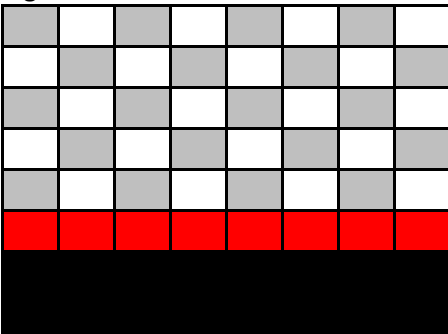


Chess is a game of real estate.
Without room to maneuver, the pieces mean nothing.
Note how the opponents pieces aren't drawn in.
They aren't as important as one might think.
If you only react to your opponents moves, you will forever be playing their game.
Trust me, you don't want to be playing my game. In my game, I win.

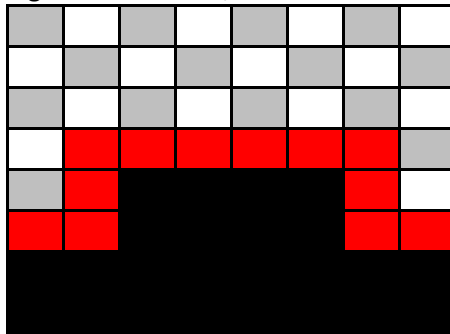
Conceptual Diagrams of Power and Control.

fig 1: the start



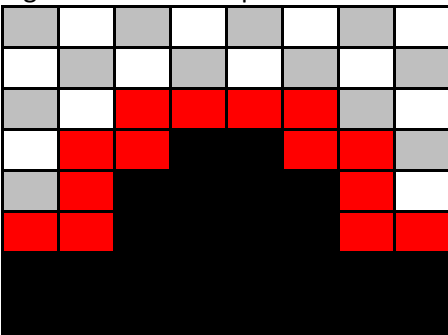
This is how the game starts.

fig 2: moves 1-5 +/-



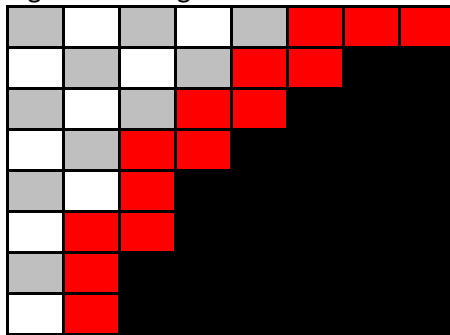
This is what I am going for in my opening moves.

fig 3: whenever it's possible



If I can extend my position one space into the enemy's territory, the hazard becomes obvious.

fig 4: the mid game



In an evenly matched game, very often the players will dominate alternate sides of the board as they try to outflank each other.

Now with the pieces.

fig 5: position at start

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| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| p | p | p | p | p | p | p | p |
| R | Kn | B | K | Q | B | Kn | R |

This is the opening set up.

fig 6: position at five

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|---|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|
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| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | B | | p | B | | |
| | | | p | | Kn | | |
| p | p | p | | | p | p | p |
| R | Kn | | K | Q | | | R |

Unless I am challenged
or given an opening,
in five moves, this is my position.
For the most part, my opponents
moves are incidental.
Do you know where you will be in five?

fig 7: position at 8 being cautious

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|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|---|
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| | | | | | | | |
| | | B | | p | B | | |
| | | | p | Q | Kn | | |
| p | p | p | Kn | | p | p | p |
| R | | | | R | K | | |

If I'm feeling cautious or defensive
this is my position at eight.
Guess which side I'm planning on
flanking through?

fig 8: alternate position at 7 being cautious

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|
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| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | B | | p | B | | |
| Kn | | | p | | Kn | | |
| p | p | p | | | p | p | p |
| | K | R | | Q | | | R |

As an alternative, proceeding from
fig 6: position at five, I have castled to the
opposite side, and promoted my Knight
to a mediocre position.
Which way am I flanking?
Where do you think my queen headed?

Note: it is the arrangement of the pawns at the center that decide where the flanks.
(the left & right hand sides of the board) begin and end.

If you don't want to play a flanking game,
elimination of the center pawns tends to force a head to head confrontation.

I've never lost a game to an opponent who voluntarily gave up the center.

Chess Lesson II
Going First

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Always go first.

If given the option, choose white.

The reasoning is simple. Whoever goes first is at least one move ahead of the other, and therefore always has at least a one move advantage over their opponent. This is the difference between bringing pressure to bear with one piece or two.

Look at it this way. If you are going to have a conversation, and the person you are going to be talking with asks, “What do you want to talk about?”

You can either select a topic, or say, “I don’t know. What do you want to talk about?”

If you choose the later, it should be obvious that your are ceding control of the conversation to the other.

In chess, going first is like this. If you go first, you may reasonable expect to play whatever opening you desire (i.e. your first few moves are yours and yours alone to decide).

In addition to this, by choosing the opening you may well force your opponent to play a “defense” they are not familiar with. And please, take a moment to note how the second player’s response is denoted as a “defense.”

And thirdly, at higher levels of play, it is presumed that the first player (white) will be on the offensive (on the attack) until they capture a piece or make a mistake, which often just means playing either too timidly or too aggressively.

In short, the best defense is a good offense. It’s hard to put your opponent in mate if you never get to his side of the board, and the first step in doing that is in moving forward at every opportunity. And this means, if you are given the opportunity, choose to go first.