THE
COMPLETE
FRENCH

Lev Psakhis

The Complete French

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Contents

Symbols

+	Check
+ +	Double check
± ∓	Slight advantage (White/Black)
± ∓	Clear advantage (White/Black)
±± ∓∓	Winning advantage (White/Black)
=	Level position
!	Good move
!!	Outstanding move
!?	Interesting move
?!	Dubious move
?	Weak move
??	Blunder
corr	Correspondence
C	Candidates
Ch	Championship
IZ	Interzonal
Ol	Olympiad
Z	Zonal

Preface

It was back in 1982 that the question of what to play against 1 e4 became a torment to me. I then took inspiration from the countless strong grandmasters who included the French Defence in their opening repertoires.

The French is like a proud woman who does not give her heart away easily. In order to master this difficult opening, it is not enough to know a few variations. You have to put your 'heart and soul' into it, you have to love it, and only in this way will you understand its mysteries.

It is impossible to learn the French without studying games by the great masters of blockade such as Nimzowitsch and Petrosian; generally speaking, the main struggle takes place in complex middlegame positions. These can have a deceptive character; very often White seems to be making the running, only to see his attack snuffed out and his position left full of weaknesses. The stubborn, complex nature of this opening leads to unbalanced positions, and it is in such positions that the stronger player can steer his opponent towards the precipice.

The French is not as vulnerable to the changing winds of chess fashion as, for example, the Sveshnikov Variation of the Sicilian. Nevertheless, I have tried to supply the latest 'state-of-the-art' material. Given the speed at which theory is developing, the reader must be constantly alert to the possibility of important new developments.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it, and that it will help you in your study of this rich system of defence. Finally, I would like to thank Nigel Davies for his moral support and the use of his library.

Lev Psakhis

Herzliya, Israel
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1 . Rare Continuations

| 1 | e4 | e6 *(1)* |
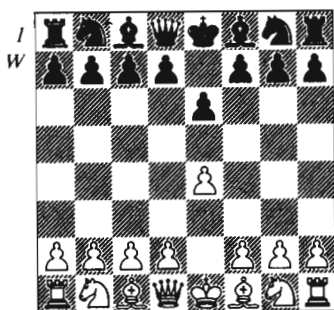
In addition to the most usual move, 2 d4, and the fairly common 2 d3, White has at his disposal a wide range of alternatives of differing worth. Apart from 2 ♕e2 and 2 ♘f3, which have been played at quite a high level, some moves dating back to the last century (2 e5, 2 f4, 2 c4) are occasionally seen. To meet them successfully requires no laborious analysis but just a minimum of theoretical knowledge combined with common sense. Thus:

(a) **2 b3**

Réti's move. 2 ... d5 3 ♗b2 (offering a pawn sacrifice) 3 ... de (the offer is accepted! A good alternative is 3 ... ♘f6 4 ed ed 5 ♘f3 ♗e7 6 ♗e2 0–0 7 0–0 ♗f5 8 ♖e1 c5 9 d4 ♘c6 10 ♘bd2 ♖e8, which gave Black an excellent game in Castro–Petrosian, Biel IZ 1976. At move 5, lovers of the romantic style may go in for 5 ♕e2+ ♗e6 6 ♘f3 ♗e7 7 ♕b5+!? ♘bd7 8 ♘d4 0–0 9 ♕xb7 ♘c5 10 ♘xe6 fe 11 ♕b5 ♘fe4, when White will have to suffer for a long time in return for the pawn; Karasev–Erikalov, USSR 1990) 4 ♘c3 ♘f6 (it doesn't pay to be greedy; after 4 ... f5 White has more than enough for the pawn) 5 ♕e2 ♗b4 6 0–0–0 ♕e7!? (very sensible! After 6 ... ♗xc3 7 dc ♕e7 8 f3! ef 9 ♘xf3 ♘c6 10 ♘e5 ♗d7 11 g4! White's initiative is worth more than a pawn; Ivanović–Reefschläger, match Yugoslavia–West Germany 1975) 7 ♘xe4 ♗a3 8 ♘f3 (8 ♘xf6+ fails to spoil Black's pawn structure, since he can calmly retake with the queen) 8 ... ♗xb2+ 9 ♔xb2 b6. Steering clear of dangerous adventures, Black secured an equal game in

Spielmann–Grau, San Remo
1930.

(b) **2 ♘f3**

2 ... d5, and now:
(b1) **3 ♘c3** can be answered by:
(b11) **3 ... d4** (the most thematic)
4 ♘e2 c5 5 c3 (after 5 b4?! e5! 6
♘xe5 ♕e7 7 ♘d3 ♕xe4 8 ♘xc5
♗xc5 9 bc ♘c6 10 d3 ♕e7 11 g3
♗g4, it is only for White that
problems can arise; Gurgenidze–
Vaganian, USSR 1974) 5 ... ♘f6!
6 d3 (an equally harmless line is 6
e5 ♘fd7 7 cd cd 8 ♕a4 ♘c6 9
♘exd4 ♘dxe5 10 ♗b5 ♗d7=
Gufeld–Korchnoi, USSR Ch,
Tbilisi 1959) 6 ... ♘c6 7 g3 e5
8 ♗g2 ♗e7= Mark Tseitlin–
Faibisovich, USSR 1967.
(b12) **3 ... ♗b4!?** is also play-
able: 4 e5 ♘e7 5 a3 ♗xc3 6 dc c5
7 ♗f4 ♘bc6 8 ♕d2 ♗d7 gave
Black quite a good game in G.
Kuzmin–Lputian, Harkov 1985.
(b13) **3 ... ♘f6** 4 e5 ♘e4!? (4 ...
♘fd7 5 d4 c5 leads to the Steinitz
Variation) 5 ♘e2 ♗c5 6 d4 ♗b6!?
(6 ... ♗e7 7 ♘g3 c5 8 ♗d3 ♕a5+
9 c3 cd 10 ♘xd4 ♘d7= is a
recommendation of Vogt's) 7 ♘g3
c5 8 ♗d3 cd 9 ♘xe4 de 10 ♗xe4
♘d7 11 0–0 ♘c5, with chances for
both sides; Fishbein–Murey, New
York Open 1989.
(b2) Apart from the transpo-
sition to the Exchange Variation
with 3 ed ed 4 d4, there only
remains **3 e5**, when White answers
the natural 3 ... c5 with 4 b4!?.

Somewhat limited tournament
experience has shown that Black
has to exercise great care here, but
if he fulfils this requirement there
are good prospects awaiting him.
For example, 4 ... cb 5 a3 (on 5
d4 ♗d7 6 ♗d3 ♘e7 7 a3 ♘bc6
8 ab ♘xb4 9 ♗e2 ♘f5 10 c3
♘c6, Black's chances are better;
Barendregt–Bronstein, Hamburg
1965) 5 ... d4!? (5 ... ba is quite
good too. If then 6 d4 ♘c6 7 c3
f5!? 8 ♗d3 ♗d7 9 g4 ♘ge7 10 gf
♘xf5 11 ♘g5 ♘ce7, and Black has
good chances of neutralising his
opponent's initiative while keep-
ing his material plus; Mortensen–
Karlsson, Copenhagen 1985.
Alternatively, 6 ♗xa3 ♗xa3 7
♖xa3 ♘h6 8 d4 0–0 9 h4 ♘c6 10
♗d3 f6, and Black had good play
in Barua–Mack, London Open
1990) 6 ab ♗xb4 7 ♗a3 ♗xa3
8 ♘xa3 ♘e7 9 ♗d3 ♘g6 10 0–0
♘c6 11 ♖e1 0–0, followed by 12
... f6! with the better chances;
Martens–Djurhuus, World Junior
Ch, Santiago 1990.

(c) **2 ♗b5?!**

Of course this move looks very
odd, but its aim is clear: to prevent
... d7–d5. Wahls–Vaiser, Berlin
Open 1988, went 2 ... c6 3 ♗a4
d5 4 ♕e2 ♕a5! 5 ♗b3 ♘f6 6 e5
♘fd7 7 c3 c5 8 d3 ♘c6 9 f4 ♘d4!
10 ♕d1 ♘xb3 11 ♕xb3 c4! 12 dc
♘c5; Black has excellently
exploited his opponent's artificial
play and obtained the advantage.

(d) **2 c4**

2 ... d5 3 ed ed 4 cd (4 d4 would transpose into the Exchange Variation) 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♗b5+ (there is no promise of advantage in either 5 ♗c4 ♘xd5 6 ♕b3 ♕e7+ 7 ♘e2 ♘b6 8 ♘bc3 ♘xc4 9 ♕xc4 ♗e6= Nimzowitsch–Rubinstein, Hannover 1926, or 5 ♘c3 ♘xd5 6 ♗c4 ♘b4! 7 ♘f3 ♘d3+ 8 ♔f1 ♗e7 9 ♕e2 ♘xc1 10 ♖xc1 0–0, Velimirović–Nikolić, Novi Sad 1984) 5 ... ♘bd7 6 ♘c3 ♗e7 7 d3 0–0. We can already stop; White has the opportunity to conduct active piece play, which compensates for the isolated pawn, but he cannot count on more than that.

(e) **2 ♕e2** *(2)*
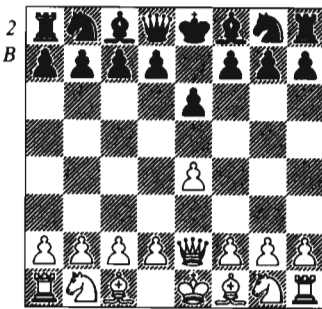
The favourite continuation of Chigorin, who adopted it, not without success, against the strongest players of his day. Like 2 ♗b5, this move has the aim of making difficult the freeing advance ... d7–d5, but it does it by more natural means. Black now

has the choice between several quite good continuations:

(e1) **2 ... e5?!**, and now:

(e11) **3 f4!?** (a King's Gambit in the French Defence!) 3 ... d6 4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 ♕f2!. Taking into account his more active queen position in contrast to the 'normal' King's Gambit, *ECO* assesses the position in White's favour.

(e12) Quiet play with his bishop developed on g2 promises White a small plus, for example 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 g3 (Sax–Nikolić, Banja Luka 1981, saw the interesting 4 c3 d5 5 ♕b5!? de 6 ♘xe5 ♕d6 7 d4 ed 8 ♘xc6 bc 9 ♕xd3 ♘f6, with approximate equality) 4 ... ♗c5 5 g3 ♘e7 (or 5 ... ♘f6 6 ♘c3 0–0 7 0–0 ♘d4 8 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 9 d3 d6 10 ♗g5± Canal–Spielmann, Karlsbad 1929) 6 d3 d6 7 ♗e3 ♗g4 8 h3 ♗e6 9 ♘bd2 ♘g6 10 ♘b3, and White's pieces are perhaps more harmoniously placed; Treybal–Torre, Baden-Baden 1925.

(e13) A complicated position arose in Day–Herbert, Toronto 1989: 3 ♘c3 ♘c6 4 ♘d5!? ♘d4!? 5 ♕d3 c6 6 ♘e3 ♘f6 7 ♘f3 ♘xf3+ 8 gf d6, with completely unclear play.

(e2) **2 ... ♗e7**, and now:

(e21) **3 ♘f3 d5 4 d3 ♘f6 5 g3 0–0 6 ♗g2 c5 7 e5 ♘fd7 8 c4 ♘c6**, with an unclear position; Nenashev–Tseshkovsky, Barnaul 1984.

(e22) In the last century, the usual continuation was **3 b3** (Chi-

gorin especially liked this move). Chigorin–Tarrasch, St Petersburg 1893, went 3 ... d5 4 ♗b2 ♗f6 5 e5 (White has no advantage after 5 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 6 e5 ♘fd7 7 ♕g4 g6 8 f4 ♘c6 9 ♘c3 ♘b4!, as in another game Chigorin–Tarrasch, St Petersburg 1893) 5 ... ♗e7 6 ♕g4 ♗f8 (it is interesting to note that the return of this bishop to its starting square is a frequent device in the French Defence. Compare, for example, with the variation 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 b6 5 ♕g4 ♗f8) 7 ♘f3 c5 8 ♗b5+ ♗d7 9 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7, with a level game.

(e3) **2 ... ♘f6** (I know of only one game with this move; perhaps Black's crushing defeat in that game explains why it has not caught on in tournament play) 3 e5 ♘g8 4 f4 b6 5 ♘f3 ♗b7 6 g3 h5? (too optimistically played; it was imperative to continue developing) 7 d4! c5 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♗e3 ♘h6 10 ♗xc5 dc 11 ♘c3 ♘f5 12 0-0-0. With his retarded development, it is hard for Black to do anything against his opponent's pressure on the central files. It is therefore not surprising that the game Vasyukov–Vaganian, USSR Ch, Vilnius 1980, ended in a win for White.

(e4) **2 ... c5** (the most usual reply and, together with 2 ... ♗e7, the most solid) **3 ♘f3** (after 3 g3 ♘c6 4 ♗g2 ♘ge7 5 ♘c3 g6 6 d3 ♗g7 7 ♗e3?! d5 8 ed ♘d4! 9 ♕d2 ed, Black seized the initiative in

Stoltz–Botvinnik, Groningen 1946. In the event of 3 f4 ♘c6 4 ♘f3 g6 5 d3 ♗g7 6 c3 ♘ge7 7 ♗e3 d6 8 ♘bd2 b6 9 d4, Black has stationed his pieces harmoniously and now successfully counters White's unprepared central actions with 9 ... 0-0 10 g3 cd! 11 cd ♘b4 12 ♕c4 a5 13 ♕b3 f5!, a typical but not the less powerful blow at White's pawn structure; in Gurgenidze–Chernin, Sverdlovsk 1984, Black proceeded to seize the key central squares and obtain the better position. The opening was also a success for Black in Kovacs–Uhlmann, Sarajevo 1969, where instead of 4 ... g6 Black played 4 ... ♗e7; after 5 g3 d5 6 d3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 0-0 8 0-0 b5 9 e5 ♘d7 10 c3 ♘b6 11 d4 b4! his queenside activity proved considerably more dangerous than his opponent's operations on the other wing) **3 ... ♘c6 4 g3**, and now:

(e41) White has good attacking chances after **4 ... ♗e7** (positions analogous to the 2 ... ♗e7 line frequently arise now) 5 ♗g2 d5 6 d3 ♘f6 (in Vasyukov–Lputian, USSR Ch, Vilnius 1980, Black went in for excessive prophylaxis with 6 ... h6? 7 0-0 ♘f6 8 ♖e1 b6?!, and White gained a large plus with the powerful 9 e5 ♘h7 10 c4! ♘g5 11 ♘c3 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 ♘d4 13 ♕g4) 7 0-0 0-0 (in his game against Balashov in the same tournament, the opening again turned out badly for Lpu-

tian; he continued 7 ... b6?!, and after 8 e5 ♘d7 9 c4! ♘f8 10 h4 ♗b7 11 ♖e1 h6 12 h5 his position was unappealing) 8 e5 ♘e8 9 c4 ♘c7 10 ♗f4 b5 11 b3 ♖b8 12 h4, when White has just a little more space and slightly more active pieces; Tal–Debarnot, Las Palmas 1977.

(e42) **4 ... g6** 5 ♗g2 ♗g7 6 0–0 ♘ge7 7 d3 (on 7 c3 e5!? 8 d4!? cd 9 cd ed 10 ♗f4 d6 11 ♘a3 ♗g4, White has to exert himself to regain the pawn; Hjorth–Speelman, 1985) 7 ... 0–0 (after 7 ... d5 White obtains the better game, for example: 8 e5 ♕c7 9 ♖e1 h6 10 h4! b6 11 c4 a6 12 ♘c3± Dreyev–Van Wely, Arnhem 1989) 8 c3 b6 (8 ... e5 is not bad either) 9 h4 h6 10 ♘bd2 ♗b7 (or 10 ... d6 11 ♖e1 ♕d7 12 ♘h2 ♗a6 13 f4 e5! 14 ♘df3 ef 15 ♗xf4 ♖ae8= Bronstein–Teske, Polanica Zdroj 1988) 11 ♖e1 d6 12 ♘h2 b5, with excellent play for Black in Smyslov–Kurajica, Bar 1980.

(f) 2 e5

A favourite weapon of Steinitz's. Unlike the Chigorin Variation, 2 e5 has not occurred in recent tournament practice. No wonder; Black can obtain a good game with no great trouble. For example, 2 ... d6 3 ed ♗xd6 4 d4 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♘ge7 6 ♗d3 e5 7 de ♘xe5=.

With that, I think we may stop. Although White does have a few

more second-move continuations at his disposal, they are not worth serious examination. We now move on to a discussion of the White system inaugurated by 2 d3.

| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d3 | |

A not very ambitious move that has quite a long history, beginning perhaps with the game Nimzo-witsch–Capablanca, San Sebastian 1911. One of the adherents of this modest continuation was Bobby Fischer, a fact which obliges us to look at it fairly attentively.

| 2 | ... | d5 |
| 3 | ♘d2 | |

This looks a good deal more natural than 3 ♕e2, after which Black quickly seized the initiative in Vasiukov–Vaganian, Dubna 1973: 3 ... ♘c6 4 ♘f3 e5 5 c3 ♘f6 6 ♘bd2 ♗e7 7 g3 0–0 8 ♗g2 ♖e8 9 0–0 ♗f8 10 ♖e1 a5∓.

| 3 | ... | ♘f6 |
| 4 | ♘gf3 | |

4 g3 occurs just as frequently; Black is then faced with the radical choice of whether to clarify the central position at once with 4 ... de, or maintain the tension with 4 ... b6. Let us examine both these possibilities:

(a) **4 ... de** 5 de e5 6 ♘gf3 ♗c5 (of course, 6 ... ♘c6 is also possible) 7 ♗g2 (7 ♘xe5 ♗xf2+

8 ♔xf2 ♕d4+ 9 ♔g2 ♕xe5 10 ♘f3 ♕h5 promises White nothing good) 7 ... ♘c6 (in Kavalek–Hertneck, Bundesliga 1990, Black played the interesting 7 ... b6 8 0–0 ♘bd7!? 9 ♘c4 ♕e7 10 ♘e3 ♗xe3!? — freeing c5 for the knight — 11 ♗xe3 0–0 12 ♘d2 a5 13 ♖e1 ♘c5 14 f3 ♖d8, with an excellent game) 8 0–0 0–0 9 c3 (the attempt to do without this move cost White dearly in Knecht–Glek, Philadelphia Open 1990: 9 ♕e2 b6 10 ♘b3 ♗d6 11 ♖d1 a5 12 a4 ♗a6 13 ♕e1 ♘b4∓) 9 ... a5! (not only fortifying the position of the bishop on c5, but also preparing the 'extended fianchetto' of its light-squared colleague) 10 a4 (in Barahona–Gdanski, World Junior Ch, Santiago 1990, White achieved little after 10 ♕c2 ♕e7 11 ♘c4 b6 12 ♘e3 ♗a6 13 ♖d1 ♖ad8 14 ♘d5 ♘xd5 15 ed e4! 16 dc ef 17 ♗xf3 ♖xd1+ 18 ♕xd1 ♖d8, with a strong initiative for Black, who in any case can recover the pawn whenever he likes; alternatively 10 ... ♗e6 11 ♘g5 ♗d7 12 ♘c4 ♕c8 13 ♘e3 h6 14 ♘f3 ♗xe3 15 ♗xe3 ♗h3∓ Csom–Fuchs, Berlin 1968) 10 ... b6 (in Zolnierowicz–Cichocki, Polish Ch, Warsaw 1990, Black invaded his opponent's camp with the immediate 10 ... ♕d3!?, and achieved success after 11 ♘e1 ♕d6 12 ♕e2?! b6 13 ♘c4 ♗a6 14 ♘c2 ♕e6 15 b3 ♘e8!∓) 11 ♕e2 (clearly it is no longer White who has claims to an advantage, and it pays him to be more cautious. After 11 ♘h4!? g6 12 ♘b3 ♕xd1 13 ♖xd1 ♗e7 14 ♗h6 ♖e8 15 h3 ♗a6 16 ♖e1 ♘d7, the game is about equal; Kagan–Ornstein, Lucerne Ol 1982) 11 ... ♗a6 12 ♘c4 ♕d7 (the task of converting Black's advantage into a decisive one was accomplished excellently by Vaganian against Kagan, Rio de Janeiro IZ 1979: 12 ... ♘e8!? 13 b3 ♘d6 14 ♘h4 ♕f6 15 ♘f5 ♘xc4 16 bc ♘e7! 17 ♗e3 ♗xe3 18 ♘xe3 ♕c6∓∓. Black has methodically exchanged off all White's active pieces, and can now fully come to grips with the pawn weaknesses) 13 ♘h4 ♕g4 14 ♗f3? (what chances White still has of continuing the struggle could have been preserved with 14 ♕xg4 ♘xg4 15 b3 ♖fd8 16 ♗f3 ♘f6∓. All this hardly looks impressive, but what else is there?) 14 ... ♕e6 15 b3 b5! 16 ab ♗xb5 17 ♖d1 a4 (the poor white knight loses its last defenders) 18 ♖d5!? ♘xd5 19 ed ♕f6 20 b4 e4∓∓ Jansa–Hübner, Athens 1969.

(b) **4 ... b6** 5 ♗g2 ♗b7 (the set-up chosen by Black in Belkhodja–Vaiser, Clichy Open 1991, is worth looking at: 5 ... de 6 de ♗c5 7 ♘gf3 ♗a6! 8 h3 ♘c6 9 c4 ♗b7, and the outcome of the opening gives Black no cause for complaint) 6 e5 (after 6 ♘gf3 de 7 ♘g5 ♘c6! Black has no problems; in Larsen's view, his game is even preferable) 6 ... ♘g8!? (after 6 ...

♘fd7, as in Todorcević–Drasko, Rome Open 1990, Black failed to place his pieces effectively. The game continued 7 f4 ♘c6?! 8 ♘gf3 g6 9 0–0 ♗g7 10 c3 0–0 11 ♕e2 a5 12 h4±. Of course, there is more than one point where Black's play can be improved; in particular, I think that 7 ... c5 is a good deal stronger) 7 ♘gf3 ♘e7 8 0–0 c5 9 ♖e1 ♘bc6 10 c3 ♘f5 *(3)* occurred in Sax–Larsen, Teesside 1972.
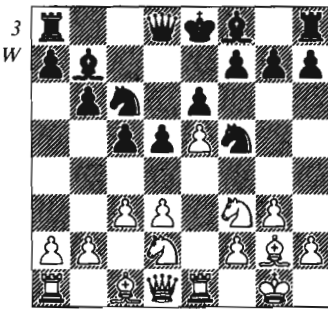
With their excellent harmonious arrangement, Larsen's pieces are ready for active central operations. But White too has made gains; in other words, the position is one of dynamic equilibrium. The best illustration of how the contest may develop is supplied by the continuation of this remarkable game itself: 11 a3 ♗e7 12 ♘f1 h6 13 ♘e3 ♘xe3 14 ♗xe3 ♕d7 15 d4 c4= 16 ♘d2 ♘a5 17 f4 h5 18 f5?! ef 19 ♘f3 ♘c6∓ 20 b3?! cb 21 c4 dc 22 d5 0–0–0! 23 dc ♕xc6 24 ♕e2 ♖d3∓∓ 25 ♘h4 ♕e6 26 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 27 ♕f3+ ♔a6!

28 ♘xf5 ♗c5 29 ♕e4 g6 30 ♘g7!? ♖xe3! 31 ♖xe3 ♕g4 32 ♔g2 ♖d8! 33 e6 ♖d2+ 34 ♔h1 ♕xe4+ 35 ♖xe4 c3 36 ef b2 37 ♖f1 c2 38 ♖ee1 ♖f2! 39 ♘e6 ♖f1 40 ♖f1 ♗xa3 0–1.

4 ... ♘c6

4 ... c5 is not bad either, but after 5 g3 ♘c6 6 ♗g2 ♗e7 7 0–0 we reach a King's Indian Reversed, which is 'another story'.

5 c3

A weaker line is 5 e5 ♘d7 6 d4 f6, while after 5 g3 de 6 de e5 the play transposes into variations we have looked at already, which are not unfavourable to Black. 5 ♗e2 is also harmless, for example 5 ... de 6 de ♗c5 7 0–0 0–0 8 c3 e5 9 ♕c2 (9 b4!? deserves consideration) 9 ... a5! 10 ♘c4 ♕e7 11 ♗g5 ♕e6, and Black has nothing to complain about; Radulov–Mednis, Siegen Ol 1970.

5 ... a5

5 ... e5 is also playable. But 5 ... ♗d6?! 6 b4! a5 7 b5 de 8 de ♘e5 9 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 10 ♕c2 leads to a slight advantage for White; Ljubojević–Portisch, Montreal 1979.

6 e5

White has quite a wide choice here, and we will briefly examine the main alternatives:

(a) **6 a4** (recommended by *ECO*) 6 ... e5! (6 ... g6? is weak: 7 e5 ♘d7 8 d4 ♗g7 9 ♘b3 f6 10 ef ♕xf6 11 ♗b5± Ciocaltea–Keene, Tbilisi 1974) 7 ♗e2 (or 7 ♕c2 g6! 8 ♗e2 ♗g7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♖e1

♖e8= Hickl–van Heste, Graz 1987. Black also has nothing to fear from 7 ♕e2 ♗d6 8 g3 0–0 9 ♗g2 de 10 de b6= Yurtayev–Karpeshov, USSR 1983) 7 ... ♗c5 (not bad, but I would prefer 7 ... g6!?) 8 0–0 0–0 9 h3 b6 10 ♖e1 ♗a6=.

(b) **6 ♕c2** e5 (the most logical. Lputian, a great connoisseur of the French, obtained an excellent position against Kupreichik in the USSR Ch, Riga 1985, by means of 6 ... g6 7 d4 ♗g7 8 ♗b5 0–0 9 ♗xc6? bc 10 0–0 c5 11 e5 ♘d7 12 b3 ♗a6∓. However, White's exchange on c6 was clearly premature. It was worth considering 9 e5 ♘d7 10 0–0 f6 11 ef ♕xf6 12 ♖e1, when White's chances are better) 7 ♗e2 ♗c5 (in Wilder–Lputian, Dortmund 1988, Black achieved an excellent position with 7 ... ♗e7 8 h3 0–0 9 g4 a4! 10 ♘f1 d4 11 ♘g3 a3. Of course, not all White's moves were the only ones available!) 8 ♘xe5 (this decision is not forced either, but then you cannot lay claim to an advantage when playing Philidor's Defence, even with an extra tempo) 8 ... ♘xe5 9 d4 de 10 de e3! 11 ef ed+ 12 ♗xd2 ♕xf6, and peace can be concluded already. In Mestel–Farago, Esbjerg 1981, the players did just that.

(c) **6 g3** e5 (after 6 ... de 7 de ♗c5, White's bishop may be tempted to deviate from its 'rightful' course with 8 ♗b5!? ♗d7 9 ♕e2 ♘g4!? 10 0–0 ♘ge5, but to no particular advantage; Hazai–Farago, Hungarian Ch 1977) 7 ♗g2 de 8 de ♗c5 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♕c2 ♕e7= Hazai–Portisch, Hungarian Ch 1977.

(d) **6 ♕a4** ♗d7 7 ♕c2 de 8 de ♘g4!? 9 h3 ♘ge5 10 ♗e2 ♗c5= Berezyuk–Nikolenko, Azov 1991.

(e) **6 ♗e2** g6!? 7 0–0 ♗g7 8 ♖e1 0–0 9 ♕c2 b6 10 ♘f1 ♗a6= Britton–MacDonald, British Ch 1991.

| 6	...	♘fd7
7	d4	f6

Or 7 ... b6 8 h4!? ♗e7 9 ♗b5 ♘cb8 10 ♘f1 ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 12 ♕d3 h6 13 ♘g3 ♘f8 14 ♘h5± Ljubojević–Portisch, Petropolis IZ 1973. White is also slightly better after 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗b5 0–0 9 ♘f1 f6 10 ef ♘xf6 11 ♘g3 ♗d7 12 a4; Mortensen–Kosten, Esbjerg 1988.

| 8 | ♘h4? |

I believe this was the last time that this move occurred in grandmaster practice. Recent attempts by White to rehabilitate the variation have involved 8 ♗b5!?, so let us examine this fashionable line: 8 ... fe 9 de (White comes out a pawn down after 9 ♘xe5? ♘cxe5 10 de c6) 9 ... ♗e7 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♕e2 (practice has also seen 11 ♖e1 ♘c5 12 ♘f1 ♗d7 — threatening 13 ... ♘xe5! — 13 ♗e2 ♘e4 14 ♗d3 ♗e8!? with unclear play; Filipović–Langeweg, Lugano 1989) 11 ... ♘c5 (Kindermann recommends 11 ... ♕e8, intending 12 ... ♕h5) 12 ♘b3 ♘xb3 13 ab

♗d7 14 ♗d3 ♗e8. It must be admitted that despite the lack of weaknesses in the black camp, White does have a certain tactical initiative.

8 ... ♕e7! *(4)*
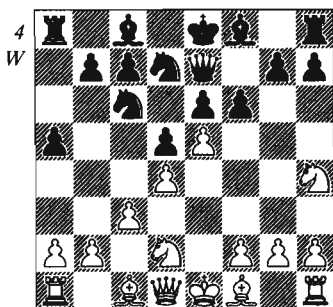
The only move, but adequate. White's pawn centre is tottering, and it is too late now for him to back out.

9 ♗d3 fe!
10 ♕h5+ ♕f7

Black may be able to play 10 ... ♔d8 11 ♘g6 ♕e8, but why should he?

11 ♗g6 hg
12 ♕xh8 e4!

We may state that the first twelve moves have been conducted much more effectively by Black. White's proud pawn centre has collapsed, and his extra exchange is hardly sufficient consolation, given the eccentric placing of his queen and the knight on h4.

13 ♘b1?

Ljubojević has clearly lost the thread of the game. It was still possible to fight on, for instance

with 13 ♕h7!? g5 14 ♘xe4! de 15 ♗xg5 ♘f6, although Black's advantage is obvious.

13 ... ♘f6
14 f3 ♗d7
15 fe de
16 0-0 0-0-0

A major concrete threat arises: 17 ... g5 18 ♗xg5 ♗e7 19 ♕h7 ♘xh7 20 ♖xf7 ♘xg5∓∓.

17 g3 e5! *(5)*

White had pinned his hopes on 17 ... ♗d6 18 ♕h7!
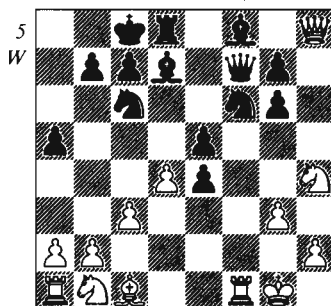
18 ♗e3 g5!
19 ♘f5

On 19 ♗xg5, Vaganian intended 19 ... ♗e7 20 ♕h7 ♘xh7 21 ♖xf7 ♘xg5 — a device we have seen already.

19 ... ♘e7!

It is now time to get at the queen.

20 ♘h6

Desperation, but 20 ♘xe7 ♗xe7 21 ♕h7 ♗e6! is equally hopeless.

20 ... ♕h5!∓∓
21 g4 ♘xg4
22 ♖xf8 ♕xh2+
23 ♔f1 ♗b5+
24 ♔e1 ♕e2 mate!

2   Exchange Variation

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	ed	ed *(6)*

The Exchange Variation has had a 'pacifist' reputation for a long time, though it by no means deserves it. True, the variation can be a big help when it comes to enacting 'grandmaster draws', but if yo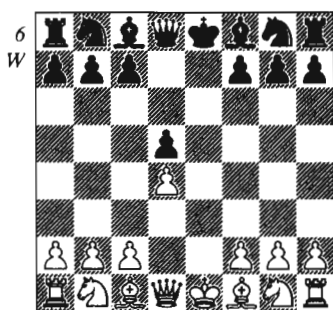u are in the mood for a complex, uncompromising struggle, the e-file can be utilised not just for wholesale exchanges of the major pieces but for penetrating into the opponent's camp. Furthermore, the lover of 'isolated queen's pawn' positions always has the chance to reach them with c2–c4 or ... c7–c5. Among the

partisans of the Exchange Variation for White, we should mention first and foremost Grandmaster Malanyuk and the young Soviet Master Ulibin; the line has also cropped up from time to time in the repertoire of such players as Morphy, Larsen, M. Gurevich, Gulko and many others. I would conclude by giving one piece of advice to players of the white side: a study of the statistics reveals that good results can be obtained only by active play, whereas attempts to secure the draw, and a quick draw at that, frequently come to grief. The best-known recent illustration of this is the famous game M. Gurevich–Short from the Manila Interzonal.

