian *пешка* de-

[23] The same form refers sometimes to rabbits ("rabbit" – Polish *królik*).

[24] Returning to the ancient Arabic *al-faras*.

[25] The old form of *skoczek* was *skakun*. It was still used in the 19th century.

[26] One of the Ukrainian chess coaches working in Poland with small children has observed that they often use the name *rycerz* (the Polish equivalent of "knight") instead of *skoczek*.

[27] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/François-André_Danican_Philidor

[28] Litmanowicz (1987: 892) classifies both Italian *pedone*, and Spanish *peon* as meaning peasants, unjustly in the opinion of the author.

rives from *пеший* "pedestrian", from the Indo-European *ped* "leg" (Sitnikova 2004: 167). The colloquial Russian name *пехотинец* means "walker, foot soldier" and pawns are called *пехота* "infantry".

A foot soldier, the lowest rank in the army, often was a peasant. Therefore, the other big stream in the nomenclature is derived from this stem: Arabic *baidag*[29], Indian and Persian *pejada*[30], German *Bauer*, and Hungarian *paraszt*, (Litmanowicz 1987: 891-892). An exception is the Irish *fichillin*, which means "little chess" (see Wikipedia: entry Pawn (chess) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pawn_(chess)).

In modern times the Polish for pawn *pieszy* means "pedestrian" but in the seventeenth-century was a term meaning "infantryman". Other terms used were *pieszek*, a diminutive form of *pieszy*, *piechur*, "walker" or "infantryman", *chłopek*, a diminutive form of "peasant", *żołnierz* "soldier" *dworzanin* "courtier" and *drab*[31] from the German *draben*, "to march". It experienced a complete semantic change and became pejorative. Today's meaning of is "tall strapping fellow" or "ruffian" whereas earlier it meant "foot soldier", "servant". In this sense it was used by Adam Mickiewicz in the Polish national epic *Pan Tadeusz* (Holly 2001: 85-86).

Although today's Polish *pionek* or *pion*[32] "pawn" has the same form as in French, it does not have any meaning beyond chess. However, it is used metaphorically to suggest somebody who is not significant and can be disregarded, which harmonizes with the name of the weakly armed soldier of the lowest rank in the army. The Polish and Russian expressions *być pionkiem*, and *быть пешкой*, "to be a pawn" means to be a tool in somebody's hands (Skorupka 2002: 257).

Names of Chessmen Used in Poetry

Another source of names for chess pieces (differing from both the official or technical terms and the colloquial ones) is poetry. Poetry is often a law unto itself, as the poets' imagination knows no bounds. The names given below come from two poems by Vida (1983) and Kochanowski (1966) – the listing is incomplete and does not repeat terms already quoted earlier in this paper. Collective terms for chess pieces include *legia bukszpanowa* "boxwood legion", *szyki z bukszpanu* "boxwood formations" and *drewniane wojsko* "wooden army". The names of individual pieces include, for the king e: *wódzowie* "commanders" *władcy ludów* "rulers of peoples", and *przewodnicy ludów* "leaders of peoples"; for the queen e: *żona* "wife", *grzmiąca* "thundering (n)" *królewna* "king's daughter" and *Amazonka* "Amazon"; for the rook : *stwory niosące uzbrojone wieże*[33] "creatures carrying armed towers", *bestie z wieżą na grzbiecie* "beasts with a tower on its back", *słonie* "elephants" and *potwory* "monsters"; bishops are *łucznicy* "archers", *młodzieńcy zbrojni w strzały* "young men armed with arrows"; the knight is called *koń* "horse", *jeździec* "horseman", *rumak* "steed" and pawns are named *piechota* "infantry", *dworzanie* "courtiers", *falanga* "phalanx" and *służki* "woman servants". The latter term probably relates to promoted pawns, which become new queens.

Moves

Castling

Obviously, the Word castling is a derivate from *castel*. Skeat (1993: 71) gives Anglo-Saxon *castel* from Latin *castellum* which is a diminutive form of "fortified place". Again, the English word *castling* has a different stem than most of the other languages: Polish *roszada*, German *Rochade*, Russian *рокировка*, Frech *roque*, Spanish *enroque*, Dutch *rokade*, Latvian *rokāde*, Czech *rošáda* all sound very similar (and exhibit the typical change k-χ [Grimm's Law]).

The word *roszada* is associated with the rook, which is one of the two pieces taking part in this move (the other, of course, being the king). Therefore, the etymology is the same as for the word *rook*. Tokarski (1980: 654) states that this word comes from Arabic *rochch* and came into Polish through

[29] As written in the subchapter 4.3, Giżycki (1984), citing Machalski (1951) gives *al-beizaq* with a different meaning – "infantryman".

[30] This information also seems to be dubious. Considering the footnote no 27 and juxtaposing very similar forms of stems (given above): Persian *pejada* Italian *pedone*, Spanish *peon* and, above all, Latin *pedo*, the Author thinks that *pejada* may be a foot soldier, as well.

[31] Nearly all of these forms are found in Kochanowski (1966).

[32] The Polish Chess Code (*Kodeks Szachowy*) term for pawn is "pionek". Nevertheless, the names *pionek* and *pion* are used interchangeably in chess publications.

[33] Some ancient rooks have exactly this form of an elephant with a tower on its back. The examples can be seen e.g. in Giżycki (1984: 12, 326) or Oxford Dictionary (2006: 2, 87).

Table 4. Moves

English term	Polish term	German term	Russian term
move (n), continuation	ruch, posunięcie, kontynuacja	Zug, Fortsetzung	ход, продолжение
move (v), make a move	ruszać się, wykonać posunięcie	Zug machen, ziehen	сделать ход, ходить
capture, take	bić	schlagen, nehmen	бить, взять
kingside/queenside castling or short/long castling	krótka/długa roszada	kurze/lange Rochade	короткая/длинная рокировка
castle	roszować	rochieren	рокировать, сделать рокировку
en passant	bicie w przelocie	en passant, schlagen im Vorübergehen	взятие на проходе
promotion	promocja	Umwandlung	превращение
zugzwang	zugzwang, przymus	Zugzwang	цугцванг

German *Rochade*. However, the pairs of words *castling – rook*, *roszada – wieża*, *Rochade – Turm* and *рокировка – ладья* in English, Polish, German and Russian, respectively, are demotivated in the present-day languages[34]. Nevertheless, if we take the old forms form the rook: English castle and Polish *roch*, the motivation will be visible.

It is very interesting that Jan Kochanowski in his poem uses a mysterious term *skok do kuchni* "a jump to the kitchen"[35]. This expression sounds very metaphorical, but it is difficult to find any sensible associations. Perhaps the kitchen, like a castle or a tower, was regarded as a particularly safe place?

The word castling is one of the most frequent chess words which occurs in general language usage, in particular the plural form, meaning personal *reshuffle*. Polish *robić roszady*, German *Rochaden machen* and Russian *делать рокировки* all use castling to mean "to reshuffle" i.e. "to change jobs" or "to reorganise something" e.g. the cabinet. In German *Rochade* is also the change of positions on the pitch or court in team games. In Polish, *roszada*, in the past meant a railway track parallel to the front line used to redeploy units of soldiers.

Zugzwang

Zugzwang is a typical chess word, but not one that is well known. The ODE (2006: 2053) explains its meaning as the "situation in which the obligation to make a move in one's turn is a serious, often decisive disadvantage." The word came into English in the early 20th century from German *Zug* "move" + *Zwang* "compulsion". The other languages adopted this word, and in Polish the native word *przymus* is also sometimes used.

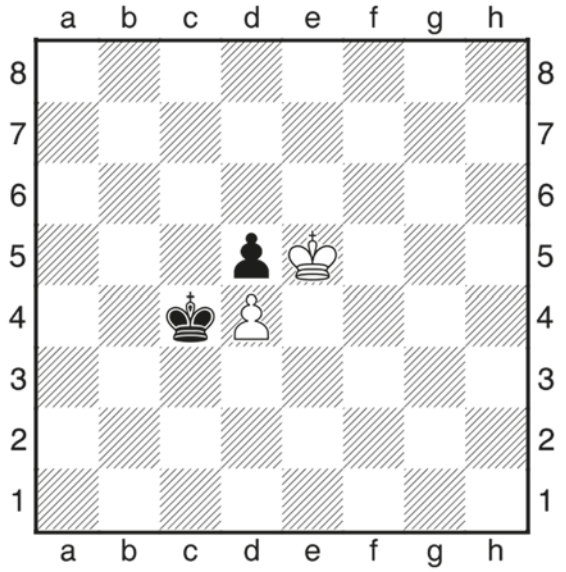

Diagram 3. Zugzwang

The situation in the diagram depicts a typical zugzwang, the so called reciprocal *zugzwang* (Diagram 3). He who is to move loses the game since his king has no other square to defend his own pawn.

A Chess Game, Chess Tournaments

A Tournament

The word *tournament* derives from the Old French. Different sources give here various forms: *tourneoi*, *torn(e)lier*, *tourn(o)ier*, *tornoiement*, *torneiement*. In the Middle Ages a tournament was "a sport-

[34] Motivation is a linguistic term.

[35] One of towers in town's defensive walls in Tallin is called Kiek in de Kök 'look into the kitchen'. (see Tarnawa 2009).

Table 5. A Chess Game, Chess Tournaments

English term	Polish term	German term	Russian term
chess game	partia szachów	Schachpartie	шахматная партия, встреча
opening	debiut, otwarcie	Eröffnung	дебют, начало игры
middlegame	gra środkowa	Mittelspiel	миттельшпиль, середина игры
ending, endgame	końcówka	Endspiel	эндшпиль, заключительная часть партии
tournament	turniej	Turnier	турнир
gambit	gambit	Gambit	гамбит

ing event in which two knights (or two groups of knights) jousted on horseback with blunted weapons, each trying to knock the other off, the winner receiving a prize" (ODE 2006: 1865). However, the medieval tournaments were a very dangerous kind of rivalry and even fatal accidents occurred. He who won achieved fame and therefore a lot of knights took part in the most prestigious tournaments. The participation in a tournament gave a foretaste of a real fight in a battle. Hence, it can be said that today's word "tournament" as sporting event also has a military origin.

A Gambit

The word *gambit* derives from an Italian noun *gambetto* (also *gambata*) meaning literally "trip up" and deriving from *gamba*, "leg" (to which the English *gammon* "bacon", is also related). *Gambetto* was borrowed into Spanish as *gambito*, where its underlying notion of underhanded procedure was first applied specifically to a chess manoeuvre in the mid-16th century. It passed into English mainly via French *gambit* (Ayto 1990: 248).

A gambit is an opening in which one side sacrifices material to receive an advantage in development. If the opponent accepts the sacrifice, we have a gambit accepted, if not – declined. King's Gambit, one of the sharpest chess openings, appears after (Diagram 4: 1.e4 e5 2.f4). *Gambit* is a word which has entered the general language in English. ODE (2006:710) gives as the first meaning "an act or remark that is calculated to gain an advantage, especially at the outset of a situation: *his resignation was a tactical gambit.*" (Procter 1995:581), also at the first position gives: "a clever action in a game or other situation which is intended to achieve an advantage and usually taking risk. [...] *The government's promise to lower taxes is so obviously an election-year gambit*". The word *gambit*, often preceded by words with words *opening* or *conventional*, may be also a remark to start a conversation e.g. "He approached me with that tired old conventional gambit, «Don't I know you from somewhere?»"(Procter 1995: 581).

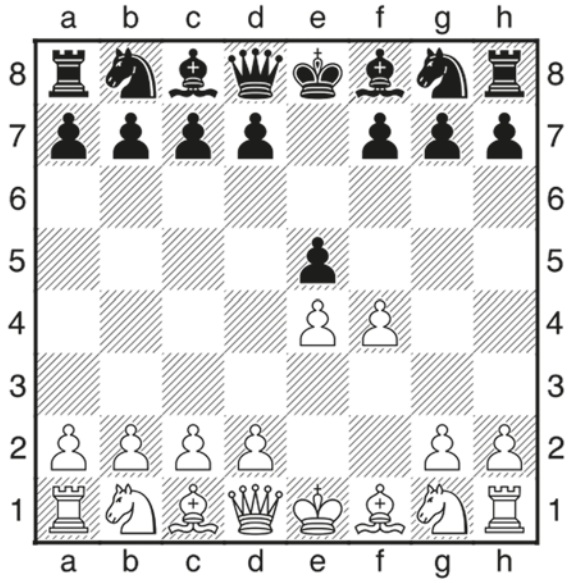

Diagram 4. King's gambit

As shown then, the meaning of gambit in general language contains the key features of : 1) something that is done at the beginning of something 2) in order to achieve an advantage 3) which is risky.

Most Polish dictionaries do not include any figurative meaning of *gambit*. Only USJP gives "risky activity, threatened with a loss, undertaken in order to create a favourable situation to oneself" (my translation). Expressions such as *gambitowe zagranie*, "gambit move" are sometimes used metaphorically among chess-players to convey the meaning of a "risky activity".

Conclusions

There are three language layers in present-day chess terminology representing three different culture epochs: Indo-Persian, Arabic and European. The chess terminology in the Middle Ages (probably since the 14th century) and even in the Polish Renaissance contained some German vocabulary, usually borrowed from Czech. The influx of Romance influence is much later (some of it via German). Eastern vocabulary has a marginal influence on Polish terminology.

Chess terms and expressions are common in general (i.e. non-specialist) language use. The author has gathered numerous examples of the figurative use of chess vocabulary, particularly in Polish and English. These include in sermons, morality works, literature and colloquial speech. It proves that for many centuries chess has occupied an important place in human culture and that specialist chess vocabulary and general languages have been interpenetrating all that time.

Chess metaphors usually describe perfectly the reality in situations full of tension. Expressions such as to keep *somebody in check* show the situation very expressively and aptly. These metaphors are particularly vivid in the Russian language, where they sometimes sound more positive that in the other languages.

Nearly all the vocabulary of chess can be a beautiful metaphor of a struggle, both between two opponents and with our own weaknesses. Chess, like life, is a fight. The chessboard is a real battlefield, the place of our victories and defeats.

Contrary to expectations, the comparing of terms from two Germanic and two Slavonic languages did not reveal significant discrepancies between the languages. The other unexpected outcome revealed by the analysis is that where as the vocabulary in Polish, Russian and German is coincident (usually as calques), in English the terms differ in the majority of cases.

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Sandomierz, Cathedral Hill

Around the Game

Leszek Słupecki

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The Game of the Gods. Board Games as Pre-figuration of the Reality in Old Germanic and Old Norse Mythology

Chess is considered to be a royal game, the King of all games and the game of Kings, rulers, statesmen and generals. It is a game which requires a lot of strategic skill. In the setting of the rules for chess competitions a lot of efforts is taken to avoid as far as possible any elements of pure chance. As in any game or contest however chance cannot be completely removed from the equation. For instance in any game requiring two or more players there is usually an arbitrary element of chance in deciding who goes first and this can frequently give an advantage to the starting player.

