

# KLAN-Defensive Retractor

with special reference to the AntiCirce condition

by Klaus Wenda (Vienna) and Andreas Thoma (Groß Rönnau)

in memoriam Wolfgang Dittmann (+ 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014)

As to the genesis of the defensive retractor [in German Verteidigungsrückzüge (VRZ)]: Its year of birth can be fairly precisely defined as the last months of 1923 and the beginning 1924.

About that time the pioneer problems of the Romanian composer *Zeno Proca* and the Danish composer *Niels Hoeg* were published, including the definitions of those retro types as formulated by the inventors. The crucial difference between the two types refers only to retro moves allowing the retraction of a capturing move. Concerning historical details see *Dittmann*, DER BLICK ZURÜCK, pp.151 ff.

The following definition (convention) applying to those two types of the VRZ (with an explanatory addition referring to the Hoeg type) was downloaded from the fairy chess dictionary on the website of *Die Schwalbe* with some slight adaptations made for the purpose of this article.

## Defensive Retractor

*White and Black retract moves in turn. After the retraction of his last move White executes a forward move in the course of which he must comply with the additional stipulation. Black retracts in such a way as to aim at the refutation of White's intention to fulfil that additional stipulation. In the case of more than one option for the black retro move, variations in retro play will be created.*

**Proca Type:** *The side about to make the retro move decides whether there will be an uncapture and which unit is to be uncaptured.*

**White retracting** *decides whether this is an uncapturing move and (in the affirmative case) what kind of black sacrificial unit is uncaptured.*

**Black retracting** *decides in an analogous fashion.*

**Hoeg Type:** *not the side to move but the opposite side decides whether a unit gets uncaptured or not and what kind of unit is to be taken in the affirmative case. In the case of White retracting a move, it is up to him to define both the starting square and the arrival square (provided that there is no other unambiguous prescription given on grounds of legality according to the convention of retro chess). Now it is Black who decides whether that move is an uncapture or not, and – in the affirmative case – defines the kind of black sacrificial unit to be chosen, the whole procedure being allowed or being necessary for reasons of legality. If the retraction is characterised by the mere option of an uncapture without any obligation to do so, Black may decide that no sacrificial unit will be added. With Black to move, White's decision will be taken in an analogous fashion.*

**Forward defence:** *Black has the right to defend himself by cutting off the retro play at any given time and to fulfil the stipulation of the forward play in his turn if legally possible provided that this option is not excluded explicitly (“without forward defence”).*

In the decades to follow both orthodox types of the defensive retractor were to win only a relatively small amount of popularity. The same phenomenon has been seen with some occasional defensive retractors under fairy chess conditions. It was only as late as in 2001 that

the combination of the **Proca** retractor with the condition **AntiCirce** brought about a real change on the retro stage.

*Wolfgang Dittmann*, who owed his high reputation as the most eminent protagonist of this retro species to more than 200 compositions and numerous essays from his pen, dedicated a bulky chapter comprehending ample material to the presentation of the new species in his book *DER BLICK ZURÜCK*, pp. 375-465. In addition to that, quite a number of such problems were composed by *Vlaicu Crisan*, *Paul Raican*, *Günther Weeth* and by the authors of this essay. About 500 examples with Proca AntiCirce have been published so far.