Malanyuk–Psakhis
USSR Ch, Moscow 1983

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ed ed
3 ... ♕xd5 can hardly be recommended; play transposes to the variation 3 ♘c3 de 4 ♘xe4 ♕d5 5 ♘c3.

4   ♗d3
The standard, most usual con-

tinuation. A few words about the alternatives:

(a) **4 c4** (this radically alters the pawn structure and significantly reduces the likelihood of a draw, but promises no advantage, especially if Black plays accurately) 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♗b4! (strangely enough, Black usually contents himself with the somewhat passive 5 ... ♗e7, which indeed is good enough for equality. For example, 6 ♘f3 0–0 7 cd ♘xd5 8 ♗d3 ♗e6 9 0–0 ♘d7 10 a3 ♖e8 11 ♕c2 ♘f8= Hansen–Eingorn, Uzhgorod 1988; or 7 ♗e3 ♗e6 8 cd ♘xd5 9 ♗d3 ♘c6 10 0–0 ♕d7 11 ♖c1 ♘xc3! 12 bc ♗f5= Plaskett–Gallagher, Hastings Challengers 1989/90; the move 7 ♗e3 turned out to be redundant) 6 ♘f3 0–0 7 ♗e2 dc (7 ... ♘e4 was also very tempting) 8 ♗xc4 ♗g4 (Black's pieces are taking up active positions) 9 ♗e3?! (better 9 0–0, when Black cannot go into the lengthy variation 9 ... ♗xf3 10 ♕xf3 ♕xd4 11 ♕xb7 ♕xc4 12 ♕xa8 ♘c6 13 ♕b7 ♗d6 14 ♕b5 ♗xh2+ 15 ♔xh2 ♕h4+ 16 ♔g1 ♘g4, on account of the simple 17 ♗f4) 9 ... ♘d5 10 0–0!? ♗xc3! (he shouldn't be lured into winning a pawn, since after 10 ... ♘xc3 11 bc ♗xc3 12 ♖b1 White has excellent compensation for it) 11 bc ♘xc3 12 ♕b3 ♗xf3 13 gf b5! 14 ♗d3 ♘d5. Thanks to White's battered kingside, Black's chances turned out to be better in Gulko–Psakhis,

USSR Ch, Riga 1985.

(b) **4 ♘f3**, and now:

(b1) **4 ... ♗g4!?** (Black displays activity at the first opportunity) 5 h3 (White's attempt to achieve more with 5 c4 had unpleasant consequences in Psakhis–Nogueiras, Madrid 1988. Nogueiras reacted precisely with 5 ... ♗b4+ 6 ♘c3 ♘e7! 7 h3 ♗h5 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc ♘bc6 10 ♗e2 0–0 11 0–0 ♘a5!, and White got nowhere. In Karolyi–Vaiser, Clichy Open 1991, it was astonishing how quickly Black seized the initiative: 5 ♗f4 ♗d6 6 ♗xd6?! ♕xd6 7 c3 ♕e7+ 8 ♔d2 ♘f6 9 ♔c1 ♘e4 10 ♕e2 ♘d7∓) 5 ... ♗h5 6 ♗e2 (in Ulibin–Vilela, Santa Clara 1991, White's play was a good deal more active and interesting: 6 ♕e2+!? ♕e7 7 ♗e3 ♘c6 8 ♘c3 0–0–0 9 g4! ♗g6 10 0–0–0 ♘b4 11 a3 ♘xc2 12 ♗f4 ♘a1! 13 b4! with not unfavourable complications) 6 ... ♗d6 (75 years ago Capablanca achieved quite a good game with 6 ... ♘c6 7 0–0 ♗d6 8 ♘c3 ♘ge7 9 ♗e3 f6 10 ♕d2 ♗f7= Marshall–Capablanca, St Petersburg 1914) 7 ♘e5?! (misguidedly seeking exchanges and a draw) 7 ... ♗xe2 8 ♕xe2 ♘e7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗f4 ♖e8 11 ♕g4 ♗xe5! 12 ♗xe5 ♘g6 13 ♗g3 ♘d7 occurred in M. Gurevich–Short, Manila IZ 1990. The position of course is equal, but if I had to choose which colour to continue with, I would choose Black.

(b2) The more restrained **4 ... ♘f6** has also stood up quite well, for example: 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6 ♗d3 0-0 7 0-0 ♗g4 8 ♘bd2 c5!? (8 ... ♘bd7 9 c3 c6 10 ♕c2 h6 11 ♗h4 ♗xf3 12 ♘xf3 ♗d6= Ulibin-Gdanski, World Junior Ch, Tunja 1989) 9 dc ♗xc5 10 c3 ♘bd7 11 h3 ♗h5 12 ♗c2 ♕b6, Ulibin-Dolmatov, USSR 1988. The free play for his pieces is excellent compensation for Black's isolated pawn.

(b3) Ulibin has come forward with many interesting ideas in the line **4 ... ♗d6** 5 c4!? ♘f6 6 ♘c3 (stronger than 6 c5 ♗e7 7 ♗d3 b6 8 cb ab 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♘c3 ♗g4 11 h3 ♗h5= Tartakower-Botvinnik, Groningen 1946) 6 ... 0-0 (6 ... dc 7 ♗xc4 0-0 8 0-0 ♗g4 is risky, since by utilising his lead in development White can immediately start a dangerous attack: 9 h3 ♗h5 10 g4! ♗g6 11 ♘e5 c5 12 ♘xg6 hg 13 dc ♗xc5 14 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 15 ♕b3+ ♔e8 16 ♖e1+ ♗e7 17 ♕xb7++ Ulibin-Lautier, Sochi 1989; the position also favours White after the more passive 8 ... c6 9 ♖e1 ♘bd7 10 ♗b3 h6 11 ♘e5 ♘b6 12 ♕f3, Bologan-Temirbayev, Azov 1991) 7 cd ♘bd7 8 ♗g5 h6 9 ♗h4 ♘b6 (Black came off badly in Ulibin-Komarov, Borzhomi 1988, after 9 ... ♖e8+ 10 ♗e2 ♘f8 11 ♘e5! ♗xe5 12 de ♖xe5 13 0-0 ♘g6 14 ♗g3 ♖e7 15 h4!+) 10 ♗e2 ♗e7 11 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 12 ♕b3 a5 (Black retained good equalising chances

with 12 ... ♗g4!? 13 0-0 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♗xd4 15 ♖ad1 ♗e5 in Ulibin-Monin, USSR 1986) 13 a4 ♗f5 14 0-0 ♕e7 15 ♖ac1. Although Black does have some compensation for the pawn, he will have to struggle to draw; Ulibin-Lputian, USSR 1988.

(c) **4 ♘c3 ♗b4** (4 ... ♘f6 is perfectly playable, e.g. 5 ♗d3 ♘c6!? 6 ♘ge2 ♘b4 7 ♗f4 c6 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 h3 0-0, Hennings-Knaak, Bundesliga 1991. 5 ♗g5 turned out in White's favour after 5 ... ♗b4?! 6 ♕f3 c6 7 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 8 ♕xf6 gf 9 ♗d3 ♗g4 10 h3 ♗e6 11 ♘f3± in A. Sokolov-Brunner, Clichy Open 1991, but 5 ... ♗e7 6 ♗d3 ♘c6!? 7 ♘ge2 ♘b4 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♘g3 ♘xd3 10 ♕xd3 c6 11 ♖ae1 ♖e8 12 ♖e2 ♗g4 gave equality in Malishauskas-Yudasin, Lvov 1987; in this line, 8 ... h6 9 ♗f4 c6 10 ♘g3 ♘xd3 11 ♕xd3 0-0 is also equal) **5 ♗d3** (5 ♕f3 brought quick success in Larsen-Portisch, Amsterdam IZ 1964: 5 ... ♘c6? 6 ♗b5 ♘ge7 7 ♗f4 0-0 8 0-0-0 ♘a5 9 ♘ge2 c6 10 ♗d3 b5 11 h4! ♘c4 12 h5 f6 13 g4, with a powerful initiative. However, 5 ... ♕e7+! relieves Black of all difficulties, for example 6 ♗e3 ♘f6 7 h3 ♘e4 8 ♘ge2 ♘c6 9 0-0-0 ♗xc3 10 ♘xc3 ♘xc3 11 bc ♗e6∓ Lehmann-Farago, Kiev 1978), and now:

(c1) **5 ... c5** (premature activity) 6 dc ♘c6 7 ♘f3 ♗xc5 (or 7 ... d4 8 a3 ♕e7+ 9 ♗e2 ♗xc3+ 10 dc dc 11 ♘d4± van der Wiel-

Vaganian, Amsterdam 1986) 8
0–0 ♘ge7 (8 ... ♗g4?! 9 h3 ♗h5
10 g4! ♗g6 11 ♗xg6 hg 12
♕xd5±) 9 h3 0–0 10 a3 f6 11
♖e1± Sariego–Paneque, Pinar
del Rio Z 1990.

(c2) **5 ... ♘ge7** 6 ♕f3!? (great
complications resulted from 6
♕h5!? c5 7 dc!? d4 8 a3 ♕a5 9 ab
♕xa1 10 ♘ce2 ♕a2 11 ♘xd4 ♕d5
12 ♕xd5 ♘xd5 13 c3, with more
than enough compensation for the
exchange in Ziatdinov–Komarov,
Biel Open 1991. Black may also
adopt a more restrained strategy:
6 ... ♘bc6!? 7 ♘f3 ♗e6 8 a3 ♗d6
9 ♘b5 ♕d7 10 ♘g5 g6 11 ♕f3
0–0–0= Arnason–Uhlmann,
Novi Sad Ol 1990) 6 ... ♗e6 7
♘ge2 ♕d7 8 0–0 ♘bc6 9 a3 ♗xc3
10 bc ♗f5 11 ♘g3 ♗xd3 12 cd
0–0 13 h4!± Hickl–Uhlmann,
German Ch 1991.

(c3) **5 ... ♘f6** 6 ♗g5 (an equal
game results from 6 ♘ge2 0–0 7
0–0 ♖e8 8 ♗g5 c6 9 ♘g3 h6 10
♗f4 ♗d6, as in Dvoiris–Dolma-
tov, Harkov 1985; but an interest-
ing alternative is 6 a3!? ♗xc3+ 7
bc 0–0 8 ♘e2 c5 9 dc!? ♘bd7 10
0–0 ♘xc5 11 ♗g5 h6 12 ♗h4 ♖e8
13 ♖b1 b6 14 ♖b4!± Dvoiris–
Eingorn, Lvov Z 1990) 6 ... 0–0
7 ♕f3 ♗xc3+ 8 bc ♕e8+ 9 ♘e2
♗g4 10 ♕e3 ♗xe2 11 ♕xe2 ♘e4
12 ♗xe4 de 13 0–0 ♕c6 14 c4±
Bronstein–Ortega, Berlin 1968.

(c4) **5 ... c6!?** 6 ♘f3 (6 ♕f3 ♕f6
7 ♕xf6 ♘xf6 8 ♘ge2 ♘bd7 leads
to complete equality) 6 ... ♕e7+!?
7 ♗e3 ♘f6 8 0–0 0–0 9 ♖e1

♗g4 10 h3 ♗h5= Tseshkovsky–
Eingorn, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987.

(c5) **5 ... ♘c6** is the most precise
equalising line. There can follow:

(c51) **6 ♘ge2 ♘ge7** (another
quite good line is 6 ... ♗g4!? 7 f3
♗h5 8 0–0 ♘ge7 9 ♘g3 ♗g6 10
f4 f5!= Sax–Hort, Vinkovci 1976)
7 0–0 ♗f5 (in Negulescu–Farago,
Warsaw Z 1987, White seized the
initiative after 7 ... 0–0 8 a3! ♗xc3
9 bc ♗f5 10 ♘g3 ♗xd3 11 cd
♕d2 12 a4 ♖fe8 13 ♕f3±) 8 ♘g3
(or 8 a3 ♗xc3 9 bc ♕d7, followed
by castling long) 8 ... ♗xd3 (the
position should likewise be
assessed as equal after 8 ... ♗g6
9 f4 f5 10 ♘ce2 0–0 11 c3 ♗d6 12
♔h1 ♘b8!, Wittmann–Hertneck,
Mitropa Cup 1990) 9 ♕xd3 0–0
10 ♗g5 ♕d7 11 ♗xe7 ♘xe7=
Shabanov–Rozentalis, Uzhgorod
1988.

(c52) Black has an excellent
game after **6 ♘f3 ♗g4** 7 0–0 ♘ge7
8 ♘e2?! ♗xf3 9 gf ♗d6 10 c3
♕d7, Larsen–Kosten, Hastings
1990/1.

(c53) Nor does Black have any
particular cause for worry after **6
a3 ♗xc3+** (another method is 6
... ♗e7 7 ♗e3 ♗f6 8 ♘ce2 ♘ge7
9 c3 ♗f5 10 ♘g3 ♗xd3 11 ♕xd3
g6 12 ♘f3 ♕d6 13 h4! 0–0–0,
when Black is close to equality
although White does possess a
slight initiative; Mokry–Rozen-
talis, Trnava II 1988) 7 bc ♘ge7
(stronger than 7 ... ♕f6 8 ♕h5!
♘ce7 9 ♗g5 ♕c6 10 ♖b1 ♘f6 11
♗xf6 ♕xf6 12 ♘f3 h6 13 0–0

g6 14 ♕e5± Kaidanov-Huzman, Kuibishev 1986) 8 ♕f3 (or 8 ♕h5 ♗e6 9 ♘e2 ♕d7 10 ♘g3 0-0-0 11 0-0 ♖de8= Casper-Uhlmann, Leipzig 1982) 8 ... ♗e6 9 ♘h3 (or 9 ♖b1 b6 10 ♘h3 ♕d7 11 ♘g5 h6 12 ♘xe6 ♕xe6+ 13 ♔d1 0-0 14 ♖e1 ♕d7= Kavalek-Yusupov, Dubai Ol 1986; it was worth considering 11 ♘f4!?) 9 ... ♕d7 10 ♘f4 ♗f5 11 0-0 0-0-0, with chances for both sides in Short-Timman, Tilburg 1990.

4 ...   ♗d6

Maintaining the symmetry. 4 ... c5 also has a good reputation, especially since the well-known game Tatai-Korchnoi, Beer Sheva 1978, which lasted only ten more moves: 5 ♘f3 (White obtained no advantage from 5 dc ♗xc5 6 ♘f3 ♘f6 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♘c3 ♘c6 9 ♗g5 ♗e6 10 ♕d2 ♗e7 11 ♖ad1 ♕a5= Marco-Schlechter, Nuremburg 1896!, while in Muir-King, British Ch, Blackpool 1988, White unexpectedly came under a strong attack after 5 c3 ♘c6 6 ♕e2+ ♗e7 7 dc ♘f6 8 ♗e3 0-0 9 ♘d2 d4! 10 cd ♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♕xd4 12 ♘b3 ♕b4+ 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♖d8 15 ♔c2 a5!∓) 5 ... ♘c6 6 ♕e2+?! (just like Muir, Tatai couldn't resist the temptation to give check! Better 6 dc, with a roughly equal game) 6 ... ♗e7 7 dc ♘f6 8 h3? 0-0 9 0-0 ♗xc5 10 c3 ♖e8 11 ♕c2 ♕d6 (White's irresolute play has already put him in an uncomfortable situation, but his failure to

see Black's main threat finishes the game at once) 12 ♘bd2? ♕g3! 13 ♗f5 ♖e2 14 ♘d4 ♘xd4 0-1.

5   c3

In the good old days they usually continued with 5 ♘f3 ♘f6 (in our own day Black doesn't like to maintain the symmetry for long, and sidesteps it with 5 ... ♘e7 6 ♘c3 c6 7 0-0 ♗g4 8 ♖e1 ♕b6 9 ♗d2 ♘d7 10 ♘a4 ♕c7, which led to complex play in Bannik-Korchnoi, USSR Ch, Leningrad 1956; or with 5 ... c6 6 0-0 ♗g4 7 ♖e1+ ♘e7 8 ♘bd2 ♘d7 9 ♘f1 h6 10 h3 ♗e6= Adams-Wilder, Preston 1989) 6 0-0 (or 6 ♕e2+ — in the old days they liked to check too! — 6 ... ♗e7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♘e5 ♖e8 9 ♗g5 ♘g4 10 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 11 h3 ♘xe5 12 de c5 with equality, Kupchik-Capablanca, New York 1915) 6 ... 0-0 7 ♗g5 (the great Morphy first developed his knight with 7 ♘c3, and only after 7 ... c6 brought his bishop into the fray with 8 ♗g5 h6 9 ♗h4 ♗g4 10 h3 ♗xf3 11 ♕xf3 ♘bd7 12 ♗f5 ♕c7 13 ♖ae1, gaining a slight advantage in Morphy-Löwenthal, London 1858! In Larsen-Petrosian, Havana Ol 1966, White played instead 8 ♘e2!? ♖e8 9 ♘g3 ♘bd7 10 ♘f5 ♘f8 11 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 12 ♘e5, and stood slightly better as a result of his dashing cavalry raid) 7 ... ♗g4 8 ♘bd2 ♘bd7 9 c3 c6 10 ♕c2 ♕c7 11 h3 (to those who love symmetry to the bitter — drawish! — end, I recommend a close

study of Capablanca–Maroczy, Lake Hopatcong 1926: 11 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 12 ♗h4 ♗h5 13 ♗g3 ♗xg3 14 hg ♗g6 15 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 16 ♗xg6 hg 17 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 18 ♘xe1 ♘e8 19 ♘d3 ♘d6 ½–½) 11 ... ♗h5 (11 ... ♗xf3 is quite good too: 12 ♘xf3 ♖fe8 13 ♖fe1 ♗f4 14 g3 ♗xg5 15 ♗xg5 h6= Chigorin–Rubinstein, Karlsbad 1907) 12 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 13 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 14 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 15 ♘xe1 ♗g6= Forgacs–Rubinstein, St Petersburg 1909. Incidentally, Rubinstein won both of these games!

<div align="center">5 ... ♘c6</div>

Farewell to symmetry! Maintaining it a little longer was quite good too: 5 ... c6 6 ♕f3 ♕f6 7 ♗e3 ♕xf3 8 ♘xf3 ♘e7 9 ♘h4 ♘d7 10 ♘f5 ♘xf5 11 ♗xf5 ♘f6= Malanyuk–Petrosian, USSR Ch, Moscow 1983.

<div align="center">6 ♕f3</div>

A favourite weapon of Malanyuk's, but to tell the truth it has brought him more trouble than joy. Let us examine some other possibilities:

(a) **6 ♘e2 ♕h4!** (an old move of Alekhine's, which is still of theoretical value) 7 ♘g3 (the game Winter–Alekhine, Nottingham 1936, which has become an Exchange Variation classic, continued 7 ♘d2 ♗g4! 8 ♕c2 0-0-0 9 ♘f1 g6 10 ♗e3 ♘ge7 11 0-0-0 ♗f5. Alekhine carried out one of the main strategic ideas at Black's disposal — exchange of the light-squared bishops — and gained a clear positional advantage. At move 8, pawn-hunting is too dangerous: 8 ♕b3 0-0-0 9 ♕xd5 ♘f6, and Black's lead in development becomes decisive. *ECO* recommends 7 g3!? ♕h3 8 ♘f4, with equality) 7 ... ♘h6! 8 ♗xh6 ♕xh6 9 0-0 ♘e7 10 ♖e1 0-0 was played in Westerinen–Kavalek, Solingen 1986. It is completely obvious that after the exchange of such an important bishop, White has to struggle for equality.

(b) **6 ♘f3 ♘ge7 7 0-0 ♗g4 8 ♖e1** (8 h3, as played in Kochiev–Psakhis, Tallinn 1987, is inaccurate since it creates additional targets on the kingside. Black achieved a good position after 8 ... ♗h5 9 ♖e1 ♕d7 10 a4 0-0-0 11 a5 f6 12 b4 ♖de8! — freeing d8 for the knight — 13 b5 ♘d8 14 ♘bd2 ♘g6. Of course the situation is very complicated and double-edged, but 8 h3 has clearly proved redundant) 8 ... ♕d7 (preparing not only to castle long but also to exchange bishops) 9 ♘bd2 (there is no danger to Black in 9 ♗g5 0-0-0 10 ♘bd2 f6 11 ♗h4 ♘f5 12 ♕c2 ♘ce7 13 ♗g3 ♘xg3 14 hg g6, with an excellent game; Illescas Cordoba–Vaganian, Barcelona World Cup 1989) 9 ... 0-0 (castling the other way is risky but very interesting. Holmov–Psakhis, Kiev 1984, continued 9 ... 0-0-0 10 b4 ♖de8 11 b5 ♘d8 12 ♕a4 ♔b8 13 ♗a3 f6 14 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 15 ♖e3 ♘c8, and in the

endgame White's far advanced pawns fell prey to the black pieces; but then, Black had to survive to the endgame first! In Blackburne–Rubinstein, St Petersburg 1914, the great master of prophylaxis obtained an excellent position without such adventures: 9 ... f6 10 ♘f1 0-0 11 ♘e3 ♗h5 12 ♗d2 ♖ae8∓) 10 h3 ♗f5 11 ♘f1 ♖ae8 12 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 13 ♘e3 ♕d7= Tal–Korchnoi, USSR 1955.

6 ... ♘f6

ECO's recommendation 6 ... ♘ge7 stood up to the test in Malanyuk–King, Palma GMA 1989: 7 ♘e2 ♗e6 8 ♗f4 ♘g6 9 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 10 ♘d2 0-0-0 11 0-0-0 h5=. I also like Black's play in Kovacs–Korchnoi, Sarajevo 1969, which went 6 ... ♘ce7!? 7 ♗f4?! ♘f6 8 h3 ♗xf4 9 ♕xf4 0-0 10 ♘e2 ♘g6. Neglecting to play 11 ♗xg6 with chances of equalising, White lost quickly after 11 ♕h2? ♖e8 12 0-0 ♗f5! 13 ♗xf5 ♖xe2 14 b3 ♕e7∓∓.

7 h3 0-0
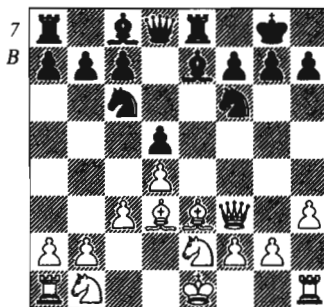**8 ♘e2 ♖e8**
9 ♗g5 ♗e7!

Intending 9 ... ♘e4.

10 ♗e3 *(7)*
10 ... ♘e4!?

An interesting pawn sacrifice for the initiative. An amusing point is that six years later, the stubborn Malanyuk reached the diagram position again, in a game against Luther (Sverdlovsk 1989). Luther refrained from the pawn sacrifice and continued 10 ... a5 11 ♘d2

b6 12 g4 ♗a6 13 ♗xa6 ♖xa6, but after 14 g5 he had to sacrifice all the same: 14 ... ♘e4 15 ♘xe4 de 16 ♕xe4 ♘b4! 17 ♕b7 ♘d3+ 18 ♔d1 ♘c5!, and we may conclude that Black has more than adequate compensation.

11 ♗xe4

A more cautious player might have preferred 11 ♘d2, with equal chances.

11 ... de
12 ♕xe4 ♘b4!

The attacking themes show a remarkable similarity to Malanyuk–Luther. White now faces a difficult choice. Naturally he cannot play 13 cb?? ♗xb4+ ∓∓, and 13 ♘d2 also loses to 13 ... ♗h4! 14 ♕f3 ♖xe3. So White has to forfeit castling.
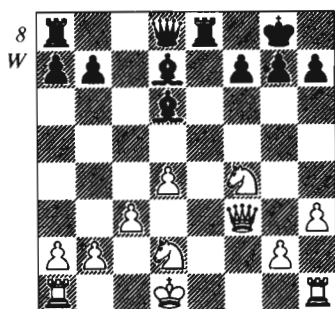
13 ♔d1 ♘d5
14 ♘f4 ♘xe3+
15 fe ♗d6
16 ♕f3 c5
17 ♘d2 cd
18 ed ♗d7 *(8)*

Black's initiative more than compensates for the minimal material loss, and despite heroic

defence Malanyuk fails to patch up the gaps in his position.

19	♖f1	♗c6
20	♕d3	♖c8!
21	g3	♕d7
22	b3	♖e7!
23	♖e1	

23 ♔c2 ♖ce8 24 d5 ♗xf4 also favours Black — 25 dc? loses to 25 ... ♕xd3+ 26 ♔xd3 ♖d8+.

23	...	♖xe1+
24	♔xe1	♗xf4
25	gf	♖e8+

| 26	♔d1	♗g2
27	f5	♕d6!
28	♔c2	♕f4?!

28 ... ♕h2!, with the powerful threat of 29 ... ♗e4, would have won immediately. But Black retains a big advantage in any case. Even in its final phase, the game contains a very interesting struggle, but this admittedly has only a remote bearing on our discussion of the opening.

29 ♕b5 ♖e3 30 ♖d1 h5 31 ♔b2 ♗xh3 32 ♘c4 ♖e2+ 33 ♔a3 ♕xf5 34 ♘e5 ♖f2 35 ♖e1! f6 36 ♕e8+ ♔h7 37 d5!! ♗g4 38 ♘xg4 ♕xg4 39 ♖e4 ♕g6 40 ♕e7 ♕g5 41 ♖d4 a5!? 42 ♕e1 ♖h2 43 c4 ♕g2! 44 ♕b1+ g6 45 ♔a4! ♕f2 46 ♕a1 ♕e3! 47 ♔xa5 ♕e5! 48 ♖d1 ♕d6 49 a3 ♕c5+ 50 ♔a4 b5+ 51 cb ♕a7+ 52 ♔b4 ♖h4+ 53 ♔c3 ♕c5+ 54 ♔d2 ♖h2+ 55 ♔d3 ♕c2+ 56 ♔e3 ♖h3+ 0–1

3 Advance Variation

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	e5 *(9)*	
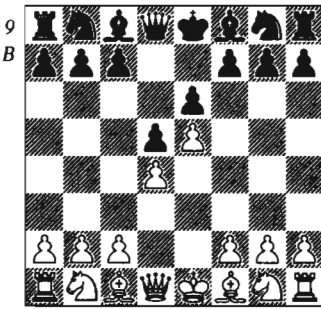
This move is just about as old as the French Defence. It had been used repeatedly in the last century, but it was only with Nimzowitsch's improvements that it became the basis of a deeply thought-out system. In our time, it is undoubtedly Soviet Grandmaster Sveshnikov who has contributed most to the development of this variation; Rozentalis and Sax also employ it in top-class events, with success. It is to the credit of 3 e5 that the ensuing contest is not a test of the players' capacity to memorise long and complicated variations, but a test of their chess understanding.

A word about the basic principles of play in the Advance Variation. The pawn structure itself prefigures active operations by White on the kingside; these may consist either in a gain of space with the advance of the h-pawn to h5, or in the opening of the f-file. After 3 ... c5, irrespective of whether White maintains the central tension with 4 c3 or abandons it (with 4 dc or 4 ♘f3), a paramount feature of his strategy is the securing of the e-pawn or the control over the e5-point (after, say, a pawn exchange on f6). Black generally seeks counterchances on the c-file; an exchange of light-squared bishops is very welcome to him. Let us now see how these plans can be realised in practice.

Afek–Psakhis
Tel-Aviv 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5

3	...	c5

Undoubtedly the best move. Once the e-pawn has gone to e5,

the only vulnerable point in the white camp is the pawn on d4, and Black must attack it. Occasionally, other continuations are met with; they tend to be selected against not very strong opponents, in the hope of inducing errors in the long sequence of play on unfamiliar ground. For example:

(a) **3 ... ♗d7** (a naive attempt to exchange light-squared bishops on b5, after ... a7–a6) 4 ♘f3 a6 5 ♗g5! ♕c8 6 c4 (so the exchange has not come about, while White has a big lead in development) 6 ... h6 7 ♗e3 dc 8 ♗xc4 ♘e7 9 ♘c3 ♗c6 10 0–0 ♕d7 11 ♖c1 a5? 12 d5! ed 13 ♗d3, and Black's position is already impossible to defend; Bronstein–Kärner, Tallinn 1981.

(b) After **3 ... b6**, play may continue 4 c3 (the most frequent reply; White also has an excellent game after 4 ♗b5+!? ♗d7 [*or 4 ... c6 5 ♗a4! ♘e7 6 c3 ♘f5 7 ♘d2 ♗e7 8 ♘df3 ♗d7 9 ♗c2, and the bishop on c2 is ideally placed to support the coming kingside attack; Lein–Blees, Belgrade GMA 1988*] 5 ♗d3 c5 6 c3 ♘c6 7 ♘f3 f6 [*in contrast to normal variations, the square b6 is occupied by a pawn, which limits Black's options*] 8 0–0 fe, Anand–Rogers, Manila IZ 1990; and now after the correct 9 ♘xe5, White's chances are better) 4 ... ♕d7 (White does well out of 4 ... a5 5 ♗b5+! c6 6 ♗a4 ♗a6 7 ♘e2 h5 8 ♘d2 ♘h6 9 ♘f3± Murey–Brinck-Claussen,

Copenhagen 1986) 5 a4 a5 (it would be dangerous to let the pawn advance further) 6 f4 (another quite good plan is 6 h4 ♗a6 7 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 8 h5 0–0–0 9 ♘f3 ♔b7 10 ♖h3, with the initiative; Ivanović–Levitt, St John 1988) 6 ... ♘e7 7 ♘d2 h5 8 ♘df3 ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♗e3 ♘f5 11 ♗f2, and by utilising his space advantage, White quickly worked up a strong attack against the queenside where the black monarch has taken refuge; Kupreichik–Korchnoi, Sochi 1970.

(c) Similar positions result from **3 ... ♘e7**, for example 4 ♘f3 b6 (the bishop is to be fianchettoed all the same) 5 c4!? (here too, 5 h4 is good: 5 ... ♕d7 6 h5 h6 7 ♘c3! ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♘e2 c5 10 c3± Fedorowicz–Prie, Paris 1989; White has a big advantage on the kingside) 5 ... ♗b7 6 ♘c3 ♕d7 7 cd (or 7 ♗e2 ♘bc6 8 0–0 dc 9 ♗xc4 ♘a5 10 ♗b5 ♗c6 11 ♗d3 ♘d5 12 ♗d2± Sax–Short, London 1980) 7 ... ♘xd5 8 ♗d3 c5 9 0–0 ♘xc3 10 bc cd 11 ♘xd4!± Kupreichik–Vaganian, USSR 1980.

4 c3

Of all the possible continuations, this quiet move is the only one still employed regularly in modern tournaments. Earlier, other moves were in favour:

(a) **4 ♕g4** (Nimzowitsch) 4 ... cd (an interesting line is 4 ... ♘h6!? 5 ♗xh6 gh 6 ♘d2 ♘c6 7 ♗b5

♕b6, with quite good play for Black; Schultz–Karlsson, Copenhagen 1989) 5 ♘f3 f5!? 6 ♕g3 ♘c6 7 ♗d3 ♗d7 8 0–0 ♕c7 9 c3 0–0–0! 10 ♗f4 ♘ge7∓ Honfi–Portisch, Hungarian Ch 1964.

(b) **4 dc** ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♗xc5 6 ♗d3 f6!? (nor is there anything wrong with 6 ... ♘ge7 7 0–0 [*in Velimirović–Kholmov, match Yugoslavia–USSR 1975, frightful turmoil arose after 7 ♗f4 ♘g6 8 ♗g3 0–0 9 0–0 f5 10 ef ♕xf6 11 c4! ♕xb2 12 ♗xg6 hg 13 cd!? ♕xa1, when the position is unclear to say the least*] 7 ... ♘g6 8 ♖e1 ♗d7 9 c3 ♗b6 10 ♘a3 a6= Nimzowitsch–Alekhine, St Petersburg 1914) 7 ♕e2 fe 8 ♘xe5 ♘f6 9 0–0 ♘xe5 10 ♕xe5 0–0= Makropoulos–Hug, Nice Ol 1974.