The present paper is devoted to the role of chance in early medieval board games in Northern Europe. The games in question are those that were played before the arrival of chess and that combined elements of both strategy and chance, the latter primarily introduced through the use of dice. This combination allows us to explore the link between the use of board games and the idea of destiny, fate, divinations and magic.

Board games combining strategy and chance were called "the game of the gods" in a landmark paper by Arnald van Hammel and published in 1934. Van Hamel was investigating the problem of the mythic *gulnar toflur* ("gold tables") mentioned in Eddic *Völuspá* as a kind of board game of the gods played in a golden age at the beginning of time (van Hammel 1934: 218-242) (a myth I will return to shortly).

Such kind of board games in Roman Empire was called *tabula* or *tabulae*, in Northern world originally named *tafl* (from Latin *tabula*)[1], later on *hnetafl* (from *hnefi* plus *tafl*), nowadays simply *hnefi*[2]. From the name of the game a verb *tefla* was derived, meaning play at tables, including chess and draughts (Zoëga 1910: 434). *Tafl* as a game was in a way quite close to lot casting and lot-drawing (fig. 1; Holtsmark 1957: 223-226; Słupecki 2017: 168-171), and in consequence was used ritually in a sort of divinations as a tool to discover the will of destiny, but at the same time (paradoxically[3]) to influence the will of destiny too.

Fig. 1. Two persons on *tafl* board playing. Picture on runic stone Ges 19 from Ockelbo, Gästrikland, Sweden. After Słupecki 2017: 170

A good starting point for the investigation can be one sentence from the *Germania* (24) of Tacitus. He noticed – with great astonishment – that Germans "aleam, quod mirere, sobri inter seria exercent" (Tacitus, Germania 24, 1937: 226, and comments).

[1] *Tafl*, also *tafli*, is an obvious loan word from Latin *tabula, -ae*: cf. (de Vries 1962: 579).

[2] *Hnefi* means "fist", but it is also the name of the first and most important pawn/stone in that kind of game, cf. (de Vries 1962: 242).

[3] Paradoxically, because the divination is based on the idea of getting knowledge about something that is already pre-determined, and can be only passively known and accepted but never influenced, so it seems to be a kind of very "passiv" ability, contrary to magic, which is considered to be a tool strong enough to influence actively everything – except for destiny!

They were treating the games so seriously, that they were ready to risk even their own freedom in the game! The text speaks, of course, not precisely about board games, but rather about simple throwing of the dice (*alea*), but precisely that item played a very important role in board games determining possible moves. Why were the Germans so serious in their gambling? The answer is very simple, because the game revealed who amongst the players had good luck, and so divine support, and this was a key attribute of a successful leader (as Old Norse sources demonstrate; Słupecki 2017: 168).

It might seem that the casting or drawing of lots can only uncover the already settled course of events and so the result chosen by fate has to be humbly accepted. This is less about controlling and changing destiny than simply knowing it. Of course humans also had a strong desire to alter or control destiny[4]. A strategy for doing this was to use more sophisticated games than just lot casting, including the tafl games already mentioned, in which the moves depended on the outcome of rolling dice. It seems that it was believed that such games could be deployed to influenece destiny. Thus the person(s) playing the game gave themselves the opportunity to shape the course of events (especially in battles), by winning on the playing board thanks to strategy, good luck, but also in some cases magic.

The earliest hint of this in the use of board games appears to be provided by *The History of the Langobards* by Paulus Diaconus (I, 20), though he appears to have little understanding of the ritual he is recording. In his account, king Hrodulf of the Heruli, during the course of a battle against the Langobards is playing a board game sat at a table behind a big tree. Hrodulf is fully confident that his army will win but in fact they loose. Paul the Deacon is showing Hrodulf as the subject of a moral anecdote about self-confident and slothful kingship (in part coloured by his own support of the Langobards). Similar stories are found in accounts by Fredegar and Saxo Grammaticus (de Vries, 1956: 435). In a Celtic story about King Arthur quoted by van Hammel (van Hammel 1934: 236-237) the King is also in such a situation and beginning to loos the game. Arthur finds a very simple way to avoid his impending defeat: he simply swipes his opponent's (and symbolic enemy's) pieces off the board. On the battlefield, as a consequence, his real enemy begins to loose and asks for an armistice. It is an obvious use of magic and, less obviously, a literary echo of the story about Alexander the Great and the Gordian knot.

The motif of the king playing a board game against one of his retinue or servants (who symbolised the enemy) at exactly the time when his actual army was fighting a battle was originally not a story about a slothful king. Rather it was a mythic tale about a king clever enough to influence destiny by playing a board game. The board game was deployed as a ritual that fused divination and magic. The person playing the game was not only able to foresee the future but also to change it to his advantage (especially on the battlefield). Board games were clearly powerful, royal tools. Their kingly connection was stressed in *Rigsthula* (41), where the Jarls sons have to learn tafl, among other skills necessary for rulers[5].

Tafl, was the game of kings because it had been the game of the gods. *Vóluspá* (8) describes the moment of brief happiness, a golden age when the gods or Aesir, having ordered the world, started to play board games:

Tefldo i túni,	played table(s) on the meadow,
Teitir vóro	and were happy
(Vóluspá 8: 2).	

This is taken to mean that the gods happily played on Idavellir (the meadow where they had their mythic assembly place) with a golden set of *tafl*. Not for long however, for "þriár qvómo þursa meyiar, or Jotunheimi" (comes three maidens of Thors [race], from Jotunheim) and those Giantesses seized the game from the gods. I follow van Hammel (1934: 227) in regarding the set of *tafl* the Aesir had as a magic instrument which allowed them to shape the world's destiny. But I differ from van Hammel in the interpretation of the three Giantesses who deprived the gods of this valuable instrument. Van Hammel interpreted them as unnamed evil forces (van Hammel 1934: 225-227), whereas I deduce that they were the Norns (Słupecki 2017:

[4] On the level of the highest literature this motif was developed in the Greek tragedy about Oedipus, which ends with the sad conclusion that the course of events must go precisely as it was predestined.

[5] *Rígsþula* 41; see also comments in: Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda, p.643-644.

171). Like the Norns, they are three in number, and the Norns are also connected in some unclear way to the world of the Giants [6]. Like Norns they are older as the race of gods (or precisely speaking Aesir) and at least equally old as Giants. The seer prophesising in *Vóluspá* (2) confess that she was fostered by Giants!

The gods, however, rediscover their game after the present world collapses in ragnarök. Then in the new, reborn world:

Þar muno eptir	They may thereafter
undarsamligar,	miraculously,
gullnar töflor	golden boards
í grasi finnaz,	find in the grass,
þaers í árdaga	they in the beginning
attar höfðo.	once had.
(Vóluspá 61).	

The divine history of the world thus completes an eternal circle. The beginning is the end and the end is the beginning. For this discussion the point is that the golden *tafl* board game owned by the gods, was obviously the first in the world and very important for the shaping of destiny of the world. The gods however lose it to three powerful Giantesses (probably Norns). They may use it to shape the world. The earthly counterpart of *tafl* enabled kings and chieftains, if skilled enough in divination, magic and games, to control or at least to influence events, especially military battles.

In this paper I decide to avoid some other motifs connected to board games, as especially love affairs, as it is the case in *Gunnlaugs saga ormestunga* (5) where Gunnlaug and Helga play tafl, or in *Frithjofs saga ins froekn*a (3) where the comments to the game are in fact commenting rather the situation between Frithjof, his fiancée, and two Kings[7]. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the motif of board game, also when used in love stories, belong firmly to the elite culture, and has almost always some flavour of wrestling with destiny.

[6] Ladies they saized the game are named thurs maidens, what appeals to one of the races of Giants, but are located in Jotunheim, what connect them to the another!

[7] It is one of the main topics in another paper – Gogosz in the present book.

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Chess and Hnefatafl: Playing Board Games in Old Icelandic Literature

Scandinavia in the Middle Ages, as with the rest of Europe, did not resist the new forms of entertainment that arrived from the Arabs. Numerous references to the game of chess can be found in the Old Icelandic sagas, and archeological excavations confirm a popular interest in the game among the Scandiniavians. Chess was not the only popular board game, however, as before this Scandinavians also played many other board games, of which *hnefatafl* is the most well known.

Depictions of the games of chess and *hnefatafl* in Old Icelandic literature are characterised by a notable lack of any detailed description of the rules or norms of the game in question. This absence leads in turn to a lack of explicit distinction between the two board games, which creates problems for us in terms of understanding how these games were played. What is interesting in this respect, however, is the example in which a saga character gives to the king a board game suitable for both the old game (*hnefatafl*) and the new game (chess), which was also known as *tafl* or *skálatafl*. It is also interesting that the most common term for both of these games was *tafl*, which simply means 'board'.

This article concentrates on the relationship between chess and *hnefatafl* in the medieval sources, and will examine these sources in order to elucidate the rules of Viking board games. It will also discuss the appearance of game-boards; the place that these games had in religious and legal cultures; and the motifs related to playing games in the sagas, such as falling in love, the creation of conflicts, and the descriptions of ideal warriors.

Introduction

In discussing the history of board games there is no way to avoid the Vikings, who were very passionate about playing board and other games. For the Scandinavian world a particularly important and rich source of knowledge about their games is Old Icelandic literature. These sources are problematic, especially when it comes to understanding the names of the games used. The main reason for this is that all the names used the word *tafl* (probably from the Latin *tabula*), but without indicating any particular game. The aim of my paper is to show that the two main board games in Scandinavia during the Middle Ages were chess and *hnefatafl*, and to explore their use as a motif in sagas and their wider cultural significance.

The best known board games from the Viking Age are chess and the *hnefatafl*. Chess is sometimes called *skáktafl*, but only a few times, and is believed to have arrived in Scandinavia around 1000 AD. The terminological distinction between chess and *hnefatafl* is blurred because at the time the Sagas were being written (13th and 14th century) *hnefatafl* was in decline and chess hugely popular across Europe but the Sagas were largely set in a time when there was no chess.

The word *hnefatafl* is a compound of two words: *hnefi*/*hnefa* which means fist or king and *tafl*, which means board/game (see Cleasby, Vigfusson 1874; Zoëga 1910). But we cannot say for certain what *hnefi* is because of its different meaning and no strict translation. This is the reason behind the title of the present paper, because when the word *tafl* is used in the sagas we cannot for sure say whether we are reading about playing chess or *hnefatafl* or maybe even some other game we don't know about. Old Icelandic literature, mainly the sagas, can be divided into the following categories: *Íslendingasǫgur* ("Sagas about the Icelanders"), *konungasǫgur* ("Royal Biographies"), *fornaldarsǫgur* ("Sagas of Icelandic Prehistory"), *riddarasǫgur* ("Translated Romances") *biskupasǫgur* ("Sagas about Bishops")

and *samtíðarsǫgur* ("Sagas of Contemporary History") (see McTurk 2011; Morawiec 2011). In regards to board games we must also include the *Poetic Edda* and law books such as *Grágás* and *Jónsbók*. From a total of 28 sources I have compiled 31 references to board games. These can be divided into five main categories which deal with the playing of chess or *hnefatafl*:

- "Appearance" (7) of the boards and pieces;
- "King" category (6), where in narration board game is connected to king;
- "Ideal Warrior" (6), in which skills in playing board game are part of the description of ideal character;
- "Conflict" (5), when playing board game is the beginning of the quarrel between protagonists;
- "Love" (4). This last category is very interesting because it can be seen that playing board game can be the beginning of love.

Hnefatafl – rules

Hnefatafl is generally categorized as a "hunt-game". In such games a smaller force (sometimes a single piece) is pursued by a numerically superior one. In *hnefatafl* the key, hunted, piece is the *hnefi* or "king", defended by a small number of bodyguards against an attacking force twice the number (fig. 1). The king has to escape to one of the four corners of the board. The board was composed of cells, like a chessboard but sometimes the games was played along the lines rather than the cells. Unfortunately the rules of this game are uncertain and currently can only be inferred from a 17th century version of the game. Some light can be cast on the subject from *Hervarar saga og Heiðreks*. There are three different manuscripts, with different descriptions. The oldest is *Hauksbók* from the 14th century and other two are from the 14th/15th century and the 17th century. *Hauksbók* tells us:

> Hverjar eru þer brúðir er um sinn dróttin vápnalausar vega; enar jorpu hlífa alla daga,
> en enar fegri fara? Heiðrekr konungr, hyggðu at gátu!
> Góð er gáta þín, Gestumblindi, getit er þeirar; þat er húnn i hnefatafl; hann heitir sem bjorn; hann rennr þegar er honum er kastat (Hervarar saga og Heiðreks 1892-1896: 368).
> What wives are they: their weaponless lord they smite down and slay? All day long the darker defend but the fairer ones go forward. King Heidrek, guess my riddle. «Good riddle, Gestumblindi – I've got it. It's a game of hnefatafl. The darker pieces defend the king, and the white ones attack.» It is hnefatafl, the pieces are killed weaponless around the king, and the red ones are following him (translation after Helmfrid 2005: 10).

Other manuscripts have different explanations of the game: „It is hnefatafl, the dark ones protect the king and the white ones attack him" (Helmfrid 2005: 10). In all the manuscripts, scholars have had a problem with how to interpret the word weaponless (*vápnalausar*). In the younger manuscript, Gks 2845 4to from 15th C. (Tolkien, 2014: 27) it is written in the singular form and in *Hauksbók* in plural. Helmfrid (2005: 10) speculates that

> the adjective must be an attribute of the king, rather than of the maids, which suggests that the king in hnefatafl is weaponless and cannot take part in captures of enemy pieces. This hypothesis is contradicted by the reply in Hauksbók, which clearly states that it is the defending pieces that are being slain weaponless around their king. Probably, the word weaponless is just a poetic way for the author to hint that he is referring to playing pieces and not to real armed warriors, and it has nothing to do with the actual strength of the pieces in the game.

In *Hauksbók* there is another riddle:

> Hvat er þat dýra er drepr fé manna ok er járni kringt útan; horn hefir átta, en hofuð ekki, ok rennr sem han má? Heiðrekr konungr, hyggðu at gátu!; Góð er gáta þín, Gestumblindi, getit er þeirar; þat er húnn i hnefatafl; hann heitir sem bjorn; hann rennr þegar er honum er kastat.
> What is that beast all girdled with iron, which kills the flocks? He has eight horns but no head, and runs as he pleases. King Heiðrek, solve this riddle! The answer is: Good is your riddle, Gestumblindi, but now it is solved. It is the húnn in hnefatafl. He has the name of a bear and runs when he is thrown (translation after Helmfrid 2005: 10).