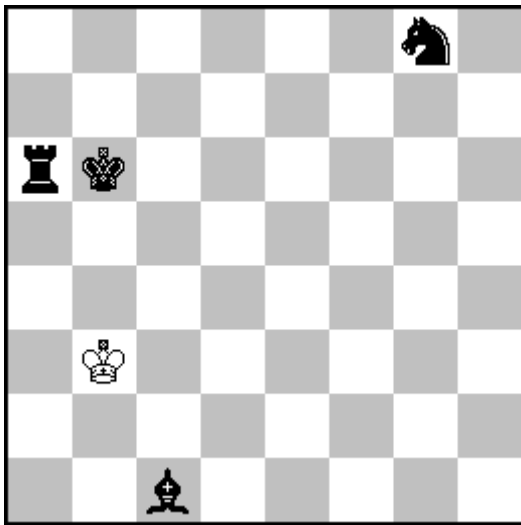
Strangely enough, the potential counterpart, the **Hoeg AntiCirce retractor**, was hardly influenced by such a rapid development. It was *Wolfgang Dittmann* who first dealt with some specific ideas and first sketches which were meant to pave the way for that new type in the course of the year 2012. His fatal disease afflicting him during the autumn of the year 2013 robbed him of the opportunity to implement his theoretical findings in the mature form of problems which he would have evaluated as worthy of publication. So it was left to *Günther Weeth* to bring the supposedly first Hoeg AntiCirce retractor under the spotlight as a dedication “in memoriam Wolfgang Dittmann” in *Die Schwalbe* 267, June 2014, no.15991. Some other problems of the same type were composed by the authors of this article and were to follow a few months after that pioneer problem (see *Die Schwalbe* 2014, no.16052, no.16177, *harmonie-aktiv* 2014, no.2088v and *StrateGems* 69/2015, no.R0228).

In addition, we should like to draw your attention to an article written by *Günther Weeth*, to be published in *feenschach* 208/2014, where the author dwells on an expanded comment on his Hoeg AntiCirce problem and where he examines further historical and technical matters as far as the construction of that type is concerned. His first survey is associated with the prediction that there will be quite new and unexpected types of strategy and options for the realisation of fascinating ideas still to be discovered in the course of intensified research. Having taken up that suggestion, we wanted as it were to get to the bottom of the subject by composing the following modest examples A-C <sup>1)</sup> in order to explore some of the potential promised by that combination of fairy conditions with a view to showing attractive ideas in light positions.

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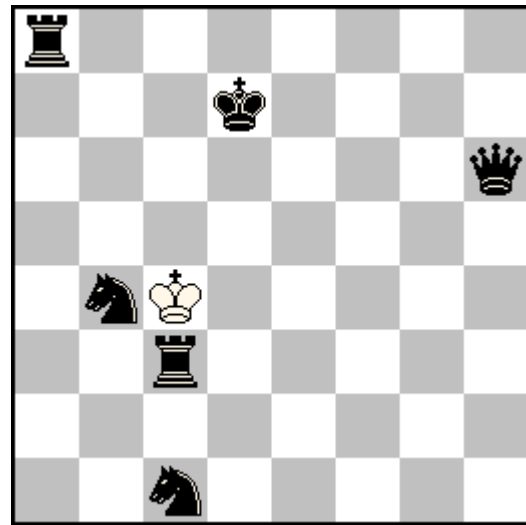
<sup>1)</sup> If quoting these originals, please refer to “KLAN-Verteidigungsrückzüge”, [www.thbrand.de/retroblog](http://www.thbrand.de/retroblog), January 2015.

**A**      **Andreas Thoma**



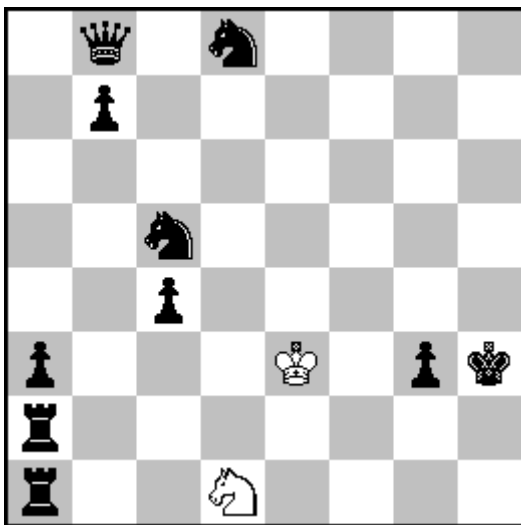
-4 & #1      (1+4)  
Hoeg retractor, AntiCirce

**B**      **Andreas Thoma**



-3 & #1      (1+6)  
Hoeg retractor, AntiCirce Cheylan

**C**      **Klaus Wenda**



-4 & #1      (2+10)  
Hoeg retractor, AntiCirce

**A:** 1.Ka4-b3 Sc7:Qa8[Sg8]+ (White defines the sacrificial object, thus enhancing his options for attacking) 2.Qf8-a8 Sa8-c7+ 3.Ka3-a4 Ka5-b6+ 4.Kb3-a3 –fw. 1.Qc5# (Rundlauf by wK).