(c) **4♘f3** cd 5 ♗d3 (White gains nothing from 5 ♕xd4 ♘c6 6 ♕f4 f5!? 7 ♗d3 ♘ge7 8 0–0 ♘g6 9 ♕g3 ♗e7= Keres–Euwe, Zandvoort 1936) 5 ... ♘c6 6 0–0 ♘ge7 (another line sufficient for equality is 6 ... f6 7 ♗b5 ♗d7 8 ♗xc6 bc 9 ♕xd4, Alekhine–Euwe, Nottingham 1936; and now 9 ... ♕b6!=) 7 ♘bd2 (quite a good answer to 7 ♗f4 is 7 ... ♘g6 8 ♗g3 ♕b6!? 9 ♘bd2 ♕xb2 10 ♘b3 ♗e7 11 h4 0–0 12 h5 ♘h8, when the onus is on White to prove that his initiative is worth the material deficit; Bator–Bareyev, Stockholm 1987) 7 ... ♘g6 8 ♖e1 ♕c7 9 ♗xg6 fg!= Skrobek–Uhlmann, Warsaw 1983.

4 ... ♘c6

Apart from this usual move, Black has 4 ... ♘e7, aiming to bring his not very active king's knight to c6, or 4 ... ♕b6, followed by 5 ... ♗d7 and an early exchange of bishops.

(a) The theory of **4 ... ♘e7** is still in its infancy, and the best methods for either White or Black have yet to be determined. There can follow 5 ♘f3 ♘ec6 6 ♗e3!? (the black queen hasn't gone to b6, so the white bishop can be developed. In the game which introduced this line, Sveshnikov–V. Kovacević, Belgrade 1988, the opening was not a success for White: 6 h4?! ♘d7 7 h5? f6! 8 ef ♘xf6 9 h6 g6, and already Black had seized the initiative) 6 ... b6!? (stronger than 6 ... ♘d7 7 ♗d3 a5 8 ♘bd2 cd 9 cd a4, as in Kupreichik–V. Kovacević, Ljubljana 1989, when White could have gained a clear plus with 10 ♘g5!) 7 ♗d3 ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♕a4 ♘ab8 10 0–0 ♕d7 11 ♕c2 ♗e7, and Black was very close to full equality in Fishbein–Friedman, New York Open 1990.

(b) **4 ... ♕b6** is not a new move and has done quite well in practice. In the last few years, however, it has virtually gone out of use, for inexplicable reasons; at least I have not been able to detect any tangible plus for White. For example: 5 ♘f3 (the simplest answer to 5 ♗d3 is 5 ... cd 6 cd ♗b5=) 5 ... ♗d7 6 ♗e2 (or 6 a3 ♗b5 [*another possibility is 6 ... a5!? 7*

♗d3 ♗b5 8 0–0 ♗xd3 9 ♕xd3
♘c6 10 dc ♗xc5 11 c4 ♕a6=
Suetin–Lputian, USSR 1978] 7
c4!? ♗xc4 8 ♗xc4 dc 9 ♘bd2
[*the position is unclear after 9 d5
♘e7!? 10 ♘c3 ♘xd5 11 ♘xd5
ed 12 ♕xd5 ♗e7, Sveshnikov–
Osmanović, Sarajevo 1983*] 9 ...
♕a6 10 ♕e2 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5=
Sveshnikov–Ehlvest, Leningrad
1984) 6 ... ♗b5 (if Black is afraid
of 7 c4, he can insert the moves 6
... cd 7 cd, and only then play 7
... ♗b5. For example, 8 ♗xb5+
♕xb5 9 ♘c3 ♗b4! 10 ♗d2 ♕d3
11 ♕a4+ ♘c6= Kupreichik–Ein-
gorn, USSR 1977) 7 c4!? (the only
realistic way to play for an advan-
tage. A bad idea is 7 dc ♗xc5 8
b4? ♗xf2+ 9 ♔f1 ♗c6!∓. Nor
does White have any trace of
advantage after 7 0–0 ♗xe2 8
♕xe2 ♕a6 9 ♕d1.c4!) 7 ... ♗xc4
(an inferior choice is 7 ... dc 8 ♘c3
♘c6 9 d5 ed 10 ♘xb5 ♕xb5 11
♕xd5 ♘e7 12 ♕xc4, with advan-
tage; Nikolenko–Shaboian, Pula
1990) 8 ♗xc4 ♕b4+ (or 8 ... dc
9 d5 ♘e7!?) 9 ♘bd2 dc 10 0–0
(Black successfully solves his
opening problems after 10 a3 ♕b5
[*10 ... ♕a5 11 0–0 ♘c6 12 ♘xc4
♕a6=*] 11 ♕e2 cd 12 ♘xd4 ♕d5
13 ♘4f3! [*13 ♘2f3?! ♗c5 14 ♗e3
♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♘c6∓*] 13 ...
♘d7 14 ♘c4 ♖c8 15 ♘e3 ♕e4 16
b4! ♘e7!? 17 ♗b2 ♘d5= Howell–
Mestel, British Ch 1987. Nor
should he be afraid of 11 0–0 ♘c6
12 dc ♗xc5 13 ♕e2 ♘ge7=
Stean–Forintos, Moscow 1975) 10

... ♘c6 (10 ... cd presents White
with extra possibilities, for exam-
ple 11 ♘xd4 ♘d7 12 ♕h5! ♕b6
13 ♘4f3 ♕c6 14 ♖e1 ♘e7 15
♖e4± Afek–Ghinda, Netanya
Open 1987) 11 de ♗xc5 12 ♕e2
♘ge7 13 ♘xc4 0–0 14 b3 ♕b5=
Malanyuk–Vaiser, Tashkent
1987.

5 ♘f3

Of course, the knight is better
placed here than on e2; 5 ♘e2 f6!
6 f4 fe 7 de ♘h6! (the sign of a
great master!) 8 ♘g3 ♗d7 9 ♗e2
♕b6 10 0–0 0–0–0∓ Pomero–
Korchnoi, Cerrado 1990.

5 ... ♕b6 *(10)*

This rather reminds one of ten-
nis — Black attacks d4, White
defends it, Black attacks, White
defends ... In addition to this
'tennis' move, Black has some
other possibilities (5 ... ♗d7, 5
... ♘ge7 etc.), but they will be
analysed in the notes to the next
game.
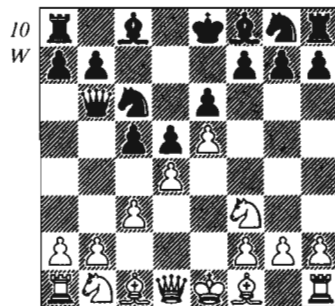
6 a3

With the obvious intention of
playing 7 b4 and forcing Black to

reveal his plans with regard to the d4-point. 6 a3 has certainly been the most popular move in recent years, yet the debates about the aggressive 6 ♗d3 and the more cautious 6 ♗e2 still continue. Let us examine each of them in turn.

(a) **6 ♗d3** cd (standard theory considers this the most precise. Ever since the game Nimzowitsch–Salwe, Karlsbad 1911, which continued 6 ... ♗d7 7 dc!? ♗xc5 8 0–0 f6? 9 b4! ♗e7 10 ♗f4 fe 11 ♘xe5±, the move 6 ... ♗d7 has been frowned on, though without justification. Black's play can easily be improved: 8 ... a5! 9 ♕e2 f6 10 ♗f4 ♘ge7 11 ♘bd2 ♘g6 with a fully satisfactory position, Rubinetti–Ivkov, Palma de Mallorca IZ 1970) 7 cd ♗d7 (of course the pawn could not be taken: 7 ... ♘xd4?? 8 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 9 ♗b5+. But now it is threatened in earnest) 8 0–0 (if White wants to strive for a plus, he has to sacrifice the pawn. The game is level after 8 ♗e2 ♘ge7 9 b3 ♘f5 10 ♗b2 ♗b4+ 11 ♔f1 ♗e7) 8 ... ♘xd4 9 ♘xd4 (the simplest answer to 9 ♘bd2 is to bring the knight back with 9 ... ♘c6!? 10 ♘b3 ♘ge7 11 ♗e3 ♕c7 12 ♖c1 ♘g6, and Black is not far off picking up another pawn; Nun–Schmittdiel, Prague 1990. If instead 9 ... ♘e7, then 10 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 11 ♘f3 ♕a4 12 b3 ♕a5 13 ♗d2, with compensation) 9 ... ♕xd4 10 ♘c3 a6 (excessive greed comes to no good: 10 ... ♕xe5 11

♖e1 ♕b8 [*or 11 ... ♕d6 12 ♘b5 ♕b8 13 ♕f3 ♗d6 14 ♘xd6+! ♕xd6 15 ♗f4 ♕b6 16 ♕g3±*] 12 ♘xd5 ♗d6 13 ♕g4 ♔f8 14 ♗d2 ♗c6 15 ♗c3 with a powerful initiative in Soulu–Züger, Haifa 1989) 11 ♕e2 ♘e7 (another method of defence was seen in Rozentalis–Epishin, USSR Ch, Leningrad 1990: 11 ... ♕h4!? 12 f4 ♘h6 13 ♗e3 ♖c8 14 ♖f3 ♗c5 15 ♗xc5 ♖xc5=) 12 ♔h1 (the complications are not unfavourable to Black after 12 ♖d1 ♘c6! 13 ♗xa6 ♕xe5 14 ♕xe5?! [*14 ♗xb7 ♕xe2 15 ♘xe2 ♖a7*] 14 ... ♘xe5 15 ♗xb7 ♖a7 16 ♗xd5 ed 17 ♖e1 f6∓) 12 ... ♘c6 13 f4 ♘b4 14 ♖d1 ♘xd3 (a new move was tried out successfully in Blasek–Kishnev, Gelsenkirchen 1991: 14 ... ♗c5!? 15 ♗xh7 ♕f2 16 ♕xf2 ♗xf2 17 ♗b1 ♔e7=) 15 ♖xd3 ♕b6!? (in Sveshnikov–Razuvayev, Belgrade GMA 1988, White effectively regrouped his forces for the attack after 15 ... ♕c4?! 16 b3! ♕c7 17 ♗b2 ♗c6 18 ♖c1 ♖d8 19 ♕f2! ♗e7 20 ♘e2! 0–0 21 ♘d4; White's threats are now highly unpleasant, while Black's extra pawn makes no impression) 16 ♗e3 ♗c5! 17 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 18 f5! ♕c6 19 ♕g4 0–0–0 20 fe fe, with a double-edged position in which Black's chances are no worse; Pirrot–Knaak, Bundesliga 1991.

(b) **6 ♗e2** cd (White has a clear advantage after 6 ... ♗d7 7 0–0 ♖c8 8 dc! ♗xc5 9 b4 ♗f8 10 ♘a3!, but 6 ... ♘h6 can serve as

quite a good alternative to the text move. Play may continue 7 ♗xh6 gh [*7 ... ♕xb2? is dangerous: 8 ♗c1! ♕xa1 9 ♕c2 cd 10 ♗b5 ♗d7 11 ♗xc6 bc 12 ♘fd2, and only a miracle can help the black queen to escape immediate doom*] 8 ♕d2 ♗g7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♘a3 cd [*better than 10 ... f6?! 11 ef ♖xf6 12 dc! ♕xc5 13 b4 ♕f8 14 ♘c2±* Kupreichik–Huzman, Sverdlovsk 1987] 11 cd f6 [*11 ... ♗d7 12 ♘c2 a5!=*] 12 ef ♖xf6 13 ♘c2, Lein–Ehlvest, New York Open 1989; and now 13 a5!?=) 7 cd ♘ge7 8 ♘c3 (8 b3 also occurs: 8 ... ♘f5 9 ♗b2 ♗b4+ 10 ♔f1 ♗e7 [*or 10 ... ♕d8 11 h4 0–0 12 a3 ♗a5 13 g4 ♘fe7 14 h5 f6! with good counterplay, Menvielle– Bareyev, Las Palmas 1989*] 11 h4 ♗d7 12 ♘c3 ♘xd4!? 13 ♘xd5 ed 14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♗c5= Kosten–Lputian, Altensteig 1989. Black similarly has no problems after 8 ♘a3 cd 9 cd ♗b4+!? 10 ♔f1 [*10 ♗d2? ♗xd2+ 11 ♕xd2 ♕xb2 12 0–0 ♕b6∓ Dreyev– Neverovsky, Podolsk 1990*] 10 ... ♗e7 11 g3 ♗d7 12 ♔g2 ♖c8 13 h3?! ♘b4= Morris–Farago, Hastings Challengers 1989/90) 8 ... ♘f5 9 ♘a4 (or 9 ♔f1 ♗d7 [*9 ... ♘fxd4!? 10 ♗e3 ♕xb2 with wild complications*] 10 ♘a4 ♕d8 11 ♗f4 ♗e7 12 g4 ♘h4= Möhring– Uhlmann, East Germany 1982) 9 ... ♗b4+ 10 ♗d2 (the game is also roughly equal in the event of 10 ♔f1 ♕d8 11 ♗g5 [*11 g4 ♘h4 12 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 13 ♗f4 f6! 14*]

♗g2 fe 15 de 0–0 with a good position; Kupreichik–Lputian, Blagoveshchensk 1988] 11 ... ♗e7 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 ♕d2 0–0 14 g3 ♗d7= Camilleri–Uhlmann, Raach Z 1969) 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♗c3 b5! 12 a3 ♗xc3+ 13 ♘xc3 b4 14 ab ♕xb4 15 ♗b5 ♗d7= Kupreichik–Ulibin, Moscow GMA 1989.

6 ...   ♗d7?!

The major question that Black has to answer is whether to permit 7 b4!?. If you don't think b2–b4 is dangerous, you have the choice between 6 ... ♘h6 and the move actually played. If your aim is not to allow White that possibility, your choice is between 6 ... a5 and 6 ... c4. Personally I would not repeat 6 ... ♗d7. Let us see what happens after Black's other moves:

(a) **6 ... ♘h6!?** (the knight is heading for f5, but unlike 6 ... ♘ge7 this move doesn't block the dark-squared bishop) 7 b4 cd 8 cd (in Rogers–Velimirović, Vrsac 1987, White acquired a plus with 8 ♗xh6!? gh 9 cd ♗d7 10 ♗e2 a5 11 b5 ♘e7 12 ♘c3±, but Black's play can be strengthened; for example 9 ... ♖g8!? is worth considering) 8 ... ♘f5 9 ♗b2 (the game Romanishin–Lputian, Erevan 1988, ended quickly with 9 ♗e3 f6! 10 b5 ♘xe5! 11 de ♘xe3 12 fe ♕xe3+ 13 ♕e2 ♕c1+ 14 ♕d1, and the players agreed a draw) 9 ... ♗e7 (Black also has a fully satisfactory game after 9 ...

♗d7!? 10 ♗e2 [*10 g4!? ♘h6 11 h3 ♖c8 12 ♘c3 ♘a5 13 ♘a4 ♛c6 14 ♘c5 ♘c4 with chances for both sides, Haba–Dizdar, Bundesliga 1991*] 10 ... h5!? 11 h4 ♗e7 12 ♛d2 ♖c8 13 g3 0–0 14 0–0 f6= Landa–Danielyan, Yurmala 1991) 10 ♗d3 a5! 11 ♗xf5 ef 12 ♘c3 ♗e6 13 b5 a4! with a good game; Sveshnikov–Moskalenko, Norilsk 1987.

(b) **6 ... a5** (a very rare move, but by no means a bad one) 7 ♗d3 ♗d7 8 0–0 (a better move may be 8 ♗c2!?, with chances of an advantage) 8 ... a4! (it is not good to take the pawn, for in that case the insertion of 6 a3 a5 would clearly benefit White) 9 dc?! ♗xc5 10 ♘bd2 f6 11 ♛e2 ♘ge7 with an excellent position; Dowden–Belyavsky, Lucerne Ol 1982. Of course, White's ninth move was not obligatory, but in any case Belyavsky's idea (8 ... a4) deserves further analysis.

(c) **6 ... c4** (the most thematic rejoinder. With 6 a3 White created a weakness on b3 of his own accord, so why no 'fix' this weakness? The game now enters a lengthy manoeuvring phase. Normally White will gradually prepare a pawn offensive on the kingside, while Black with equal lack of haste organises piece pressure on the queenside; an important part of his plan will be to penetrate his opponent's camp via the a4–d1 diagonal. Although statistically Black achieves quite good results,

it must be observed that if the white pieces are being played by a connoisseur of the variation — such as Sveshnikov — the initiative is usually on his side. Let us now return to the board and see what direction the investigations are taking in this crucial line) 7 ♘bd2 (there is no doing without this move sooner or later. If 7 g3 then apart from 7 ... ♘a5 8 ♘bd2 which transposes, Black can play 7 ... f6!?. For example, 8 ef [*8 ♗h3 fe 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 10 de ♗c5 11 ♛h5+ g6 12 ♛e2 ♗d7= Malanyuk–Uhlmann, Tallinn 1987*] 8 ... ♘xf6 9 ♗g2 [*or 9 ♗h3 ♗d6 10 ♛e2 0–0 11 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 12 ♛xe6+ ♔h8 with compensation for the pawn in S. Arkell–J. Cooper, British Ch 1990*] 9 ... ♗d6 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♛e2! [*11 ♘bd2?! e5! 12 de ♗xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♛e2 ♖e8∓*] 11 ... ♔h8 12 ♘e5, Sax–Uhlmann, Sarajevo 1982; and now in Uhlmann's opinion Black could have equalised with 12 ... ♘d7! 13 f4 ♘dxe5 14 fe ♖xf1+ 15 ♔xf1 ♗e7) 7 ... ♘a5 (though 7 ... f6 was quite playable in reply to 7 g3, in the case of 7 ♘bd2 f6 White acquires an advantage: 8 ♗e2 ♗d7 [*8 ... fe 9 ♘xe5 ♘f6 10 f4 ♗d6 11 ♗h5+! g6 12 ♗f3 0–0 13 ♛e2∓ Pähtz–Uhlmann, East Germany 1986*] 7 0–0 0–0–0 10 b3! cb 11 ♘xb3 ♛c7 12 ♖b1± Sveshnikov–Podolsk 1990). Now White has to decide what to do with his light-squared bishop:

(c1) **8 g3** ♗d7 9 ♗h3 (Black has an easy game after 9 ♗g2 0–0–0 10 0–0 h6 11 ♖e1 ♘e7 12 ♘f1 ♘f5 13 ♘e3 ♘xe3 14 ♖xe3 ♗e7, Clarke–Petrosian, Munich Ol 1958. He also has ways of coping with 9 h4; Klinger–Portisch, Dubai Ol 1986, went 9 ... 0–0–0 10 ♗h3 f5! 11 0–0 [*11 ef!?*] 11 ... ♘h6 12 ♖e1 ♘f7, and Black's position was at least no worse) 9 ... ♘e7 10 0–0–0 h6 11 ♘e1 0–0–0 12 ♘g2 ♔b8 13 ♖b1 ♔a8!? 14 ♔h1 ♘ec6 15 f4 g6 16 ♘e3 h5= Lobron–Hjartarson, Manila IZ 1990.

(c2) **8 ♗e2** ♗d7 9 0–0 ♘e7 10 ♖e1 (another plan involves carrying out b2–b3, for example: 10 ♖b1!? h6 [*or 10 ... ♗b5!? 11 ♘e1 ♘b3 12 ♘xb3 ♗a4 13 ♗f4 ♗xb3 14 ♕d2 ♘c6 15 g3!± Sveshnikov–Ivkov, Sochi 1983*] 11 ♕c2 ♕c7 12 b2 cb 13 ♘xb3 ♗a4 14 ♘fd2 ♘ec6, with an unclear position; Tal–Petrosian, USSR 1956) 10 ... ♕c6!? (practice has also seen 10 ... h6 11 ♖b1 ♗c6 12 ♘f1!? ♕b3!? 13 ♗f4 ♗a4 14 ♕c1 ♕b6 15 ♘3d2, and White has securely defended his queenside, while the kingside play is only just beginning; Sveshnikov–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Riga 1985) 11 ♕c2 ♘c8 12 ♘g5 h6 13 ♘h3 ♘b6 14 ♘f4 0–0–0 15 ♘h5 ♕c7 16 a4! ♗c6 17 ♗d1± Sveshnikov–Eingorn, Palma de Mallorca 1989.

7 b4

If White tries the ruse 7 ♗e2 ♘h6!? 8 b4 cd 9 ♗xh6, Black has

the fitting retort 9 ... d3! 10 ♗xd3 gh 11 0–0 ♗g7 12 ♖e1 0–0, with quite a good position; Sveshnikov–Razuvayev, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989.

7 ... cd

A line that has hardly ever been played in tournaments but nonetheless deserves attention is 7 ... c4 8 a4 f6 9 ♗e2 a5 10 b5 ♘a7 11 ♗a3 0–0–0 12 ♕c1 ♔b8 13 0–0 ♘c8, as in Mellano–Giaccio, Buenos Aires 1991. The queenside position has been stabilised and White's hands are free for active operations on the other wing, yet the black king has already found a safe refuge, the pawn on a4 will soon be attacked by a knight, and in general Black's counterchances are not to be underestimated.

8 cd ♖c8

White has a big advantage after 8 ... ♘ge7?! 9 ♘c3 ♘f5 10 ♘a4 ♕d8 11 ♗b2 ♘h4 (an even more forlorn prospect is 11 ... b6 12 ♖c1 g6 13 ♗a6 ♗h6 14 ♖c3 ♖b8 15 h4, and Black came under pressure on all parts of the board in Zaichik–Dreyev, Lvov 1987) 12 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 13 ♗d3 f5 14 0–0± Unzicker–Gligorić, Stockholm IZ 1952.

9 ♗b2! *(11)*

White is also a little better after 9 ♗e3 (Black had been hoping for 9 ♗e2?!, when after 9 ... a5! 10 b5 ♘xd4! 11 ♘xd4 ♖xc1 12 ♕xc1 ♕xd4 13 ♕c3 ♗c5! 14 0–0 ♕xc3 15 ♘xc3 ♗d4, he picks up the e5-pawn and obtains more

than enough for the exchange; Sveshnikov–Hoang Thang, Chelyabinsk 1990) 9 ... ♘h6 (Black also fails to equalise with 9 ... ♘ge7 10 ♗d3 a6 11 ♕d2 ♘a7 12 ♘c3 ♕c7 13 ♖c1± Grosar–Raicević, Yugoslav Ch 1991) 10 ♗d3 ♘g4 (10 ... ♘f5 deserves further investigation, for example 11 0–0 ♗e7 12 ♗xf5 ef 13 ♘c3 ♗e6 14 ♕d2 0–0 15 h4 ♖fe8 16 ♗g5 a5! and White still has to demonstrate his advantage; Andrienko–Danielyan, Yurmala 1991) 11 0–0 ♘xe3 12 fe g6 13 ♘c3 ♗h6 14 ♘a4± Sveshnikov–Piskov, Bled 1989.
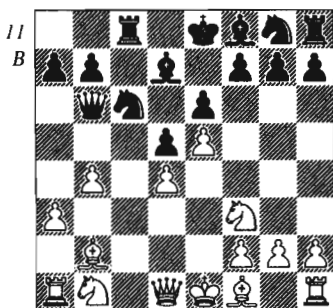
9 ...   ♘a5!?

Black's plan is interesting but not one hundred per cent correct. Unfortunately 9 ... ♘xb4?! doesn't work: 10 ab ♕xb4+ 11 ♕d2 a6 12 ♗a3 ♕b3 13 ♕d3 ♗b4+ 14 ♘bd2±.

10   ♘bd2

Black would equalise after 10 ♗c3?! ♘c4 11 ♗d3 ♗e7 12 0–0 ♘h6 13 ♕e2 ♘f5= Klinger–

Arencibia, World Junior Ch, Gausdal 1986.

10 ...   ♘c4
11   ♘xc4!

With this natural move, White practically refutes Black's entire strategy. In the event of the other capture, 11 ♗xc4 dc 12 ♖c1, Black sacrifices a pawn with 12 ... c3! and equalises after 13 ♗xc3 ♘e7 14 0–0 ♘d5 15 ♘e4 ♗e7 with adequate compensation; Sax–Nogueiras, Lucerne 1989. After the game I discovered the score of Afek–Huzman, Berlin Open 1990, in which White continued with 11 ♗xc4 dc 12 ♗c3? and ended up in the worse position after 12 ... ♘e7 13 ♘e4 ♘d5 14 0–0 ♗e7 15 ♕c2 h6!.

11 ...   dc
12   ♖c1   ♕a6

Inadequate alternatives are 12 ... ♗b5 13 ♘d2!? c3 14 ♖xc3 ♖xc3 15 ♗xc3 ♗xf1 16 ♘xf1! ♘e7 17 ♘e3±, and 12 ... a5 13 ♘d2! ab 14 ♘xc4 ♕d8 15 ab b5 16 ♘d6 ♗xd6 17 ed ♘f6± Sveshnikov–Lputian, Moscow 1991.

13   d5!

The side with the advantage is obliged to attack. White has a sizable lead in development, and the opening of the centre promises Black a great deal of trouble.

13 ...   ed
14   ♕xd5   ♗e6
15   ♕e4   ♘e7
16   ♗e2

Afek brings his last reserves into

the battle. Black is forced to exercise exceptional care to avoid losing at once.

16	...	♗d5
17	♕d4	b5
18	0–0	♕b7
19	♖fd1	♗e6!

The exclamation mark doesn't mean that this move is strong, just that all others are bad. For example, if 19 ... ♗c6, then 20 e6! follows with terrible force.

20	♘g5	♘f5
21	♕f4	♗e7
22	♘xe6	

So far Black has managed to balance on the edge of the precipice, but after the positional move 22 ♘e4!?, followed by an incursion on d6, he would have a hard life ahead of him. The opening of the f-file means that in certain situations he will have some counterplay.
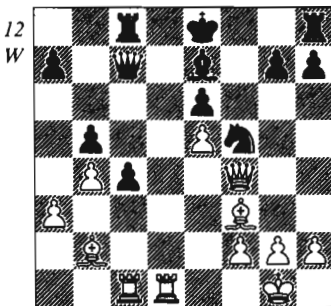
| 22 | ... | fe |
| 23 | ♗f3 | ♕c7 *(12)* |

| 24 | ♗d5! | ♕b6! |

Continuing to dance on the tightrope. After 24 ... ed 25 ♕xf5, Black's position is hopeless.

| 25 | g4! | ♖f8!? |

At least this sets White more problems than 25 ... ♘h4 26 ♗h1. It should also be noted that the players were already in severe time-trouble.

| 26 | ♗h1! | |

Coolly played, and strong! 26 gf ♖xf5 would lead to unnecessary complications.

26	...	♘h4
27	♕g3	♖d8
28	♖xd8+	♕xd8
29	♕e3	

29 ♗c6+?! ♔f7 30 ♗xb5 would give the king time to reach a safe haven with 30 ... ♔g8.

| 29 | ... | a6 |
| 30 | f4!? | |

White decides where to strike the main blow. He just needs to carry out f4–f5, and Black's defences will collapse.

30	...	♔f7!
31	♗e4	♔g8
32	♖f1	♕c8

A last-ditch attempt to thwart his opponent's plans.

| 33 | ♗c3 | a5?! |

Desperately trying to give White at least some token difficulties in the execution of his design.

| 34 | ♕b6 | |

There is nothing wrong with this move, but either 34 ba!? or 34 ♕a7 would have brought the game to its rightful conclusion more quickly.

34	...	ab
35	ab	♕d7
36	♕c6?	

But this is a time-trouble error that will have the most serious consequences. The black queen, which has been forced to defend the pawn on e6 and while doing so was constantly exposed to attack, unexpectedly springs an ambush...

36	...	♕a7+
37	♔h1	♕e3!
38	♗e1	♔h8
39	♗g3	c3!

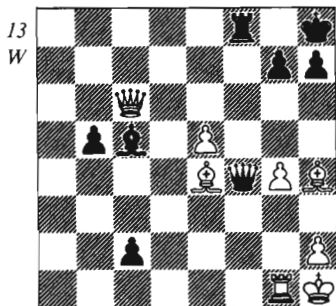For some time Black has been pinning his last hopes on his protected passed pawn, and it justifies them splendidly.

40	♖e1	♕d2
41	♕xe6	♗xb4
42	♗xh4	c2
43	♕c6	

Astonishingly, White is already defenceless. On 43 ♗xc2, Black has 43 ... ♕xf4! with unanswerable threats (Afek).

| 43 | ... | ♕xf4 |
| 44 | ♖g1 | |

The only move.

| 44 | ... | ♗c5!! | *(13)* |

The *coup de grâce*. White cannot defend his king and stop the passed pawn.

| 45 | ♗g5 | |

If 45 ♗g3, then 45 ... ♕e3 is decisive.

45	...	♕xe5!
46	♖e1	♖f2
47	♕c8+	♗f8
48	♗f4	♕xf4
49	♗g2	♖d2
	0–1	

De la Villa–Korchnoi
Pamplona 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3

| 5 | ... | ♗d7 |

A quiet developing move, perhaps a good alternative to 5 ... ♕b6. Black also has a few other moves to choose from:

(a) **5 ... f5?!** (Clearly a faulty decision. The central position is stabilised, and White, who has an advantage in space, will easily be able to find a good plan of attack) 6 ♗e2 c4 (continuing the same unsound strategy) 7 b3 cb 8 ab ♗e7 9 h4 ♘h6 10 ♗xh6 gh 11 ♕c1± Vasyukov–Velimirović, Vrsac 1989.

(b) **5 ... f6** (it is better to play this move after White has committed his king's bishop) 6 ♗b5! ♗d7 7 0-0 ♕b6 8 ♗xc6 9 ef! ♘xf6 10 ♘e5 ♗d6 11 dc! ♗xc5 12 ♗g5 with a large plus; Nimzowitsch–Levenfish, Karlsbad 1911.

(c) **5 ... ♘h6** 6 dc (better 6 ♗d3,

which Black should probably answer with 6 ... cd 7 cd ♘f5, transposing into the 5 ... ♘ge7 line which we shall examine presently) 6 ... ♗xc5 7 ♗xh6 (Black also has an excellent game after 7 b4 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 [*8 ♗xh6!?*] 8 ... ♘g4 9 ♗f4 f6! 10 b5 ♘cxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 ♗xe5 fe 13 ♕h5+ ♔f8, Rozentalis–Kuporosov, Budapest 1990) 7 ... gh 8 ♗d3 (8 b4!? ♗e7 9 b5, with an unclear position) 8 ... f6! 9 b4 ♗f8 10 b5 ♘xe5 11 ♘xe5 fe 12 ♕h5+ ♔d7 13 ♕xe5 ♖g8∓ Halifman–Kaidanov, Moscow 1987.

(d) **5 ... ♘ge7** (Black doesn't want to waste a tempo on 5 ... ♗d7, and aims to bring his knight to f5, acutely increasing the pressure against d4), and now there are three moves White normally employs:

(d1) **6 a3** ♘f5 (better than 6 ... cd 7 cd ♘f5 8 ♘c3 ♗e7 9 ♗b5! ♗d7 10 ♗a4 ♕b6 11 ♘e2, and having securely defended his centre, White holds the initiative; Romanishin–Razuvayev, Moscow 1985) 7 b4 cd 8 cd ♕b6, and play transposes into the variation 5 ... ♕b6 6 a3 ♘h6, examined in the notes to Afek–Psakhis.

(d2) **6 ♘a3** cd 7 cd ♘f5 8 ♘c2 ♘b4 (Black has to be careful; one mistake can be quite sufficient to bring about a quick end to the game. For example, 8 ... ♗e7 9 ♗d3 0-0? [*9 ... ♕b6!±*] 10 g4! ♘h4 11 ♘xh4 ♗xh4 12 g5! ♗xg5 13 ♕h5 h6 14 ♖g1 with a decisive

attack in Sveshnikov–Farago, Hastings 1984/5. Nor does Black equalise with 8 ... ♕a5+ 9 ♗d2 ♕b6 10 ♗c3! ♗e7 11 ♗d3 a5 12 ♘e3 g6 13 0-0± Sveshnikov–Ortega, Sochi 1987. More complex play, though nonetheless favourable to White, arises from 8 ... ♕b6 9 ♗d3 ♗b4+ 10 ♔f1 ♗e7 11 h4! [*a significant improvement on White's play in Short–Vaganian, Montpellier C 1985, which continued 11 g3 ♗d7 12 ♔g2 ♖c8! 13 ♗xf5 ef 14 b3 0-0 with a good position for Black*] 11 ... h5 [*virtually forced; after 11 ... ♗d7?! 12 g4! ♘h6 13 ♖g1 ♘g8 14 ♖b1± the knight on g8 can only be an object of pity, Rohde–Spraggett, New York Open 1986*] 12 g3 a5 13 ♔g2 ♗d7 14 ♗xf5 ef 15 ♗g5± Malanyuk–Lputian, USSR Ch. Kiev 1986] 9 ♘xb4 ♗xb4+ 10 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 11 ♕xd2 ♕b6 12 ♗d3 ♗d7 13 ♗xf5 ef 14 0-0 0-0 and White can only count on a minimal plus; Psakhis–Chernin, USSR Ch, Riga 1985.