Here the problem is with the word *húnn*. Helmfrid is trying to explain that "*Húnn* may either refer to dice, to the king in *hnefatafl* or to some other playing pieces in hnefatafl" (fig. 2) and he offers this explanation for the connection between *húnn*/bear and *hnefatafl*:

> The game experts who identify húnn as die put forward that playing pieces cannot be thrown. A dice, on the other hand, is thrown in the way the text says, and the erratic nature of a dice on a gaming board certainly is applicable to the phrase «runs as he pleases» in the riddle. The eight horns are the eight edges of a six-sided dice and the flock that it kills are the stakes that the players lose. The association between bear and húnn

Fig. 1. *Hnefatafl* pieces. Exhibition: Lindholm Høje Museet 2. Photo by R. Gogosz

Fig. 2. *Hnefatafl* pieces. Exhibition: Þjóðminjasafn Íslands. Photo by R. Gogosz

> can be explained by the double meaning of the word, as it is also used for the offspring of a bear in Icelandic. The connection between hnefatafl and dice is more difficult to explain. In spite of Bell's hypothesis that tawl in tawl-bwrdd means throw, few people believe that the riddle actually implies that hnefatafl was played with dice. It has been suggested that the writer may have confused hnefatafl with Icelandic tables, kvátrutafl, which is similar to backgammon (Helmfrid 2005: 10-11).

Mark Hall (pers. comm.) observes that archaeologically, several *hnefatafl* sets have been found with dice, lending support to the dice explanation for *húnn* (fig. 2).

Very different opinions and rules can be found in the article of Damian Walker (2007), where he is trying to reconstruct *hnefatafl* game. But he sees the word *hnefatafl* as a name for several types of games. He divides hnefatafl into different variations of the game with similar rules. But I will not present them here because his thesis is quite complicated. Walker tries to reconstruct the rules of game and fit it to contemporary cultural needs.

The appearance of chess and hnefatafl sets

The sagas contain varying descriptions of the gaming boards. Usually the focus is on beautifully carved and decorated objects. *Gull-Þóris saga*, has in my opinion the most detailed description of the *hnefatafl* board, "They were playing a board game (*hnettafli*); the entire board was cast in silver, and the red squares were gold (…) he got the board (*taflit*) and everything that went with it. There was a gold ring embedded with stones on the pouch's strap, and a silver ring in the board.(*í borðinu*)" (Gull-Þóris saga 2009: 205; Gold-Thorir saga 1997: 349-350).

Friðþjófs saga describes the use of two differently colored pieces (fig. 3). The reddish ones were attackers and bright ones – defenders (Friðþjófs saga ins frækna 1944: 549). The colors are similar to those described in *Hervarar saga og Heiðreks 1892-1896: 368*).

Konungs skuggsjá ("The King's Mirror") a Norwegian text written for the instruction of a young king in the middle of the 13th century, says that good chess pieces can be made from the tooth of a sperm whale: "En er það og eitt hvala kyn, er búrhvalir heita, og hafa þeir hvalir tennur ekki stærri en gjöra má mjög stór hnífshefti af eðu tafl" (Another kind is called the sperm whale. These are toothed whales, though the teeth are barely large enough to be carved into fair-sized knife handles or chess men) (The King's Mirror 1917: 212; Lárusson 1955: 10). Sigurðar saga þögla 1949: 159, which is one of the *riddarasogur* written in Iceland, has a description of Kings Arthur's chess board "And they bring the (*taflid*) and board with them. It was all made from gold and set with jewellery. And one square were made from gold and another from silver, carved with greatest workmanship (*hagleik*)". In *Grettis saga*, we have a description that confirms the use of pegged pieces. Þorbjǫrn Hook was playing a "board game using big pieces that fitted into the board on long pins" (Grettis saga 1936: 70) (at Þorbjǫrn ǫngull sat at tafli; … þat var stórt halatafl). My suggestion is that the board was adapted for a movement of the board. Maybe it was used during the travel on the sea? Unfortunately there is no other reference in the sagas to pieces with the pins, but only in archeology (see board game from Ballinderry in Ireland).

One of the most significant references come in *Króka-Refs saga* (11-12) (written c. 1325-75).

> Gunnar sent three valuable possessions to King Harald. The first was a full grown and very well-trained polar bear. The second was a board game skillfully made of walrus ivory (Annar gripr var tanntafl ok gert með miklum hagleik) […] One day Bard came before the king and said, «Here is a board game which the most honourable man in Greenland sent you. His name is Gunnar and he wants no money for it; rather than that he wants your friendship. I spent two years with him and he was a good fellow to me. He is very eager to be your friend.» The board game was both for the old game with one king and the new with two. (Þat var bæði hnefatafl ok skáktafl) The king examined the set for a time and ordered him to thank the one who sent him such a gift: «We certainly must reciprocate with our friendship.» Not long after this, Bard had the polar bear led into the hall (The saga of Ref the Sly 1997: 410-411).

All the written descriptions share the view that the boards were well made, with beautiful carvings and decorations (which *Gull-Þóris saga* extends to the pieces). The clear implication is that gaming boards had considerable meaning and were treasures, prized for their possession and use. They were items to be respected and handled with care. King Harald received a board as a great gift (even more precious than a polar bear), after which he offered his friendship to the giver.

Fig. 3. *Hnefatafl* pieces and board game (fragment). Exhibition: Wikinger Museum Haithabu. Photo by R. Gogosz

Law

The desire to control and limit the playing of board and dice games is revealed by the first law book of the Icelanders, *Grágás*, which was written around the year 1117. It strictly forbade any form of gambling:

> It is prescribed in our laws that men shall not throw dice for money, but if they do, then the penalty is lesser outlawry. Nor are men to play board games with money at stake or anything else which a man thinks better to have than to be without. And the penalty for a man who stakes money or anything else on a board game is lesser outlawry, and there is no right of claim to such a stake (Laws of Early Iceland: Grágás 2000: 183).

Moreover, everyone who is connected to this case can enforce the law and present the problem at a *thing* (assembly) of Quarter, which means quarter part of the Iceland. It is a really high price for this. The second law book of the Icelanders, Jónsbók forbade any kind of gambling and playing for money (Jónsbók 2004: 248) Confirmation can also be seen in *Konungs skuggsjá* ("Kings Mirror"), which gives information about merchants:

> And further, there are certain things which you must beware of and shun like the devil himself: these are drinking, chess, harlots, quarreling, and throwing dice for stakes. For upon such foundations the greatest calamities are built; and unless they strive to avoid these things, few only are able to live long without blame or sin (The King's Mirror 1917: 83).

Moral and legal censure of board and dice games is not, however, a feature of the saga evidence.

Game of the Gods

The cultural significance of board games is reflected in their occurrence in Scandinavian mythology. The oldest source is a fragment of a poem from the Poetic Edda, Vǫluspá, where we read:

> They played chequers in the meadow,
> they were merry-
> For them there was no
> want of gold-
> until there came three
> ogres' daughters,
> of redoubtable strength,
> from Giant Realms.

> Tefldi í túni,
> teitir vóro-
> var þeim vettergis
> vant ór gulli-
> unz þriár kvómo
> þursa meyiar,
> ámátkar miǫk,
> ór iǫtunheimom (Vǫluspá 1996:9)

In her commentary on the *Poetic Edda*, Ursula Dronke (1997: 58-59) wrote about the gods gambling on their magical board:

> Relaxing in a grassy meadow over their magical gaming-board, they gamble for gold – they have enough of it to play with (..) their happy game is the image of the radiant first age of the world: no lack, no diminution, a perpetual motion of profit. And no rivalry – they play only against themselves. Their game makes the world go round in felicity, but it has its hazards. Others may want to play it. And indeed their self-satisfaction provokes challenge from a different world, one that had faded from the hearers' memory as the bright cosmos grew. Out of the realms of the giants three young ogresses come with their uncanny powers and bring to an end the gods' wealth of gold. I have suggested – as the poet does not tell us the full story – that the girls play the gods for their board and its golden pieces, and as the gods see they are losing, in their fury of temper they overturn or break the board, refusing to play anymore, leaving the gaming pieces fallen on the ground – í túni – not to be picked up until they are found again í grasi, ready for the tafl-game of the next golden age (58). For the gods of the first world, however, the age of automatic gold is over. They underestimated their giant visitors, just as Fróði did, when he made slaves of two itinerant giant girls – «You chose us for strength… but did not ask about ancestry» – until rebellion they shattered his gold-grinding mill-stone. A perpetually gold-winning board-game, a perpetually gold-grinding mill – to such illusions of permanence the giants will always put an end.

Van Hamel interprets it in a different way. There was no desire for gold, he states that the game and pieces were filled with "strong magical power. The golden game is the magic through which the gods keep the world in order and prevent the intrusion of war" (Hamel 1934: 227) The desire of the board game by the giantess is based on not wanting the idyllic world without wars to exist.

The Game of Kings

Chess, as it was in other parts of Europe, became the natural game of rulers and their court. There was no difference in Scandinavian society. In Snorri Sturlusson's *Heimskringla* in *Ólafs saga ins helga* in chapters 151-152, Knútr, king of Denmark, is visiting his brother-in-law jarl Úlfr. The jarl prepared a banquet for the king and when he saw that Knútr was taciturn and glum, he suggested they play chess. The game commenced and after a while Knut made a mistake, consequently losing a piece. Refusing to accept this he ordered the jarl to change the move and put the piece back. Úlfr refused and broke the board and left. Knútr calls Úlfr a coward but Úlfr reminds Knut that he had saved him from death by Swedes. As Robert Bubczyk (2005: 64) says, he accuses the king of a false judgment and leaves. After this the king plans and carries out the killing of his brother-in-law. Gvozdetskaya (2005: 109) writes that King Knútr is

> represented in the saga as an irritable and violent person ready to make rash and cruel decisions. For example, he immediately orders the killing of jarl Úlfr for beating him at chess – Knútr sends the killer to the altar and orders the monks to continue their service after the murder (chapt. 153). The game of chess seems to acquire here a symbolic meaning: Knútr is presented both as a short-sighted politician and a poor Christian,

both attributes revealed by his attitude towards chess. Quite a different understanding of this passage is given by Bubczyk (2005: 63-66). He sees the chess game as an aspect of the rivalry between the king and the tributary:

> Knútr wants to be, as a true ruler, the highest authority and, at least in theory, set for himself the rules and norms of behavior. That's why he does not acknowledge the loss of the chess piece, showing his certainty that he cannot lose the play. Knútr believes in his kings power and trusts, that in cases of danger (…) he is able to change the goings-on on the board.

Úlfr is one of the highest-ranking aristocrats in the king's peer group and the king has to show him some consideration. Bubczyk and Gvozdetskaya agree that he is a poor ruler and that he kills jarl with premeditation. Bubczyk (2005: 66) goes further and writes that the king saw a true danger in Ulf's independent behavior, for victory in and refusal to obey at chess could so easily turn to political rebellion and usurpation. Bubczyk suggests that Knut believed that chess reflected reality and in fact, jarl Ulf was a traitor who conspired against the King (for a full discussion of this aspect see Morawiec 2013: 231-39).

The game of chess is also used as a metaphor for warfare and making strategic decisions on the battlefield. The best example is *Friðþjófs saga ins*

frækna chapter 2 which contains a scene in which Friðþjóf plays tafl with his friend Björn. "From the conversation that follows, one understands that Friðþjóf is playing the attackers and his friend Björn the defenders. A messenger called Hilding arrives and asks for Friðþjóf's help in a raid against king Hring

> «That is a bare place in your board, which you cannot cover,» Friðþjófr says to Björn without taking notice of Hilding, «and I will attack your red pieces there». Of course, the metaphor has indirectly answered the question. Friðþjófr means that going on a raid would leave a weak point in their defense, which he threatens to take advantage of. From the reply, we learn that the defenders are red in this version of the game, in contrast to tablut where the king's men are fair. When Hilding points out that there might be trouble later on if he does not join the raid, Björn says to Friðþjófr that he has two possible moves, and Friðþjófr replies that it is an easy choice, he will go against the hnefi. The reply means that he agrees to take part in the attack against king Hring after all. The metaphor verifies that the hnefi is a piece with a special function in the game, since it is symbolically used to represent king Hring." (Helmfrid 2005: 10)

Another example of playing chess by the king can be found in *Hallfreðar saga* (chapter 6). The King is sitting at a *tafl* board whilst he listens to a report from his official, Hallfred. In *Knytlínga saga*, chapter 14 we see King Valdemar at playing a board game whilst King Knut watches. This is a description of the events which took place in Roskilde in 1157. Whilest the game was in progress, the assassin Þéttleifur came in, killed King Knut and wounded King Valdemar in the foot. Sigurdsson (1988: 9) sees here an invention by the saga's author, revealing of the methods of 13th century scribes. In his opinion, the author of Knytlinga saga adds the gaming scene as a peaceful pursuit for Valdimar and Knut because then " the assault becomes more cruel" (Torfason 1988: 9).

The Game of Lovers

Playing chess or *hnefatafl* is often mentioned as a game for lovers or, better, as a context for falling in love. In chapter 4 of Heiðarvíga saga, written around 1200 AD:

> Styrr had a full-grown daughter named Asdís. Leiknir, the younger of the berserks, began to spend long hours talking with her or playing chess (hann sat lǫngum á tali við hana ok að tafli). People began talking of it, and news of it reached Styrr. He said it was nothing serious and pretended not to notice it, although he saw clearly enough what was going on.

Styrr was not happy with the fact of Leiknir's proposal and delayed the wedding until he had killed him.

A similar example can be found in the love of Gunnlaug and Helga from chapter 4 of *Gunnlaugs saga ormstunga* (written c. 1270-80). Gunnlaug, who stays at Þorsteins home as a foster-child, makes friends with his daughter, Helga:

> Gunnlaug and Helga often amused themselves by playing board games with each other (skemmtu at tafli). They quickly took a liking to each other, as events later bore out. They were pretty much the same age.

The saga relates the frequent chess games between them which are a metaphor for their falling in love by sitting together, a doomed love which finally leads to Gunnlaug's death.

Another example is from chapter 19 of *Mírmanns saga*, one of the *Riddarasögur*. Young princess Cecilia meets with Justin and they play chess at her place. They play obsessively, ignoring meal times and mass times. The princess wants to continue the game because she wants to know with whom she is playing. During the game, she loses a knight and is close to losing the game, but then she begins asking her opponent about playing chess with a Frenchmen and an earl who died because of witchcraft and in answering Justin becomes distracted and loses a knight. He accuses Cecilia of winning through trickery. His answers enable Cecilia to work out his true identity. Much later Justin, who is really Mírmann, marries princess Cecilia. But he lives in bigamy. Nevertheless, the play of chess is a metaphor for getting know one´s opponents and the feelings that may start between them.