**B:** 1.Kd3-c4 Ra8:Qg8[Ra8]+ 2.Qg3-g8 Ra8xQg8[Ra8]+ 3.Kc4-d3 -- fw. Qc7# (Here we see two sacrificial objects defined by White)

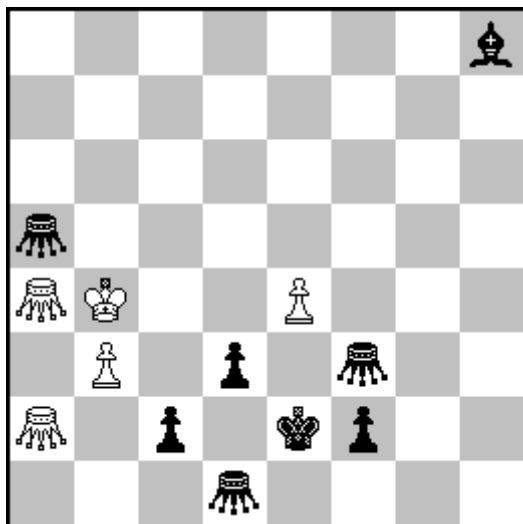
**C:** 1.Kd3-e3 Sd7-c5+ 2.Kd2-d3 c3:Qb2[b7]+ 3.Qb1-b2 Qb2-b8+ 4.Sf2-d1 –fw.1.Qh1# (not 1.Kd2-e3? illegal!).

In all these three specimens White makes moves exclusively with units not placed on their fictitious original squares. Because of that positional feature any uncapture performed by White and influenced by Black would not comply with the AntiCirce condition.

In orthodox chess it would be far more difficult to integrate white retro moves without an uncapture. There any uncapture can be executed from practically any given square, and - according to Hoeg – many such uncaptures may be defined by Black at the expense of white damage. Take for example a king moving from a3 to a2 , or from a3 to b2. Black may declare that move to be an uncapture adding a black unit on a3. An exception without the alternative of an uncapture is shown only by pawn moves on their files as d2-d4, b2-b3.

Even black uncaptures are sometimes tricky and not at all easy to cope with in Hoeg retractors as in the following example **D**. This is because White must avoid duals when making use of his right to choose a certain sacrificial white unit.

**D** Klaus Wenda



-3 & #1 (5+8)

Hoeg retractor

Grasshoppers a2, a4; a5, d1, f3

**D:** 1.Kc3-b4! cd3:e.p.+ 2.d2-d4 Gd4:Rd1+ 3.b2-b3 –fw.1.G:c2#

(On the key move Black must not add a black unit on b4 as a threefold check by Ga5/Bh8/Gf3 could not be abolished.)

Annotation:

As a rule, white retractions provide substantial technical difficulties in the orthodox Hoeg retractor, resulting from Black's ability to add black sacrificial units to the position, thus destroying White's strategy. Now this is prevented on principle in the KLAN type (see definition below). There it is White exclusively who decides on his own uncaptures as well. As a result of our research, and on balance, we should like to emphasise that many good ideas based on the techniques of black and white uncaptures either escape correct implementation, or demand such a high degree of difficulty and complexity that they fail to appeal to friends of retro art other than a very small circle of retro experts who may claim to be specialists in the genre.

