The Seven Sages

14 "sage" pawns - 1 "fool" pawn - 1 board

2 players

Each player tries by clever tactical disposition of its seven pawns ("sages"), and the judicious use of those of the opponent, to bring the "fool" pawn in the opposite field (city).

The game is played on a 15 x 15 square board in alternate dark and light colors. Each city is made of 5 squares.

The sages move on all squares of the board (kingdom, barbarian countries and both cities), but can't stop on the squares of the opponent's city, which can only be occupied by a single defending sage. Bordering just outside the kingdom there's a row of squares (the barbarian countries) forming a corridor impenetrable by the fool. This area is bounded by a white border. Every player has its pawns in play: a sage in the middle city, the other six across the kingdom; the fool is placed in the center of the board and the game begins.

PAWN MOVEMENT

General rules

- Each player, in turn, can only move one of his pawns;
- There can be only one pawn per square;
- No pawn can move over an occupied square;
- Pawns are never captured or eliminated;
- A pawn can land on the square occupied by the fool which is then "ousted" and moves in a straight line, in the opposite direction from the one it was ousted;
- Sages can't oust each other;
- The fool does not move until it has been ousted by a sage;
- Each player may have only one pawn in one of the five squares that comprises his city.
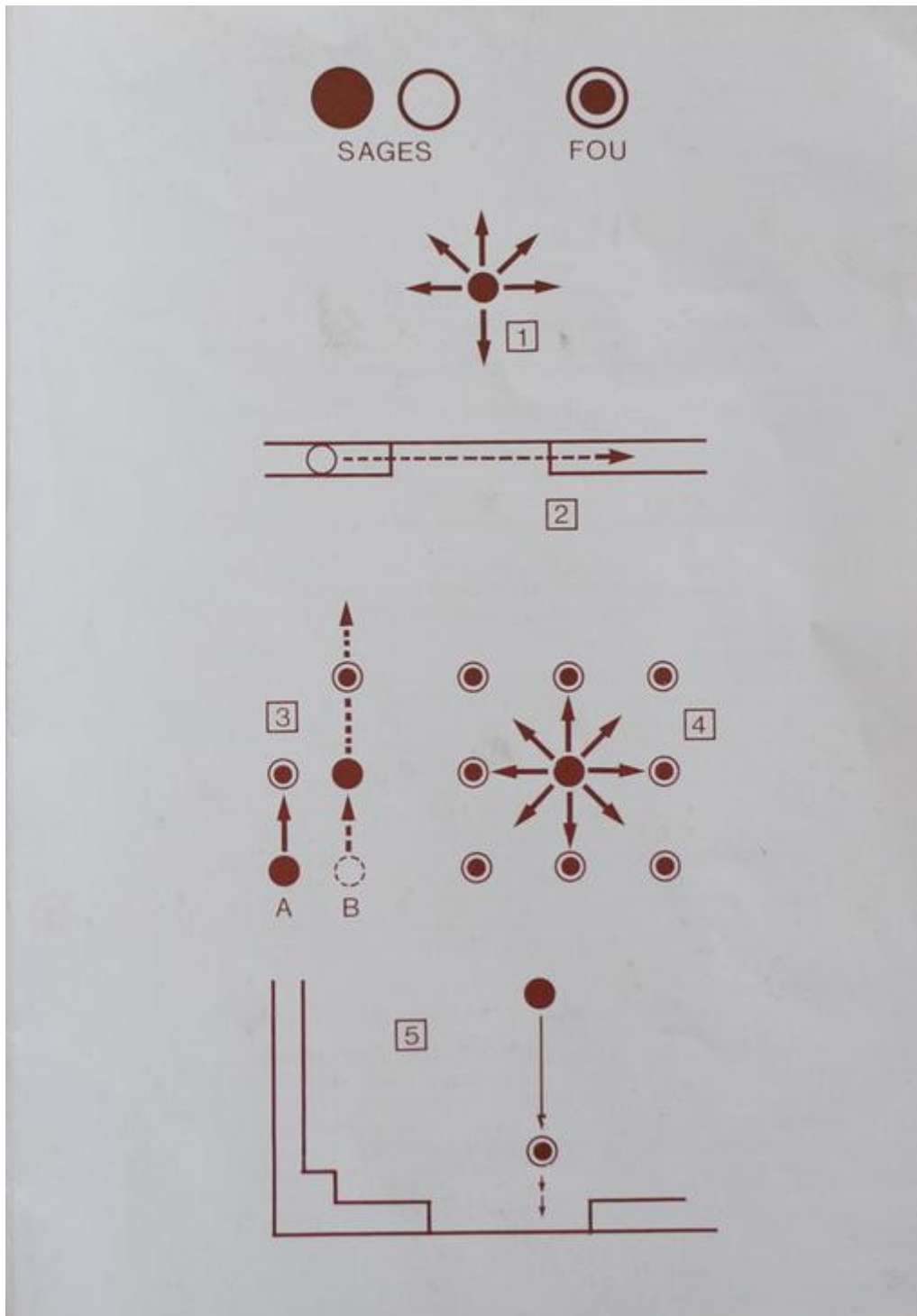
The sage pawns