In *Víglundar saga* (chapter 22, Víglundar saga, 1959: 111-112). Víglundr fell in love with his childhood friend, Ketilrid, but they had to be parted and she married another man. When Víglundr and his brother were invited to a neighbouring farmers's home the farmer proposes they play a board game for amusement. However, Víglundr was paying little attention because he was looking at the lady of the house whom he recognized as his childhood sweetheart. Distracrted, he is put in check by his opponent. Then Ketilrid says: "You, generous man, should merrily move your piece – a woman's word to the wise to another square" (Viglund's saga, 1997: 438-439). Her husband observes that her advice is contrary to his own position. Víglundr plays according to Ketilrid's

advice and so the game ends in a draw. The game proves to be a test by the farmer (who is Víglundr's uncle) to assess whether he is in fact worthy to marry Ketilrid. The test is passed, doubly so because Ketilrid also showed her interest in Víglundr because by helping him she confirmed the wife's role of supporting and being faithful to her husband.

In all of these sagas, playing chess has a very important symbolic meaning. First of all, we have the young lovers who do not know each other before the game. Playing is a symbol of getting to know and shape each other´s feelings. Subsequently all pairs fall in love with each other after the game, which then leads to a proposal from the boys/men to the female opponent. The love though is often doomed, with no marriage taking place: Leiknir is killed by Styrr, Gunnlaug goes abroad and Helga marries his opponent and in a fight with him he dies, and Mírmann lives in bigamy, having married two women.

Child's play

Chess is also presented as a game between children, or between children and adults. *Gunnlaugs saga* has already been mentioned, and in that tale, Gunnlaug and Helga are play at the age of 5 and fall in love. In both *Droplaugssona saga* (chapter 13) and *Heiðarvíga saga* (chapter 28) children are described as playing chess. In the latter we read: "farmhands were tending to their tasks. Eid sat playing chess, along with his two sons, one of them called Illugi and the other Eystein". Presumably the two boys played against each other with the father offering advice to both but the training of the two boys may have been sufficiently advanced for them to play as a team against their father. We can read of a more definite example of two against one play in *Víglundar saga* (chapter 4): "They were playing a board game and two were playing against one" (*satu at tafli ok leku tveir til jafns vid einn*) and the two were losing! Here playing a board game is used to show how king Harald took one of jarl Eírik's sons to his court as a foster father.

Playing *tafl* can also be seen as a part of the teachings of future prominent man. There are two sources which give us an account about the teaching of young people. One can be seen in *Rígsþula* stanza 42, when the author during a listing of names of the Jarl's sons also presents their activities:

En Barn annat,
Ióð ok Aðal
Afri, Mǫgr,
Niðr ok Niðinungr
– Námu leika –
Sonr ok Sveinn
– sund og tafl. –
Kundr hét einn,
Konr var hinn yngzti.

Boychild was the eldest
And Bairn the second,
Offspring and High Kind,
Heir, Scion,
Kin and Kinsman
– they learned sports –
Son and Stripling
– swimming and chequers. –
Nearkin one was named,
Noblekin was the youngest.
(Dronke 1997: 171-172)

The sons of the jarl were playing a witch board game and were skilled at swimming (von See 2000: 643-644) As it will be written in another chapter, swimming was also considered an aristocratic sport.

Ideal warrior

Saga depictions of games cast much light on how individual character was defined. Board games are often crucial in indicating the ideal status of a warrior. More than once in Old Icelandic literature, the attributes required of a warrior are physical appearance, skill in sport and the ability to play chess. Jarl of Orkney, Rognvald Kali Kolsson, in Orkneyinga saga recites the verse where he describes himself as a man superior in skills compared to ordinary people:

Tafl emk ǫrr at efla,
íþróttir kank níu,
týnik trauðla rúnum,
tíð er bók ok smíðir,
skríða kank á skíðum,
skýtk ok rœk, svát nýtir;
hvártveggja kank hyggja :
harpslôtt ok bragþôttu
(Orkneyinga saga, 1965:130).

Chess am I mighty to thrive
Sports know I nine
I rarely forget runes
time is a constructed cover
I know how to crawl on skis
shooting and driving are utilized
both I know well in mind:
harpoon shot and quick to react.

In *Þorsteins saga Síðu-Hallssonar* (chapter 4), a man called Stein is described as a great interpreter of dreams and extremely good at board games. This was the reason that others wanted to compete with him. Another saga, *Hálfdánar saga Eysteinssonar* in chapter 7 describes Grim First as: "a first-rate shot with handbow and crossbow, and so skilled at chess (tefldi svá vel) that no one could beat him." Prince Hálfdán competes with him in chess and archery. *Hjálmþés saga og Ölvis* (chapter 1) has a description of Olvir as "the tallest and the strongest of men, and better than anyone else at chess (*tafl*), swimming and jousting." In *Míramanns saga* (chapter 3) we read that his mother was teaching him "riding, chess and such pastimes" (*reið og tafl og þess konar skemmtan* – Mirmans Saga 1949: 1-94).

Conflict

As is the case with all games in the sagas, chess is occasionally deployed as a motif in the rise of conflict. Good examples include the previously-mentioned fragment from *Ólafs saga ins Helga* and *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* (chapter 5), where we are told that: "It happened one day that King Gudmund was playing at chess (*lék at tafli*), and was getting very much the worst of the game; the king asked whether there was anyone who could give him advice on his play. Then Hervard stood up and went to the board, and did not long have a hand in the game before the king's fortune turned." Afterwards king's courtiers drew the sword and when Hervard saw it she "swung round and snatched the sword and struck off the head of the man who had drawn it." In fact "Hervard" was a women called Hervör and she was a battle-maiden.

Conclusion

John Martin (2009: 40-42) rightly observed that board games were perceived in Icelandic society differently from other games. Unlike horse-fights, ball games, or wrestling, board games had a rather private dimension, because it was for the most part not allowed by the winner to show real strength before a large crowd of people as it was with sports where a score was kept. In Martin's article, those games limit the outbreak of major interpersonal conflict due to the fact that loss in such games resulted in less of a detriment to the honor of a man. I would also like to add that the main cause of this was the fact that board games, in contrast to other sports (where we have almost always in Iceland competitions), were played for pleasure of the game itself. They were resembling the real life as a metaphor of fight and skills in board games could show that the one playing is a good or bad tactic. But losing in board game was not equal with losing fame or honor. The Representatives from each social group played chess or *hnefatafl*, including kings, chieftains, peasants, and even children and women (and even one man alone, in *Kormáks saga* chapter 4, where we read that "Kormákr situr at tafli ok skemmtir sér" – sit at the board game and enjoyed himself). Furthermore chess/*hnefatafl* is the only game we see in the sagas where women are not only playing but are on equal terms with men. In the sagas, it was accepted by society that chess and *hnefatafl* were the main pleasure games. Moreover, these games connected people from different social groups. We can see it for example in Morkinskinna:

> when king Sigurð came into the hall he saw «another Norwegian was playing a board game with one of Þorgil's farmhands» (í stofu tefldi annar Austmaðr við heimamann Þorgils) (Morkinskinna 2011:174). He was quite a fop and puffed himself up. The Norwegian called to Sigurðr to advise him on the game because he was familiar with that skill as with others. When he looked at the game, he thought that it was as good as lost (Morkinskinna 2011: 369).

King then in fact played with farmhand, which was not surprising thing for them. Earlier, in case of falling in love it was written about young berserker, who is part of the social margin in Iceland and playing board game with young girl.

The major difference which strikes the eye when examining Old Norse texts is the difference between the board games in sagas versus law books and in *Konungsskuggsjá*. In the sagas there is no gambling mentioned and the warriors who can play chess to a high standard are great men and heroes. In the law books and *Konungsskuggsjá* gambling is strictly forbidden. However, those games also fill their cultural role of. Andersson and Miller (1989) agree that games in Medieval Iceland were taken as seriously as other cultural interactions: honor and status were gained and lost during play. Sagas usually portray games in a very biased way, but consequently show that borders between games and life outside of them were not always clearly marked or observed.

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Chess Collections in Krakow's Museums

Through the ages chess has had many supporters and opponents and today it remains one of the most popular of board games. Chessboards and chess pieces were made of different materials. They varied from simple to sophisticated in form and materials and from cheap to extremely expensive. They were valuable gifts, souvenirs and witnesses to the past. We can find them in all of these guises in the collections of Krakow's Museums and this paper is by way of an introduction to some of them.

Chess in Krakow

Krakow was not built in one day, they say. Its origins go back to as early as the 7th century, when the town was organized on a cross-roads by the legendary ruler Krak, who gave his own name to the place (Burek 2000). It was an important market centre frequented by many merchants. The assumption is that they were important in bringing chess to the town. Evidence from the archeological and the documentary records suggests that chess became popular in Poland as early as in the 12th century. After evening masses or services, on feast days, after guild-meetings organized in medieval Krakow people used to talk, drink beer and play dice, cards and chess. Gambling on these games was prohibited by the church "unless they were played for pleasure – not for money" (Wyrozumski 1992: 446, Bubczyk 2005: 105-116).

The oldest known chess piece connected with Krakow was long described as Romanesque and was probably made of ivory (see Niemiec in this volume). It was found before World War I in the layers of debris, probably from the castle, used to levell Koletek Street in Stradom. The figure resembled a rook from the chess sets found on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland (Jamka 1960).

The chess piece was in the collection of the Archaeological Museum of the Polish Academy of Science in Krakow until the outbreak of World War II. In 1939-40, some exhibits were taken away, probably to Wrocław, and the rest were left in Kraków under the supervision of a new, German curator (Estreicher 2003). That chess piece, stolen by the Nazis, has not been found yet. The opportunity to carry out further research and to examine the material from which it was made was lost. Detailed comparative analysis of its surviving photographs (taken by Demetrykiewicz) with iconographic parallels has promoted a shift in the dating of the chess piece from the beginning of the 2nd half of the 12th century, to the last decade of the 12th century, placing it in the Gothic catalogue of European art and suggesting its manufacture had a Teutonic or Masovian context (Wachowski 2005: 71-83; Niemiec 2011 :195-206).

Wawel Royal Castle

Another chess "jewel" that thankfully survived the War can be found at the Wawel Royal Treasury, Krakow. It is an amber chessboard, which belonged to the Polish king Sigismund III Waza (fig. 1). It was given to the king in 1608 by Hieronim Wołowicz, Treasurer of Lithuania. Hieronim Wołowicz spent his youth at the royal court. He accompanied king Sigismund III on diplomatic trips to Sweden and was a loyal companion in the face of many dangers. They were keen competitors across the chessboard.

The chessboard measures 30 × 30 cm with a thickness of 2.5 cm is decorated with ivory, ebony and amber. The tiles of the playing area are made

Fig. 1. Chessboard of the Polish king Sigismund III Waza. Wawel Collection. Photo by S. Michta

Fig. 2. Dedicatory inscription on the bordure of chessboard. Wawel Collection. Photo by S. Michta

of ebony and ivory. The four holes in the corners of the reverse side of the board suggest that it was originally rested on four feet. The border and side walls are inlaid with rectangular and square amber plaques, alternately opaque and transparent. Under the transparent amber plaques are a series of inscriptions on silver plates. One of them is "OTII CAVSA – DOMINO SVO – SERVVS DEDICAT" ["For entertainment dedicated servant of the lord"] (fig. 2)

The upper part of the board carries Sigismund's royal coat of arms, with those of Poland and Lithuania. (fig. 3)

The lower part of the board carries the coat of arms of the donor, Hieronim Wolowicz. Under the tiles of the side walls of the board are quotations from Ovid's poem, *Ars amatorias liber III*, an elegy dedicated to the role of the game and a nymph called Scacchia, who inhabited the river

Fig. 3. Coat of arms of the Polish king Sigismund III Waza on the bordure of chessboard, Wawel Collection. Photo by S. Michta

Seria (and who was also the heroine of the Latin poem *Scacchia lidus* written by the Italian, Mark Hieronim Vida [1482-1566]). We do not know precisely what happened to the chessboard after the death of the king Sigismund. It is possible that it passed to his successor, John Casimir, because the inventory made after his death in Paris in 1673 stated that his goods included a couple of chessboards with their chess pieces (Ryszkiewicz 1952). Later the board was sold, along with Casimir's other belongings and from that moment it began to its trajectory in and out of various private collections and antique shops. It remains uncertain where the chessboard was made and by whom. It is posible that it was made at Gdańsk or Konigsberg (Królewiec) as the closest appropriate centres (where amber was frequently used) to Wołowicz and to Lithuania. Shortly after 1918 the board was purchased in Lvov by a famous collector, Tadeusz Wierzejski, and then purchased from him by the Association of Wawel Friends. The Association donated the board to the Wawel in 1928. In 1939 along with other pieces of art, it was taken to Canada for safe-keeping, returning to the Wawel in 1959 (Bernasikowa 1968: 498-503).

Another valuable exhibit from the collections of the Wawel Castle, exhibited in the Private Royal Apartments, is the fold-out box for playing chess, checkers (marked out on the base board) and another board game (laid out in the interior), (fig. 4). When closed, the box measures 13 × 47 × 47 cm. It is an example of the products of the 17th/18th century workshops of Cheb (West Bohemia), and also known under the German name Eger.

It was and remains valued because of its unique design, including its different colored inlay reliefs (Voigt 1999). The cover of the box carries a depiction of *Flora* – the allegory of smell – and a frame with a flower relief. The cells of the chessboard are decorated with inlay - dark cells with a single flower and the light cells with a bunch of fruits. Such decoration is seen as a hallmark of one of Cheb's leading artists, Johann Karl Haberstumpf (1656-1742) (fig. 5).

The interior surface of the box reveals another board game like: trick-track decorated with inlays alternately depicting fish tails braided by vines and obelisks with a cartouche and banners, symbolizing glory and wisdom (fig. 6). The obelisks are crowned with fireballs, representing fire crowning

Fig. 4. Folding box for chess and other games, Wawel Collection. Photo by Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza (National Publishing Agency)

Fig. 5. Chess face of a folding box for board games, Wawel Collection. Photo by A. Wierzba

and contrasted with the grapes full of juice representing water. The whole is read as a symbol of war and peace.

The origin of this folding game-board box is not known. It has been in the collection of the Wawel Castle since 1930, and during World War II it was one of the treasures for safe storage to Canada (Link-Lenczowska 2001: 97).

We leave the Wawel Collection with an example of the on-going passion for the game of chess. It is a chess table on display in the Private Royal Chambers, formerly the suite of the President of Poland, Ignacy Moscicki. The table was made by the Zdzisław Szczerbiński Furniture Company, in the year 1930.