So we were inspired by the thought of blending elements of both the Proca and Hoeg types into a new type as a supplement to those classical types, with the following definition:

## **Defensive Retractor KLAN Type**

*Distinction is to be made between the colours to move. With White to move it is up to him to decide whether the next move is an uncapture, and (in the affirmative case) what kind of black unit is chosen as the sacrificial unit, so far in analogy to the Proca type. With Black to move it is White as the opposite colour (in analogy to the Hoeg type) who decides whether this is going to be an uncapture, and (in the affirmative case) what kind of white unit is chosen as the sacrificial unit.*

*A possible exclusion of the forward defence should be noted explicitly.*

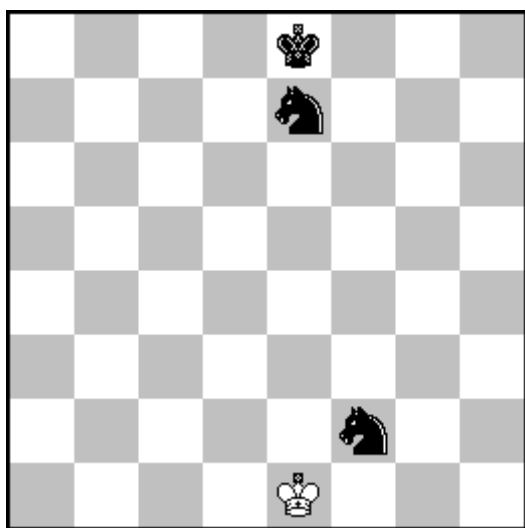
For further clarification: It stands to reason that Black to move still has the right to decide from which square his retro move starts and, in case of uncapture defined by White, on which square the white sacrificial unit is placed. This circumstance is quite meaningful, especially in AntiCirce retractors. Yet it is left to White to decide whether an uncapture takes place at all, and, in the affirmative case, what kind of white sacrificial object is chosen.

What is to be borne in mind as a consequence of using the KLAN type? The gist of it can be described as follows: the KLAN type implies a limitation of Black's defensive options as implied in the Hoeg type, combined with a simultaneous preservation of White's strategic power.

It remains to be seen whether this new condition not only makes the construction of defensive retractors easier but – as we hope – also helps to present profoundly rooted (retroanalytical) content in both orthodox and fairy fashion, at least in the long run, especially with a view to AntiCirce.

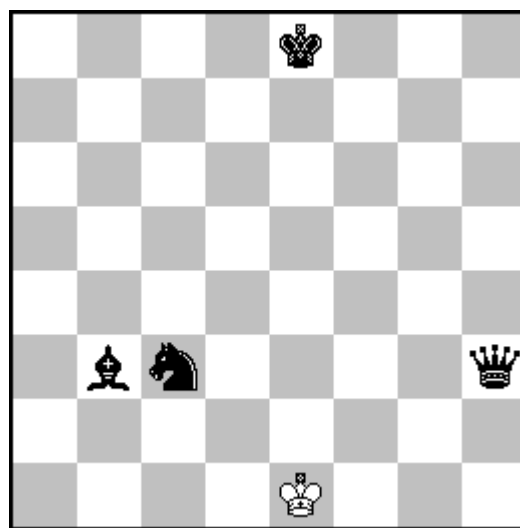
Anyway, one thing seems to be clear: KLAN with AntiCirce promises the construction of retros in a distinguished and elegant style with designs that should please the observer's eye. So we believe that KLAN retractors may to a certain extent attract the attention of lovers of chess problems who do not necessarily claim to be specialists in retrograde analysis. The following modest selection of four miniatures **E-H** may serve to confirm our argument. As to the term "KLAN": this cryptogram was chosen as a combination of our first names – **Klaus & Andreas – and may be taken as a discreet hint at our authorship concerning the invention of the new type.**