(d3) **6 ♗d3** (probably the most unpleasant move for Black to meet) 6 ... cd (a worse choice is 6 ... ♘f5 7 0-0 cd 8 ♗xf5 ef 9 ♘xd4! ♗e6 10 ♗e3 ♗e7 11 f4± Kupreichik–Legky, Lvov 1984. 7 dc!? is also worth considering) 7 cd ♘f5 8 ♗xf5 ef 9 ♘c3 (theory has been sceptical about 9 0-0 on account of 9 ... ♗e7 10 ♘c3 g5, but the game Blatny–Moldovan, Stara Zagora Z 1990, cast doubt on this verdict; play went 11 ♘e1

f4 12 h4! h6 13 ♕h5! gh 14 ♗xf4 ♗e6 15 ♗e3±) 9 ... ♗e6 (quite a good idea is 9 ... ♗b4!? 10 ♗d2 ♗xc3 11 ♗xc3 ♗e6 12 ♕d2 a5! 13 a4 h6, with good chances of equalising; Sveshnikov–Chernin, Sochi 1986) 10 ♘e2 (White's queenside is weakened by 10 a3 ♗e7 11 h4 h6 12 ♗f4 ♘a5 13 ♔f1 ♕d7= Benjamin–Vaganian, Wijk aan Zee 1989. Again the plan of castling is worth considering: 10 0–0!? ♗e7 11 ♘e1! [*11 ♘e2 g5! 12 ♘e1 f4 13 f3 ♕b6 14 ♔h1 ♗f5∓ Teschner–Portisch, Monte Carlo 1969*] 11 ... ♕b6 12 ♘e2 0–0 13 ♔h1! a5 14 f4∓ Blatny–Machulsky, Alma-Ata 1989) 10 ... ♗e7 11 h4 h6 12 ♘f4 ♖c8 13 ♖h3 ♔d7 (13 ... g6!?) 14 h5! ♔c7 15 ♖g3± Nun–Zaichik, Polanica Zdroj 1989.

(d4) The other bishop move, **6 ♗e2**, is weaker; Black has a promising game after 6 ... ♘f5 7 g4!? ♘h4 8 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 9 ♗e3 ♗d7 10 0–0 (10 ♘d2?! cd 11 ♘f3 ♕xg4!) 10 ... f6 11 f4 fe 12 de g5!

6 ♗e2 *(14)*

The most usual reply, but of course not the only one. White completes his development and aims to tackle the broader strategic problems afterwards. Some other continuations are also seen:

(a) **6 a3** (unlikely to be the most dangerous move in the position) 6 ... f6!? (6 ... c4 is also more favourable for Black than in the line with 5 ... ♕b6 6 a3, because now the b6-square is available to

a knight as well as the queen. For example, 7 ♗f4 [*or 7 b4 cb 8 ♕xb3 ♘a5 9 ♕c2 b5! 10 ♗d3 h6 11 0–0 ♖c8, and Black has nothing to complain about; Halifman–Bareyev, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987*] 7 ... ♘ge7 [*Black played the opening very strongly in Sveshnikov–Gulko, USSR 1981: 7 ... ♕b6 8 ♕c2 f6!? 9 ♘bd2?! g5! 10 ♗g3 g4 11 ♘h4 de 12 fe ♘h6! and already Black's position deserves preference. Of course, White's play can be strengthened; for example 9 h4!?*] 8 h4 ♘c8 9 ♘bd2 h6 10 g3 ♘b6 11 ♗h3 ♗e7= Halifman–Yusupov, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987. Another quite good line is 6 ... ♘ge7 7 ♗d3 [*7 b4 cd 8 cd ♘f5 9 ♗b2 ♖c8 10 ♘bd2 ♕b6 11 ♘b3 a5! 12 g4 ♘h6 13 b5 a4∓ Legky-M. Gurevich, Lvov 1984; or 9 ... b5!? 10 ♘c3 a6 11 ♗d3 g6 12 0–0 h5 13 ♘e2 ♗e7= Grosar–Hansen, Vidmar Memorial 1991*] 7 ... cd 8 cd ♘f5 9 ♗xf5 ef 10 ♘c3 ♗e6 11 b4 ♗e7 12 h4 h6= Marjanović–Abramović, Yugoslavia 1985) 7 ♗d3 (Dolmatov suggests 7 ef!? gf 8 ♘h4 ♕e7 9 ♕h5+ ♕f7, with a complex position. A weaker line is 7 b4?! fe 8 dc e4 9 ♘d4 ♘f6 10 ♗f4 ♗e7 11 ♗b5 0–0∓ Popchev-Dolmatov, Polanica Zdroj 1987) 7 ... fe 8 de ♕c7 9 ♗f4 0–0–0 10 ♘bd2 ♘h6! 11 ♕e2 ♘f7, with an excellent game; S. Arkell–King, London 1989.

(b) **6 ♗d3 ♖c8!?** (or 6 ... cd 7 cd ♕b6, transposing into normal lines) 7 a3 (in Bjelajac–Wilder,

Belgrade GMA 1988, Black quickly gained the upper hand after 7 dc ♗xc5 8 0-0 ♘ge7 9 ♗f4?! ♘g6 10 ♗g3 0-0 11 h4 f5! 12 h5 f4!∓) 7 ... cd 8 cd ♕b6 9 ♗c2 g5!!? (a brilliant idea, the actual purpose of which is to induce the weakening of g3) 10 h3 ♘xd4! 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5 12 ♘e2 (not 12 ♘f3 ♗xf2+ 13 ♔e2 ♗g3! 14 ♖f1 ♖xc2+!) 12 ... ♗xf2+ 13 ♔f1 f6, with very sharp play; Sveshnikov–Chernin, USSR Ch, Riga 1985.

(c) **6 dc** (at first sight the surrender of the centre looks dubious, but this is a move of Sveshnikov's, so it is worth studying) 6 ... ♗xc5 7 b4 (at the cost of seriously weakening his queenside, White expels the black pieces from their ideal posts. The idea is risky, but if events proceed quietly White cannot count on a plus. For example, 7 ♗d3 ♘ge7 [*7 ... f6!? 8 b4 ♗e7 9 b5 ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 fe 11 ♕h5+ ♔f8 12 ♕xe5 ♗f6, with unclear play; Sveshnikov–Savon, Lvov Z 1978*] 8 0-0 ♘g6 9 ♖e1 ♕c7 10 ♗xg6 fg! 11 ♗f4 0-0 12 ♗g3 ♘e7 with a good position; Sveshnikov–Balashov, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976) 7 ... ♗e7!? (with a view to ... f7–f6. Another possibility is 7 ... ♗b6 8 b5 ♘a5 9 ♗d3 ♘e7 10 0-0 ♕c7 [*or 10 ... ♖c8 11 a4 ♘g6 12 ♖e1 f6 13 ♖a2 0-0, and Black was close to equality in Sveshnikov–Naumkin, Moscow 1989*] 11 a4 ♘g6 12 ♖e1, as in Sveshnikov–Popović, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989; and now 12 ... f6 was correct) 8 b5 ♘a5 9 ♗d3 ♕c7 10 ♗f4 ♘c4 11 0-0?! ♗xb5 12 ♘d4 ♗d7 13 ♕g4 g5! 14 ♗xc4 h5, and Black seized the initiative in Sveshnikov–Ulibin, Chelyabinsk 1990. Knowing what strong principles this Russian Grandmaster has, I am sure this game will not be the last one with 6 dc.
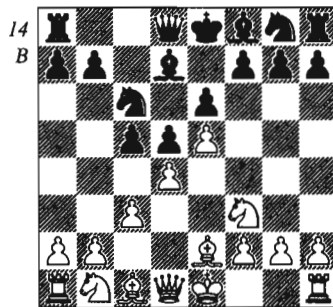
6 ... ♘ge7

A more radical way to fight against White's pawn centre is 6 ... f6!?, a move which sharpens the play at once. There can follow 7 0-0 (this quiet move is best. In Kupreichik–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Vilnius 1980, White tried to obtain more from the position but landed in severe trouble after 7 c4?! cd 8 cd ed 9 ef ♘xf6 10 ♘xd4 ♗c5 11 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♘d2 ♕b6∓. Without having had to play any particularly difficult moves, Black is in full possession of the initiative) 7 ... fe (Black has somewhat the worse position after 7 ... ♕c7 8 ♗f4

♘ge7 9 ♘a3!? [*9 ♗d3 f5 10 ♖e1 c4 11 ♗c2 ♘c6=*] 9 ... a6 10 ♗g3 ♘f5 11 ef ♘xg3 12 f7+ ♔xf7 13 fg; Bastian–Lobron, Bundesliga 1990) 8 ♘xe5!? (stronger than 8 de ♕c7 9 ♘a3 a6 10 ♗f4 ♘h6! 11 ♘c2 ♘f7 12 c4 d4, and Black is in good shape; Kupreichik–Gulko, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976) 8 ... ♘xe5 9 de ♕c7 (Black has also tried 9 ... ♗c6 10 c4!? [*in Ivanchuk–Short, Novi Sad Ol 1990, Black equalised after 10 ♗d3 ♕d7 11 ♗g5 ♘h6 12 ♘d2 ♘f7 13 ♗h4 ♗e7=*] 10 ... ♘e7 11 ♗g4! ♕d7 12 ♘c3 dc 13 ♕e2 ♘f5 14 ♕xc4 ♘d4 15 a4, and White had the initiative in Sax–Speelman, Hastings 1990/1) 10 c4! (White is compelled to play energetically. An inferior choice is 10 ♗f4?! ♘e7 11 ♘d2 0–0–0 12 ♘f3 h6 13 h4 g5! 14 hg ♘g6∓ Holmov–Naumkin, USSR 1983) 10 ... 0–0–0!? (not 10 ... d4 11 ♗f4 ♘e7 12 ♘d2 ♘f5 13 ♗d3 ♗e7 14 ♘e4 0–0 15 ♕g4, and having blocked the centre of his own accord and presented White with the crucial e4-square, Black was left without any counterplay in Zaitsev–Tarjan, Quito 1977. The text move is more precise than 10 ... ♕xe5 11 ♗h5+! g6 12 ♗f3 0–0–0 13 ♖e1 ♕d6 14 ♘c3!, when the weakness of Black's kingside gives White additional possibilities; Romanishin–Ivanchuk, Irkutsk 1986) 11 cd ♕xe5 12 ♗f3 ed! (12 ... ♗d6?! 13 g3 ed 14 ♗f4 ♕f6 15 ♘c3 ♗c6 16 ♘xd5 ♕d4 occurred in

Sveshnikov–Psakhis, Sochi 1984; by playing 17 ♕c2! White could have acquired a plus) 13 ♖e1 ♕d6 14 g3!? (or 14 ♘c3 ♗c6 15 ♖e6!? ♕c7, with unclear play) 14 ... ♘f6 15 ♗f4 ♕a6! 16 ♘c3 d4, Sveshnikov–Vaiser, Sochi 1984. White has good compensation for the pawn, but not more.

7 ♘a3

A stock manoeuvre; the knight heads for c2, where it will not only securely defend the d-pawn but also be ready at any moment to join in a kingside attack. Alternatively, considering that sooner or later Black will have to clarify the central pawn position with an exchange on d4, White may postpone the development of this knight until the c3-square is freed for it, and simply castle. Thus, 7 0–0 (7 h4!?, starting the kingside offensive at once, is also interesting, for instance 7 ... cd 8 cd ♘f5 9 g4 ♘h6 10 ♗xh6 gh 11 g5! with the initiative; Prie–Kindermann, Uzes 1990. It is advisable for Black to delay resolving the central tension and play the waiting move 7 ... ♖c8!?) 7 ... cd (highly complex play results from 7 ... ♘g6; Black refrains from the central exchange for the time being, and prepares the ... f7–f6 break. There can follow 8 ♗e3 [*or 8 g3!? ♗e7 9 h4 cd 10 cd 0–0 11 h5 ♘h8 12 h6 g6 13 ♘bd2 f6= Hjartarson–Korchnoi, Amsterdam 1991; the knight comes back into play via f7*] 8 ... ♗e7 [*the immediate capture*

*on d4 benefits White: 8 ... cd 9 cd
♗e7 10 ♘c3 0-0 11 ♗d3 ♗e8
12 ♖c1, and the white pieces are
very harmoniously placed; Sax–
Korchnoi, Wijk aan Zee 1991]* 9
g3 *[the chances are about equal
after 9 ♘e1 0-0 10 f4 ♕b6 11 ♕d2
cd 12 cd f6 13 ♘f3 fe 14 fe ♖ac8;
Kupreichik–P. Nikolić, Ljubljana
1989]* 9 ... cd 10 cd f6 11 ef
♗xf6 12 ♘c3 0-0 13 ♕d2 ♘ge7 14
♗d3 h6!= Romanishin–P. Nikolić,
Leningrad 1987. Nor is it simple
for White to acquire an advantage
after 7 ... ♘f5 8 ♗d3! ♘h4 *[better
than 8 ... cd 9 ♗xf5 ef 10 ♘xd4!
♗e7 11 ♕b3! ♗c8 12 f4 0-0 13
♗e3∓ Kupreichik–Kosten, Torcy
1989]* 9 ♘xh4 *[mind-bending
complications arise after 9 ♘g5!?
cd 10 cd ♘xd4 11 ♕h5 ♘g6 12
♘c3 ♘xe5 13 ♘xe6 ♘ef3+! 14
gf ♗xe6, and the consequences
are unclear; Kupreichik–Levitt,
Badenweiler 1990]* 9 ... ♗xh4 10
♗e3 ♕d8! *[a considerably weaker
line is 10 ... cd 11 cd ♕d8 12 ♘c3
♗e7 13 f4 with advantage; Blatny–
Ruxton, Oakham 1990]* 11 ♘d2
♕b6 12 ♘f3 c4 13 ♗c2 ♕xb2 14
♕d2 ♕b6, and it is up to White
to show that he has full compen-
sation for the sacrificed pawn;
Vasyukov–Levitt, Graested 1990)
8 cd ♘f5 9 ♘c3 ♗e7 (Blatny–
Ghinda, Stara Zagora Z 1990,
went 9 ... ♖c8!? 10 ♗e3 ♗e7 11
♗d3, and Black would have been
close to equality after 11 ... ♘xe3
12 fe 0-0) 10 g4! (White played
passively in Kamsky–Kasparov,*

New York 1990: 10 a3 ♖c8 11
♗f4?! g5! 12 ♗e3 g4 13 ♘e1
h5 14 ♘c2 f6, and the World
Champion seized the initiative) 10
... ♘h4 11 ♘xh4 ♗xh4 12 ♗e3
0-0 13 f4, and White's position is
clearly preferable; Nunn–Anand,
Munich 1991.

   7   ...   ♘g6!?

Another method involves more
traditional moves: 7 ... cd 8 cd
♘f5 9 ♘c2 ♕b6 (showing that
Black is aiming for complex pos-
itions. He also has 9 ... ♘b4!? 10
♘xb4 *[10 ♘e3 ♘xe3 11 fe ♗e7
12 a3 ♘c6 13 b4 a6 14 ♖b1 ♘a7!?
15 a4 ♘c6= Spassky–Korchnoi,
Belgrade 1978]* 10 ... ♗xb4+ 11
♗d2 ♕a5 *[Anand recommends 11
... ♕b6!?]* 12 a3! *[an improvement
on the game Sieiro–M. Gurevich,
Havana 1986, in which Black
achieved equality after 12 ♗xb4
♕xb4+ 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2
♘e7! 15 ♖hc1 f6! 16 ♖c5 ♔d8;
though White has a certain amount
of activity, it is neutralised by the
pressure against the d4- and e5-
pawns]* 12 ... ♗xd2+ 13 ♕xd2
♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 f6 15 ♖ac1 ♘e7
16 b4 ♔d8 17 ♗d3± Anand–M.
Gurevich, Manila IZ 1990) 10
0-0 a5 (Black prepares counter-
play on the queenside. Practice
has also seen 10 ... ♘a5!? 11 g4!
♘e7 12 ♘fe1 ♗b5 13 ♘d3 h5! 14
gh ♘f5, with quite good counter-
chances; Sveshnikov–Dolmatov,
USSR 1988) 11 g4! (the slow 11
b3?! ♖c8 12 ♗f4 ♘b4 13 ♘ce1
♗b5 14 ♖c1 ♖xc1 15 ♗xb5+

♕xb5 16 ♕xc1 ♘c6 hands the initiative over to Black; Afek–Gulko, Lugano 1988) 11 ... ♘fe7 12 ♘fe1 h5 13 gh ♘f5 14 ♗e3 f6 with a complex game, in which both sides have their trumps; Sveshnikov–Razuvayev, Moscow 1985.

8 h4

At the sight of a knight on g6, White can rarely resist the pleasure of chasing it with a quick advance of the h-pawn.
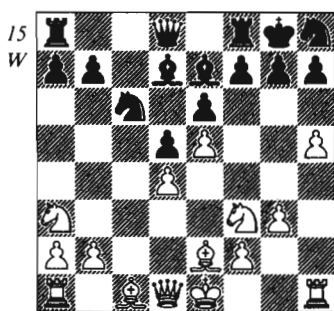
8 ... ♗e7

More precise than 8 ... cd 9 cd ♗b4+ 10 ♔f1 h6 11 ♘c2 ♗e7 12 h5 ♘f8 13 b4, when White has a large spatial advantage; Sveshnikov–Gulko, Tashkent 1984.

9 g3

9 h5 ♘h4 is not very dangerous for Black.

9	...	cd
10	cd	0–0
11	h5	♘h8 *(15)*

The superb master of the French Defence utilises all sixty-four squares of the chessboard! Of course, on h8 the knight is scarcely occupying a very active post, but it doesn't plan to stay there for long; once ... f7–f6 is played, it will go to f7 and take a very active part in the fight.

12	♘c2	f6
13	ef	♗xf6
14	b3	♘f7
15	♗b2	♕a5+!

Korchnoi invites his opponent to go into an ending which will not be unfavourable to Black, in view of the weakness of the d4-pawn.

16 ♕d2?!

The invitation is accepted — unwisely. 16 ♔f1! would more or less have maintained the balance.

16	...	♕xd2+
17	♘xd2	♘d6
18	♗g4	♖fc8

The second unpleasant consequence of the ill-considered queen exchange — the first, as already mentioned, is the weakness of d4 — is that Black seizes the c-file.

19	0–0	♖c7
20	♖fe1	♖ac8
21	♔g2	

Of course not 21 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 22 ♖xe6, on account of 22 ... ♘d8! 23 ♖xd6 ♖xc2, and Black wins. 21 ♖xe6 ♘f7 is also in Black's favour.

21	...	♔f7
22	♖ad1	a5
23	♘f3	♘e7
24	♘e3	♘e4

The initiative is clearly in Black's hands, though it must be

said that White's position is very solid.

| 25 | ♖c1 | b5 |
| 26 | ♗h3?! | |

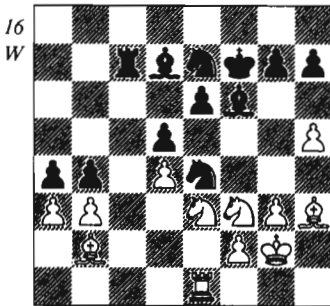Permitting the blockade of his queenside; it was essential to prevent this with 26 a3!

| 26 | ... | b4 |
| 27 | ♖xc7 | |

27 a3 a4 leads to much the same thing.

| 27 | ... | ♖xc7 |
| 28 | a3 | a4! *(16)* |

16
W

A good few books have been written about Korchnoi's prowess in the final phase of the game, and this game will surely be included in the next volume. With a temporary pawn sacrifice, Black creates a strong passed pawn which decides the issue.

| 29 | ba | b3 |
| 30 | a5 | ♘c6 |

All Black's pieces hurry to the aid of the bold foot-soldier.

| 31 | ♖c1 | ♚e7 |
| 32 | a4 | |

Even after the better 32 ♘f1 ♚d8 33 a6 ♘a5 34 ♖xc7 ♚xc7 35 ♘fd2 ♘xd2 36 ♘xd2 ♘c4 37 ♘xc4 dc, it would be very difficult for White to save the game.

32	...	♚d8
33	a6	♘b4
34	♖xc7	♚xc7
35	a7	♚b7

Again a tragedy of one tempo! The black king arrives in time, and the white pawns on the a-file will be its victims.

36	♘e1	♚xa7
37	f3	♘g5
38	♗g4	♚a6
39	♗c3	♗xa4
40	♘d1	

After 40 ♗xb4 b2 there is no stopping the pawn.

| 40 | ... | ♚b5 |
| 41 | ♚f2 | ♚c4 |

0–1

4 Tarrasch Variation: 3 ... ♘c6 and others

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2 *(17)*	
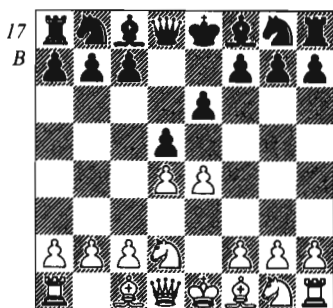
Dr Tarrasch's move, which has been employed with success for over 100 years and has thereby withstood the severest test — the test of time. With 3 ♘d2, White is not going all out for a large advantage (which is what he aims for with 3 ♘c3), but is attempting first and foremost to limit the counterplay which his opponent would have reason to expect after (for example) 3 ♘c3 ♗b4. It may be counted among the defects of this move that White forgoes a more intensive pressurisation of the centre, and thus gives Black the opportunity to assert himself there immediately with 3 ... c5. However, I hope you are not planning to play that way against Karpov; play against the isolated pawn is a major speciality of the ex-World-Champion.

We shall first examine some fairly rare continuations for Black. An analysis of the most thematic lines (3 ... ♘f6 and 3 ... c5) will be given in subsequent chapters.

A. Sokolov–Vaganian
Biel IZ 1985

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2

3	...	♘c6

This move is far from new. As far back as the 1920s, it was played from time to time by that chess innovator, Aron Nimzowitsch. Later, at the end of the forties and in the early fifties, it became known to a wide circle of players and was incorporated in the

repertoire of Botvinnik and Petrosian, but never became really popular. In recent years, the attention of theorists has been attracted much more strongly by other possibilities for Black, and 3 ... ♘c6 has remained a 'poor relation' in theory and in practice. It can occasionally be seen in the games of Vaganian, Rogers and Kovacević, but it is only Drasko, an International Master from Yugoslavia, who risks playing this way constantly. To be perfectly frank, 3 ... ♘c6 is a move I don't much like, since in many variations of the French the most natural and effective counterplay for Black consists in undermining White's strong pawn centre with ... c7–c5; and 3 ... ♘c6 means, at best, that this possibility must be left until later. However, among the positive features of this variation we may count the complexity of the resulting positions and the relative lack of study devoted to them. White usually replies with 4 c3 or 4 ♘gf3, both of which promise him an opening advantage. First, however, a word about some even less frequent Black third move continuations:

(a) **3 ... ♘e7** 4 ♘gf3 ♘d7 (or 4 ... g6?! 5 e5 ♗g7 6 b4±) 5 ♗d3 c5 6 ed ♘xd5 7 0–0 ♗e7 8 ♘e4 with a slight edge (*ECO*).

(b) **3 ... f5?!** (is it worth weakening e5 like this?) 4 ef ef 5 ♘df3! (the other knight will be excellently placed on e2. A weaker line is 5 ♘gf3 ♘f6 6 c4 ♗d6 7 cd 0–0 8 ♗e2 ♘xd5 9 0–0 ♔h8= Geller–Benko, Curaçao C 1962) 5 ... ♘f6 6 ♗d3 ♗d6 7 ♘e2 0–0 8 0–0 ♘e4 (8 ... ♘c6!? 9 c3±) 9 c4! c6 10 ♕b3 ♔h8 11 ♘c3± Psakhis–Shilov, USSR 1978.

(c) **3 ... ♗e7** 4 ♘gf3 (it is also worth considering 4 ♗d3 c5 [*4 ... ♘c6 5 ♘gf3 ♘b4!? 6 ♗e2 de 7 ♘xe4 ♘f6 8 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 9 0–0± Radulov–Romanishin, Leningrad 1977*] 5 dc ♘d7 [*5 ... ♗xc5 6 ♘gf3 ♘f6 7 e5 ♘g4 8 0–0± *] 6 ed ed 7 ♘b3 ♘xc5 [*there is no point in turning the nominal pawn sacrifice into a real one: 7 ... ♘gf6?! 8 ♗e3 0–0 9 ♘e2 a6 10 ♕d2 ♖e8 11 0–0± Popović–Dizdar, Yugoslav Ch 1991*] 8 ♘f3 ♘f6 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗e3 ♘ce4 11 ♗e2± Adams–Lputian, Manila IZ 1990; also 4 e5 c5 5 dc [*5 c3!?; 5 ♕g4!?*] 5 ... ♘c6 6 ♘gf3 ♕c7 7 ♗b5 ♗xc5 8 ♘b3 ♗b6 9 0–0 ♘ge7 10 ♗f4 with a minimal edge for White, G. Kuzmin–Romanishin, Leningrad 1977) 4 ... ♘f6 5 e5 (the game is equal after 5 ♗d3 c5! 6 dc [*6 e5!? ♘fd7 7 c3*] 6 ... de 7 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 8 ♗xe4 ♕xd1+ 9 ♔xd1 ♗xc5 10 ♔e2 ♘d7= Zakharov–Romanishin, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976) 5 ... ♘fd7 (5 ... ♘e4 has also been seen; 6 ♗d3 ♘xd2 7 ♗xd2 0–0 [*7 ... b6!?*] 8 h4! h6 9 c3 ♘d7 10 ♘g5! c5 11 ♕h5 with the initiative, Chandler–Short, Brighton 1981) 6 ♗d3 (6 c4!? is interesting; 6 ... dc 7 ♗xc4 ♘b6 8 ♗b3 ♘d5 9 0–0 b6 10

♘e4± Holmov–Suetin, Moscow 1983) 6 ... c5 7 c3 b6 (7 ... ♘c6 transposes into the variation 3 ... ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7 5 ♘gf3 c5 6 c3 ♘c6 7 ♗d3 ♗e7) 8 ♕e2 cd 9 cd a5 10 ♘f1 ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 12 ♘g3 ♖a7 13 h4± Ehlvest–Lputian, Manila IZ 1990.

(d) **3 ... b6** 4 ♘gf3 (White also retains some chances of the better game after the simple 4 ed ed 5 ♘df3!? ♗d6 6 ♗d3 ♗g4 7 c3 ♘d7 8 ♕c2, Miles–Nikolac, Wijk aan Zee 1979. 4 c3 is also playable, for instance 4 ... ♗b7 [*4 ... de!? 5 ♘xe4 ♗b7 6 ♗b5+! ♘d7 7 ♕e2 ♘gf6 8 ♘xf6 gf 9 ♘f3 ♗d6 10 0–0 c6= Yudasin–Gulko, USSR Ch, Frunze 1981*] 5 ♗b5+ c6 6 ♗d3 c5! 7 e5 ♘c6 8 ♘df3 ♕d7 9 ♘e2 f6 with a roughly equal game) 4 ... ♘f6 (White has an easy game after 4 ... ♗b7 5 ♗b5+! c6 6 ♗d3 ♗e7 7 0–0 de 8 ♘xe4 ♘f6 9 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 10 ♗f4 0–0 11 ♕e2± Kasparov–Agdestein, Tilburg 1989) 5 e5 (a heavy manoeuvring game typical of the French arises after 5 ♗b5+ c6 6 ♗d3 c5! 7 e5 ♘fd7 8 c3 ♗a6) 5 ... ♘fd7 (5 ... ♘e4!? is hardly ever encountered in practice) 6 c3 (White achieves little with 6 c4 ♗b7 7 cd ♗xd5 8 ♗c4 ♗e7 9 0–0 c6 10 ♕e2 0–0, and Black is close to equalising; A. Sokolov–Gulko, Moscow 1983) 6 ... ♗e7 7 h4!? ♗a6 8 h5 c5 9 ♖h3 cd 10 cd was played in Lobron–Qi Jinqxuan, Hannover 1983; White has the initiative on the kingside,

but Black's position remains very solid.

(e) **3 ... a6** 4 e5 (the main continuation, 4 ♘gf3 c5, will be examined under 3 ... c5 4 ♘gf3 a6) 4 ... c5 (4 ... ♗d7, a move frequently chosen by Eingorn, deserves attention. For example, 5 ♘gf3 [*5 c4!? dc 6 ♗xc4 ♗b5 7 ♘e2 ♘c6 8 ♕b3 ♗xc4 9 ♘xc4 ♗b4+ with quite a good game for Black; Dvoiris–Dreyev, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989*] 5 ... ♗b5 6 ♗e2 ♗xe2 7 ♕xe2 c5 8 dc ♗xc5 9 0–0 ♘e7 10 c4! ♘bc6 11 ♖d1± Lau–Eingorn, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989) 5 c3 ♘c6 6 ♘df3 ♕a5!? (the alternative is good for White: 6 ... ♘ge7 7 ♗d3 cd 8 cd ♘f5 9 ♘e2 ♗e7 10 0–0 ♕b6 11 a3 ♗d7 12 ♗c2± Dvoiris–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989) 7 ♘e2 ♗d7 8 ♗f4 ♖c8 9 a3 ♕b6!? with equality; Meduna–Korchnoi, Palma de Mallorca 1970.

4 c3

This gives Black the opportunity for a freeing advance in the centre, but nonetheless contains a fair amount of poison.

4 ... e5

The most popular move in this position, but by no means the only one. A few words about the alternatives:

(a) **4 ... ♘f6** is a 'speciality' of Rogers. Black self-confidently provokes the following central pawn advance: 5 e5 ♘d7 6 ♗d3 f5!? (White obtains a fierce attack after 6 ... ♗e7 7 ♘df3 0–0? [*it*

was essential to play 7 ... f6 at once] 8 h4! f6 9 ♘g5! fg 10 hg [*an even stronger method is 10 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 11 ♕h5+ ♔g8 12 hg*] 10 ... g6 11 ♖xh7! as in Dahne–Bostra, West Germany 1967) 7 g4! (White immediately takes the bull by the horns, exploiting Black's backward development. He can also develop quietly with 7 ♘e2 ♘b6 8 ♘f4 g6 9 h4 ♕e7 10 ♕f3 ♕f7 11 ♕g3 ♖g8 12 ♘f3± Klinger–Rogers, Biel 1986) 7 ... ♘dxe5!? (Black is no coward! After 7 ... g6 8 gf ef 9 ♗xf5 ♘dxe5 10 ♗xc8 ♘d3+ 11 ♔f1, White has a decisive advantage) 8 de ♘xe5, and now instead of 9 ♗e2?! fg 10 ♘b3 ♗d6, which led to unclear play in Watson–Rogers, Bor 1986, analysis by Watson indicates a plus for White after 9 ♘df3! ♘xd3+ 10 ♕xd3 fg 11 ♘e5 ♗d6 12 f4.

(b) **4 ... f5?!** 5 ef! (simplest, but White also has the better chances if he closes the centre, for example 5 e5 ♘h6 6 ♘df3 ♘f7 7 h4 ♗d7 8 ♗d3 ♗e7 9 ♘e2 ♘a5 10 ♘f4± Caplinski–Gusev, USSR 1967. Black has dug himself in quite well, but White remains in control) 5 ... ef 6 ♗b5 (in an old game Keres–Petrosian, USSR Ch, Moscow 1950, White stood better after 6 ♗d3 ♗d6 7 ♘e2 ♘ge7 8 ♘f3 0–0 9 ♕c2 ♕e8 10 ♗d2 ♗d7 11 0–0–0. Black has no compensation for the weaknesses in the e-file) 6 ... ♘f6 7 ♘e2 ♗d6 8 0–0 0–0 9 ♘f3 ♗d7 10 ♗f4 ♘e7

11 ♗d3 ♗e8 12 ♕b3 occurred in Jansa–Rogers, Kragujevac 1985. White's advantage, though not very large, is distinct.