The Historical Museum of the City of Krakow

In adversity, chess can sometimes become a survival mechanism, allowing its players to cope (through escape) from tragic situations such as Siberian exile, the partition of Poland or Gestapo imprisonment during World War II. In the collections of the branch of the Historical Museum of Krakow, Pomorska Str. 2 (the Gestapo headquarters during the World War II), there is a box for chess, made of bread, by a prisoner of the Montelupich jail in 1943. On April 16th 1942 at Dom Plastykow Cafe on Lobzowska Str. 3, the Nazis arrested 198 people: artists, guests, inhabitants and chess players, all of them were jailed in the cells on Montelupich Street. Later, they were taken to KL Auschwitz, where 168 people were shot on May the 27th in Death Block 11. The chess players used small portions of their black bread rations to make the chess pieces they needed.

National Museum in Krakow

In the collections of the National Museum in Krakow, is a Viennese-cast chessboard connected with the partition of Poland and forced exile to Siberia. It was made by Helen Skirmunt (1827-1874), who was born in Kolodno near Pinsk, Lithuania. Helen Skirmunt is the first recognised Polish woman artist. She was both a sculptor and a painter (Zaleski 1876, Koziański 1900). After the defeat of the January Uprising in 1863 she was sent to Siberia (first to Tambov and then to Kirsanov) and there she started work on her "patriotic chess". Originally they were made as a consolation for exiled Poles. They were made in stages during 1864-1873, and were cast in bronze in Vienna under the direction of J. Caesar. The figurine pieces are chiselled, silvered and gilded, and measure 11 cm in height. Their theme is the Battle of Vienna, 11-12 September 1683, with the individual figurines denoting the main participants of the battle (fig. 7a-c).

The gilded group represents the Polish side and the silvered group the Turkish opposition. The Polish side includes the king Jan III Sobieski, the Great Crown Marshal, Stanisław Jabłonowski and Leo of Red Russia, the Bear of Samogitia and Chase of Lithuania (fig. 7a). The pawns represent the Polish peasant class. The Turkish side includes Sultan Mehmed IV and the Grand Vizier, Kara Mustafa, Ethiopian and Moor (fig. 7b). The rooks

Fig. 6. The interior surface of a folding box for trick-track, Wawel Collection. Photo by A. Wierzba

Fig. 7. Viennesecast chess figures of Helen Skirmunt, National Museum in Krakow.
a – The Polish: Jan III Sobieski; The Great Crown Hetman; Leo of Red Russia;
b – The Turkish: Sultan mehmed IV and Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa;
c – The rooks: golden lion and silver camel. Photos by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Kraków

are zoomorphic: golden lions and silver camels (fig. 7c) (Skirmunttowa 1883).

The collections of the National Museum in Krakow also include the personal belongings of Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), the great Polish poet of the Romantic period. Those belongings include a case containing 20 chess pieces and 10 fragments of chess pieces. They come from different sets and were all created in St. Petersburg around 1824, and carved in wood and bone. They measure 5 cm high by 2.5 cm in diameter. They were given to the Museum by the poet's son, Wladislaw, in 1885. Mickiewicz played chess all his life, both during the years he spent in Lithuania and during his emigration. In his poem from 1823, about his rejected romantic love, *To M...*, he writes about chess:

> Or, playing chess, when your new partner seizes
> In mortal check-mate your king with his dame,
> You will remember: just so stood the pieces
> When we had finished our very last game.

In the porcelain collection of the National Museum in Krakow we have 32 chess figurines, each 5 cm height. Sixteen are multicolored and sixteen are ivory coloured. They were made in France at the Mennecey-Villeroy Manufacture, which was working between 1748 and 1773. The factory was established by Francis Barbin and it moved to Bourg la Rein, near Paris, in 1773, though with a noticeable reduction in the quality of the materials and the decoration. The factory's main products were tableware and toilet accessories, with a side-line in small, curiosity porcelain figures, in-

Fig. 8 a-d. Porcelain chess figurines, National Museum in Krakow: a – king; b – queen; c – pawn; d – pawn.
Photos by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Krakow

Fig. 9. Maria Stangret-Kantor's Chess, National Museum in Krakow. Photo by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Krakow

cluding chess figurines (Ryszard 1964: 21, 66, 133). They were not alone in turning them out, and the famous Meissen manufactory also manufactured them (Krieger 1994).

The figurines in the National Museum in Krakow are of exquisite artistic quality. All of them represent people, each wearing a different form of headgear: beret, hat, cap etc. Half of the figurines are sitting on the backs of a range of animals whilst the other half are standing. All of them are fixed to small, conical pedestals, 1 cm height, with painted decoration on the base of different colors indicating the significance of each piece. Thus gold is used to signify the king and queen and bishops are indicated by the colour grey (to go with their donkey's ear head-gear. Knights are marked with a wide black stripe and rooks have two brown stripes (the lower one wider than the upper one). Two of the figurines, one of each side, are sitting on lions. They have a simple, roller shaped hat but given that the lion is the king of beasts must indicate that these figurine are king pieces (fig. 8a). The queen is shown a woman riding a horse side-saddle (fig. 8b). The pawns (fig. 8c-d), are standing figures, each of them holding a range of objects, including musical instruments and weapons.

It is difficult to work out the symbolic meanings of some of these figurines and the positions they were meant to fulfill on the chessboard and the partial interpretation given here (fig. 8a-d), the work of several authors and derived from the treatise of Jacob de Cessolis, is far from certain (Karłowska-

Kamzowa 2000). The porcelain chess pieces are still waiting for a much needed thorough investigation.

Several of Krakow's Museums have paintings and works of art on paper incorporating chess as a theme, notably in the National Museum in Krakow (Kozakowska, Małkiewicz 2004).

Maria Stangret-Kantor's 1974 painting, Chess, (fig. 9) is perhaps the most significant. Stangret-Kantor was a member of the avant-garde Krakow Group and her large canvas is painted in acrylic with the addition of a moveable element, a large pawn. According to the critic Kuryłek

> Stangret diminishes the difference between what is real and what is created by art, her paintings consist of many elements, and are «streaming down» the wall, to the area reserved by viewer – inviting him in a symbolic way to engage in child's play or a chess game – it means to play with illusion in painting, to participate in creation (Kuryłek 2010).

The National Museum in Krakow collections also include the late-19th century prints, *Chess players after Ernest Meissonier*, *Les échecs*, and Rzeczpospolita Babinska ("Babin's Commonwealth", after a Jan Matejko painting). *Les échecs* is a French print from an engraved wooden block (fig. 10). It illustrates the typical climate of the 19th century, when chess players met at cafés and organized the first chess clubs. The first Kraków Chess Club was set up in Schmidt's Café in 1893, one of the earliest in Poland.

One of the branch museums of the National Museum in Kraków is dedicated to the eminent historical painter Jan Matejko (1838-1893). The Museum's displays include a simple wooden chess set, the one he used when playing with his confidant and friend Marian Gorzkowski (Gorzkowski 1993: 312, 397, 478).

Matejko's fondness for chess is expressed in the painting *Rzeczpospolita Babinska* ("Babin's Commonwealth"). The painting shows the garden of Krzesławice manor house, crowded with people, two of whom (bottom-left) are playing chess (fig. 11). The players represent renaissance poet Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584), whose works include Chess, and the annalist and poet Jan Bielski (1495-1575). Matejko's work also inspired the work of other artists. The Museum's print collection includes two, late-19th century, woodcut engravings by Walenty Cichomski after Matejko's painting.

Fig. 10. *Les échecs*, National Museum in Krakow. Photo by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Krakow

The previously mentioned poem *Chess* by Jan Kochanowski was printed in 1585 in Krakow by the printer Łazarz manufacture, with an engraving decoration on the title page showing men playing chess (also in the collection of the National Museum in Krakow).

National Museum in Krakow, The Princes Czartoryski Museum

The Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow houses what is regarded by many as the most beautiful chess set of 32 pieces and their board in Poland (fig. 12). It is made of ebony, tortoise-shell and mother of pearl (nacre) probably in Venice, Italy at the close of the 17th century. The edge of the board is defined by a columned balustrade with ornamental engravings. Below this there are two drawers in which the pieces can be kept. The board measures 55.4 × 43.5 × 14.5 cm. The size of the pieces ranges from 4.5 to 6 cm and they are made of wood, bone, ivory and alabaster, partly personified with the busts of queens, kings and bishops. The chessboard was a gift from the Sul-

Fig. 11. Rzeczpospolita Babinska (woodcut by picture Jan Matejko 1881). Photo by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Kraków

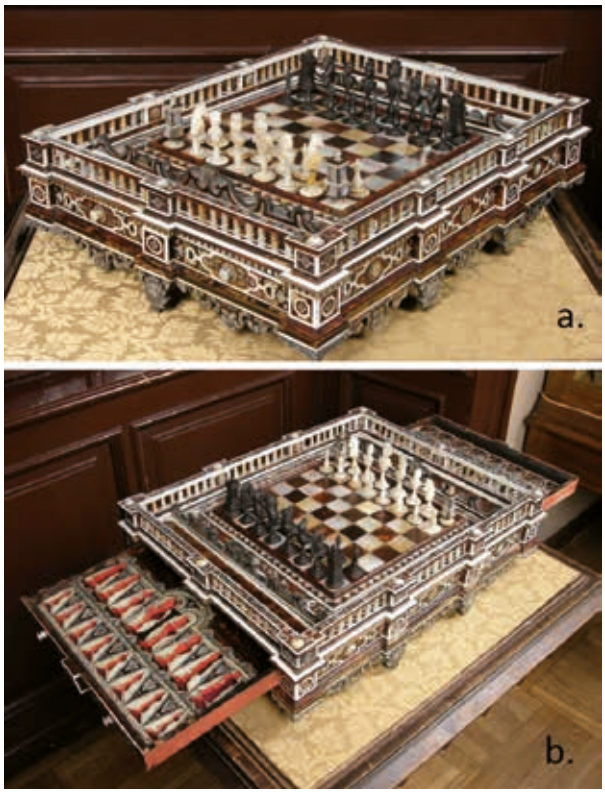

Fig. 12. Chessboard, The Princes Czartoryski Museum:
a – chessboard and chess pieces; b – open chessboard with space for figures. Phots by Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Kraków

tan of the Ottoman Empire, Ahmed II Khan Ghazi (1643-1695, sultan 1691-1695) to the Polish Great Crown Marshal, Adam Mikołaj Sieniawski (1666-1726). It was kept at the Gothic Pavilion, Pulawy, the first museum in Poland, established by the princess Izabella Czartoryska in 1801.

This paper has presented an admittedly random selection of objects connected with chess and in the collections of Krakow's museums, some of them displayed in permanent and temporary exhibitions. The selection only scratches the surface of the many "chess mysteries" to be found in Kraków's museums, all awaiting their explorers. Particularly deserving of further research is the museum of photography named after Walery Rzewuski, which includes numerous photographs of prominent people, including Marshal Piłsudski, and less prominent people, including WWI Austrian soldiers, and many others – playing chess.

Kraków is in essence, one, huge museum of chess, and even the plan of the historical city looks like a chessboard. What is more anyone who visits Krakow can buy a souvenir chessboard from the Cloth Hall (Sukiennice), at the centre of the medieval Market Square.

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Janów Pomorski/Truso, Poland. Game piece made of horse tooth

Piotr Adamczyk

Hunting for Games in the Margins of Polish Ludic History

Starting my research into the history of games in Poland some years ago I had to ask myself some important questions. Who played games? When and where were games played? What was the social context (including gambling and legal aspects)? What kind of games were the most popular? Was chess a popular or just a snobbish game? What should the chronological and spatial parameters of the study be? As to this last question the chronological boundaries chosen were the beginnings of Poland to its 3rd partition in 1795, which brought to an end the former independence of the Polish state.. The spatial boundaries chosen are those of the medieval and post-medieval kingdom of Poland which side-steps the issue of Polish territory later lost to Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania and new territories acquired since 1945 – Silesia, West Pomerania and Mazury (and which were formerly part of the Teutonic Order, Prussia, the Holy Roman Empire and Brandenburg). This article shows a part o a research, being a short overview of topics, areas of interest and examples of specified data gathered by the author so far. Examples are chosen to show the matter of specified areas of interest and to show possibilities of work, to show how much is still to be done. Material data is excluded, as it needs also other editorial and historical work and is being still gathered.

Range of sources

There is a wide range of evidence telling us about the history of games in Poland. Within them the archaeological finds of artefacts kept in museums and private collections is a crucial starting point but the focus of this paper is specifically on the diverse range of written sources that shed light on games as an aspect of everyday life. Their coverage can be summarised as follows:

- Legal texts, including military statutes, maritme law and statutes, testaments, city law and guild statutes.
- Education texts including school statutes and advice on the upbringing of children.
- Biographical texts including memoirs, post-mortem testaments and inventories.
- Poetry and other tracts, including proverbs, satirical texts and treatises.
- Religious texts, including sermons and statutes.
- Economy-related texts including trade books and tax books (e.g. for sea ports and customs houses).

Legal framework

The Oxford English Dictionary definites law as „the system of rules which a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and which it may enforce by the imposition of penalties". Dividing the whole range of legal texts into military statutes, maritime statutes, testaments, city law and guild statutes gives us a good look into the specific groups commonly defined in these legal texts as "gambling people": soldiers, sailors, workers and merchants. The fullest source is that of the guild statutes, the rules governing the associations of craftsmen or merchants and their behaviour. Examples include:

Poznań

Guild of turners: the statutes instituted in 1495 required that turner's masterpiece should be a black and white chess board (Gloger 1902: 179).

Guild of carpenters: from the 17th century a carpenter's masterpiece was set as a table, abed and chest and a draughts board (Gloger 1902: 179)

Guild of bakers: bakers were forbidden to play games with executioners and, from the 16th/17th

centuries this was extended to "any other suspicious man" (Bartkowski 1929: 49)
Guild of shoemakers: the 1555 statutes of the guild decreed that a master could not play cards or dice with suspicious men (including executioners) nor could masters play with journeymen. The penalty was 6 pounds of wax. (Zaleski 1932: 61). The guilds 1649 statutes forbade the playing of dice, cards and other games in public and with suspicious people. Again the penalty was 6 pounds of wax (Zaleski 1932: 71).

Gdańsk
Corporation of butcher's journeymen: their 1739 articles disallowed journeymen staying in a hostel from playing for money, under a penalty of 1 florin. Journeymen were also not allowed to gamble if they were in possession of their master's money (Kropidłowski 1997: 216).

Nowy Targ
Most of the guilds banned the playing of cards and dice and associating with adulterous women.