**E** **Andreas Thoma**

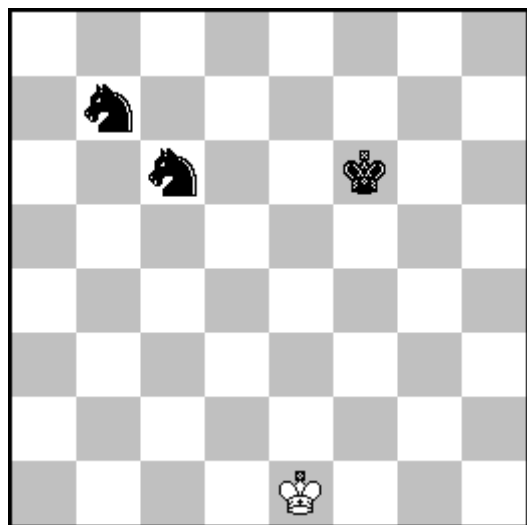


-3 & #1 (1+3)  
KLAN retractor, AntiCirce Cheylan

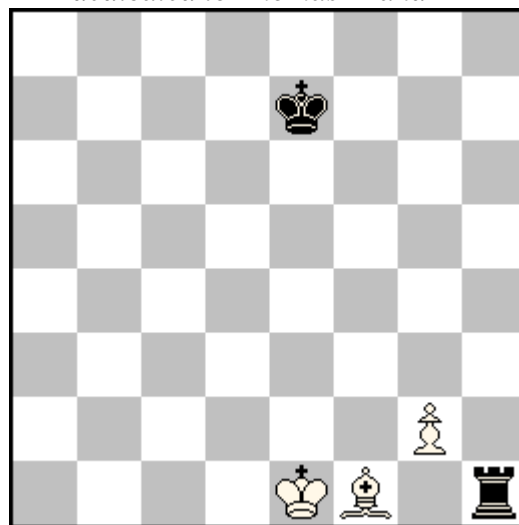
**F** **Klaus Wenda**



-4 & #1 (1+4)  
KLAN retractor, AntiCirce

**G** Andreas Thoma

-3 & #1 (1+3)  
KLAN retractor, AntiCirce

**H** Andreas Thoma & Klaus Wenda  
*dedicated to Thomas Brand*

-5 & #1 (3+2)  
KLAN retractor, AntiCirce  
without forward defence

**E:** 1.Kg7:Bh8[Ke1] Ke8:Qf8[Ke8]+ 2.Qf3-f8 Ke8:Rf8+ 3.Qh1-f3+ - fw.Qc6#

**F:** 1.Kd1:Pd2[Ke1] Bg8-b3+ 2.Ke1-d1 d3-d2+ 3.Kh6:Rh5[Ke1] Kh8:Sg7[Ke8]+ 4.Se8-g7 - fw.1.Kg7#; 3... Kh8:Sh7[Ke8]+ 4.Sf8-h7 - fw.1.Sg6#.

(Both uncaptures performed by the wK in combination with the two uncaptures performed by the bK provide variations in a vivid retro play with a nice change of scenery. Important for a dual free series is the fact that the wK can abolish black self-check on the 3<sup>rd</sup> retraction by means of uncapturing **only** from the square h8. For this purpose two squares are at his disposal, yet there is only one single solution when White is adding a Sg7/Sh7.)

**G:** 1.Kd8:Be8[Ke1] Sb8-c6+ 2.Kd7-d8 Sc8:Qa7/Qb6/Qd6/Rd7[Sb8] 3.Qg1-a7/Qg1-b6/Qg3-d6/Rg7-d7+ - fw.1.Ke6#.

(Four variations with uncaptures by the bS in a “Wenigsteiner”.)

**H:** 1.h5:g6ep(g2)! g7-g5 2.Lc8:Dh3(Lf1) Th2-h1+ 3.Kh1:Lg2(Ke1) La8-g2+ 4.Ld7-c8 f3:Dg2(g7)+ 5.Dg8-g2 & 1.Df8#

1.Lc8:Dh3(Lf1)? h2-h1T+! 2.?