(c) **4 ... de** (reminiscent of the Rubinstein Variation, but what is the knight doing on c6?) 5 ♘xe4 ♘f6 (*ECO* disapproves of 5 ... ♕d5 in view of Keres's recommendation 6 ♗d3 e5 7 ♕e2, and assesses the position as clearly advantageous to White. This verdict was not borne out by the game Yanovsky–Muratov, Moscow 1988, in which after mind-bending complications — 7 ... ♗e6 8 ♘g5 ed 9 ♗e4 ♕d7 10 ♘xe6 fe!? 11 ♕h5+ g6!? 12 ♗xg6+ hg 13 ♕xh8 0–0–0 14 ♗g5 dc! — Black emerged victorious. Hence after 5 ... ♕d5 White must either try to improve on the game just mentioned, or else play the cunning 6 ♘d2, which transposes back to our main game A. Sokolov–Vaganian after 6 ... e5 7 ♘gf3) 6 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 7 ♘f3 h6 8 ♗b5 (8 ♗d3 has also been played: 8 ... ♗d6 9 ♕e2 0–0 10 h4!± Hertel–Blank, GDR 1975) 8 ... ♗d7 9 0–0 (9 ♗xc6?! is considerably weaker: 9 ... ♗xc6 10 ♘e5 ♗xg2 11 ♕a4+ c6 12 ♖g1 ♗d5 13 c4 b5, with an excellent game for Black in Sax–Ljubojević, Hilversum 1973) 9 ... ♗d6 10 ♕e2 0–0–0 11 ♘d2!? ♔b8 12 ♘e4 ♕e7 13 b4, with a powerful initiative; Jansa–Johansen, Dubai Ol 1986.

(d) **4 ... ♘ge7?!** is not a very

effective move, condemning Black to prolonged defence: 5 ♘gf3 g6 6 ♗d3 ♗g7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♖e1 a5 9 c5 b6 10 ♘f1± Jansa–Karlsson, Gausdal Arnold Cup 1991.

5 ed

According to *ECO*, the other capture 5 de similarly promises White good chances. And indeed, in Veingold–Vaganian, Tallinn 1973, White gained the advantage after 5 ... de (in the event of 5 ... ♘xe5 6 ♘gf3 ♘xf3+ 7 ♕xf3 ♘f6 8 ♗d3, White stands a little better) 6 ♕a4 e3 (6 ... ♕d5?! 7 f4! ef 8 ♘gxf3 ♗e6 9 ♗c4 ♕c5 10 ♗xe6 fe 11 ♘e4 ♕d5 12 0-0 0-0-0 13 ♗g5 ♖e8 14 ♖ad1 is good for White; Sorokin–Doroshkevich, Voronezh 1988) 7 fe ♗d7 8 ♘gf3 ♕e7 9 ♗b5 a6 10 0-0 g6 11 e6! fe 12 ♘d4+. However, in Sherzer–Anand, Prestwich 1990, Black immediately concentrated his attention on the weak pawn on e5, thus: 7 ... g6 8 ♘gf3 ♗g7 9 ♗c4 ♘h6 10 ♘e4 0-0 11 ♘f6+ ♔h8 12 0-0 ♘xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♗xf6, obtaining a good position.

5 ... ♕xd5
6 ♘gf3 ed

6 ... ♗g4 is weak. After 7 ♗c4 ♕d7 (7 ... ♗xf3? transforms a difficult position into a hopeless one, in view of the intermediate 8 ♕b3! ♘a5 9 ♕a4+ ♕d7 10 ♗xf7+! ♔d8 11 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 12 ♘xf3; Keres–Botvinnik, USSR Ch 1955) 8 de 0-0-0 9 ♕a4 ♗c5 10 b4 ♗b6 11 ♕b3! there are hard

times ahead for Black; Kinnmark–Ek, Göteborg 1968.

7 ♗c4 *(18)*
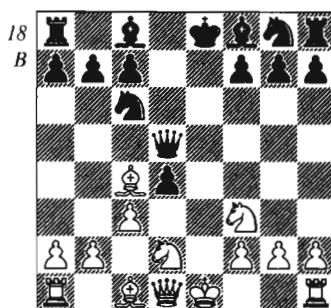
A critical position for the future of the 4 c3 variation. Black has opened up the game in the centre and even won a pawn, but his backward development will give him a good deal of worry.

7 ... ♕f5

Preparing a bishop exchange under suitable circumstances. The following continuations are also seen:

(a) **7 ... ♕d8** 8 0-0 (in a game Micić–Gunawan, Black defended successfully after 8 cd ♕e7+!? 9 ♗e2 ♗e6 10 0-0 0-0-0 11 ♘c4 ♘f6=) 8 ... ♗e7 9 ♘e4 ♘f6 10 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 11 ♖e1+ ♗e7 12 ♗g5, and according to analysis by Keres, White has a clear plus.

(b) **7 ... ♕c5** 8 0-0 dc 9 bc ♗f5! 10 ♕a4 ♕a5, and now instead of 11 ♕b3 0-0-0 12 ♗xf7 ♘h6 13 ♘c4 ♕a6= Gufeld–Vaganian, USSR 1973, in Gufeld's view 11 ♖e1+ ♗e7 12 ♕b3 is in White's favour.

(c) **7 ... ♕h5** (frequently played) 8 cd ♗e6!? (this move is repudiated by *ECO*, but the matter isn't so clear. After 8 ... ♘f6 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 [*if 10 ♘e5 ♕xd1 11 ♖xd1, Black does badly with 11 ... ♘d8 12 d5! 0–0 13 ♗b3 a5 14 a4 ♘d7 15 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 16 ♘c4, which gave White a large plus in Marjanović–Kovacević, Yugoslavia Ch 1984; on the other hand 11 ... ♘xd4!? 12 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 13 ♗c4 b5 14 ♗d3 ♗b7 15 ♘df3 ♘xf3+ 16 ♘xf3 a6 almost equalised the chances in Matanović–Addison, Maribor 1967*] 10 ... 0–0 11 h3! ♗d6 12 ♘f1 h6 13 ♘g3 ♗xg3 14 fg, White stands better; A. Sokolov–Kovacević, Novi Sad 1984) 9 ♕b3 0–0–0 10 ♗xe6+ fe 11 0–0 (if 11 ♕xe6+ ♔b8 12 0–0, as in Wahls–Landerberque, Lucerne 1989, then instead of the weak 12 ... ♖e8, Black can usefully continue developing with 12 ... ♘f6 or even 12 ... ♘h6!?. He may also win the pawn back with 12 ... ♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♖xd4, equalising) 11 ... ♘f6 (11 ... ♘h6!? is also interesting, for example 12 ♘e4 ♘f5 13 ♕xe6+ ♔b8 14 ♗g5 ♘fxd4 15 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 16 ♗e3 ♕d5! gave equality in Lane–Landerberque, Zug 1989) 12 ♘e4!? ♖d5! (the position after 12 ♘e4 is assessed in White's favour by *ECO*, but it seems to me that Black's last powerful move should alter this verdict) 13 ♖e1 (on 13 ♘c3, it is even worth considering 13 ... ♗d6!?) 13 ... ♘xe4 14 ♖xe4

♗d6, Lawson–Landerberque, European Team Ch, Haifa 1989. The position is very complicated, but Black's chances are by no means worse.

8 ♘xd4
According to Adorjan's analysis, an equal game results from 8 0–0 ♗e6 (Black shouldn't be greedy with 8 ... dc?, since 9 ♖e1+ ♗e7 10 ♘e4 is very dangerous for him) 9 ♗xe6 fe 10 ♕a4 0–0–0 11 ♘b3 e5! (11 ... ♗c5? 12 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 13 b4! ♕c4 14 ♘xd4± Adorjan–Hübner, Graz 1972) 12 cd e4 13 ♘e5 ♘xe5 14 de a6.

White also achieves little with 8 cd ♗e6 9 0–0 0–0–0 10 ♗xe6! ♕xe6 11 ♖e1 ♕d5 12 ♕a4 ♗d6 (a weaker line is 12 ... f6 13 ♘b3 g5 14 ♗e3 ♔b8 15 ♖ac1 ♗d6 16 ♘c5, with strong pressure; Geller–Lein, USSR Ch, Tbilisi 1966) 13 ♘b3 ♘ge7, and in Petrosian's view White has only an insignificant advantage.

8	...	♘xd4
9	cd	♗e6

In the case of 9 ... ♗d6 10 0–0 ♘e7 11 ♖e1 0–0 12 ♘e4, White is slightly better (Korchnoi).

10	♕a4+!	♗d7
11	♕b3	0–0–0
12	0–0 *(19)*	

There is no sense in 12 ♗xf7 ♘h6 13 ♗d5 ♖e8+ 14 ♔f1 c6, with excellent compensation for the pawn.

12	...	♗d6!?

J. Horvath–Kuligowski, Naleczow 1986, went 12 ... ♗e6 13 ♖e1
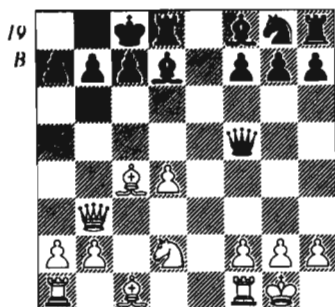
♗xc4 14 ♘xc4 f6 (Black is lost after 14 ... ♗d6 15 ♘xd6+! cd 16 ♗d2 ♚b8 17 ♖ac1 ♘f6 18 ♖e7 ♖d7 19 ♕xf7, when in addition to his overwhelming positional advantage White is making material gains; Korchnoi–Hug, Palma de Mallorca 1972) 15 ♗e3 ♕d5 16 ♗f4! (serious trouble on the c-file is in store for Black) 16 ... g5 17 ♗g3 ♘e7 18 ♖ac1 ♘c6 19 ♖e8! (the rook cannot be taken, but not taking it is also bad; the game doesn't last much longer...) 19 ... ♕xd4 20 ♖xd8+ ♕xd8 21 ♘a5! ♗b4 22 ♘xc6 ♕d2 23 ♕e6+ 1–0.

13 ♘f3!

Again the capture of the pawn would give Black time to create good counterplay after 13 ♗xf7 ♘h6 14 ♗d5 c6.

13 ... ♘h6?!

Black can try strengthening his play with 13 ... f6!?. For example, after 14 g3 ♘e7 15 d5 h5! 16 ♘d4 ♕h3, the wild complications that have arisen will give both players a headache; Thipsay–Prasad, Kolhapur 1987. A stronger reply

is 14 ♖e1 ♘e7 15 ♗d2 ♚b8 16 d5 c5 17 ♗a5 ♖de8 18 ♘d2!, and White has more prospects of working up an attack; Wahls–Gallagher, Biel Open 1989.

14	♖e1	f6
15	♗xh6	gh
16	g3	*(20)*
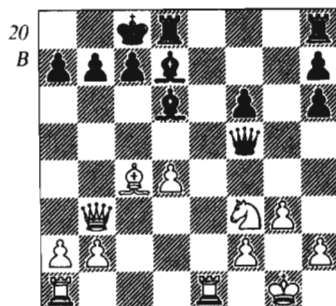
His opponent's shattered kingside guarantees Sokolov the better endgame, considering that the white bishop controlling g8 prevents Black from organising any substantial counterplay on the g-file. Vaganian faces a hard defensive task.

16	...	♖he8
17	♗f7	♖xe1+
18	♖xe1	♚b8
19	♗e6	

Depriving Black of his last trump — the advantage of the bishop pair.

19	...	♗xe6
20	♖xe6	c5!
21	♚g2	♗f8
22	♘h4	♕g5
23	♘f3	♕f5
24	♕c4	h5
25	dc?!	

A serious inaccuracy, allowing freedom to the bishop, whereas after 25 a3! ♖c8 26 d5 ♖d8 27 ♘h4 ♕g5 28 ♕e4 White's advantage could easily have become decisive. After the imprecise text move, Vaganian succeeds in holding the balance by ingenious defence.

25 ... ♗xc5 26 ♖e4 ♗b6 27 b4 ♖c8 28 ♕e2 a5 29 ba ♕xa5 30 ♕b2 ♕d5 31 ♖f4 ♗d8 32 ♖d4?! ♕c6 33 h4 ♗c7 34 ♕a3 f5 35 ♖a4 b5?! 36 ♕b3 ♗b6 37 ♖b4 ♕c2 38 ♕xc2 ♖xc2 39 ♖xb5 ♖xf2+ 40 ♔h3 ♖xf3 41 ♖xb6+ ♔c7 42 ♖f6 ♔d7 43 a4 ♖f2 44 ♖h6 ♖a2 45 ♖xh5 ♔e6 46 ♖h6+ ♔e5 47 ♖xh7 ♖xa4 48 ♖f7 ♖a1 49 ♖f8 ½–½

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘c6
4 ♘gf3 ♘f6**

The moves 4 ... g6 and 4 ... ♘h6 have a bad reputation. Indeed, 4 ... g6 seriously weakens the dark squares without any justification. After, for example, 5 c3 ♗g7 6 ♗d3 ♘h6 7 0–0 0–0 8 ♖e1 f6 (the knight can't stay on the edge for ever) 9 b4! a6 10 a4 ♖e8 11 ♕b3, White's advantage is obvious; Sokolsky–Korchnoi, USSR Ch, Kiev 1954.

4 ... ♘h6 likewise fails to further Black's main strategic purpose — pressure against his opponent's pawn centre — and lets White obtain the better game by simple

means. Thus, a game Tseitlin–Muratov, USSR 1977, continued 5 c3 f5 6 ed ed 7 ♗d3 ♗d6 8 0–0 0–0 9 ♖e1 ♕f6 10 ♕b3, and the weaknesses on the open file will give Black a great deal of trouble.

5 e5 ♘d7 (21)

5 ... ♘e4 is rarely seen, and no wonder! After, for instance, 6 ♗d3 ♘xd2 7 ♗xd2 ♘b4 8 ♗xb4 ♗xb4+ 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♕d2 0–0 11 h4! c5 12 ♘g5! White has acquired excellent attacking possibilities for nothing; Timoshchenko–Panbukchian, Varna 1977.
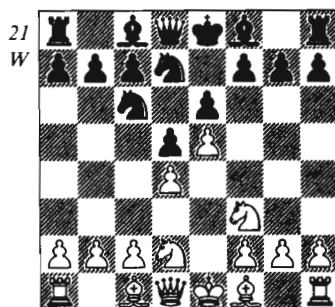
A very important position for the fortunes of the variation. Black's game is very cramped, but we should not underrate his counter-attacking possibilities based on breaks in the centre with ... f7–f6 or (after some preparation) ... c7–c5. White usually counters this by freely developing his pieces while not shrinking from 'cavalry raids' such as ♘f3–g5. On move six, White has a choice of at least seven quite good continuations: 6

♘b3, 6 c3, 6 b3, 6 g3, and three king's bishop moves. In recent times, it is 6 ♘b3 and 6 ♗e2 that have attained the greatest popularity.

6 ♘b3

Clearing the path of the dark-squared bishop and commencing prophylactic action against ... c7–c5. Let us examine the alternatives:

(a) **6 c3** (a very popular move in the forties and fifties, but very rarely played today) 6 ... f6 (stabilising the centre has grave consequences for Black, for example 6 ... f5? 7 h4 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 ♘cb8 9 g4! fg 10 ♘g5! ♗xg5 11 hg ♕xg5 12 ♘f3 ♕e7 13 ♗g6+! with a decisive attack in Kristensen–P. Cramling, Gladsaxe 1983) 7 ef (according to Keres's analysis, the premature attack 7 ♘h4 ♕e7 8 ♗d3 fe! 9 ♕h5+ ♕f7 10 ♗g6 hg 11 ♕xh8 e4 12 ♘b3 ♘f6 13 f3 ♗d7 brings trouble only to White. Nor is 7 ♗b5 dangerous; after 7 ... fe 8 de ♗e7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♕e2 ♕e8 11 ♖e1 ♕f7 12 ♘f1 ♘c5 Black obtained good counterplay in Mikhailov–Gusev, Leningrad 1989. Unclear complications result from 7 ♗d3 fe [*if 7 ... g6 8 ♕e2 ♗g7 9 ♗b5! 0–0 10 0–0 fe 11 ♗xc6 bc 12 ♘xe5, White's chances are better; T. Georgadze–Sveshnikov, USSR 1973*] 8 de ♘dxe5 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 10 ♕h5+ ♘f7 11 ♗xh7 ♗e7 12 ♘f3 ♗f6 13 g4! e5, Marinković–Drasko, Cacak 1991) 7 ... ♕xf6 8 ♗b5

♗d6 9 ♘f1 e5 10 de ♘cxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♕xe5, with quite a good game for Black; Radulov–Szabo, Montilla 1975.

(b) **6 b3** f6 (6 ... ♗b4 is also interesting) 7 ♗b2 ♗e7 8 g3 fe (after 8 ... 0–0 9 ♗h3 ♔h8 10 0–0 f5?! 11 c4 ♘b6 12 ♗g2 White's position is better; Plachetka–Govedarica, Odzaci 1978) 9 de 0–0 10 ♗h3 ♘c5 11 0–0 a5 12 ♕e2 a4, with unclear play; Benko–Portisch, Budapest 1956.

(c) **6 g3** (a rare move) 6 ... b6!? (after 6 ... f6 7 ♕e2! fe 8 de b6 9 ♘b3 ♘c5 10 ♗h3, problems may arise for Black in connection with the weak e-pawn; Gipslis–Doroshkevich, USSR 1970). Now the bishop is ready to jump out advantageously to a6, bringing about a favourable exchange or making castling difficult for White.

(d) **6 ♗d3** f6!? (a risky but perfectly feasible continuation. Black also maintains equalising chances after 6 ... ♘b4, for example 7 ♗e2 c5 8 c3 ♘c6 9 0–0 cd 10 cd f6 11 ef ♘xf6 12 ♘e5!? ♘xd4 13 ♕a4 ♘c6 14 ♘df3 ♗d7 and Black can successfully defend; Geller–Doroshkevich, USSR Ch, Erevan 1975) 7 ef (after the game Chiburdanidze – Zatulovskaya, Tbilisi IZ 1976, which went 7 ♘g5!? fg? 8 ♕h5+ g6 9 ♗xg6+ hg 10 ♕xg6+! ♔e7 11 ♘e4! ♗h6 12 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 13 ♕g7+ ±±, it seemed as though 6 ... f6 was refuted, but a little later it appeared that the matter was not

by any means so clear! In Chek-
hov–Yurtayev, Vilnius 1978,
Black played the intermediate 7
... ♘dxe5! 8 de, and only then 8
... fg. After 9 ♕h5+ g6! 10 ♗xg6+
♔d7, Chekhov blundered with 11
♘f3? hg! and ended up in a lost
position, since 12 ♕xh8 fails to 12
... ♗b4+. In fairness we should
add that even after the correct 11
♗d3 ♘xe5 12 ♘f3 ♗b4+ 13
♔f1 ♘xf3 14 gf ♗e7, Black has
the better chances) 7 ... ♕xf6 (7
... gf 8 ♘h4 is bad for Black) 8
♘f1 e5 9 ♘e3 ♘xd4 10 ♘xd4 ed
11 ♘xd5 ♕e5+ 12 ♕e2 ♕xe2+ 13
♔xe2 ♗d6 and Black maintains
the balance.

(e) **6 ♗b5!?** (a dangerous con-
tinuation) 6 ... a6 (other replies
are also possible, but they have not
had much success. For example, 6
... ♘cb8 [*planning 7 ... b6 and a
bishop exchange*] 7 0–0 ♗e7 8
♖e1 b6 9 c3 ♗a6, and now after
the simple 10 ♗xa6 White would
retain the better game thanks to
his spatial advantage. On the other
hand, after 10 ♗a4 ♗d3! 11 ♘f1
♗g6 Black's defensive possibilit-
ies were suddenly enhanced in
Jimenez–Suetin, Havana 1968.
Black fails to equalise with 6 ...
a5 [*which by the way is a typical
manoeuvre in this variation; the
knight may retreat to a7 with
tempo, clearing the path of the
c-pawn*]; in Djurić–Drasko, Sara-
jevo 1984, White acquired an
advantage with 7 0–0 ♘a7 8 ♗d3
c5 9 c4!? cd 10 cd ♘c5 11 ♘c4 ed

12 ♗g5, and the defects in Black's
position are plain to see) 7 ♗xc6
(an interesting alternative is 7
♗a4!? b5 8 ♗b3 f6 9 ef ♕xf6 10
♘f1! [*the pressure on the centre
prevents the freeing move ... e7–
e5*] 10 ... ♗d6 11 ♘e3 0–0 12 c3±
Donchev–Topalov, Bulgarian Ch,
Sofia 1989) 7 ... bc 8 ♘b3! a5 (or
8 ... c5 9 ♗g5 ♗e7 10 ♘a5! ♘b8
11 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 12 c3, and the
strong position of his knight gave
White a clear plus in Mortensen–
Jinrong, Malta Ol 1980) 9 ♗g5
♗e7 10 h4!? (in Halifman–Monin,
USSR 1986, Black equalised after
10 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 11 ♕d2 ♕b4! 12
0–0 ♕xd2 13 ♘bxd2 c5=) 10 ...
h6 11 ♗e3 a4 12 ♘c5 ♗xc5
13 dc ♗a6 14 ♕d4, and Black's
position is completely blockaded;
Tolnai–Monin, Budapest 1990.

(f) **6 ♗e2** (in the last few years
this has been White's principal
weapon; according to circum-
stances he can castle or carry out
the very important manoeuvre
♘d2–f1–e3). Black now has the
choice between an immediate
break with 6 ... f6 and preparation
for it with 6 ... ♗e7.

(f1) **6 ... f6** 7 ef ♕xf6 (strangely
enough, 7 ... ♘xf6 is also fre-
quently seen, even though it has
the obvious drawback of weaken-
ing Black's control of the key
square e5. White acquires a plus
with no particular trouble, by
means of 8 0–0 ♗d6 9 c4 [*perhaps
9 ♖e1 0–0 10 ♗b5! a6 11 ♗xc6
bc 12 c4! c5 13 dc ♗xc5 14*]

♘b3 ♗a7 15 c5± is even simpler; Psakhis–Prie, Chicago 1983] 9 ... 0–0 10 c5 [or 10 b3 ♗d7 11 ♗b2 ♘e4 12 c5! ♗f4 13 g3 ♗h6 14 ♘xe4! de 15 ♘d2 e3 16 ♘c4 ef+ 17 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 18 ♔xf2 ♕f6+ 19 ♗f3, and despite certain complications, White's chances are better; Razuvayev–Gusev, Moscow 1979] 10 ... ♗f4 11 ♗b5 [another possibility is 11 ♘b3 ♗xc1 12 ♘xc1 ♗d7 13 ♘d3!? ♘g4 14 b4 ♕f6 15 h3 ♘h6 16 ♘de5, and again the undisputed control of e5 secures White a clear plus; Wolff–Sorensen, Hastings Challengers 1989/90] 11 ... ♗d7 12 ♖e1 ♕e8 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♘f1 ♘e4 [it is worth considering 14 ... ♗xc1 15 ♖xc1 ♘h5!? 16 ♘e5 ♗b5 17 ♘g3 ♘f4, retaining some possibilities of counterplay; Psakhis–Malanyuk, Leningrad 1979] 15 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 16 ♘g3 ♕f8 17 ♖ac1± Short–Vaganian, Naestved 1985; Short's advantage is completely obvious although it may not be very great) 8 ♘f1 ♗d6 (Balashov has occasionally played 8 ... b6, but after 9 ♘e3 ♗b7 [9 ... ♗d6!?] 10 ♘g4! ♕f5 11 ♘h4 ♕f7 12 f4 0–0–0 13 c3, White has the better chances; A. Kuzmin–Balashov, Moscow 1982. It is very risky to play 8 ... e5?!, in view of 9 ♘e3! e4 10 ♘xd5 ♕d6 11 ♗c4! [after 11 c4!? ef 12 ♗f4 ♕xf4? 13 ♘xf4 ♗b4+ 14 ♔f1, White has a big advantage and went on to win in Makarichev–Hübner, Amsterdam 1975; but according to Makarich-

ev's own analysis, Black would have obtained quite a good position after 12 ... fg! 13 ♖g1 ♕xf4 14 ♗h5+ g6 15 ♕e2+ ♔f7 16 ♘xf4 ♗b4+ 17 ♔d1 ♘f6, with good compensation for the queen] 11 ... ef [in this position too Black may sacrifice his queen with 11 ... ♗b6!? 12 ♗f4 ♕xd5! 13 ♗xd5 ♘xd5, but after 14 ♕e2 ♗f5 15 ♗g5! White stands better; Polajzer–Szabo, Maribor 1978] 12 0–0!? [another good line is 12 ♗f4 ♕g6 13 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 14 ♕xf3 ♘b6 15 ♗d3! ♗g4 16 ♕g3 ♗f5 17 ♕xg6 hg 18 ♘xa8 ♘xa8 19 0–0–0, and White has splendid prospects in the ending; Dolmatov–Sisniega, Graz 1978] 12 ... ♕g6 13 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 14 ♘e6+ with a fearsome attack) 9 ♘e3 (practice has also seen 9 ♗g5 ♕f7 10 ♘e3 h6 11 ♗h4 b6 12 c3 ♗b7 13 ♕a4 a6, with unclear play; Chandler–Mariotti, Wiesbaden 1981) 9 ... b6!? (more often Black plays 9 ... 0–0 10 0–0 ♕g6, after which White can gain the advantage either with 11 c4 ♘f6 12 c5 ♗f4 13 ♖e1 ♗d7 14 ♘f1 ♘g4 15 ♗d3 ♕f6 16 h3± Malanyuk–Short, Lvov 1984, or with 11 g3 ♘f6 12 ♘h4! ♕e8 13 f4 ♘e7 14 c3 b6 15 ♖e1± Marjanović–Foisor, Baile Herculane 1983) 10 c4 (there is more promise in 10 ♘g4!? ♕g6 11 ♘h4 ♕f7 12 f4 0–0 13 ♗e3! ♗xf4 14 ♖f1 ♕e7 15 ♗xf4 ♕xh4+ 16 g3 ♕e7 17 ♕d2, with excellent compensation for the pawn; A. Kuzmin–Naumkin, USSR 1986)

10 ... ♘e7 11 cd ♘xd5 12 ♘xd5 ed 13 0–0 0–0 14 ♗g5 ♕g6 15 ♗h4 ♗b7 with a roughly equal game; Krasenkov–Naumkin, Kusadasi 1990.

(f2) **6 ... ♗e7** (a waiting move; Black plans to carry out ... f7–f6 at a later stage) 7 ♘f1 (7 b3 doesn't look bad: 7 ... 0–0 8 0–0 f6 9 ♗b2 fe 10 ♘xe5! ♘dxe5 11 de ♗c5 12 c4, with a slight plus; Smagin–Johansen, Belgrade 1986) 7 ... 0–0 (Black made a serious mistake in Psakhis–Drasko, Sarajevo 1981: 7 ... f6 8 ef ♗xf6? [*Black understands the importance of the e5-square and arranges all his pieces to guard it; but he allows too much freedom to the white knight, without in any case managing to carry out ... e6–e5*] 9 ♘e3 ♘b6 10 ♘g4! ♕d6 11 0–0 ♗d7 12 a4! 0–0–0 13 a5! ♘c4 14 b3 ♘xa5 15 ♕d2! and in view of the threat to win his queen with 16 ♗a3, Black's position is hopeless) 8 ♘e3 f6 9 ef ♘xf6 10 0–0 ♗d6 (on the one hand Black has lost a tempo in bringing his bishop to d6, but on the other hand the white knight on e3 now looks rather awkward) 11 c4 b6 12 a3 (preparing to gain space on the queenside. White achieved nothing by 12 b3 ♘e7 13 ♗b2 ♗b7 14 ♖c1 ♘e4 15 ♖c2 ♘g6, with equality in Lobron–Drasko, Sarajevo 1984) 12 ... ♘e7! (a weaker choice is 12 ... ♔h8 13 b4 dc 14 ♗xc4 e5 15 ♗b2 ed 16 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 17 ♕xd4; having prema-

turely opened up the game in the centre, Black was faced with great difficulties in Wolff–Gallagher, Hastings Challengers 1989/90) 13 b4 dc 14 ♘xc4 ♘fd5 15 ♗d3 h6 16 ♗d2 ♘f5, and in this complex position the chances may be assessed as roughly equal; Psakhis–Drasko, Sarajevo 1986.

6 ... a5

The cornerstone of Black's strategy. Kingside activity for White is indicated by the pawn structure itself, hence Black must start seeking counterplay on the opposite wing. Possible alternatives are 6 ... f6 and 6 ... ♗e7.

(a) Botvinnik–Boleslavsky, USSR Ch, Moscow 1944, went **6 ... f6** 7 ♗b5 (7 ef is weaker: 7 ... ♕xf6! 8 ♗g5 ♕f7 9 ♗h4 e5 10 de ♘dxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5= Flohr–Bondarevsky, USSR Ch, Moscow 1947) 7 ... ♗e7 (7 ... fe is premature, since after 8 de the d4-square presents White with an ideal bridgehead for the attack. For example, 8 de ♗e7 9 ♘bd4 ♘bd8 10 c3 0–0 11 h4!? ♘xd4 12 cd and White's strong centre gives him excellent prospects; Peshina–Muratov, Blagoveshchensk 1988) 8 ♗f4 (Botvinnik puts the emphasis on rapid piece development and on strengthening his control of e5. Another possibility is 8 c3 fe 9 de 0–0 10 ♕e2 ♕e8 11 ♘bd4 ♘c5 12 0–0, with a small plus; Ljubojević–Hübner, Montreal 1979) 8 ... 0–0 9 ef gf (he must take with the pawn, as otherwise

White will acquire an excellent outpost on e5) 10 0–0 ♘b6 11 ♖fe1 ♗d6 12 ♗g3, and Black's unstable pawn centre causes him much difficulty.

(b) Quite often Black plays the waiting move **6 ... ♗e7**. The game may continue: 7 ♗b5 (after 7 c4?! dc 8 ♗xc4 ♘b4 9 a3 ♘d5 10 0–0 b6 11 ♕e2 ♗b7, Black had good prospects in Espinosa–Juarez Flores, Cali Z 1990) 7 ... ♘cb8 (the position is closed, and the time factor is not all that important; Black may proceed with manoeuvres in his own camp. 7 ... a6 is weak — after 8 ♗xc6 bc 9 ♘a5! ♘b8 10 0–0 c5 11 c4! 0–0 12 dc ♗xc5 13 ♗g5, Black's position is not to be envied; Estevez–Hübner, Leningrad IZ 1973) 8 0–0 (8 h4!? is not at all bad: 8 ... h6 9 ♖h3 b6 10 ♕e2 a5 11 ♖g3 ♗f8 12 c4! and White assumes the offensive on all parts of the board; Tal–Fichtl, Halle 1974) 8 ... 0–0 (or 8 ... b6 9 ♕e2 a5 10 ♗e3 0–0 11 ♗d3 ♗a6 12 c4!± Janosević–Suetin, Titovo Uzice 1966) 9 ♗f4 b6 10 ♖c1 (if the light-squared bishop is not exchanged, it can settle on b1, while the rook will come into the game after c2–c4. In Grünfeld–Hug, Munich Z 1987, White obtained a strong initiative with 10 ♕e2 a5 11 a4 ♗a6 12 c4! c6 13 cd ed 14 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 15 e6) 10 ... ♗a6 (of course the bishop exchange helps Black. Gufeld–Hübner, Sukhumi 1972, saw the

weaker 10 ... ♗b7 11 ♗d3 ♘a6 12 c3 c5 13 ♗b1; White's bishop plays the leading role in his mounting attack, while Black's is in a wretched state) 11 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 12 ♕e2 ♘b8 13 c4! and in Gufeld's opinion, with which we can agree, White is better.

7   a4

The typical reaction, but sometimes White doesn't prevent the advance of the pawn. For example, 7 ♗f4 (also 7 ♗d2!? ♗e7 8 ♗b5 ♘a7 9 ♗e2 a4 10 ♘c1 c5 11 ♘d3 cd 12 ♘xd4± G. Kuzmin–Panchenko, Irkutsk 1983; another game between the same players, USSR 1976, went 7 ♗b5 a4 8 ♘bd2 a3 9 0–0 ab 10 ♗xb2 ♘a5 11 ♕e2 ♗e7, with approximate equality) 7 ... ♗e7 (7 ... a4 8 ♘c1 a3 9 b3 f6! is not bad — Drasko) 8 h4 (Timman–Drasko, Sarajevo 1984, developed on similar lines: 8 c3 b6 9 h4 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 11 ♖h3 h6 12 ♖g3 ♗f8, with unclear play. It is very hard for White to make anything concrete out of his kingside initiative) 8 ... h6 9 ♖h3 b6 10 ♖g3 ♗f8 11 h5 ♗b7 12 a4 ♘e7, Chandler–Timman, Amsterdam OHRA 1984. The verdict on Timman–Drasko applies here too.