Kraków
In the capital city dice (*ludus tessararum*) and card games (*ludus taxillorum seu kozyrarum*) where forbidden to the clergy (there are known court cases from 1526) and to the university students. Between 1550-1600 there were at least 40 known cardmakers. In some documents annotations were made in German or in Latin: "kartenmacher", "kartenmaler", "cartarius", "chartarius" – about 1550 polish word "carthownyk" (Hamerliński-Dzierożyński 1978: 14) appears in written sources.

Kielce
In 1647 in Kielce a single guild was created for the bakers, weavers, brewers and "carthownyk's" (cardmakers). The cardmakers made paper, parchment and cards. In the same year one of the guild documents mentions one Christoph as both a weaver and a cardmaker (Jubileusz 400-lecia n.d.).

Kalisz and Kobylino
Guild of weavers: their 1639 statutes decreed that if a master or a companion gambled away their clothes they had to pay a penalty of 1 stone of wax.

Toruń
Guild of bricklayers: article 25 of their association requires the elders to watch that no masters, companions or apprentices engage in drinking alcohol, gluttony or gaming during Sunday Mass times; anyone found doing so would be fined 5 grosches (Ciesielska 1962: 226).
Guild of bakers: the 1523 (and later) guild regulations (for both bakers and ginger-bread makers) forbade apprentices from running with rascals, smoking and playing cards.

Bieruń
All the guilds forbade the playing of hazard (Spyra n.d.).

Elbląg
Guild of carpenters: in the 17th/18th centuries a carpenter's masterpiece had to be a gaming board or a gaming table (Betlejewska 2004: 14, 16).
Guild of turners: in the 18th century a turner's masterpiece had to include a set of chess pieces (Betlejewska 2004: 18).
Guild of beer porters: article 18 of their1644 statutes forbade the playing of "double cards or dice"[1] during the guild meetings under a penalty of 1 *reichsthaler* (Kropidłowski 1997: 190).

Gdańsk
Guild of carpenters: their 1596 regulations permitted journeymen to play cards and dice but they had to behave properly (Kropidłowski 1997: 204).

Warszawa
Guild of tailors: their 1505 statutes banned journeymen from playing dice and cards (Karpiński 1983: 115-116).

After the guild legislation the most significant legal source is the various law codes passed by towns, villages and regions. They include many articles that ban the playing of dice and cards (especially for money) and they are re-promulgated so often that they appear to have been rather ineffectual and more a case of wishful thinking. Examples include:

Toruń
The 1634 court articles, or *Wettgericht*, for Toruń city laid down the rules of trade for both city dwell-

[1] It is exact translation "podwójne karty". Game unknown

ers and newcomers. Article 4 deals with holy days and feast days and banned the playing of dice, draughts and similar games within houses, under a strict penalty (Gulden 1973: 92).

Tuchola
Article 80 of the district's 1749 statutes banned gambling on dice, cards and other games prone to cheating. Playing without gambling was allowed (Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej 1938: 312).

Lubawa and Chełmno
The 1756 (Lubawa) and 1758 (Chełmno) statutes for the bishops's villages in these districts banned gambling on dice, cards and other games and decreed that anyone found cheating at these had to be punished before leaving the district (Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej 1938: 345 and 373).

Gruczno
The 1763 statute for this village required that anyone who wanted to live in the village had to avoid sexual sins, dicing, drunkenness and similar misdemeanors (Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej 1938: 386).

Puck and Mirachowo
The 1767 statute for these two districts banned gambling on cards, dice and other games prone to cheating, under a penalty of 3 *zloty*. Playing for fun without money is permitted. (Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej 1938: 407 and 410).

Łąkosz
The 1692 statute for this district required that anyone who wanted to live in any of the district's villages had to avoid dicing, drinking, thieving, bad women (Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej 1938: 174).

Sadłuki
The 1739 statute for this village banned the playing of cards, dice and similar games in the village taverns and in peasant houses. Any money being gambled could be confiscated and given to the village superior/owner (Gulden 1963: 76).

Łowicz
The 1744 decrees of this city banned play and gaming after 9 p.m. If those found breaking this rule were tavernkeepers, musicians or gamblers they had to be punished (Librowski 1998: 64).

The military legal sources, dealing primarily with the camp life of the soldiers, is generally focused on the years 1520-1698. 17 military statutes and war orders had several articles concerning dice, cards and generally they were classed as a problem alongside bawdy women, theft and murder. But from the military perspective the most troubling aspect of such gambling was that it could lead to the loss of military equipment and to bad conduct. The statutes demanded that the tavern-keepers where the games were played should suffer the same punishment as the actual gamblers (winners and loosers). Thus under the *War and Knights Law Order* of King Sigismund II, issued in 1557, included the stipulation (article 18) that whoever lost their armour or harquebus through gambling should be punished (Kutrzeba 1937: 67). Under article 44 both the loser and the winner were to be punished when any soldier lost his sword, armour or harquebus and the punishment was to be on a par for conviction of theft (Kutrzeba 1937: 70). Finally, article 50 stated that any kind of games was not suitable for nobles or knights and those caught were to be punished (Kutrzeba 1937: 71-72).

Article 28 of the *War Instructions* of Florian Zebrzydowski, issued in Vilnius in 1559, allowed for a servant to drink and gamble with their own money, if they used borrowed money they would be punished (Kutrzeba 1937: 83). The so-called Soldiers Articles of 1556 by 'hetman' G. Chodkiewicz included several relevant articles. No. 5 decreed that the winner and the looser should both be hanged if a soldier lost his horse, armour or weapons as aresult of playing cards and dice (Kutrzeba 1937: 130). No. 37 decreed that a guard found drinking or plating cards or dice was deemed to have lost honour and his life could be forfeit (Kutrzeba 1937: 136).

As with the civic law sources the military codes suggest that daily life was in sharp contrast to the ideal sought through the military orders. We can see a beautiful example of 17th century camp life, including soldiers gambling in the poem *Kostyrowie obozowi*. Its narrative includes a quarrel and later a serious fight between a noble and a soldier in a war camp during king Stefan Batory's campaign near Pskov (Piotrowski 1966: 323-324).

Revealing of the material culture of different the social groups are court cases, testaments and post mortem inventories. In 1595 the wife of a handicraftsman complained in court against her husband, accusing him of loosing everything in card games and heavy drinking and then abandoning her and their children, leaving them only his debts (Karpiński 1983: 64). From Poland's largest port, Gdansk, we learn from the post mortem inventories of the poorer classes what range of gaming equipment they had. Usurers, craftsmen, small merchants, rich craftsmen and traders all left behind cards and gaming boards. The widow of merchant Mikołaj Schulz left half a dozen cards and a chess set. The pharmacist Jakub Haye left a chess set. The widow of Daniel Perschen left a chess board. A chess set and a table for cards were left by the merchant Antoni Montewka and a chess set was also left by the widow of Paweł Ramel (Bogucka 1973: 76).

The final legal category to note is that of maritime law. Surviving regulations, dispositions and sea laws from Gdansk dealt with the behavior of sailors on board ship. The 1761 Sea Law, for example, demanded that sailors must avoid playing any games for money when on board ship (Matysiak 1958: 292).

Personal writings

This is a very capacious group encompassing all privately created written sources, especially memoirs, but also wills and post-mortem inventories that list a range of gaming opbjects owned by people. In total this is a very large body of evidence of some thousands of documents. In the past these have been overlooked with respect to gaming history but today, the development of online transcripts of document has made it significantly easier to get to grips with this material. More of this work needs to be done. This applies both to the many wills and post-mortem inventories held in city archives and the memoirs – several hundrd of these have been published so far, especially those dating between the 16th and 18th centuries (especially the latter). Space dictates than only a very few examples can be touched upon here.

The Diaries of Jan Chryzostom Pasek are divided into two parts: 1655-1666 (covering military campaigns and the soldier's life) and 1667-1688 (covering the home life of a noble land owner). They include many references to the playing of cards and dice in both the military and domestic contexts. *The Memoirs of Krzysztof Zawisza* (1666-1721), deal with the life of a Voivod nobleman of the Mińsk region (nowadays Belarus). Zawisza was the Marshall of the Great Principality of Lithuania and has left us a very long account of daily and political life amongst the high nobility. Only once does he write about cards: „For two weeks I was conversing with Sapieh's Familly, the great marshall, the field marshall and the prefect of the Olkinice; they were always visiting me for cards and supper" (Zawisza 1862: 140). Also of 18th century date are the *House Memoirs*. *Diaries of Mr Wacław Borejka*. These memoirs include the author's school years: "[…] for playing dice, cheating […] was a hard punishment. By own father, on a stool […]" and after that boy had to kiss father's hand and sometimes even kissed the lash (Borejko 1845: 22-23)[2]. From the late 17th century we have the *Memoirs of Jan Duklan Ochocki*. This includes details of the games on which Ochocki's father gambled, including cards (especially the game *kwindecz*) almost every evening. As far as his own gaming is concerned, Ochocki only mentions cards, which he played often (Ochocki 1910: 50, 57-59, 66-69). Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, in his memoirs, writes about a servant, Mr Patkowski, whose only job was to eat, drink and play draughts with the author's father (Niemcewicz 1957: 51). Writing about his own daily life as an officer at Adam Czartoryski's court he mentions his friend, poet Franciszek Karpiński and that they fell out only once, because of a chess game, which they played "so intensely, that I have thrown the chess board with the chess pieces onto the ground" (Niemcewicz 1957: 147). Another poet, mentioned by the author, Stanisław Trembecki, also played chess: "with a Jew he practiced chess play" (Niemcewicz 1957: 307). *The Memoirs of Stanislaw Kostka Potocki* provide a nice example of some gaming equipment that still survives. In writing about the acquisition of various items he records that "I have

[2] He had to kiss the father's hand and sometimes even a lash! "Doroślejszym synom, po wyjściu ze szkół, za burdy, karty, koście, szalbierstwo i inne wady młodzieńcze, ostra bywała kara, przez własnego ojca na taborecie, albo na materacu wymierzona i nie w małej liczbie, a na otarcie łez podawana była ręka, a niekiedy i sam batóg do całowania".

bought in a sale, after Rogalinski, Chinesee Tric-Track for 77 florins" – Ekielska n.d.). This tric-track board is still in the possession of the Wilanów Palace Museum.

Poetry

Poetry is another copious body of evidence. As well as poetry it includes proverbs, satirical texts and treatises. Many of these sources have been published (several before 1939). One of the best examples in this category is Zbigniew Morsztyn, whose poem *Kostyrowie obozowi* (Camp Cozeners) was written in the 17th century. It is a beautiful example of a poem recording the daily life of a soldier, including the quarrelling over a game of cards. A century before, Morsztyn, Melchior Pudłowski, secretary (1562-1571) of a king Sigismundus Augustus, wrote three shorts poems that mention different card games (and their associated activity of drinking alcohol) (Wierzbowski 1898: 33, 36). Anonymous poetry, mostly of bourgeois origin but sometimes of peasant origin, also includes gaming details. The so-called Anonymous Protestant (of the 17th century), in a few short poems about travelling with Count Tęczyński, mentions chess play (Anonim-Protestant 1903: 29), drinking and card playing during ship travel on the Vistula river (Anonim-Protestant 1903: 20). Other poems refer to draughts played in the noble's village of Kłoczowo (Anonim-Protestant 1903: 29). Typically of nobles, whilst tatars and muscovites attack the eastern borders the nobles discuss, drink, argue, fight each other and play cards (Anonim-Protestant 1903: 113). A further short poem ends with the line: "But my skin might sometimes scream, When one bangs with cards and draughts-board." (Anonim-Protestant 1903: 145).

The key treatise that comes into this group is the Fortune or Luck by Seweryn Bączalski, printed in Kraków in 1644, a study of dice and fortune-telling. It explores belief in fortune and luck, cautioning that Fortune is fickle and can soon disappear.

Games – cards, dices and sometimes board games – can be also traced in old, short anecdotes, satirical texts called in old Polish *facecja*. One of the most famous, Masters Joke, was written by Jan Kochanowski (the so-called father of Polish national literature and also the author of the poem *Chess*):

> This king Sigmund playing flus, get 2 kings and said he has three of them; when other players asked «Where is the third one?» «And it's me – said – the third one» – and he won the game.[3] (Krzyżanowski, Żukowska-Billip 1960: 74).

Wespazjan Kochowski, in one of his short poems, *Horse*, writes that a horse is very useful when a die comes off badly, enabling a gambler to make a quick get away (Eustachiewicz 1991: 270). Other satirical poets include Jan Kochanowski, whose work includes a poem about chess and a satirical comparing of an official and their job to a kind of simple card game (Eustachiewicz 1991: 291, 305).

Other poems deal with a quarrel over draughts (Brückner 1903: 25) and in a comical cook book of the 17th century, are poems satirizing Lenten fasting with dice made of bread (Przetocki 1653: 8) or parsley, fish and onion: if in the meals they are beeing cutted into dice shape do they play dice games (Przetocki 1653: 10)?

The satirical 1614 *Eternal Calendar*, advised that playing cards with peasants during the passage of Saturn should be avoided and that it is good for the wise to have fun at the expense of stupid card players (Kalendarz wieczny 1911: 15, 17). One hundred years later king Jan III Sobieski iwas satirised in the context of a card game, with his opponent, Stanisław Wojeński, bishop of Kamieniec. His predecessor by 50 years, king Władysław IV Waza was also satirized for his love of card games, and his habit oif playing for seven hours at a time (Czapliński 1959: 252-253). Another anonymous anecdote mentions Stanisław Stadnicki, the famous noble brawler and adventurer, and his love of card games (Krzyżanowski, Żukowska-Billip 1960: 272-273). Card games were also often deployed as a satirical criticism of court life. A range of terms were used: "playfulness, mockery, sitting, lies,, card games, insolence, pride, courtliness, wrong, bitch, pride, madness, infidelity, drunkenness, pride, cruelty, obscene speech" (Krzyżanowski, Żukowska-Billip 1960: 295) and generally seen, together with dice games, as describing the typical entertainments and behaviour of the Polish nobility.

[3] "Król Zygmunt grając flusa otrzymał dwa króle. Powiedział tedy że ma trzy. Gdy pozostali gracze zapytali «gdzie jest trzeci?» odpowiedział «to przecież ja, trzeci król» i wygrał grę."

Economy

From the second part of the 17th century there are surviving records that indicate that Polish board games were exported, especially to England. The information is recorded in port customs books, especially for Gdansk and Elblag. The key terms are "board game" and a "plank for games". In 1568 the London merchant Jarvis Simons bought in Gdańsk six playing tables and in 1587 the merchant Ralph Menley imported 70 pairs of board games. One year later four members of the Eastland Company - Roger Clarcke, Peter Collett, James Lewis and Robert Mayott – bought in Gdańsk 27 dozen playing tables (Zins 1967: 272). Elbląg's book of pile duty also gives us information on the export of board games: 101 board games in 1586, 20 in 1587, 60 in 1596 and 20 in 1599 (Groth 1990: 109-110). Elblag also imported playing cards (see table 1 and Groth 1990: 204, 206, 209, 211, 213-214).