A) Displacement tactics. Pawns can move any number of squares in a straight line directly backwards, sideways, forwards, or along either forward diagonal. So there are six possible directions (Fig 1). The pawns can venture out of the kingdom, crossing the white border, but they cannot stop on the squares of the opposing city, over which they have full-time free passage (Fig 2).

B) Ousting the fool. To oust the fool (push it) and take its place (Fig 3):

   a. The sage must be adjacent or on in a straight line to the fool. The sage moves any number of squares in a straight line, horizontally, vertically or diagonally (forward or backward) like the Queen in chess. There are eight possible directions (Fig.4). *"The ousted fool loses its place"*;
   b. The fool must meet on its way another sage which will then deviate it in the direction and number of boxes desired by the player: *"The fool always needs to meet a sage on its way"*. If this option is not available, the fool can't be ousted,

except in the special case where there is no obstacle between the fool and the opposing city, thus entering it directly (Fig 5)

Important

- The sage will oust the fool if they see fit to their strategy.
- Moving the pawns diagonally backwards is only permitted when ousting the fool.

The fool

The fool ousted by a sage moves in a straight line, within the limits of the kingdom:

A) Horizontally or vertically if it has been ousted by a sage who was on the same row or column of it.
B) Diagonally, if it has been ousted by a sage who was on one of its diagonals.

Deflections - The sage deflect the fool

A special feature of the game lies in the fact that each displacement of the fool is necessarily linked to its reflection on one or more pawns.

The fool is reflected when it arrives directly on a square occupied by a sage.

The possibilities are: the fool arrives:

A) vertically, it is reflected and deflected horizontally (Fig 6),
B) horizontally, it is reflected and deflected vertically,
C) diagonally, it is reflected on the perpendicular diagonal of the same color (Fig 7)

The reflection happens at an angle of 90°, to the right or to the left, but the fool also has the ability to reverse itself (Fig 8A). It can stop on the square adjacent to the sage who just reflected it (Fig 8B). The reflection of the sage ignores borders (Fig 9)

Deviations

The deviation is said to be **simple** when the fool is reflected by a single sage (fig 10); it is said to be **multiple** when it is reflected and deflected several times in the same displacement as a result of his meeting with several sages (Fig 11). It is possible to reflect the fool on the opponent's sage.

"To the fool, the sages have no color"

After a mandatory first reflection, the fool can stop anywhere along its path; following reflections are optional. The direction and length of the deviation depend on the sage that ousted it.

In case the fool returns itself, it's possible to reflect it on the sage that ousted it (Fig.12)

START OF THE GAME

The 14 sages are placed on their respective squares, the fool in the middle of the kingdom. Red starts the game, and moves a sage (it doesn't need to oust the fool)

Rule of three

A player can't have three of his sages side by side (adjacent to each other) (Fig 13).

"Two friendly sages chat, three compete."

SCORING

In case the fool enters directly in the opponent city (Fig 14) after being ousted or deflected by one of your sages, you score two points. But if the fool enters after being deflected on an opponent's pawn, you score only one point (Fig 15)

The last sage to touch the fool before it enters the city will be considered when determining the score to receive.

"No sage voluntarily introduce the fool in his own city"

END OF THE GAME

The winner is the first to get at least 5 points.

Each new round will be started by the loser of the previous round. The pawns assume their initial positions.

Note: an hourglass is provided if you want to limit the amount of time available in a turn.