7   ...   b6

The interpolation of 6 ... a5 7 a4 doesn't alter our assessment of the ... f7–f6 break: 7 ... f6 8 ♗b5 fe 9 de ♘c5 10 ♗g5 ♕d7 11 ♘bd4 ♘e4 12 ♗e3 ♗e7 13 ♘d2, with the better position for White;

Morović–Belyavsky, Tunis IZ 1985.

Another possibility is 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗b5 ♘a7!? (or 8 ... ♘cb8 9 h4! h6 10 c3 b6 11 h5! c6 12 ♗d3 ♗a6 13 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 14 ♗e3 ♘c7 15 ♘h2! and even without his light-squared bishop White had a fierce attack in Delaune–Seirawan, USA 1979) 9 ♗d3 (it doesn't pay to go for the pawn with 9 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 10 ♘xa5, as after 10 ... b6 Black has good compensation for it) 9 ... b6 10 0–0 0–0 11 c3 c5 12 ♗c2 ♖e8 13 ♖e1 ♘c6 14 h4! and White's prospects are better; Rogers–Hug, Biel 1986. Black has better opportunities for counterplay if he doesn't hurry to castle; Liberzon–Vaganian, Baden 1980, went 10 ... ♗b7 11 ♕d2 c5 12 dc ♘xc5 13 ♘xc5 bc, with a complex game.

8 ♗f4

White often plays 8 h4, which is probably more precise since he cannot do without this move anyway. For example, 8 h4 ♗e7 9 ♗g5 (White has slightly the better position after 9 c3 h6 10 ♗e3 ♗b7 11 ♘c1! ♘a7 12 ♘d3 c5 13 ♘f4± Geller–Vaganian, USSR Ch, Vilnius 1980) 9 ... h6 10 ♗xe7 ♘xe7, Averbakh–A. Zaitsev, USSR Ch, Alma-Ata 1969; and now White could have gained the advantage with the manoeuvre 11 ♘c1! followed by ♘d3.

On the other hand, after 8 c3 ♗e7 9 ♗d3 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 11 0–0 ♖a8 12 ♖e1 ♘f8 13 ♘bd2

♘g6 the chances are equal; Hübner–Larsen, Montreal 1979.

It is hard to detect even the trace of an advantage for White after 8 ♗b5 ♘cb8! 9 ♗g5 ♗e7 10 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 11 0–0 ♗a6 12 c3 c6= Brodsky–Budnikov, Azov 1991.

8 ...   ♗e7
9 h4

Or 9 c3 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 11 ♘c1! ♘cb8 12 h4 c5 13 ♖h3 ♘c6 14 ♖g3± Kupreichik–Böhm, Polanica Zdroj 1981.

9 ...   ♗b7
10 c3   ♕c8
11 ♗b5   ♘d8 *(22)*
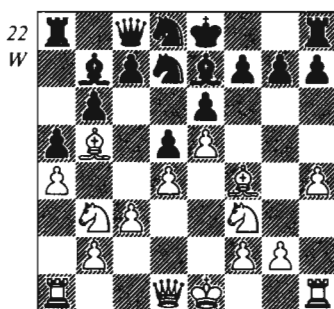
A position characteristic of the variation. We may state that the players have achieved the ends they were pursuing. White is ready to develop a large-scale kingside offensive, and Black has prepared the desired exchange of bishops. White has a broader range of possibilities, though breaking down Black's defence is not at all easy.

12 ♗g5!

An important move! By offering the exchange of this bishop, White secures an active post for it.

12	...	♗f8
13	h5	h6
14	♗h4	c6
15	♗e2	♗a6
16	0–0	♗xe2
17	♕xe2	♕a6
18	♕d1	

White's desire to avoid the queen exchange is natural, but in Drasko's view he could also have maintained a plus by 18 ♕xa6 ♖xa6 19 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 20 ♖fc1, intending 21 c4.

18	...	c5
19	♗xd8	♖xd8
20	♘e1!	

Clearing the way for the f-pawn.

20	...	♗e7
21	f4	f5

After 21 ... c4 22 ♕e2 b5 23 ab ♕xb5 24 ♘xa5 ♖b8 (24 ... ♖a8? 25 b4!) 25 f5! White has a strong attack.

22	♘c2	♖g8
23	♘e3	♘f8
24	♔h2?	

Spassky has played strongly so far, and after 24 ♔f2! g5 25 hg ♘xg6 26 ♕h5 he would have had good chances of success. But now Black equalises.

24	...	g5!
25	hg	h5!

Now we see the difference! It would be dangerous to play 26 ♕xh5 ♘xg6 27 ♔g1 ♔f7, when Black unexpectedly goes over to the attack. Therefore Spassky played:

26	♘c1

— and offered a draw, which was accepted.

5 Tarrasch Variation: 3 ... ♘f6

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2	♘f6!? *(23)*

23
W
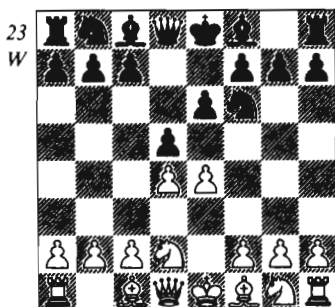
A sharp continuation which has always had its supporters. Black provokes the advance e4–e5, permitting White to create a strong pawn centre. If White succeeds in consolidating his centre, he is assured of an advantage. If not — the consequences can be drastic.

Vogt–Bareyev
Budapest 1988

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6
4 e5

There is no danger to Black in 4 ♗d3 c5 5 dc (5 e5 ♘fd7 6 c3 transposes to the main lines) 5 ... de! (stronger than 5 ... ♗xc5 6 ♕e2 ♘c6 7 ♘gf3 0–0 8 e5 ♘d7 9 ♘b3 ♗e7 10 h4! with good chances of an attack; Donev–Kolev, Elenite 1986) 6 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 7 ♗xe4 ♕xd1+ 8 ♔xd1 ♗xc5 9 ♔e2 f5 10 ♗f3 ♘c6 with a level game; Rogers–Cavendish, British Ch, Plymouth 1989.

4	...	♘fd7

4 ... ♘g8 is very seldom played, although no one should be surprised at pieces returning to their starting squares in the French Defence; 5 ♗d3 c5 (or 5 ... b6 6 c3 ♕d7 7 ♘e2 ♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♗b7 9 ♕c2 h6 10 ♘g3 ♘a5 11 0–0 ♘e7 12 ♘h5, with advantage to White; Bannik–Korchnoi, USSR Ch, Riga 1958. In this line, 7 ... ♗a6 doesn't lead to a bishop exchange; White evades it with 8 ♗b1 ♘c6 9 0–0 ♘ge7 10 ♖e1 g6 11 ♘f3 h6 12 h4, and retains the better game; Akopian–Camas Fabrego, World Junior Ch, Santiago 1990) 6 c3 ♘c6 7 ♘e2 ♗d7 8 0–0 ♕c7 9 ♘f3 c4 10 ♗c2, and Black is not

without counterchances although the secure pawn centre guarantees White the better prospects; Stein–Bagirov, USSR Ch 1963.

4 ... ♘e4 is seen a good deal more often, and indeed the knight looks more suitably placed on e4 than on g8. There can follow: 5 ♗d3 (5 ♘xe4 is not bad either: 5 ... de 6 ♗e3 *[or 6 ♗c4 a6 7 a4 b6 8 ♘h3 ♗b7 9 ♘f4 ♘c6 10 ♗e3 ♘e7 11 0–0 g6 12 ♕e2 ♘f5 13 ♖fd1 ♗h6 14 a5!± Aseyev–Lputian, USSR Ch, Lvov 1984; instead, 8 d5 ♗b7 9 de ♕xd1+ 10 ♔xd1 fe 11 ♗xe6 ♘c6 12 ♗e3 ♘e5 led to equality in Imanaliev–Malanyuk, Frunze 1987]* 6 ... c5 7 dc ♘d7 8 ♕g4 ♘xc5 9 ♗b5+ ♘d7 10 ♘e2 ♕a5+ 11 ♘c3 a6. So far the game has proceeded on more or less forced lines: White has attacked the pawn and Black has correspondingly defended it. White now has the choice between 12 ♗a4 ♕xe5 13 0–0–0 b5 14 ♗f4 h5! 15 ♕g3 h4 with unclear play as in Tseitlin–Przewoznik, Gdynia 1989, and the more logical 12 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 13 ♗d4 ♗c6 14 0–0–0 0–0–0 15 ♔b1, when the pawn falls after all; A. Ivanov–Malanyuk, USSR 1981) 5 ... ♘xd2 (the intrepid 5 ... f5 is inadequate. After 6 ef ♘xf6 7 ♘gf3 ♗d6 8 0–0 0–0 9 ♖e1 c5 10 dc ♗xc5 11 ♘b3 ♗b6 12 ♘bd4, Black has nothing to show for his pains except his weakness on e6 and his vulnerable dark squares; Anand–Mariotti, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 6

♗xd2 c5 7 ♕g4!? (White also has some other tempting possibilities at his disposal. He can play to maintain the centre with 7 c3 ♕b6 8 ♘f3 ♘c6 9 0–0 ♗d7 10 dc ♗xc5 11 b4 ♗e7 12 ♕e2, as in Hresc–P. Nikolić, Yugoslavia 1982; or he can surrender it at once with 7 dc ♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♗xc5 9 0–0 a6 10 a3! h6 11 ♕e2 ♕c7 12 ♖fe1 b6 13 b4! ♗e7 14 c4 dc± Geller–Vaganian, Erevan Z 1982. Both methods guarantee him excellent prospects) 7 ... ♕b6 8 ♖b1 ♘c6 9 dc ♕xc5 10 ♘f3 ♘b4 11 0–0, Gelfand–Malanyuk, Sverdlovsk 1987. White's chances can be rated as superior, especially considering Black's incomplete development and the chronic passivity of his bishops.

5 ♘gf3

5 ♗d3 and 5 f4 occur more frequently (they will be examined later), but the text move also has its adherents and there has recently been a big increase in its popularity. We may consider it a defect of the variation that the knight on d2 is deprived of its rightful square.

5 ... c5

6 c3

Sometimes White insists on opening the centre with 6 c4, but this has not brought him very much success: 6 ... ♘c6 (6 ... cd 7 cd ed 8 ♗d3 ♘c6 transposes) 7 cd ed 8 ♗d3 (8 ♗b5!? may well be stronger: 8 ... ♗e7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♖e1 ♕b6 11 ♗a4 cd 12 ♘b3, with a pleasant position) 8 ... ♗e7

(in a game Halifman–Bareyev, USSR Ch 1986, Black carried out a highly original and interesting idea: 8 ... g6! 9 0–0 ♗g7 10 ♕e2 cd 11 e6 ♘c5 12 ef+ ♔xf7, obtaining excellent play. The bishop proved to be in the right place!) 9 0–0 cd 10 ♖e1 ♘c5 11 ♘b3 (or 11 ♗b1?! ♕b6 12 h3 ♗d7 13 ♘f1 ♘e6, securely defending his doubled — but extra — pawn; Smagin–Knaak, Erevan 1988) 11 ... ♘xb3! 12 ♕xb3 0–0 13 h3 g6= Speelman–Lputian, Rotterdam 1988.

6 ... ♘c6

6 ... b6 contributes nothing to the pressure against White's pawn centre, and in addition deprives the queen of an important square. White seizes the initiative with 7 ♗b5! ♗b7 (or 7 ... a6 8 ♗a4 b5 9 ♗c2 cd 10 cd ♘c6 11 0–0 ♕b6 12 ♘b1!± Vasyukov–Bagirov, USSR 1973) 8 ♘f1 ♘c6 9 ♘g3 h6 10 0–0 ♕c7 11 a3 c4 12 h4, Smagin–Gulko, Minsk 1985. With the queenside closed, White has a free hand on the kingside.

7 ♗d3 g6!?

Bareyev likes fianchettoing his king's bishop in the French! (Compare, for instance, his game above with Halifman.) Black sets up a barrier to the fearsome bishop on d3, and is prepared to postpone ... f7–f6 temporarily, so as to play it with greater effect later. He also has several other systems of defence (and counter-attack) available, but recent practice has

clearly favoured White. Let us examine the main options:

(a) **7 ... cd** 8 cd f5 (or 8 ... f6) 9 ef ♘xf6 10 0–0 ♗d6 11 ♘b3 (stronger than 11 b3 0–0 12 ♗b2 ♕b6 13 a3 a5 14 ♖c1 ♗d7 15 ♖e1 ♖ae8, with a good game; Chiburdanidze–De la Villa, Salamanca 1990) 11 ... 0–0 12 ♗g5 ♕e8 (or 12 ... ♕c7 13 ♖c1 ♘h5 14 ♖e1 ♕f7 15 ♗h4 g6 16 ♗b5! ♗f4 17 ♖c3± Maksimović–Ilić, Kladovo 1990) 13 ♗h4 ♕h5 14 ♗g3 ♗xg3 15 fg! ♘g4 16 ♕e2± Hellers–Wheeler, Thessaloniki Ol 1988. If Black plays an immediate 7 ... f6, the retention of the c-pawns gives White additional possibilities involving c3–c4, for example: 8 ef ♕xf6 9 0–0 ♗d6 10 c4! 0–0 11 ♘b3 h6 12 dc ♘xc5 13 ♗b1! ♘xb3 14 ab d4 15 ♕d3! and the black king started to feel uncomfortable in Nunn–Ree, Lucerne Ol 1982. White also has some advantage after 8 ... ♘xf6 9 0–0 ♗d6 10 dc ♗xc5 11 b4 ♗d6 12 b5 ♘e5 13 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 14 ♗b2 0–0 15 ♘f3± Ehlvest–Andersson, Reykjavik World Cup 1991.

(b) **7 ... cd** 8 cd ♘b6 (Black prepares the pawn thrust ... a7–a5–a4) 9 a3! (a good prophylactic move. Sometimes White tries to do without it, for example: 9 0–0 ♗d7 [*or 9 ... ♗e7 10 ♖e1 a5 11 ♘b1!? ♗d7 12 ♘c3 a4 13 a3 ♘a5 14 ♘d2 ♗c6, with a complex game in which Black has his trumps; Maksimović–Drasko, Yugoslav Ch, Pljevlja 1989*] 10 ♖e1 ♘b4 11

♗b1 ♗b5 12 ♘f1 ♗e7 13 ♘g3±
Benjamin–Seirawan, USA 1979) 9
... a5 10 b3 ♗d7 11 ♗b2 ♗e7
12 h4! a4 (playing on the weakness
of the light squares is a central
theme of Black's strategy) 13 b4
♘a7 14 ♕e2 (the bishop exchange
is something Black can only dream
about) 14 ... h5 (after 14 ... h6
15 h5 ♔f8 [*this position actually
arose by transposition*] 16 ♖c1
♕e8 17 0–0 ♗b5 18 ♘e1 ♖c8 19
♖xc8 ♘bxc8 20 f4, Black is close
to realising his dream, but the loss
of time has cost him dearly —
White has a decisive attack even
without his bishop; Nunn–Bisch-
off, Hamburg 1984) 15 ♖h3 g6 16
♖g3 occurred in Tal–Hecht, Nice
OI 1974. White has the better
position, but breaching his
opponent's fortifications is not
simple. At move 15, it was worth
considering 15 ♖c1 ♖c8 16 ♖c5!,
a positional exchange sacrifice
which undoubtedly increases
White's attacking possibilities.

(c) 7 ... ♗e7 8 0–0 g5!? *(24)*

24
W
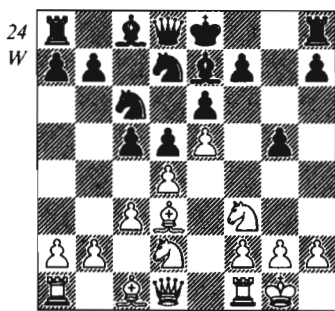
(An idea remarkable for its bold-
ness! The interesting thing is that

Black doesn't play to win a pawn
[*say with 8 ... ♕b6 9 ♖e1 cd
10 cd ♘xd4*], but wants to force
White into exchanging on c5, and
is prepared to take such risky steps
to attain this strategic goal. In the
first few games with 8 ... g5, the
surprise effect brought Black vir-
tually one hundred per cent suc-
cess, but recently White has more
or less adjusted to it. Another
possibility is 8 ... a5 9 ♖e1 c4!?
[*a variation on the ... g5 theme
occurred in Halasz–Knaak, Kec-
skemet 1985, which went 9 ... cd
10 cd g5!? 11 h3 h5, but now White
obtained the better position with
some precise play: 12 ♘f1! g4 13
hg hg 14 ♘3h2 ♘xd4 15 ♕xg4
♗c5 16 ♗g5!±*] 10 ♗c2 b5 11
♘f1 ♘b6 12 ♘g3 h5!? with unclear
play; Smirin–Shabalov, Vilnius
1988. On the other hand, 8 ...
♘f8? is weak: 9 ♖e1 ♗d7 10 dc!
♗xc5 11 ♘b3 ♗e7 12 ♗f4 ♘g6
13 ♗g3± Geller–Romanishin,
USSR Ch, Minsk 1979. Also after
8 ... cd 9 cd a5!? 10 ♘b1! ♕b6 11
♘c3! ♘xd4 12 ♘xd4 ♕xd4, as
in Pantz–Knaak, Potsdam 1985,
White could have gained a clear
plus with 13 ♖e1! ♕b6 14 ♕g4 g6
15 ♘b5; the square b5 increases
his possibilities) 9 dc! (9 h3?! would
merely fall in with his opponent's
plans: 9 ... h5 10 g4 hg 11 ♕b6
12 ♕a4 cd 13 cd f6, and Black
seized the initiative in Paavi-
lainen–Vaiser, Tallinn 1986. Com-
plex play results from 9 ♗b5!? g4
10 ♗xc6 bc 11 ♘e1 h5 12 ♘c2

♗a6 13 ♖e1 ♗d3, Hyldkrog–Clarke, Lyngby Open 1990) 9 ... ♘xc5 (or 9 ... g4 10 ♘d4 ♘dxe5 11 ♗b5 ♗d7 12 ♖e1 ♗c5 13 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 14 ♕xg4±) 10 ♗b5 ♗d7 (Black is also in difficulty after 10 ... a6 11 ♗xc6+ bc 12 b4! ♘d7 13 ♘b3 g4 14 ♘fd4 ♘xe5 15 ♗f4, Smirin–Poldauf, Groningen Open 1990; due to Black's backwardness in development, the destruction of his opponent's pawn centre counts as no more than a moral success. However, it is worth considering 10 ... ♕b6!? 11 ♕e2 a6 12 ♗xc6+ bc 13 c4 a5, with quite a good game) 11 ♕e2 a6 12 ♗xc6 bc 13 c4 ♖b8 14 b3 ♕a5 15 ♕e3± Rachels–Arencibia, Manila IZ 1990.

(d) 7 ... ♕b6 (the most critical line. White is forced to sacrifice a pawn, but obtains excellent compensation) 8 0–0 cd (often Black waits with 8 ... ♗e7, and only after 9 ♖e1 continues with 9 ... cd 10 cd ♘xd4 11 ♘xd4 ♕xd4. However, the position of the rook on e1 means that apart from the standard 12 ♘f3 ♕b6 13 ♕c2 ♕c5 14 ♕e2 ♕b6 15 ♗e3 ♗c5 16 ♕c2 ♗xe3 17 ♖xe3, with a very active game for the pawn in Nunn–I. Farago, Helsinki 1981, White also has the possibility of 12 ♘b3!? ♕a4 13 ♗c2 ♘b6 14 ♘d4 ♕a5 15 a3, with a mounting initiative; Hartman–Benjamin, USA 1986. Incidentally, after 9 ♖e1 Black has the familiar blow 9 ... g5!?

available, with obscure consequences. For example, 10 ♘f1 [*10 dc ♗xc5 11 ♕e2 g4 12 ♘d4 ♘dxe5 13 ♗b5 ♗d7∓ Plaskett–Chernin, Jarvenpaa 1985*] 10 ... g4 11 dc ♗xc5 12 ♘d4! ♘xd4 13 cd ♗xd4 14 ♗e3 ♗xe3 15 ♘xe3 with good play for the pawn; Tseitlin–Afek, Beer-Sheva 1990. All this is very interesting and deserves further investigation, yet I do not know what to advise Black to play in reply to 9 dc!. White's advantage is undeniable after either 9 ... ♘xc5 10 ♗c2 a5 11 ♘b3 ♗d7 12 ♖e1 a4 13 ♘bd4± Saltayev–Rosiak, Karl-Marx-Stadt 1990, or 9 ... ♕c7 10 ♘b3 ♘cxe5 [*10 ... ♘dxe5 11 ♗f4! ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 e5 13 ♗g3 f5 14 ♖fe1! f4 15 ♕h5+ ♔f8 16 ♗h4± Kuijf–Blees, Amsterdam 1985*] 11 ♗f4 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 e5 13 ♗g3 ♕c6 14 ♖fe1! e4 15 ♖xe4! fe 16 ♗xe4 ♕f6 17 c6± Chandler–Henley, Indonesia 1982) 9 cd ♘xd4 10 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 11 ♘f3 ♕b6 12 ♕a4 (12 ♕c2 is also played, but merely amounts to a transposition after the correct 12 ... ♕c5. A weaker reply is 12 ... ♘c5 13 ♗e3 ♕b4 14 ♗xh7 ♗d7 15 ♖ac1± Dimitrov–Vezzosi, Cappelle la Grande 1989) 12 ... ♕b4 13 ♕c2 ♕c5 (persistently chasing the white queen! Instead, 13 ... h6?! fails to provide a sound defence: 14 ♗d2 ♕b6 15 ♖ac1 ♗e7 16 ♕a4! ♕d8 17 ♖c2, with very powerful pressure in Korchnoi–Udovcić, Leningrad 1967. However, a line deserving

further tests is 13 ... ♘c5!? 14 ♗d2 [*14 ♗xh7 ♗d7!*] 14 ... ♕a4 15 b3 ♕d7 16 ♗e2 ♗e7 17 ♗e3 b6, and Black has no cause to complain about the outcome of the opening; Nunn–Moles, Oxford 1971) 14 ♕e2 (14 ♕b1 also deserves attention; but 14 ♗xh7 leads to a dead level position after 14 ... b6! 15 ♗f4 ♗a6 16 ♖fc1 ♕xc2 17 ♗xc2 ♘c5, Furman– Uhlmann, Polanica Zdroj 1967) 14 ... ♗e7 (or 14 ... ♕b6 15 ♗e3 ♕d8 16 ♖ac1 ♗e7 17 ♖c3 0–0 18 ♖ac1, and Black has nothing to oppose against White's penetration on the c-file; Hellers–De Wit, Amsterdam Open 1985) 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♖ac1 ♕d8 17 ♖c3, and again what it amounts to is that White is conducting an attack on both wings and in the centre, while the black queen rushes about the board looking for shelter — all for the price of one pawn! (King–Kuijf, Amsterdam 1982).

8   0–0

Great complications arise after the energetic 8 h4, for example: 8 ... ♕b6 9 h5 (Nikolenko–Zlochevsky, Moscow 1989, took an interesting course: 9 0–0 ♗g7 [*as we have come to understand already, Black shouldn't go in for dubious material gains; after 9 ... cd 10 cd ♘xd4 11 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 12 ♘f3 ♕b6 13 ♗e3 ♕d8 14 ♗g5 ♗e7 15 ♗h6, the weakness of the dark squares gives him a great deal of trouble*] 10 h5 cd 11 cd ♘xd4 12 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 13 ♘f3 ♕g4! 14 ♗e2!

♕xh5 15 g3 ♕f5 16 ♗f4 ♘xe5. Winning *so* many pawns is rarely dubious! White's initiative hardly amounts to full compensation for his material losses) 9 ... g5! 10 ♘xg5 cd 11 cd ♘xd4 12 f4 ♘c5 13 ♗b1, with a wholly unclear position. To those who are afraid of these complications, I can recommend the following move-order: 7 ♗d3 ♕b6, and if 8 0–0, only *then* 8 ... g6. Now 9 h4 leads to Nikolenko–Zlochevsky, and 9 dc is not dangerous either: 9 ... ♕c7! 10 ♘b3 ♘dxe5 11 ♗f4 ♗g7 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♗b5+ ♗d7 14 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7= Maksimović– I. Farago, Copenhagen 1989. A good game for Black similarly results from 9 c4 ♗g7! 10 ♘b3 cd 11 cd ed 12 ♗f4 0–0. Finally, after 9 ♕a4 ♗g7 10 h4!? 0–0 11 h5 gh!? 12 ♖e1 cd 13 cd f6! Black's affairs are again in perfectly satisfactory order; Saltayev–Nikolenko, Spartakiad 1991.

8   ...   ♗g7
9   b3?

Too passive! A stronger line is 9 ♖e1 0–0 10 ♘f1 f6 11 ef ♕xf6 12 ♘e3 cd 13 ♘g4 ♕e7 14 cd with a promising position; Kunze– Poldauf, German Ch 1991.

9   ...   0–0
10 ♗b2   f6
11 ef   ♕xf6 *(25)*

Black is now ready to carry out an advantage 12 ... e5, and White's awkwardly placed pieces (the bishop on b2 is especially conspicuous) cannot stop this by
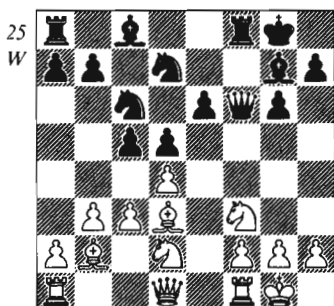
normal means. So White sacrifices a pawn to fight for the initiative.

12	c4	cd
13	cd	ed
14	♗b5	♕d6!
15	♗xc6?!	

After the surprise he came up against in the opening, Vogt has gone to pieces. Better 15 ♕c1!? ♘de5 16 ♗a3 ♘b4 17 ♘xd4 a5∓.

15	...	bc
16	♗xd4	♗xd4
17	♘xd4	♘e5!∓

Now there are much more serious troubles in store for White. The knight on d4 is shaky, and there are threats of raids by black pieces coming to g4, d3 or a6.

18 ♕e2?!

Misfortunes don't come singly! The last chance was 18 h3! ♗a6 19 ♖e1 c5 20 ♘4f3 ♘d3 21 ♖e3 ♖ae8∓.

| 18 | ¬... | ♗g4! |
| 19 | f3 | |

Or 19 ♕a6 ♕b4! 20 ♘4f3 ♗xf3 21 ♘xf3 ♖xf3! and mates.

| 19 | ... | ♗d7 |
| 20 | ♖fd1 | ♖ae8 |

21	♕a6	♕c5
22	♘f1	♗c8!
23	♕a4	♕b6
24	♔h1	♖f4!

The pin puts an end to the game. Now 25 ♘g3 loses to 25 ... ♗d7! with the unanswerable threat of 26 ... c5.

25 g3 ♖xf3!

Bareyev has conducted the game with immense verve!

26 ♖d2

Despair, but after 26 ♘xf3 ♘xf3 27 ♘d2 ♕f2 28 ♘xf3 ♖e2, mate is unavoidable.

| 26 | ... | ♗h3 |
| | **0-1** | |

A terrible rout!

Vasyukov–M. Gurevich
Moscow 1987

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7

5 c3

White cannot do without c2–c3 sooner or later; the choice between ♗d3, ♘gf3 and f2–f4 can be made next move.

5 ... c5

A less accurate choice is 5 ... b6 6 ♘h3! c5 7 ♗b5!? a5 8 0-0 ♗a6 9 a4! ♕c8 10 c4 with a strong initiative for White in Psakhis–Shestakov, USSR 1980.

6 f4 *(26)*

Perhaps the most thematic move. Realising the importance of the e-pawn, White fortifies it in the most resolute manner. He has a big advantage in space, and

26
B
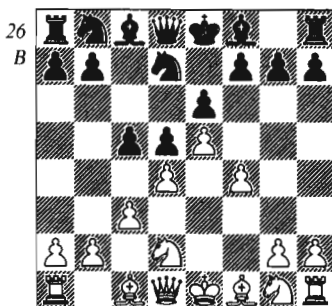
Black must play with extreme precision.

6 ...   ♞c6

6 ... b6 is too slow: 7 ♞h3!? ♝a6 8 ♝xa6 ♞xa6 9 0–0 ♞c7 10 f5!? (10 ♞f3 is also playable and gives a small plus) 10 ... ef 11 ♛f3, with good prospects of an attack;   Glek–Moskalenko, Odessa 1989.

It is worth considering 6 ... cd 7 cd, and only then 7 ... ♞c6.

7 ♞df3

Smagin and Serper have been playing 7 ♞gf3, not without success. The idea is that after 7 ... ♛b6 White defends his pawn chain with the somewhat ugly 8 ♞b3 (but not 8 c4?! cd 9 cd ed 10 ♞b3 ♞c5 11 ♞xc5 ♝xc5 12 a3 d3! with a good game; Smagin–Kindermann, Dortmund 1991). The following line can be recommended for Black: 7 ... a5!? 8 a4 (8 ♝e2?! is weaker: 8 ... ♛b6 9 dc ♝xc5 10 ♞b3 ♝f2+ 11 ♚f1 ♞c5! with an excellent position; Serper–Glek, Frunze 1988) 8 ... ♝e7 (8 ... cd 9 cd?! ♝b4! 10 ♚f2 f6 11 g3 ♛b6 12 ef ♞xf6 was fine for

Black in Smagin–M. Gurevich, Kiev 1986, but White has the stronger 9 ♞xd4! ♞xd4 10 cd ♝b4 11 ♚f2! f6 12 ♝d3 0–0 13 ♞f3, with some advantage; Serper–Barsov, Tashkent 1988) 9 ♝e2 f6 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♞b3 cd 12 ♞bxd4 ♝c5, with unclear play; Serper–Savchenko, Tbilisi 1989.

7 ...   ♛b6

A logical move, increasing the pressure against d4. But Black also has several other continuations to choose from, notably the following:

(a) **7 ... c4** (Black declines to maintain the central tension, and prepares active play on the queenside) 8 g4 b5 (8 ... h5?! is premature: 9 gh ♜xh5 10 ♞e2 ♞b6 11. ♞g3 ♜h8 12 h4 ♝d7 13 h5 with a clear advantage, Hort–Basman, Harrachov 1967) 9 ♞e2 ♞b6 10 ♞g3 a5 11 ♝g2 b4 12 0–0 a4 13 a3! occurred in Belyavsky–Bagirov, USSR 1974. Black's queenside initiative has come to a dead end, while White's kingside play is only just starting.

(b) **7 ... f5** (this move has a bad reputation, but perhaps does not deserve it) 8 ♝d3 cd (nor is everything clear after 8 ... ♛b6 9 ♞e2 ♝e7 10 0–0 ♞db8!?, a favourite manoeuvre of Farago's, who is a great French Defence specialist. The knight lets the bishop out, and itself heads for a6, where it is very soundly though not very actively deployed. In Smagin–Ree, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989,

White failed to demonstrate an advantage after 11 ♔h1 ♘a6 12 ♖g1 ♗d7 13 g4 g6) 9 cd ♗e7 10 ♘e2 ♘b6 11 h3 a5!? (or 11 ... 0–0 12 g4 a5 13 a4 ♘b4 14 ♗b1 ♗d7, with quite good possibilities for queenside counterplay; Ye–Short, Lucerne 1989. Ye recommends instead 12 a3! a5 13 b3 a4 14 b4±) 12 g4 ♗d7 13 ♘c3 0–0 14 gf ef 15 h4 ♖c8, and White can only count on a slight edge; Adams–Züger, London 1990.

(c) **7 ... ♕a5** (highly popular in the mid-seventies, this move is currently undergoing a severe crisis) 8 ♗e3! (the simplest way to gain the advantage) 8 ... b5 (Black likewise fails to equalise with 8 ... cd 9 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 10 ♗xd4 ♘b8 [*not 10 ... b6?? 11 a4 ♗a6 12 b4±± Short–Borngässer, Dortmund 1986*] 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 ♗e3±) 9 dc b4 10 ♘d4! (stronger than 10 a3 b3! 11 ♕xb3 ♗xc5 with compensation for the pawn) 10 ... ♕xc5 (the careless 10 ... ♗b7? led to a quick defeat after 11 a3! bc 12 b4 ♕d8 13 ♘gf3±± Tseshkovsky–Vaganian, Vilnius Z 1975) 11 ♕a4! bc (or 11 ... ♗b7 12 ♗b5 ♖c8 13 ♔f2! and it is hard for Black to find an adequate defence _ against the numerous threats) 12 ♕xc6 cb 13 ♖b1 ♕a3 14 ♔f2 ♖b8 15 f5!± Adorjan–Watson, New York 1981.