The third big city in the region was Toruń, which although not a seaport was also exporting cards. The custom house tax books reveal that in 1605, three merchants from what is now Lithuania bought eight dozen cards (Gulden, Stępkowski 1979: 273)and that in 1657, seven merchants from Słuck (present day Belarus) transported away various cargos in 17 wagons, including 20 "bonts" of cards (Gulden, Stępkowski 1979: 99).

Education

In post-medieval and early modern Poland the world-view was generally that many dangerous traps awaited the young and uneducated and scholars, tutors and philosophers devoted time to creating an educational system that sort to keep the young from falling into these traps of temptation, including gambling. School regulations sometimes reflect thinking on cards, dice and board games as dangerous. In the early 17th century cards were so popular that in many educational texts and tracts there would be advice that peasants should not be allowed to play dice. A typical example is *Gospodarstwo* (Household Farm) by Anzelm Gostomski. In there, it is recommended that officials should watch over and punish those who disobey this injunction to prevent them becoming rascals (Gostomski 1588: 28). Concerns over damage being done to the social fabric by gambling enables us to characterize the concerted actions of officials, parents, masters and others as a fight back against this loss of social control. One of the best examples in Poland is the *Leges Scholae Racovianae*. Rakow was a famous Arian center for education, boasting one of the best schools of the time, the *Gymnasium Bonarum Atrium* (1602-1638). It was the first school in Poland to employ private teachers and to regulate their work. Just after the formation of the school, printed regulations were published which dealt with the varioius rules for teachers, private teachers, the chancellor and the students. Board games – including chess – were seen as a dangerous are and rule 12 for the students stated: "Let them not to play hazardous games: dice, chess, cards; if they will be playing any other kind of game, they are not to play for money" (Wołoszyn 1965: 309).

The mode of educating the higher nobility was different to that provided in the schools but retained a concern with gaming and gambling as socially and personally damaging. A key aspect of this education was for young nobles to make a long trip through Europe, learning in schools and academies, meeting many important people and visiting courts and famous cities. The richest took private teachers with them. All the students took with them a set of instructions prepared by their parents on how to behave, whom they should and should not visit, what they should see and learn and where they should receive additional money. Jakub Sobieski, the father of the future king of Poland, Jan III, prepared special instructions for his sons in advance of their visit to Paris. He advises them that French people were uneducated because they did not know Latin and that the whole nation was "flighty, inattentive, loose-tongued; treating small jokes as a serious dishonor" (Wołoszyn 1965: 407). He also cautions: "And among everything the two things must be avoided: playing cards and dueling" (Wołoszyn 1965: 407). Almost identical advice was given by the rich nobleman Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski, in the instructions for his sons – Teodor and Franciszek – for their journey do Vienna, France and the Netherlands. They were told to avoid idling games, dice games, drunkenness an any other kind of misdemeanor (Polak 1953: 274). In the 18th century we see a similar picture: in some families any kind of gaming was seen as bad behavior and liable to lead

Table 1. Imported cards in Elblag, from tax records

Year	Import
1586	Cards – 10 dozen
1607	Cards – worth 40 florins
1652	Cards – worth 60 florins
1657	Cards – 300 dozens+ cargo worth 359 florins (also cards)
1675	12 dozen
1696	Cards – worth 150 florins

to a beating for the children found engaged in such activity (Grabowski 1845: 22-23).

Other important educational sources include treatises on the subject of education. Some of these were translations of western books, e.g. Marcin Kwiatkowski's 1564 translation of the medieval manuscript about child rearing, *De ingenuis moribus ac liberalibus studiis* (by Pietro Paolo Vergerio). Chess and draughts were well regarded as simulating the art of war whereas dicing and greed were seen as improper for and softening of men but playing games generally was seen as developing agility and artistry (Kwiatkowski 1889: 70-71). Shortly before, circa 1527, Herman Schotten published his first edition of a very popular treatise about virtue and the honest life. About childhood he observed: "ones raised carelessly [..] will be open for games, theft, idleness" (Schottennius 1891: 27). Writing about the youthful age of 14-18 years he regards insubordination, lying, infidelity, anger, games, drunkenness, idleness, and harlotry as bad behaviours to be avoided (Ptaszycki 1891: 32). A pedagogical, religious book of 1553 by Wit Korczewski is written as a dialogue between a parson and a cleric and includes the complaint that peasants in the past were simpler and more modest but that now, as in the towns where one finds drunkards and gamblers, ploughmen were more concerned to play dice than to thresh and plough (Korczewski 1889: 41).

Conclusion

This article has explored a range of the written sources that illuminate the history of board games and gambling in Poland during the 16th-18th centuries. The selction made, under the constraints of time and space is inevitably subjective and far from exhaustive but is sufficient to encourage much fuller analyses. The sources selected for discussion primarily illuminate the social context of gaming. The general overview based on the written sources suggests that there was a widespread alarm expressed, especially in statutes and pedagogical texts, that children should be kept away from any kind of board and dice games – even chess was regarded as a hazardous game not least because it could provoke fights when someone lost. Where gambling was concerned the social alarm spread to the need for everyone to avoid such games as were gambled upon. These expressions of social anxiety are counter-pointed by other sources that demonstrate a continual need to keep playing. Many people were playing, especially card and dice games. With a few exceptions (notably chess and draughts) the popularity of many of the games, especially dice and cards (are rather the many varieties of these games), varied through the centuries, The playing of card from the 17th to the 18th century increased massively, with the 18th century memoirs for example indicating large numbers of people gambling for huge sums of money.

This paper has barely scratched the surface of a huge topic and the general process of gathering sources is a work in progress. As it progresses it will undoubtedly reveal new topics, areas of interest or groups of sources to study. With the written sources more fully understood in their scope, range and content the prospect is also offered of combining this evidence with that of the surviving boards and pieces through archaeology and art history to give a much more balanced and engaging look at the history of board and table games in Poland.

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Sandomierz Chess Pieces

Reminiscences

Szymon Maćkowiak

Egbert Meissenburg

Szymon Maćkowiak

Stanisław Ulam: Chess-player, Computer-scientist and Mathematician

"It is still an unending source of surprise for me to see how a few scribbles on a blackboard or on a sheet of paper could change the course of human affairs." – This sentence spoken by Stanisław Ulam best describes his contribution to the history of mankind and the character of his work. Arguably, Ulam is one of the twentieth century's greatest representatives of the Polish scientific community. He was born in Lvov, where he graduated from Lvov Polytechnic. He was an active member of the Lvov School of Mathematics and shared the fellowship of several other great Polish mathematicians, including Stefan Banach, Kazimierz Kuratowski, Stanisław Mazur and Hugon Steinhaus. Before the outbreak of World War II he moved to the USA where he worked inter alia at the Universities of Princeton, Harvard and Wisconsin and also the Los Alamos laboratory. His scientific achievements include aspects of nuclear bomb theory, aspects of mathematical theory (topology, set theory, measure theory) and computer simulation methodology (especially the Monte Carlo method). Stanisław Ulam was also a pioneer of computer chess, leading on the creation of the programme that allowed the MANIAC I computer to play chess with a human. This paper is going to describe Stanisław Ulam's life, his most important achievements and his work on computer chess and computing.

History

Stanisław Ulam was born in Lvov in 1909. At that time Poland was still subject to the German, Russian and Austrian Empires. Lvov was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in which it had a high degree of autonomy and was an important cultural and scientific center.

Ulam came from a wealthy, assimilated Jewish family. His father, Józef, was a lawyer and a staff officer in the Austrian army. His mother, Anna (maiden name Auerbach), came from a family of industrialists. Because of World War I and Józef Ulam's profession (an officer in the Austrian Army), the Ulam family was forced to travel often. For several years they lived in Vienna - the then capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Because of the war, his parents provided him with a private education. He learnt German and English and quickly began to show a particular interest in mathematics. As a child he was fascinated by the books on mathematics and astronomy that he found in his father's library. After the Great War, Stanisław and his parents went back to Lvov.

From 1919-1924 he attended secondary school and from an early age had a particular interest in natural sciences, especially in mathematics, physics and astronomy. His passion is testified to by one of his notebook signatures: "Stanisław Ulam – an astronomer, a physicist and a mathematician". It was also in his childhood that he fell in love with chess and became an accomplished player, recalling:

> Father taught me to play chess. He had a short brochure about chess and he told me about the most famous games. I was fascinated by the knight moves, especially by the possibility of attacking two enemy pieces at the same time. Although it is a simple maneuver in my opinion it is fabulous and since that time I have loved chess (Ulam 1996: 51).

Stanisław moved to Lvov Polytechnic in 1927. His plan to become an engineer was derailed by poor marks in his entrance exams and he switched to the General Department, where he realized how much he loved mathematics. He joined the highly original Lvov School of Mathematics (hereafter, LSM) an informal society of scientists (including Stefan Banach, Kazimierz Kuratowski and Hugon Steinhaus), who met regularly at the Scottish Café.

Their meetings were usually based on discussing and inventing mathematical problems, establishing new theories, discussing politics or playing chess. Firstly they wrote the problems on the marble tables in the café, but finally the annoyed café owner (who had to clean the tables) decided to buy them a notebook which went down in history as a *Scottish Book*. The scientists often proposed awards for the solution of particular problems. The award could be a bottle of wine, a live hen or a live goose. One of the most famous solved problems was Mazur's problem from 1936 (problem 153 in the *Scottish Book*), solved by Per Enflo. In 1972 Mazur finally awarded him the promised live goose. After Ulam's graduation (1933) the political and economic situation in Poland significantly worsened. The lack of jobs at Polish Universities forced Ulam to look for a scientific job abroad. His parents funded him to travel around Europe and amongst others, he visited Vienna, Zurich, Paris and Cambridge to listen to and to give lectures and to have discussions with others great mathematicians of the period.

In 1935 Ulam met John von Neumann, who invited him to Princeton (USA) with the support of a $300 grant. Just before World War II he persuaded his brother to join him in the USA and their emigration probably saved their lives; almost none of Ulam's family and friends survived the war. In the USA Ulam worked as a mathematician in Princeton, Harvard, and Wisconsin, but was at his most creative when working on the top of his creativity was while he worked at Los Alamos on the U.S. military's Manhattan Project. He also had access to one of the first computers, MANIAC I, which fostered his interest in computer chess and led to the programming of the computer to play chess with a human.

Ulam's achievements

Ulam's wider achievements ranged over mathematics, numerical methods and simulation, physics and computer science. His impact was so extensive I can only scratch the surface here in acknowledging it. He started publishing serious scientific papers on relative mathematics at the age of 18. He worked mainly on topology, set theory and measure theory. However, one of his mathematical inventions is relatively simple to explain and to describe and shows the rich potential of his ever-curious imagination. In 1963, during the presentation of "a long and very boring paper", Ulam started writing a diagram which revealed a very interesting pattern of prime number distribution. Prime numbers are the building blocks of all other numbers and have the essential quality of only being divisable by itself and by one. All other numbers can be composed as a product of prime numbers. The pattern he plotted (see fig. 1) is known as "The Ulam spiral". It can be constructed by writing down a regular rectangular grid of numbers, starting with 1 at the center, and spiraling out. Then, if we mark the prime numbers we will see that the marked numbers tend to line up along diagonal lines. The diagonal pattern appears if we start from other numbers as well. Using some of the first computers Ulam made and described a map of prime numbers according to this provision (Ulam, Stein and Wells 1964: 516-520). Some of the irregularities in the diagonal patterns are still not understood, but Ulam's idea was the first which showed large prime numbers spaced in a graphic way.

During Ulam's scientific activities at Los Alamos he had access to one of the first computers – MANIAC I (Mathematical Analyzer, Numerator, Integrator, and Computer) constructed in the late 1940s. Because of this access he was able to get involved in the development of numerical methods of calculation. A computer operates on discrete numbers and so to use computers to calculate of physical problems (especially differential equations) they had to be rewritten into the discrete form. One of the most inhibiting problems of the first computers was their low computational power (i.e. the number of operations per second). This problem was especially important for the calculation of multidimensional integrals or integrals of sets of differential equations and Ulam devised an alternative method of integrating (Metropolis and Ulam 1949: 335-341). He recalls in his autobiography that he invented this method while playing solitaire. Because this method is based on draw and probability, it was named the Monte Carlo Method in honor of Monte Carlo – the then gambling capital of Europe. The technique relies on modeling complex physical processes and the calculation of multidimensional integrals (Allen and Tildesley 1987: 111). Nowadays the Monte Carlo

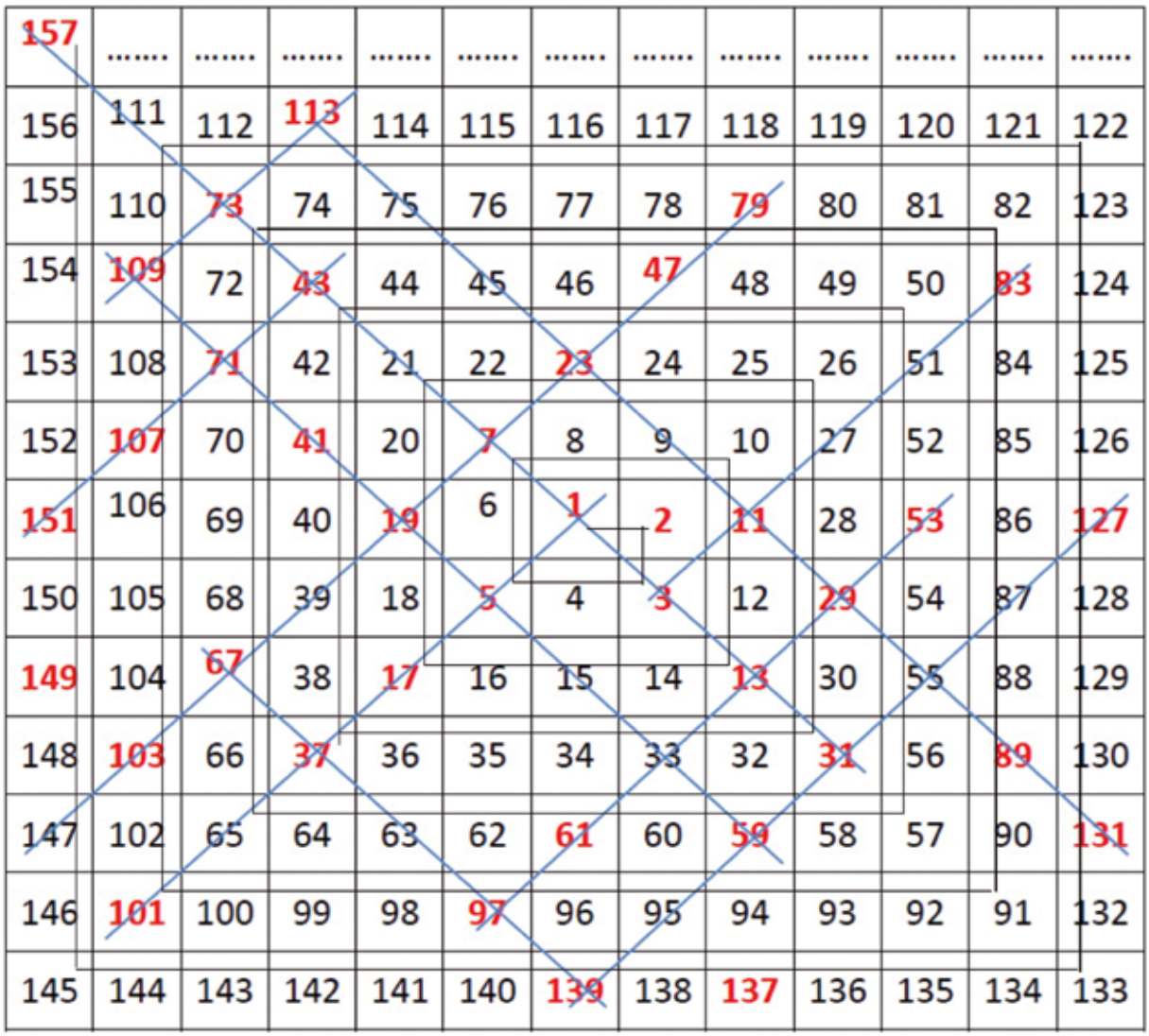

Fig. 1. Ulam's spiral. Drew. S. Maćkowiak

method is one of the most important used in computer simulations.