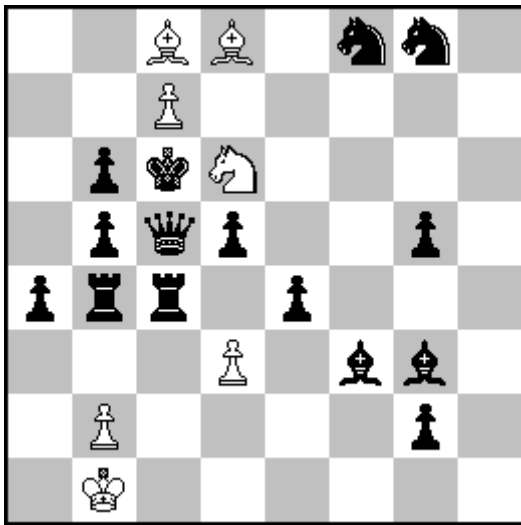
The forward defense would have been ...3.Kh1:Lg2(Ke1)La8-g2+ & 1.Df1#.

Three white uncaptures and one black one with no more than five units.

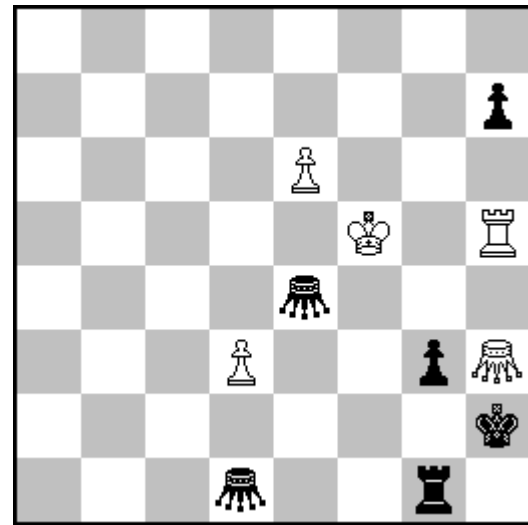
The dedication is to express our gratitude for everything Thomas Brand has contributed to this article. Not only did he put his retroblog at our disposal for publication, but he also cooperated with great engagement and competence whenever we had to dispel certain doubts concerning theoretical clarity or the correctness of problems.

We should like to conclude by presenting two problems of higher complexity with a detailed description of the solution in order to illuminate essential and basic elements of construction based on the KLAN condition for readers' purposes.

In **K** we recognise some traits seemingly familiar to us when comparing **K** with **D**.

**I****Andreas Thoma**

-4 & s#1 (7+15)  
KLAN retractor, AntiCirce

**K****Klaus Wenda**

-5 & s#1 (5+6)  
KLAN retractor  
Grasshoppers h3; d1, e4

**I:** 1.a2:Rb3[b2] Sb2:Rd1[Sg8]+ 2.Kc1-b1 Rd4-c4+ 3.Bf6-d8 Sc4-b2 4.0-0-0 –fw.1.Bd7+ S:d7[Sb8]#.

(On the 1<sup>st</sup> retro move White chooses a promoted black Rb3 as the sacrificial unit in order to provoke a white self-check which can be abolished by Black only by uncapturing a white piece on d1 starting from the square b2. According to White's decision, this is a rook enabling on the following 4<sup>th</sup> move the retraction of castling. The try 3.Be7-d8? Sc4-b2 is refuted in the forward play 1.Bd7+ S:d7[Sb8]+ 2.Bf8!)

**K:** 1.Kg4:Bf5! Bg6-f5+ (Bg6:Xf5+?) 2.Kf3:Bg4 Bf5-g4+ (Bf5:Xg4?) 3.Rh4:Bh5! f4:g3 e.p.+ 4.g2-g4 Gg4:Ge4+ 5.Gf1:Sh3 –fw.1.Ge4-c2+, Gg4-e2#.

(As we are accustomed to proceed in Proca type, White uncaptures at W1, W2 and W3 by simultaneously defining the sacrificial unit of the opposite colour. At B1 and B2 White may not add any unit of his own choice on the squares f5/g4 since it would obstruct the solution. Uncapturing *en passant* is the only legal defence at B3. Again it is only White who defines the sacrificial unit at B4 as well as at W5. Here we see an intensive and varied exploitation of the options offered by the KLAN type without any need to use a fairy condition like AntiCirce.)

Vienna and Groß Rönnau, January 2015

(English translation by Günther Weeth)