(d) **7 ... cd** 8 cd (8 ♘xd4!? is also perfectly playable, for example 8 ... ♘xd4 9 cd ♘b6 10 ♘f3 ♗e7 11 ♗d3 ♗d7 12 0–0± Larsen–

Brinck-Claussen, Esbjerg 1978. If Black doesn't want to allow 8 ♘xd4, he should exchange on d4 on move six) 8 ... ♘b6 (8 ... ♕b6 transposes into Vasyukov–M. Gurevich. If 8 ... ♗b4+, White can reckon on a small plus after either 9 ♔f2 or the less pretentious 9 ♗d2 ♕a5 10 ♗d3 ♗xd2+ 11 ♕xd2 ♕xd2+ 12 ♔xd2 ♘b6 13 b3, with the better chances in the ending; Motwani–Carton, Blackpool Z 1990. With the text move, Black initiates a well-founded strategic plan. Conceding considerable freedom of action to White on the kingside, Black prepares active operations on the other wing without undue hurry; an important role is assigned to the advance of his a-pawn. White's large spatial advantage allows him to count on the initiative, but only with very accurate play) 9 ♗d3 (alternatively, 9 ♘e2 h5 10 ♘c3 ♗d7 11 ♗e2 ♖c8 12 0–0 g6 13 ♔h1 a6 14 b3± Bronstein–Hug, Petropolis IZ 1973. *ECO* recommends 9 g4!?, which indeed is quite strong; so perhaps as a prelude to his plan Black ought to construct some kingside fortifications with 8 ... h5!?, especially since he cannot do without this move in the long run anyway) 9 ... h5 10 ♘e2 (or 10 ♘h3!? ♗d7 11 0–0 g6 12 a3 a5 13 ♕e2 ♗e7 14 ♘hg5 a4, with unclear play in Marić–Uhlmann, Skopje 1988) 10 ... ♗d7 11 0–0 g6 (it is worth con-

sidering 11 ... a5!? 12 a4 [*12 a3!?*] 12 ... ♘b4 13 b3 ♘xd3 14 ♕xd3 ♘c8 15 ♘c5 ♘e7= Malevinsky–Savchenko, Riga 1988) 12 ♘c3 (after 12 ♗d2 ♘b4 13 ♗xb4 ♗xb4 14 a3 ♗e7 15 ♘c3 ♔f8, Black has no reason to complain at the results of the opening; Hug–Portisch, Petropolis IZ 1973) 12 ... ♗e7 13 ♕e2 ♔f8!? 14 ♗e3 ♔g7 15 ♗f2 a5 16 ♖ad1 a4 17 a3 ♘a5, Adams–Whiteley, London 1987. The weakness of the light squares in his opponent's camp permits Black to look to the future with optimism.

(e) 7 ... ♖b8 (an ingenious move; Black is preparing the rapid advance of his b-pawn, but the delay in developing his pieces entails considerable risk) 8 ♗d3 b5 9 ♘e2 ♕b6 (the game Machulsky–Temirbayev, Alma-Ata 1989, ended quickly after 9 ... b4 10 0–0 g6?! 11 g4! h5 12 f5 hg 13 fg gf 14 gf+ ♔xf7 15 ♖xf3+, and the black monarch soon succumbed to the blows of all White's pieces) 10 0–0 b4 11 ♔h1 ♗a6 12 f5 ♗xd3 13 ♕xd3 ♕b5± Glek–Ivanchuk, Tallinn 1986. Black managed to survive, after some adventures.

(f) 7 ... f6?! 8 ♗d3 cd 9 cd ♗b4+ 10 ♗d2 ♕b6 11 a3!? ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 0–0 13 ♘e2 h6 14 b4!± Speelman–Skembris, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

8 g3

This has been the main line for many years. White utilises the full resources of his pawn position to pursue his chief aim — preventing the destruction of his centre. A further point is that, given the inevitability of the ... f7–f6 break, the bishop is ready to exert pressure from h3 on the weaknesses that will be formed in Black's camp. Other moves to be met with are 8 a3, 8 ♘e2, and Spassky's relatively new 8 h4!?. Let us examine them.

(a) 8 a3 (in the last few years this has frequently been played by Kindermann and Alexander Ivanov) 8 ... a5 9 ♘e2 (a weak line is 9 b3?! cd 10 cd ♗e7 11 ♗e3 f6 12 ♕d3 0–0, with excellent play for Black in Hoeksema–Lautier, Groningen 1988) 9 ... f5 (Black also has 9 ... f6 10 g3 ♗e7 11 ♗h3 ♘f8 12 ef ♗xf6 13 ♗e3 c4= A. Ivanov–Bikhovsky, New York 1990) 10 h3 ♗e7 11 g4 g6 12 ♘g3 cd 13 cd ♘f8 (13 ... ♘db8!?) 14 ♖h2 ♗d7 15 ♗e3 a4, with quite a good position for Black; A. Ivanov–Ostenstad, Gausdal Troll Masters 1991.

(b) 8 ♘e2 (it is hard to recommend this move; Black obtains an excellent game with no particular trouble) 8 ... f6! (after 8 ... cd 9 ♘exd4! ♘xd4 10 ♘xd4 ♘b8 11 ♕b3, White has a slight edge) 9 a3 (or 9 g3 cd 10 cd ♗b4+ 11 ♘c3 [*there is great danger for White in 11 ♗d2 fe 12 fe 0–0 13 ♗g2 ♘dxe5! 14 de ♘xe5, with a fierce attack; Hamann–Uhlmann, Halle 1963*] 11 ... 0–0 12 a3!? [*12*

ef=] 12 ... ♗e7! 13 ♗h3 ♔h8, with a roughly equal game; Sznapik–Knaak, 1983. Black does well out of 9 ♘g3?! cd 10 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 11 cd ♗b4+ 12 ♔f2 fe 13 fe 0–0, and already White is unable to offer serious resistance; Wright–Palmer, Dublin 1991) 9 ... cd 10 cd ♗e7 11 g3 0–0 12 ef ♘xf6 13 ♗g2 ♘e4, and already Black's position is preferable; Tischbierek–Knaak, East Germany 1989.

(c) **8 h4!?** *(27)*
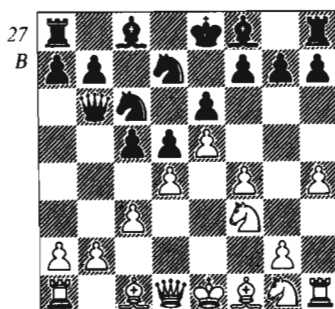
A very interesting idea of Spassky's, which he used successfully against Yusupov in the World Cup tournament, Belfort 1988. The purpose of the move is straightforward: in the last few years Black's counterplay has invariably featured the sharp ... g7–g5!, so with 8 h4 White prevents this dangerous break for a long time, if not for good. The interesting and unconventional positions which now arise have recently proved attractive to large numbers of players, and the move

has become a serious rival to the good old 8 g3. Black's search for a good reply has generally taken the following paths:

(c1) **8 ... a5** 9 h5 (White shouldn't voluntarily weaken himself on the queenside. Black achieved counterplay after both 9 a4 cd 10 cd ♘db8!? 11 h5 h6 12 ♗d3 ♗d7 13 ♘e2 ♘a6 14 0–0 0–0–0= Psakhis–Farago, Berlin 1988, and 9 a3 a4 10 h5 h6 11 g4 ♕b3! 12 ♗d3 ♕xd1+ 13 ♔xd1 ♘a5 14 ♘e2 ♘b6± Kuczynski–Matlak, Polanica Zdroj 1989) 9 ... h6 10 g4 ♗e7 11 ♘e2 ♘f8 12 ♖b1 ♗d7 13 ♗e3 f6 14 ♔f2 0–0–0 with wholly unclear play; S. Salov–Tabatadze, Moscow 1991.

(c2) **8 ... cd** 9 cd ♗b4+ (after the incautious 9 ... f6?!, White has the opportunity to develop his pieces in ideal positions: 10 ♗d3! ♗e7 [*10 ... ♗b4+ 11 ♔e2! 0–0 12 ♗e3 a5 13 ♕c2 f5 14 g4!± also fails to bring Black relief; Psakhis–Franke, Berlin 1988*] 11 ♘e2 0–0 12 a3 a5 13 h5 ♕a7 14 ♖h3! and White has a kingside initiative 'for nothing'; Psakhis–Kaidanov, Protvino 1988) 10 ♔f2 f6 (or 10 ... ♗e7 11 b3 f5 12 h5! 0–0 13 ♗e3± Kogan–Giulian, Haifa 1989) 11 ♗e3! (in Ljubojević–M.Gurevich, Linares 1991, White played the over-optimistic 11 ♔g3?! 0–0 12 ♗d3, and by means of a typical but nonetheless pretty piece sacrifice, Black confronted his opponent

with insoluble problems: 12 ...
♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 fe 14 fe ♘xe5 15
♗c2 ♘g6! with a decisive attack)
11 ... ♗e7 12 ♕d2 (12 ♖b1!?) 12
... 0–0 13 ♖d1 a5 14 ♘g3 a4 15
♗d3 ♕d8, with chances for both
sides; Belyavsky–Kindermann,
Munich 1991.

(c3) **8 ... ♗e7!?** (this quiet move
which doesn't allow White to
develop his bishop on d3 deserves
close attention) 9 h5 f6!? (in
Ghinda–Arencibia, Novi Sad Ol
1990, Black achieved success after
9 ... h6 10 g3?! cd 11 cd f6 12 a3
fe 13 fe 0–0 14 b4?! a5! 15 b5
♘cxe5!∓, but at more than one
point White's play can be im-
proved. Thus, even his tenth move
is suspect; in place of 10 g3?!,
Arencibia suggests 10 ♘h3!?) 10
♗d3 cd 11 cd fe 12 fe 0–0 13 ♘e2
♘dxe5! 14 de ♘xe5! 15 ♘c3 (of
course not 15 ♘xe5? ♗b4+! fol-
lowed by 16 ... ♕f2 mate!) 15 ...
♕c7! was played in Ermenkov–
Petkov, Bulgaria 1989. There are
too many weaknesses in White's
position, and it is unlikely that he
can withstand the attack. So in the
line with 8 h4 ♗e7!?, the ball is
in White's court.

8 ... cd
Somewhat relieving the central
pressure. If Black wants to steer
clear of long and complicated
forced lines, he can opt for 8 ... f5,
acquiescing in a passive position.
There can follow: 9 ♘e2 a5 (in
Ljubojević–Timman, Reykjavik
1987, Black ended up in an un-

pleasant position after 9 ... ♗e7
10 ♗h3 0–0 11 g4 cd 12 cd ♕d8
[*the return of his queen to its
starting square vividly demon-
strates Black's difficulties in his
search for counterplay*] 13 0–0
♘b6 14 a3 ♗d7 15 b3 ♗e8 16 gf
ef 17 ♕d3±) 10 ♗h3 (van der
Wiel–Ree, Amsterdam 1983, saw
the interesting 10 ♘g5!? ♘db8 11
♖g1 ♗e7 12 g4 ♗xg5 13 fg cd
14 cd 0–0 15 gf ♖xf5 16 ♗h3
♖f3! 17 ♗g4 ♘xe5! 18 de ♕f2+,
with perpetual check. An in-
sufficiently energetic line is 10
h3 ♗e7 11 g4 0–0 12 ♖g1 ♔h8
13 h4 ♘db8!? 14 ♗h3 ♘a6, and
Black has prepared himself for
queenside activity; M. Pavlov–
I. Farago, Baile Herculane Z
1982) 10 ... ♗e7 11 g4 ♘db8 (too
slow; it was essential to play
11 ... 0–0±) 12 gf ef 13 dc! ♕d8
14 ♗e3 ♘a6 15 ♕d3± Short–
Reefschläger, Plovdiv 1983.

9 cd ♗b4+
Very sharp play arises from **9
... f6 10 ♗h3!?** (an alternative
rarely seen in practice, but prob-
ably not bad, is 10 ♗d3 ♗e7 11
♘f1!? [*in Henley–J. Watson, New
York 1981, Black managed to seize
the initiative after 11 ♘e2 fe 12 fe
0–0 13 ♘f4 ♘xd4! 14 ♘xd4 ♘xe5
15 ♘c2 ♗b4+, with a mounting
attack*] 11 ... 0–0 12 ♔g2 ♖f7
13 ♘e2 ♘f8 14 ♘c3± Wahls–
Lautier, World Junior, Adelaide
1988), and now Black's choices
are:

(a) **10 ... ♗b4+** 11 ♔f1 fe (in

Lehto–Vladimirov, Helsinki 1990, Black played the interesting 11 ... 0–0!? 12 ♗g2 [*of course after 12 ♗xe6+ ♘h8 13 ef ♘xf6 14 ♗xc8 ♖xc8, Black has compensation for the pawn*] 12 ... ♔h8 13 ♘e2 a5 [*it is not time for sacrifices yet: 13 ... fe 14 fe ♘dxe5?! 15 de ♘xe5 16 ♘fd4 ♘g6 17 a3 ♗e7 18 ♕b3±*] 14 ♖f1 f5, with complex play) 12 fe (12 de?! is worse: 12 ... ♘c5 13 ♗e3 d4!) 12 ... 0–0 (after 12 ... ♘f8?! 13 ♘e2 ♘g6 14 ♗g2 0–0 15 ♗g4! ♗d7 16 h4, Black is left with a passive position without any hope of counterplay; Portisch–Tal, Oberhausen 1961) 13 ♗g2 (13 ♗xe6+ ♔h8 14 ♗g2 ♘dxe5! is unsatisfactory for White) 13 ... ♘dxe5!? (bold, and in a sense forced; if Black doesn't destroy his opponent's pawn centre, he is condemned to defence with slim prospects) 14 de ♘xe5 15 ♕e2! (in the game which introduced this line, Black obtained more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed piece after 15 ♕b3 ♘c4 16 a3 ♗c5 17 ♕xb6 ♘xb6 18 b3 ♘a5; Yudasin–Knaak, Trnava 1983) 15 ... ♘c4!? (after 15 ... ♘xf3 16 ♘xf3 e5!? 17 ♗xc8 ♖axc8 18 ♘xe5 ♕e6 19 ♗f4 ♖f5 20 ♖ac1 ♖e8 [*20 ... ♖cf8 21 ♕e3! g5 22 ♘g4 ♕g6 23 ♗e5±*] 21 ♕b5!± White succeeded in beating off his opponent's pressure in Ermenkov–Knaak, match Bulgaria–East Germany 1983) 16 b3 ♗c3 17 ♖b1 e5!? (or 17 ... ♗f6 18 ♕d3

♘d6 19 ♘e2 ♕a5 20 a4 ♘e4 21 ♘f4, and White managed to consolidate his position while retaining his extra piece; Hennigan–Carton, Oakham 1990) 18 ♕d3 e4 19 ♕xd5+ ♔h8 20 ♕xe4 ♘d6, with completely unclear consequences (analysis by Maier).

(b) 10 ... ♗e7 11 ♘e2 (after 11 ♔f1, Black can choose between 11 ... ♘b4!? 12 ♔g2 ♕a6 13 ♘e2 ♘b6 14 ♘c3 ♘d3 with approximate equality, Dobrovolsky–Glek, Odessa 1989, and 11 ... fe 12 fe 0–0 13 ♗g2 [*13 ♗xe6+ is very dangerous for White; after 13 ... ♔h8 Black already threatens 14 ... ♘dxe5*] 13 ... ♘dxe5!? [*again, boldness is obligatory; 13 ... ♔h8 14 ♗g4! ♖f7 15 ♘e2 ♘f8 16 ♖f1 was unsatisfactory for Black in Smagin–Ortega, Sochi 1987*] 14 de ♘xe5 15 ♕e2 ♘c4 16 b3 [*16 ♗f4?! ♗f6 17 ♖e1 e5∓*] 16 ... ♗f6 17 ♖b1 ♗d7 with double-edged play in Hawelko–Schön, Naleczow 1988) 11 ... fe (Black may also sacrifice a pawn: 11 ... 0–0 12 ♗xe6+?! ♔h8 13 ef ♘xf6 [*or 13 ... ♗b4+ 14 ♗d2 ♘xf6 15 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 16 0–0 ♗xd2 17 ♕xd2 ♘e4 18 ♕d3= Jansa–Haugli, Oslo 1988*] 14 ♗xc8 ♗b4+ [*14 ... ♖axc8 15 0–0 ♘e4 16 ♔g2=*] 15 ♔f1 ♖axc8 16 ♔g2 ♘e7 17 a3± Hübner–Mohr, Bundesliga 1988) 12 fe 0–0 13 ♖f1! (as usual, it doesn't pay White to go after risky material gains: 13 ♗xe6+?! ♔h8 14 ♗xd5 ♘dxe5! 15 de ♘xe5, with

a strong initiative. Black also has an excellent position after 13 ♘f4?! ♔h8! 14 ♗xe6 ♘dxe5! [*there are few games in which this stroke doesn't occur!*] 15 de ♖xf4! 16 ♗xf4 ♗xe6, and the exposed position of White's king gives cause for concern; Agapov–Komarov, Leningrad 1987) 13 ... ♔h8! (13 ... ♗b4+ 14 ♗d2! [*14 ♘c3? ♘xd4! 15 ♘xd4 ♘xe5 16 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8∓ Wahls–Cordes, West Germany 1986*] 14 ... ♔h8 15 ♗xb4±) 14 ♘f4 ♗b4+ (14 ... a5!?) 15 ♔e2 was played in Watson–Apicella, Ostend 1987. According to Watson's analysis, Black should continue 15 ... g5!? with unclear consequences.

10 ♔f2   g5!? *(28)*

28
W
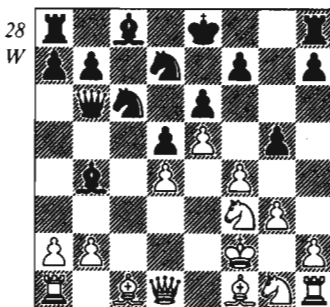
This remarkable move, which may serve as a trademark for the entire variation, made its appearance in 1984 (probably for the first time in a game between Yudasin and Kaplun), and breathed new life into the 3 ... ♘f6 system. Before that, Black had been making prolonged and fairly un-

successful efforts to obtain counterplay by less hazardous means:

(a) Against **10 ... f5**, the correct plan was demonstrated as long ago as 1965, in a game Suetin–Uhlmann at Sarajevo, which went 11 ♔g2 ♘db8 12 ♘h3! ♗d7 13 ♘f2 ♘a6 14 ♖b1 ♘c7 15 ♘d3 ♗e7 16 ♗e3, and Black soon suffocated from lack of space in his own camp.

(b) **10 ... f6** has been seen more often: 11 ♔g2 0–0 (here too, 11 ... g5!? is interesting. It brought Black a quick win in Horvath–Ivanchuk, 1985, after 12 h3? gf 13 gf ♖g8+ 14 ♔h2 fe 15 fe ♘dxe5! 16 ♗f4 ♗d6∓∓. But White would have had good chances to obtain the advantage after 12 ef g4 13 f7+!?) 12 ♗d3 ♘xd4 (this is a case where the sacrifice is unsound, but after the cautious 12 ... ♔h8 13 ♘e2 fe 14 de ♗e7 15 h4! White has excellent attacking chances; Wahls–Leiber, Berlin 1987) 13 ♗e3! (Black had been hoping for 13 ♘xd4 fe 14 fe ♘xe5 15 ♘gf3 ♘xf3 16 ♘xf3, with adequate compensation) 13 ... fe 14 fe ♗c5 15 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 16 ♘xd4 ♕xb2+ 17 ♗c2!± Yakovich–Bareyev, USSR 1985.

11 h3

White deters the further advance of the pawn in the most solid manner. Practice has also seen:

(a) **11 fg ♘dxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♗e3 (Black equalises after 13

♔g2 ♘c4! 14 ♘f3 ♗d7 15 b3
♘d6 16 ♗f4 ♘e4= Glek–Vaiser,
Tallinn 1986) 13 ... ♘c4! (stronger
than 13 ... ♘c6 14 ♘f3 ♗f8 15
b3 ♗g7 16 ♗b2 ♗d7 17 ♕d2±
O'Donnell–O. Foisor, St John
1988) 14 ♗xc4 dc 15 ♘f3 (15
♖c1?! ♕c6! 16 ♘f3 b5 17 ♘e5
♕d5∓ Ghinda–O. Foisor,
Romania 1986) 15 ... ♗d6=.

(b) **11 ♗e3 f6** (11 ... g4!? also
deserves consideration; then either
12 ♘d2 f6! or 12 ♘h4 ♗e7 prom-
ises Black equal chances) 12 ♗h3
fe (he can't solve his problems by
12 ... gf 13 gf fe 14 fe ♖f8 15 ♘e2
♗e7 16 ♕d2± W. Watson–Short,
Brighton 1983) 13 fe 0–0 14 ♖c1!
(in Chandler–Botterill, Brighton
1984, White acquired an advan-
tage after 14 ♗g4!? ♗e7? 15 ♕b3
♘dxe5!? 16 de d4 17 ♗d2 ♘xe5
18 h3±, but a year later a stunning
innovation forced players to
regard 14 ♗g4 in a different light;
in place of the passive 14 ... ♗e7,
the game Emms–Kosten, British
Ch 1985, went 14 ... ♗c5!! 15
♗xe6+ ♔h8 16 dc ♕xb2+ 17
♗d2 g4! with the better game. It
is against 14 ... ♗c5 that the text
move is directed) 14 ... ♔h8 15
♗g4 ♗e7 16 ♕d2, with advan-
tage; W. Watson–Dimitrov, Haifa
1989. Black ought to take a closer
look at 11 ... g4!?.

(c) **11 ♗h3?!** h5! 12 ♘xg5
♕xd4+ 13 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘e2
♘c2∓ Yudasin–Kaplun, USSR
1984.

     11   **...**   **gf**

An alternative strategy involves
maintaining the central tension
with 11 ... f6 12 ♗e3 0–0 13 ♖c1!?
♖f7 14 ♖h2, and now in a game
Karpov–Ljubojević, Brussels
1986 (where the moves 8 ... a5 9
a4 had been inserted) Black could
have achieved a perfectly comfor-
table position with ... ♗e7!? fol-
lowed by ... ♘f8.

     12   **gf**

White gains little from 12 ♗xf4
f6 13 ♔g2 fe (13 ... ♗f8 14 ♖h2
♗g7 15 ♔h1 0–0=) 14 ♘xe5
(Black also has an easy game after
14 de ♗e7! 15 ♖b1 ♘f8 16 ♘g5
♘g6 17 ♕h5 ♗xg5∓ Delchev–
Dreyev, European Junior Ch,
Arnhem 1988/9) 14 ... ♘dxe5 15
de ♗d7 16 a3 ♗e7 17 b4 0–0–0;
Rossmann–Knaak, East Ger-
many 1984.

     12   **...**   **f6**

Playing in 'Wild West' style
comes to no good: 12 ... ♘c5??!
13 dc ♗xc5+ 14 ♔e2 ♖g8 15
♕b3! ♘b4 16 a3, and White
refuted his opponent's daring idea
in Yudasin–Herzog, Berne 1989.
But the trappy 12 ... ♗e7!? is
interesting; then 13 ♖h2? ♘c5!
14 ♘e2 ♘e4+ gives Black the
advantage.

     13   **♗e3**   **♗e7**

We can now sum up the results
of the opening. Black will complete
his development in two or three
moves (14 ... ♘f8, 15 ... ♗d7 and
16 ... 0–0–0), and his position
is every bit as promising as his
opponent's.

14	♕d2	♘f8	32 ♖d3 ♖c2 33 ♖f2 ♗e1, with a
15	♗d3	♗d7	big advantage to Black.
16	♘e2	0-0-0	31 ♕xe2 ♘c6
17	♖ac1		32 ♕g4 ♘b4

17 a3, followed by 18 b4 and the transfer of a knight to a4, may be more accurate.

17	...	♔b8
18	♘c3	fe
19	fe	♘g6
20	♘a4	♕b4
21	♗xg6!?	♕xa4!?

21 ... hg 22 ♘c5 would have led to a quiet, approximately equal game, but as usual Gurevich steers towards complications.

22	b3	♕a6
23	♗d3	♕b6
24	♔g2	♗e8!

With this bishop coming into the game after such a passive role in the early stages, we detect that the initiative is passing to Black.

25	♖hf1	♗h5
26	♔h2	♖df8
27	♗e2	♗a3

In the first place Black needs to control c1 in order to fight for the c-file, and secondly the e7-square is freed for transferring the knight to f5. White's position is getting worse with every move, and we can only envy the composure with which Vasyukov, under increasing pressure, still manages to set his opponent some difficult problems.

28	♖cd1	♘e7
29	♗h6	♖c8
30	♘h4!?	♗xe2

As Gurevich indicates, 30 ... ♗b4! was stronger: 31 ♕e3 ♖c3

33	♖f2	♖hg8

Despite his previous inaccuracy, Black has retained a plus, and threatens to penetrate both on the kingside and on the c-file.

34	♕f4	♘c6
35	♔h1	♗b4
36	♖f3	♗e7
37	♘g2	♖g6
38	♘e3	♕a6

Judging from his last few moves which were rather scrappy, Black must have been fairly short of time. His fortieth move emphatically confirms this suspicion.

39	♖f2	♘b4
40	♖fd2	♘xa2??(29)
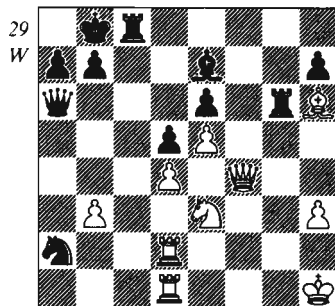
In the time-scramble Gurevich must have overlooked that after the obvious reply ...

41	♖a1

... he cannot continue 41 ..
♖c1+ 42 ♖xc1 ♘xc1, because o:
43 ♕f7! and the white pieces break into his camp with decisive effect

But strong characters — and 'Guron' is definitely one such — will fight on, even when a piece down.

41	...	♛b5
42	♖dxa2	a6!

Divine impassivity, don't you agree?

43	♖g1	♖xg1+
44	♔xg1	♛xb3
45	♖f2	♝b4!

Black can only set his hopes on his passed a-pawn; every one of his few pieces is ready to support it.

46	♔h2	a5
47	♛g4	♖c6
48	♛g8+	♔a7
49	♛xh7!	

Taking control of c2 is no less important than winning the pawn.

49	...	♖c3!
50	♛f7	♝a3
51	♖c7	♖xe3?

The tremendous tension has its effect even on Gurevich's iron nerves. And yet, after the logical 51 ... ♝c1! 52 ♖xc3 ♛xc3 53 ♘g4 a4, it would not be at all simple for White to cope with the far advanced pawn.

52	♝xe3	♛xe3
53	♖xb7+	♔a6
54	♖a7+	♔b5
55	♛c2!	

Settling the outcome of this dramatic game. The mate threats compel Black to seek a queen exchange which will be fatal to him.

55	...	♛f4+

56	♔g2	♛g5+
57	♔h1	♛c1+
58	♛xc1	♝xc1
59	♖b7+	

One final accurate move. The black king can't go to c4 on account of 60 ♖c7+, so the game is over.

59	...	♔a4
60	♖b6	♝e3
61	♖xe6	♝xd4
62	♖e8	♔b5
64	e6	

1–0

Akopian–Ulibin
Minsk 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7

5	♝d3	

Currently the most popular line.

5	...	c5

Black can hardly do without ... c7–c5 anyway, so he plays it at once. What can happen if he delays this important advance is illustrated by the game Tal–Granda Zuniga, Rio Hondo 1987, which went 5 ... b6 6 ♘e2 ♝a6 7 ♝xa6 ♘xa6 8 0–0 c5 (Black has achieved the important exchange of light-squared bishops, but his backward development provokes White into large-scale operations in the centre) 9 c4! ♘c7 10 ♘f4 cd 11 cd ♘xe5 12 de f6 13 ♘f3±±. Punishment in the best Tal style.

6	c3	♘c6

Now that White has played c2–c3, the idea of exchanging bishops

by means of **6 ... b6** looks more logical. Black's play is a little slow, but strategic achievements — and the exchange of light-squared bishops certainly comes under that heading — can be worth the price of a little inconvenience. This method of play has a firm adherent in Short, which is not a bad recommendation. White usually develops his initiative in one of the following ways:

(a) **7 f4** (this is not seen very often, but usually gives quite good results) 7 ... ♗a6 8 ♗b1!? (8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♘df3 ♗e7 10 ♘e2 c4 11 0-0 0-0 12 g4!± is also playable; Krogius–Korchnoi, Tbilisi 1956) 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♘df3 cd 10 cd ♖c8 11 ♘e2 f5 12 0-0 ♗e7 13 ♖f2± Ivanchuk–Moskalenko, Lvov 1988. Preserving his bishop enables White to count on the initiative.

(b) **7 ♕g4** ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♘e2 h5 10 ♕g3 b5 11 0-0 ♘b6 12 dc ♘xc5 13 ♘b3± Akopian–Hergott, Belgrade GMA 1988.

(c) **7 ♘e2** ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 (or perhaps White *shouldn't* exchange. At any rate, 8 ♗b1 has brought him good results in practice. For example, 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♘f3 cd [*even a more aggressive set-up left White with somewhat the better chances in Sznapik–Short, Dubai Ol 1986: 9 ... ♗e7 10 0-0 g5 11 ♗e3 h6 12 ♖e1 ♕c7 13 h3 0-0-0 14 a4!*] 10 cd ♗b4+ 11 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 ♕e7 13 a3 ♘a5 14 ♗c2± Rozentalis–

Moskalenko, Odessa 1989) 8 .. ♘xa6 9 0-0 b5 (Black paves the way for his future queenside counterplay, for which his knight may prove useful on a6. The alternative is 9 ... ♘c7 [*aiming to meet 10 f4 with 10 ... f5!, and the pawn on e6 is securely defended*] 10 ♘f4 ♗e7 11 ♕g4 [*the quiet 11 ♘f3 b5?! 12 dc ♘xc5 13 ♘d4 ♕d7 14 ♕g4 g6 15 ♗e3 also promises White a plus; Geller–Mellado Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989*] 11 ... g6 12 ♖e1 [*Black has obvious difficulties in activating his game; 12 ... ♘f8 [if 12 ... ♘b8, White reacts in similar fashion with 13 dc! bc 14 c4 ♘c6 15 cd ed 16 ♘f3 ♕d7 17 e6!± Razuvayev–Bagirov USSR 1973; opening the game in the centre clearly favours White; 13 dc! bc 14 c4 ♕d7 15 b3 h5 16 ♕f3± Müller–Moskalenko Budapest 1991) 10 ♘f4 (there is little promise for White in 10 ♘f3 ♘b6 11 h4 ♕d7 12 h5 h6 13 ♘h2 b4 with chances for both sides, T Georgadze–Short, Hastings 1979 or 10 a4 b4 11 c4 ♘b6 12 a5 ♘c4 13 ♘xc4 dc 14 ♕c2 ♕d5 15 ♘f4 ♕b7 16 ♕xc4 cd and Black is in good shape, Dvoiris–Budnikov Voronezh 1988) 10 ... ♗e7 (in Hjartarson–Agdestein, Manila IZ 1990, Black played the interesting 10 ... cd 11 cd ♗e7 12 ♕g4 g6 13 ♘f3 h5!? 14 ♕g3 g5!? 15 ♘d3 g4, but in view of the numerous kingside weaknesses the position should still be assessed in White's favour) 11 ♕g4 g6 12 h4! h5 (no

12 ... ♗xh4? 13 ♘xe6! fe 14 ♕xe6+, picking up the knight on a6) 13 ♕e2 cd 14 cd ♗xh4 15 a4, with excellent play for the sacrificed pawn; Kotronias–Short, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

(d) 7 ♘h3!? (the game now frequently develops on the same lines as after 7 ♘e2, but White gives himself the option of bringing his queen into play at any moment) 7 ... ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 0–0 b5 (or 9 ... ♘c7 10 ♕g4 ♕c8 11 ♘f3 ♕a6 12 ♘f4 g6 13 ♘g5 ♗e7 14 h4!± Grünfeld–Mednis, Riga IZ 1979) 10 ♕g4 ♕b6 (or 10 ... cd!? 11 cd ♘b6 12 b3 ♕d7 13 a4 ba! 14 ba ♘b4 with quite a good game; Semenyuk–Moskalenko, Riga 1988) 11 ♘f3 h6 (on 11 ... cd, White has every reason to sacrifice a pawn: 12 ♘xd4! ♘xe5 13 ♕e2, with more than enough compensation) 12 ♘f4 c4 13 ♘h5!? (Black equalised after 13 h4 0–0–0 14 h5 ♕c6 15 ♘e1 ♖g8 16 ♘c2 ♗e7 in Zapata–Short, Wijk aan Zee 1978) 13 ... ♖h7 (13 ... g6?! 14 ♘f6+ is also very dangerous). We have been following the game Gelfand–Shabalov, Vilnius 1988. At this point, in Gelfand's view, after stabilising the queenside position with 14 b4!? ♘c7 15 ♗d2 a5 16 a3, White would have kept quite good chances of developing an initiative on the kingside.