In physics Ulam's achievements are connected especially with the atom and helping to develop the hydrogen bomb. For most of his time at Los Alamos he was mainly involved in work on a super bomb theory, under Edward Teller's supervision. Most information about his impact on the hydrogen bomb construction is still top secret, but Ulam wrote in his autobiography that he was the first to realize that the project was rooted in some wrong assumptions that would prevent success as originally conceptualised. His solutions to these problems ensured the USA "achieved" the Bomb before the Soviet Union. During his time at Los Alamos he also became interested in computer chess.

Computer chess – history and theory

The history of computer chess can be said to begin with a fraud in 1769. It was then that Wolfgang von Kempelen's supposedly brilliant chess machine setter, the Turk, was revealed. It was a fraud because under an admittedly sophisticated mechanism a skillful player was hidden. The first real computer was invented in 1846 by Charles Babbage who created but did not finish his mechanical, "differential engine". Babbage planned to teach the machine to play chess. In 1890 Leonardo Torres y Quevedo built a machine which correctly solved the King and Rook mate. Between 1940 and 1950 Claude Elwood Shannon and John von Neumann created the theoretical basis of computer chess. In 1951 Alan Turing wrote a skeleton program for playing

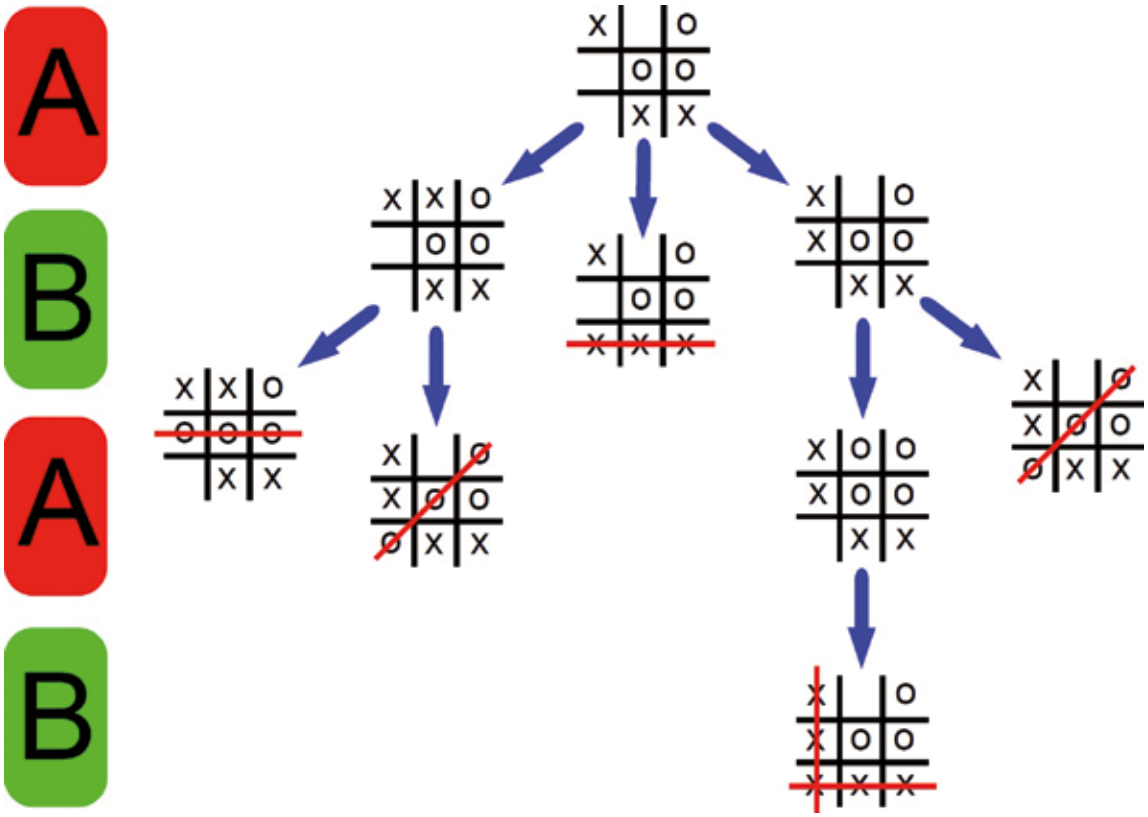

Fig. 2. The "Min-max" algorithm as applied to Tic-tac-toe. A and B denotes the turns of the first and second player respectively. Drew. S. Maćkowiak

chess but only tested it on a piece of paper. In 1952 Dietrich G. Prinz created a program to solve some chess problems. And finally between 1952 and 1956, at Los Alamos, Ulam's group programmed the computer MANIAC I to play chess with a man. The game started a "computational war" between mankind and computers and we can say that this war was finished in 1997 when IBM's supercomputer with the program Deep Blue won against the grandmaster Garry Kasparov.

From a mathematical point of view, chess is a game in which the sum is equal to zero (the gain of one player means the loss of the other). But how can a computer play chess? First of all, we need to know what a computer is. We can say that a computer is an automatic machine, which can calculate, execute lists of orders and conditional instructions and has access to a storage medium. All these elements are sufficient to perform a game of chess but to win there are two key issues: being able to assess a game (the evaluation function) and the way of searching for branches of the game (the so-called algorithms "brute force" and "min-max"). Cracking these problems enabled the development of computer programmes that could consider all its own possible moves and all the possible moves of its opponent and then consider all possible scenarios. Depending on its opponent's moves, the computer can choose the most valuable moves; it develops a tree of the game and chooses every time the best responses to an opponent's move – the most valuable branches of the game. But making such deep calculations (the "brute force" algorithm) within the time frame of a game was too time consuming. A more efficient idea was to develop the tree of the game only to a certain depth, at which point the computer assigns a value to each branch and chooses only the one which provides the maximum profit or minimal loss (the "min-max" algorithm) (see fig. 2).

In 1956 Ulam led a group working with the computer MANIAC I to create a program to play chess against a human opponent. Because of limited computational power of MANIAC I, only a simplified chessboard and pieces were used to speed up the game. Thus the bishops were removed and the board comprised only 6x6 cells. This chess variant was called "Los Alamos chess" or, because of the absence of the bishops, "Anticlerical chess" (see fig. 3).

It proved the first successful attempt at a complete human-computer game. Although simplifications were used, the computer was able to win only against beginner players. In his autobiography Ulam says: "The real problem is that we did not know how to insert experience of the previous games into memory and how to teach the machine the general recognition of the value of configurations and positions".

Ulam and chess, a summary

This paper has presented the outline biography of Stanisław Ulam, a great Polish-American scientists, who was one of the pioneers in the development of computer chess. The most important of Ulam's achievements have been outlined, especially with respect to his contribution to the development of mathematics, the theory of the hydrogen bomb, computer simulation methodology and computer chess. His entanglement with chess can be summarised as follows:

- He was taught chess as a child by his father,
- He played regularly with the members of the Lvov School of Mathematics in the Scottish Café,
- He led the group that programmed a computer to play chess against a human,
- During his life in Los Alamos he was a member of the Los Alamos chess team and played on chessboard No. 1,
- After a serious illness (meningitis) winning chess games restored his self-belief in his intellectual abilities.

The impact of Ulam's life and work is undeniable and he is deservedly recognised by many as one of the greatest scientists of the 20th century. There is still much to learn from revisiting his ideas, not least around the playing of chess.

Acknowledgments

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Fig. 3. Los Alamos or Anti-clerical chess. Drew. S. Maćkowiak

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Jerzy Giżycki (1919-2009): An Appreciation

The history of chess as a kind of science primarily began with the *Geschichte und Litteratur des Schachspiels*, published in Berlin in 1874, in two volumes and written by the Dutchman Antonius van der Linde (1833-1897). This was followed in 1897 by the Prussian diplomat Tassilo von Heydebrand und der Lasa (1818-1899) with his *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels* and culminated in *A History of Chess* by the Englishman H.J.R. Murray (1868-1955), published in Oxford in 1913. All these scholars used the modes of historicism and traditional hermeneutics by collecting and arranging the written chess literature and its non chess sources chronologically, the deeds of the chess playing people. Murray's work brought to an end what we might describe as the first period of the historicism of chess. The second period began ca. 1950, when new writers began their chess research with new and revised themes (including archaeology and inclusive art history) and methods.

Jerzy Giżycki (fig. 1; born January 7, 1919) learned chess in the 1930s. By collecting chess books (including exlibris examples) and chess ephemera after WW II he developed a long lasting connection to the history of chess and was well known as a chess bibliophile. In his profession as a film critic he was the editor of a weekly film column, published film periodicals and from 1951 onwards wrote several film books (including on films about Chopin). Despite of his prolific activity in these areas, he still found time to devote to his keen chess interest. It was his idea to develop a more interdisciplinary approach to chess and chess history in Poland by combining the different sources: paintings, graphics, drawings and letters to explore chess motivations. He urged Polish artists to show that chess as a part of mankind is „more than chess". A 1958 translation into the Russian language with the title *С шахматами через века и страны* (published in Warsaw) was the first printed version of his history of chess in a then excellent printing quality and achieving four editions. But the Russian was not in

Fig. 1. Exlibris from collection of Jerzy Giżycki. n.d. [image online]. Available at: http://konikowski.net/images/giz3.jpg [Accessed: 08.05.2018]

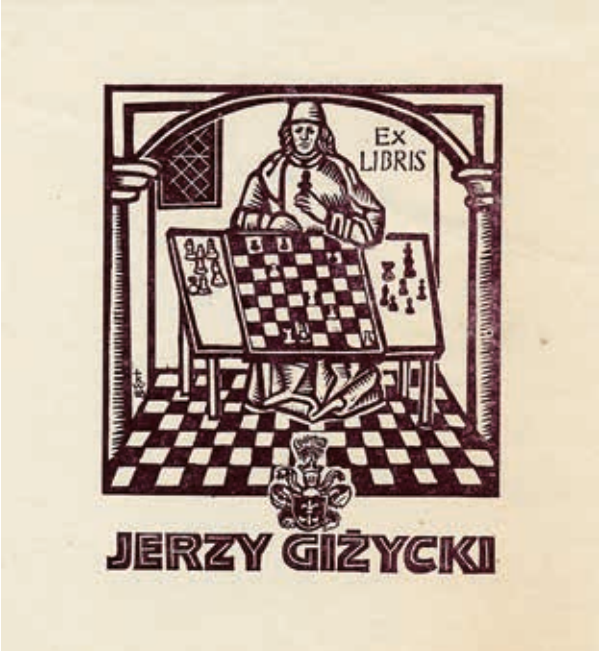

Fig. 2. Exlibris from collection of Jerzy Giżycki. n.d. [image online]. Available at: http://konikowski.net/images/ex1.jpg [Accessed: 08.05.2018]

Fig. 3. Exlibris from collection of Jerzy Giżycki. n.d. [image online]. Available at: http://konikowski.net/images/ex6.jpg [Accessed: 08.05.2018]

his mother tongue. The first Polish edition followed in 1960 as *Z szachami przez wieki i kraje* (again the Warsaw publishing house, Sport i Turystyka), the third and final polish edition published in 1984. By then *Z szachami* had been translated into the following languages: Czech, Danish, English (two versions), German (*Schach zu allen Zeiten*), Hungarian and Swedish. None of these editions remained unchanged, with significant additions made both by the author himself and by other contributors, including Henry Grob, Ludwig Rellstab, Gideon Ståhlberg and Baruch H. Wood, who added details on the chess history of their own countries.

Jerzy Giżycki wrote two other books is on game of chess in cooperation. The first, *Fortuna kołem się toczy*, was co-authored by Alfred Górny (Warsaw, 1976) with translations into German (*Glück und Spiel zu allen Zeiten* [1970 – again coming out before the Polish edition]) and into Czech (in Ljubljana 1972 and Zagreb 1974). The second was a chess encyclopedia in two volumes *Szachy od A do Z* (Warsaw 1986/1987), which ran to more than 1,400 pages and had the word edition of over 50,000 copies for each volume). The book was co-authored by the skillful chess writer Władisław Litmanowicz (1918-1992). They worked together between c. 1972 and 1983. The text is completed by illustrations from the collection of Jerzy Giżycki (for many years he had a series in the Polish chess journal *Szachy* [*Mozaika / Zebrał i opracował* by J. Giżycki also carried his contributions]), whilst the tables and diagrams had been prepared by W. Litmanowicz. The headwords on persons and chess history concern many subjects which had not been treated in the chess encyclopedias published in other languages before 1983.

Towards the end of his life Jerzy Giżycki donated, in 2008, the main part of his smaller but valuable library of chess books to the Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN in Kórnik. The donation not only included his vast collection of about 500 to 1000 chess exlibris (fig. 2 and fig. 3; many of them shaped by prominent artists) but also the literature on chess exlibris written by himself (at least 3 items for museums or galleries) and others.

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