<div align="center">7   ♘e2   cd</div>

In recent years, Black has only played this way! White easily obtains the advantage after 7 ...

♖b8?! 8 0–0 b5 9 ♘f3 b4 10 ♘f4 ♗e7 11 ♖e1 ♕a5 12 c4!± Geller–Bandza, USSR 1983.

7 ... f6 deserves more attention, but according to the latest theory White's chances are better. For example, 8 ♘f4! ♕e7 9 ef (the game is level after 9 ♕h5+ ♕f7 10 ef!? gf! 11 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 12 ♘f3 cd 13 cd ♗d6, Gufeld–Root, Los Angeles 1987; but 9 ♘f3!? is worth considering) 9 ... ♕xf6 10 ♘f3 cd 11 0–0! ♘c5 12 ♖e1 ♗e7 13 cd, and the weakness of the e6-pawn is sorely felt; Torres–Ostos, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

<div align="center">8   cd   f6 *(30)*</div>

The following less popular alternatives should also be noted:

(a) 8 ... ♘b6 (very frequently seen in the mid-eighties, this move rarely occurs today in top-class tournaments) 9 ♘f3 (it is a matter of dispute whether White should advance his pawn to f4 or leave the diagonal open for his bishop. In Lputian–Agzamov, USSR Ch, Riga 1985, White very effectively executed the first-mentioned plan: 9 0–0 ♗d7 10 f4!? h5 11 ♘f3 ♖c8 12 a3 a5 13 ♘c3 ♘a7 14 h3 ♘c4 15 f5!±) 9 ... ♗d7 10 0–0 a5 11 a4!? (it is worth stopping the further advance of Black's pawn even at the cost of weakening the important b4 square. Admittedly, after 11 ♗g5 ♗e7 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 ♖c1 ♖c8 14 a3 a4 15 ♕d2, as in van der Wiel–van Heste, Hilversum 1989, I would still prefer to play White) 11 ... ♗e7 12

♘f4 ♘b4 13 ♗b1 ♖c8 14 ♘h5!? (the game levelled out after 14 b3 g6! 15 g3 ♘a8!? 16 ♗d2 b5 17 ab ♕b6, Matulović–Marjanović, Vrnjacka Banja 1983) 14 ... 0–0 15 h4! ♗xa4!? 16 ♖xa4 ♖xe1 17 ♕xe1 ♘xa4 18 b3 ♘b6 19 ♕f4, and with the white pieces gathering round, the black king must be getting rather nervous; Psakhis–Stolyar, Alma-Ata 1978.

(b) 8 ... ♕b6 9 ♘f3 f6 (since the classic game Alekhine–Capablanca, AVRO 1938, there have been few players who wish to check on b4 here: 9 ... ♗b4+ 10 ♔f1! ♗e7 11 a3 ♘f8 12 b4 ♗d7 13 ♗e3 ♘d8 14 ♘c3±) 10 ef (the main line, but an alternative occasionally seen is 10 ♘c3 fe 11 de ♗e7 12 0–0 0–0 13 ♖e1 ♘c5= Gavrilakis–Gdanski, Novi Sad Ol 1990. Accepting the pawn sacrifice is dangerous for Black: 11 ... ♘dxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♕h5+ ♘f7 14 ♗b5+ ♔e7 15 ♕e2, with a strong initiative. White also benefits from 11 ... g6 12 ♗e3 ♕a5 13 ♗d2 ♘dxe5?! [13 ... ♕b6!?] 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♗b5+ ♗d7 16 ♕e2, when the attack can hardly be withstood; Shamkovich–J. Watson, USA 1976) 10 ... ♘xf6 11 0–0 ♗d6 (a key position which can be reached by various move orders, e.g. 8 ... f6 9 ef ♘xf6 10 ♘f3 ♗d6 11 0–0 ♕b6). At this point, from the very wide range of possibilities at White's disposal, we may pick out the following:

(b1) 12 b3 0–0 13 ♗b2 (13

♗f4!?) 13 ... ♗d7 14 ♘g3 (1 ♖c1 ♔h8 15 ♗b1 ♖e8 16 ♘e ♖e7=) 14 ... ♗f4 (14 ... ♘e7 1 a4!? a5 16 ♘e5 ♗e8 17 ♖c ♔h8!= Bosman–I. Farago Dieren Open 1990) 15 ♘e5 ♗e 16 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 17 ♕e2 ♖e8= Hellers–Brunell, Naestved 1988.

(b2) 12 a3 0–0 13 b4 (or 13 ♕c e5!? 14 de ♘xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♗xe 16 ♗f4 ♗xf4 17 ♘xf4 ♕d4! 1 g3 ♗g4!= Losev–Danieliar Kherson 1990) 13 ... e5! 14 d ♘xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 16 ♗e3 (1 ♖a2 ♘g4 17 ♘g3 ♗d4∓) 16 .. ♕d6 17 ♗c5 ♗xh2+ 18 ♔h ♕e5!, with complications nc unfavourable to Black; Rodr. guez–Gdanski, Santiago 1990.

(b3) 12 ♗d2 0–0 13 ♗c3 ♗d 14 ♘g3 ♔h8 15 ♘e5 ♗e8= Dor. cević–I. Farago, Berlin 1987.

(b4) 12 ♖e1 0–0 13 ♘f4 ♗d (not 13 ... ♗xf4? 14 ♗xf4 ♗d 15 ♗d6±. The dark-square bishop plays too important a rol to be parted with so lightly) 1 ♗e3 (according to ECO, the com plications after 14 ♘xe6 ♖fe8 1 ♗f5 ♗b4! 16 ♗d2 ♗xd2 17 ♕xd2 ♘e7 18 ♘xg7 ♔xg7 lea to approximate equality) 14 . ♖ae8 (14 ... ♕xb2!? 15 ♖b1 ♕a 16 ♖xb7 ♖ab8 gave Black a goo game in Maki–I. Farago, Jarver paa 1981) 15 ♖c1?! ♕xb2! 16 ♖b ♕xa2 17 ♖xb7 ♗c8, and White compensation for the sacrifice pawn is inadequate; Georgiev I. Farago, Prague Z 1985.

(b5) 12 ♗f4 ♗xf4 13 ♘x

♛xb2!? 14 ♖e1 (nor is there any promise for White in 14 ♘g5 0–0 15 ♖b1 ♛xa2 16 ♖e1 h6 17 ♘gxe6 ♗xe6 18 ♘xe6 ♖f7= Lucke-Kindermann, Bad Wörishofen 1990) 14 ... 0–0 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 16 ♖xe6 ♖ae8=.

(b6) **12 ♘c3!** (the most popular move, and with good reason — it sets Black the greatest problems) 12 ... 0–0 13 ♗e3 (13 ♗g5!? transposes back into the main game, Akopian–Ulibin. Unclear play results from 13 a3 ♘xd4 [*13 ... a6!? 14 ♗e3 ♛c7*] 14 ♘xd4 ♛xd4 15 ♘b5 [*15 ♗g6+?? hg 16 ♛xd4 ♗xh2+ ∓∓*] 15 ... ♛e5 16 g3!? ♗xb5 17 ♗xb5+ ♔e7, Zapata–Kuijf, Amsterdam 1986) 13 ... ♗d7 (or 13 ... ♛d8 14 ♖e1 [*14 ♗g5 ♛e8! 15 ♗h4 ♛h5 16 ♗g3 ♗xg3 17 hg ♘g4!*] 14 ... ♛e8 15 ♘e5!? [*15 h3 ♗d7 16 ♖c1 ♖c8 17 a3±*] 15 ... ♗xe5 16 de ♘xe5 17 ♗c5 ♘xd3 18 ♛xd3 ♖f7, Tal–Diez del Corral, Malaga 1981; and now, in Tal's view, 19 ♖e3 would have given White the better game. Unfortunately, 13 ... ♛xb2 fails to 14 ♘b5 ♗e7 15 ♖b1 ♛xa2 16 ♖a1 ♛b2 17 ♖a4!, and there is no defence against 18 ♗c1, winning the queen) 14 a3 (aiming to gain space on the queenside with b2–b4 when appropriate. White rarely plays 14 ♘e5, but more often 14 ♖e1; for example, 14 ♖e1 ♔h8! [*stronger than 14 ... ♘g4 15 ♗h4 ♘h6 16 ♗g3± van der Wiel–Short, Biel 1985*] 15 ♖c1 [*15 ♘e5 ♗e8 16*

♘a4 ♛a5!? 17 ♗d2 ♛c7 18 ♖c1 ♗h5= Tal–Wiedenkeller, European Club Cup 1986*] 15 ... ♗e8 [*15 ... ♖ae8?! 16 ♘e5 ♛d8 17 f4±*] 16 ♘a4 ♛d8 [*16 ... ♛a5!?*] 17 ♘c5 ♗xc5 18 ♖xc5 ♗h5= Campora–Kindermann, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 14 ... ♗e8 (14 ... ♖ae8 15 b4 a6 16 ♘e5! is in White's favour) 15 ♛d2 (Black easily equalises after 15 ♘g5 ♘e7! 16 h3 [*16 ♗xe6 ♗xh2+*] 16 ... ♗c7 17 ♛c2 [*17 ♖c1 h6 18 ♘f3 ♗h5 19 ♗e2 ♘f5∓ Ghinda-Dimitrov, Stara Zagora Z 1990*] 17 ... ♗g6 18 ♖ae1 ♗xd3 19 ♛xd3 h6 20 ♘f3 ♖ae8=) 15 ... ♗h5 16 ♘e5 ♘g4 17 ♘xg4 ♗xg4= I. Gurevich–Gdanski, Santiago 1990.

30
W
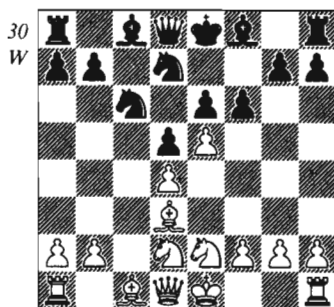
9 ef

9 f4 is not worth serious consideration: 9 ... fe 10 fe (Black has no problems whatever after 10 de ♗c5+ 11 ♘f3 ♗b6 12 ♘c3 ♘c5 13 ♗b1 ♛e7∓ Jasnikowski-I. Farago, Polanica Zdroj 1981) 10 ... ♘xd4! 11 0–0, and now either 11 ... ♛b6 or 11 ... ♘c6!?

promises Black the better chances.

9 ♘f4!? has proved considerably more unpleasant for Black, but in this case too he gradually discovered the correct path. There can follow: 9 ... ♘xd4 10 ♕h5+ ♔e7 11 ef+ (more precise than 11 ♘g6+ hg 12 ef+, since with that order of moves Black has an additional — and excellent — possibility: 12 ... ♔xf6!? 13 ♕xh8 ♔f7 14 0–0 ♘c5 15 ♗b1 e5! with the better prospects, Barle–Portisch, Ljubljana 1973) 11 ... ♘xf6 12 ♘xg6+ hg 13 ♕xh8 ♔f7 (bewildering complications with unclear results arise after 13 ... e5!? 14 ♗xg6!? [*or 14 ♘f3 ♘xf3+ 15 gf ♗f5 16 ♗xf5 gf 17 ♗g5 ♕a5+ 18 ♔f1 e4! and Black's chances are no worse; Yandemirov–Dreyev, USSR 1985*] 14 ... e4 15 0–0 ♘e2+ 16 ♔h1 ♘f4 17 ♗h7! [*the only way to save the errant bishop*] 17 ... ♘d3 18 b3! [*18 ♘b3? ♘e5! 19 ♗e3 b6∓*] 18 ... ♕d6 19 a4 ♘xc1 20 ♖axc1 ♕f4 21 f3! e3!?, Dzhandzhava–Dreyev, Lvov 1987. After 22 ♖fe1! ♕h6 23 ♘f1 ♕xh7 24 ♕xh7 ♘xh7 25 ♘xe3, the chances are about equal) 14 0–0 (problems can arise only for White after 14 f4 ♘c6! [*14 ... ♕b6?! 15 0–0!! ♗d7 16 ♔h1± S. Arkell–Quillan, British Ch 1988*] 15 ♕h4 e5 16 0–0 e4, with tremendous compensation for the petty material loss; Radlovacki–Rasidović, Yugoslavia Ch 1991. On the other hand after 14 ♕h4 e5 15 ♘f3, Black can choose between

the tactical line 15 ... e4!? 16 ♘xd4 ♗b4+ 17 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 18 ♔xd2 ♕a5+ 19 ♔d1 ed, with a very lively game in S. Jackson–Kosten, London 1985, and the positional 15 ... ♘xf3+ 16 gf ♗f5 17 ♗xf5 gf 18 ♗g5 ♕a5+ 19 ♔f1 g6! 20 ♗xf6 ♕a6+ ∓ van der Wiel–Timman, Brussels 1986) 14 ... e5 15 ♘f3 (of course, allowing the pawns to be doubled is not pleasant, but it is essential to eliminate the black knight, and the alternative 15 ♘b3 leads to an equally unpleasant change in the pawn structure. Black's simplest reaction to 15 ♘b3 is 15 ... ♘xb3 16 ab ♗f5 [*16 ... ♕b6? 17 ♗xg5+ ±±*] 17 ♗xf5 gf 18 ♗g5 ♗c5! 19 ♕h4 [*19 ♕h3 ♕d7 20 b4 ♗b6 21 ♗xf6 ♔xf6∓*] 19 .. ♕d6 20 ♗xf6 ♕xf6∓ Kramer–Chernin, Somerset 1986) 15 .. ♘xf3+ 16 gf ♕d6!? (if you enjoy analysing, a study of Pirrot–Hertneck, Bundesliga 1989, will give you plenty to think about: 16 ... ♘h5!? 17 ♗xg6+!? ♔xg6 18 ♔h1! ♕h4! 19 ♕xf8 ♔h7! 20 ♖g1!? ♕xf2?! [*20 ... ♕h3! 21 ♕a3 ♗f5=*] 21 ♕f7?? [*21 ♕a3! d4! 22 ♕d3+ ♔h8 23 ♕f1±*] 21 ... ♗g4 0–1) 17 ♗g5 ♗d7, M. Zapata–Stephens, World Junior Ch, Santiago 1990. The powerful centralisation of Black's pieces is at least worth the exchange.

    9   **...**   **♘xf6**
    10 **♘f3**

White can try placing his pawn on f4, but it isn't clear who benefits

from it. At any rate, in a game Afek–Agdestein Black had no difficulties after 10 0–0 ♗d6 11 f4 0 0 12 ♘f3 ♕b6! 13 ♔h1 ♗d7=.

10 ...   ♗d6

Those who fear an exchange of dark-squared bishops play 10 ... ♕c7, but in my opinion the exchange is not at all dangerous for Black.

11   0–0

How Black should react to 11 ♗f4 is demonstrated by the game Sorokin–Dreyev, Borzhomi 1988, whch went 11 ... ♗xf4 12 ♘xf4 ♕a5+! 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 0–0 15 ♖he1 ♘e4+ 16 ♗xe4 ♖xf4 17 ♗d3 ♗d7! (an improvement on a game Tal–Timman, in which White acquired an endgame advantage after 17 ... ♘xd4?! 18 ♔e3! ♘xf3 19 ♔xf4 ♘xe1 20 ♖xe1 ♗d7 21 ♔e5!) 18 ♔e3 ♖af8 19 ♖e2 ♗e8, and Black has a very comfortable endgame.

11   ...   0–0 *(31)*

At this point Black had the choice between three continuations of roughly equal value: 11 ... ♕b6, 11 ... ♕c7 and the move actually played. Even today, with vast practical material available, it is difficult to establish with certainty which of these three moves is strongest, and choosing between them is purely a matter of taste and fashion. The position after 11 ... ♕b6 has already been analysed in the notes to move 8. After **11 ... ♕c7**, it is White who has a difficult choice to make; no fewer

than four continuations deserve attention:

(a) **12 h3** (controlling g4 in preparation for bringing his bishop to e3) 12 ... 0–0 13 ♗e3 ♗d7 14 ♖ac1 ♖ae8!? (White does well out of 14 ... ♗e8 15 ♘g5! ♕d7 16 f4 h6 17 ♘f3 ♘e4 18 ♘e5 ♘xe5 19 de± Spasov–Gdanski, Tunja 1989) 15 ♘c3 ♕b8 16 ♗b1 ♖e7 17 ♘b5 ♗f4= Oll–Ivanchuk, Tallinn 1986.

(b) **12 g3** (a solid move preparing an exchange on f4 and guaranteeing White a small plus) 12 ... 0–0 13 ♗f4 ♗d7 (on 13 ... ♘g4 White can simply play 14 ♖c1, and the exchange sacrifice on f4 is not dangerous: 14 ... ♗xf4 15 ♘xf4 ♖xf4?! 16 gf ♕xf4 17 ♗e2! ♗d7 18 ♕d2 ♕d6 19 h3 ♘h6 20 ♗b5!± Rozentalis–Lputian,   Harkov 1985. Interesting complications arise after 13 ... ♗xf4 14 ♘xf4 ♕b6!? [*stronger than 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♖e1 ♕d6 16 ♖c1 ♖ae8 17 ♘e5! g5?! 18 ♘h5± Wahls–Belyavsky, Munich 1991*] 15 ♕d2 [*or 15 b3 ♔h8!? 16 ♘g5!? e5 17 ♘xh7! ♘xh7 18 ♕h5 e4, with great complications in Dvoiris–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch, Kiev 1986*] 15 ... ♔h8 16 ♕e3 ♕xb2!? 17 ♖ab1 ♕a3, Rozentalis–Ivanchuk,   USSR 1986. White has enough compensation for the pawn, but can he count on more?) 14 ♖c1 ♘g4 (after 14 ... ♘h5, White has no reason to go into an unclear position with 15 ♘g5?! h6 16 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 17 ♘h7!? ♖xf3! as in Kr. Georgiev–

Dolmatov, Sofia 1985; a simpler line is 15 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 16 ♘c3 g6 17 ♗b5, with a small but secure advantage. White also has the better position after 14 ... ♖ac8?! 15 ♖e1! ♔h8 16 ♕d2 ♕b8 17 ♗b5!± Ivanchuk–Dreyev, Sverdlovsk 1987) 15 ♕d2! ♖f6 16 b4! a6 17 a4± Armas–Komarov, Bad Mergentheim Open 1989.

(c) **12 ♘c3** a6 13 ♗g5 (White's plans involve bringing his bishop to g3 and exchanging it. If he wants to preserve this bishop, he may play 13 h3. There can follow: 13 ... 0–0 14 ♗e3 ♗d7 15 ♖c1 ♖ae8 [*or 15 ... ♔h8 16 ♘a4 ♗e8! 17 ♘c5 ♕e7 18 ♗e2 ♗h5= Eingorn–Psakhis, USSR Ch, Lvov 1984*] 16 ♘a4 ♖e7 17 ♘e5 ♕a5! with equal chances in Malanyuk–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch, Kiev 1986) 13 ... 0–0 (a move like this is normally made automatically, but in Psakhis–Doroshkevich, Vladivostok 1978, Black played instead 13 ... ♘g4?! [*so as to bring the knight to f5 after 14 h3 ♘h6*]. However, this landed him in trouble: 14 ♘h4! [*14 ♗h4!?*] 14 ... ♗xh2+ 15 ♔h1 ♗g1!? 16 g3 ♘xf2+ 17 ♖xf2 ♗xf2 18 ♕h5+ g6 19 ♗xg6+ ♔d7 20 ♘xd5! ♕xg3 21 ♗f5!! ±±) 14 ♗h4 (White does well to pursue his plan consistently; 13 ♗g5 commits him to 14 ♗h4. The defects of a different plan were clearly demonstrated in the well-known game Sigurjonsson–Timman, London 1975, which went 14 ♖c1

♗d7 15 ♖e1 ♘g4! 16 g3 [*16 h3? ♗h2+ 17 ♔f1 ♘xf2!*] 16 ... h6 17 ♗e3 ♖f6 18 ♗b1!? [*18 ♗f1? ♖af8 19 ♗g2 ♗e8∓*] 18 ... ♗e8 19 ♘h4?! [*19 ♘d2!? ♗h5 20 ♘f1, with unclear play*] 19 ... ♗h5 20 ♕d3 g5!∓) 14 ... ♘h5!? (the only way to work up some activity! Black is condemned to passivity in other lines, for example 14 ... ♗f4 15 ♖e1 ♔h8 16 ♗g3! ♘h5 17 ♘e2! ♘xg3 18 ♘xf4 ♘e4 19 g3± Karpov–Chen, Hannover 1983; or 14 ... g6 15 ♗g3 ♘h5 16 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 17 ♖e1 ♕f4 18 ♗f1! ♗d7 19 ♖e3, with a small but clear advantage; Matulović–Rasidović, Belgrade GMA 1988) 15 ♖e1 (15 ♗g3?! is quite harmless: 15 ... ♘xg3 16 hg g6! [*Black's counterplay is based on the idea of bringing his queen to g7, where it will attack the d-pawn and support a kingside advance*] 17 ♖c1 ♕h7 18 ♗b1 g5! 19 ♖e1 ♗d7 20 ♕d2 ♖xf3! 21 gf ♘xd4∓ Smagin–Vaiser, Barnaul 1984; but an interesting line is 15 ♖c1 g6! 16 ♗e2! [*16 ♗b1? ♕g7 17 ♔h1 ♗d7 18 ♖e1 ♖f7 is in Black's favour, Marjanović–Timman, Sarajevo 1984; if 16 ♘a4, Black's simplest reply is 16 ... ♗d7! 17 ♘c5 ♖ae8 18 ♗b1 ♗c8 19 ♖c3 ♕g7 with a good game, Kuijf–Brenninkmeijer, Wijk aan Zee 1987*] 16 ... ♗f4 17 ♖b1 ♗h6 18 ♘a4 ♗d7 19 ♘c5 ♖ae8 20 ♖e1, with a slight edge for White in Tolnai–Bareyev, Voronezh 1987) 15 ... g6! 16 ♗g5!? (this looks a little odd;

White has been playing for a bishop exchange, but now he tries to avoid it, with loss of tempo too. But then, with ... g7–g6 Black weakened the dark squares on his kingside, and this called for a change of strategy by White. Instead, after 16 ♗f1 h6! he can no longer avoid an exchange of bishop for knight; how the game may then continue, we can see from the following examples: 17 ♗g3 ♘xg3 18 hg ♖f6 [*or 18 ... g5!? 19 ♘a4 ♗d7 20 ♖c1 ♖f6 21 ♘c5 ♖af8∓ Ye Jiangchuan–Belyavsky, Lucerne 1985*] 19 ♕d2 g5 20 ♘h2 ♕g7 21 ♗e2 ♗c7! 22 ♗h5 ♗b6∓ R. Rodriguez–Yusupov, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 16 ... ♕g7 (16 ... ♘xd4?! 17 ♘xd4 ♗xh2+ 18 ♔h1 ♖xf2 19 ♖e3±) 17 ♗e3 ♗d7 18 ♗f1 h6 (the logical-seeming 18 ... ♖f7 can be met by 19 ♘g5! ±, but it is worth considering 18 ... ♘f4!? 19 g3 g5 20 ♔h1 ♔h8!? 21 gf gf, with complex play in Ivanchuk–O. Foisor, New York 1988) 19 g3 ♖f7 20 ♗g2 ♖af8, with approximately equal chances; Ivanchuk–Gdanski, Adelaide 1988.

(d) **12 ♗g5** (the most fashionable move) 12 ... 0–0 13 ♖c1 (recently the old move 13 ♗h4 has emerged again, and White has managed to obtain the better chances after either 13 ... e5 14 de ♘xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 16 ♗g3 ♗xg3 17 ♘xg3 ♕b6 [*17 ... ♕f4? 18 ♕b3! ♗d7 19 ♖ae1 ♗c6 20 ♘f5± Tal–L. Bronstein, Rio*

Hondo 1987] 18 ♕d2 ♗d7 19 ♖ad1±, or 13 ... ♘h5 14 ♕c2! h6 15 ♗g6 ♘f4 16 ♘xf4 ♗xf4 17 ♖fe1± Timoshchenko–Juarez, Managua 1988) 13 ... ♘g4 (in Kveinis–Poldauf, Groningen Open 1990, interesting complications arose after 13 ... ♗d7 14 ♕c2 ♗e8 15 ♗h4 h6 16 ♗g3 ♗h5 17 ♘e5 ♗xe2 18 ♕xe2 ♘xd4 19 ♕e3 ♕b6! 20 ♘xc6 ♗xg3 21 ♘e7+ ♔f7 22 ♕xg3 ♔xe7, and White's initiative only proved sufficient to draw. In this line, 14 ♗h4!? h6 15 ♖e1± can be recommended for White) 14 ♘g3 g6! (more exact than 14 ... h6 15 ♗d2 ♕e7 16 ♗b1 ♗d7! [*16 ... ♘xd4?! 17 ♘xd4 ♕h4 18 h3 ♘xf2 19 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 20 ♘h1!!±*] 17 ♕c2 g5 18 ♕d3! ♕g7! 19 ♖ce1± Tseshkovsky–Chernin, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987) 15 ♘h4!? (an equal game results from the tempting 15 ♗b5 ♗d7 16 ♘h4 ♘f6 17 ♕d3 ♖f7! 18 ♖fe1 [*18 ♘xg6? is refuted by 18 ... ♘e4! 19 ♘xe4 de 20 ♕xe4 gh*] 18 ... ♘g4= A. Sokolov–Yusupov, Candidates' match (9), Riga 1986. It is worth considering 15 ♘d2!?) 15 ... e5 (this should gradually lead to equality. A more complex game, but one which favours White, arises after 15 ... ♘f6 16 ♕d2 ♖f7 17 h3 ♗d7 18 ♘f3 ♕b6 19 ♗e3 ♘b4 20 ♗b1 ♗b5 21 ♖fe1± Geller–Vaiser, New Delhi 1987) 16 ♗e2 ♘f6 17 de ♗xe5 18 b4!? (18 b3 ♗f4 19 ♗xf4 ♕xf4 20 ♘f3 a6=) 18 ... ♗f4 19 ♗xf4 ♕xf4

20 b5 ♘d4! (an improvement on a game Geller–Dolmatov, which went 20 ... ♘b4? 21 ♘xg6! hg 22 a3 ♗e6 23 ab ♕xb4 24 ♕d3, and Black's kingside weaknesses led to his defeat) 21 ♘f3 ♘xe2+ 22 ♘xe2 ♕d6 23 ♘ed4 ♗d7, with roughly equal chances; Smagin–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Kiev 1986.
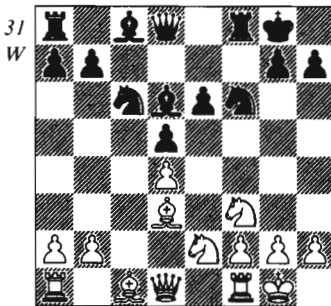
12   ♗g5
I believe White has more chance of an advantage after **12 ♗f4** (now the bishop exchange is more or less forced) **12 ... ♗xf4 13 ♘xf4**, when Black has four continuations to choose from:
(a) **13 ... ♘g4** 14 ♕d2 (Black has a good game after 14 g3 g5! 15 ♘g2 ♕f6 16 ♗e2 ♘h6! 17 ♕d2 ♘f5 18 ♖ad1 g4∓ Renet–Hertneck, Altensteig 1987) 14 ... ♕d6 15 g3 e5 16 de ♕h6 (or 16 ... ♘gxe5 17 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 18 ♗e2±). We have been following Veinger–Hertneck, Munich Z 1987; and now with 17 h4! White could have gained a clear advantage.
(b) **13 ... ♕b6** 14 ♕d2 g6 (or 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♖fe1 ♖ae8 16 ♖ac1 ♖e7 17 ♖c3 ♘d8 18 ♘e5± Grünfeld–Hertneck, Holon Open 1987) 15 ♘e2 ♗d7 16 a3 (16 ♖ac1 ♖ae8 17 ♗c2 e5=) 16 ... ♖ae8 17 ♕g5 ♘e4!? 18 ♕g4 ♘f6 19 ♕h4 e5 20 de ♘xe5 21 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 22 ♕d4+ Ivanchuk–Brenninkmeijer, European Junior Ch, Arnhem 1987/8.
(c) **13 ... ♕d6** 14 g3 e5 15 de ♘xe5 16 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 17 ♕b3 ♗d7 18 ♖fe1± Timman–Kuijf, Dutch Ch 1987.
(d) **13 ... ♘e4**, when White has three quite good replies:
(d1) **14 ♕c1** (Black has a good game after 14 g3 ♘g5 15 ♘e5 ♖xf4! 16 gf ♘h3+ 17 ♔h1 ♘xf4; Geller–Züger, Berne 1988) 14 ... ♘g5 (14 ... ♕f6 15 ♘e2 e5 16 de ♘xe5 17 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 18 f3±) 15 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 16 ♘e2 ♕f6 (16 ... ♕xc1 17 ♖axc1±) 17 ♕e3 (17 ♕d2 ♗d7 18 ♖ad1 ♖ac8=) 17 ... ♗d7 (17 ... e5 18 de ♘xe5 19 ♖ad1 ♘g4 20 ♕c5!± Tivyakov–Maksimović, Chelyabinsk 1990) 18 ♖ad1 ♖ac8 19 ♘c3± ♖fe8? 20 ♕h3! g6 21 ♘xd5; Tivyakov–Ulibin, Sochi 1990.
(d2) **14 ♘e2** ♖xf3! 15 gf ♘g5 16 ♔h1 (or 16 f4 ♘f3+ [*16 ... ♘h3+ 17 ♔h1 ♕h4 18 ♕e1±*] 17 ♔g2 ♕h4!? [*17 ... ♘h4+ 18 ♔h1 ♘f3 19 ♗xh7+!*] 18 ♔xf3 ♕h3+ 19 ♘g3 e5, with wild complications; Antonov–Balinov, Bulgaria 1987) 16 ... e5 17 de ♘xf3! (Black loses after 17 ... ♘xe5 18 ♘g1! ♘e6 19 ♗c2 a5 20 ♖e1 ♘c6 21 ♗b3±± Popović–Maksimović, Yugoslavia 1989) 18 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 19

♘g1 ♘cd4! 20 ♘xf3! (the game is level after 20 ♖e1 ♗g4 21 ♖e3 ♕f8 22 ♗e4!! de 23 ♖xe4 ♗d7 24 ♖xd4 ♘xd4 25 ♕xd4 ♗c6+ 25 f3 ♗xf3+ 27 ♘xf3 ♕xf3+ 28 ♔g1 ♖f8!, Kholmov–Ulibin, Sochi 1989. A splendid skirmish!) 20 ... ♗g4 21 ♘xd4 ♗xd1 22 ♖axd1± Timoshchenko–Gleizerov, Chelyabinsk 1990.

(d3) **14 ♘h5!?** (perhaps the most promising move) 14 ... g6 (14 ... ♘g5 is unsatisfactory: 15 ♘e5 ♘xe5 [*or 15 ... ♘xd4 16 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 17 ♕xd4±*] 16 de ♘f7 17 ♖e1±. White also has the advantage after 14 ... ♕b6 15 ♗xe4! de 16 ♘e5 ♘xe5 17 de ♕xb2 18 ♕d6!±) 15 ♘g3 ♘xg3 16 hg ♕b6 17 ♕a4! a6 (17 ... ♕xb2 18 ♗b5) 18 ♖ad1 ♗d7 19 ♕a3 ♘xd4 20 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 21 ♗xg6± Spasov–Ulibin, World Junior Ch, Santiago 1990.

12 ...   ♕b6!? *(32)*
Black tries to hamper White's activity by putting pressure on the pawns on d4 and b2. In Zapata–Knaak, Camaguey 1987, play went 12 ... ♕e8 13 ♖e1 ♘g4 14 h3 e5!? 15 hg, and now Black had to play 15 ... e4!? with complications. Campora–Züger, Biel 1988, continued instead 12 ... ♗d7 13 a3 (13 ♗h4 ♗e8 14 ♘g5 ♕d7 15 ♗g3 h6 16 ♘f3 ♗h5 17 ♘e5 ♕c7=; or 13 ♘c3 ♗e8 14 ♖e1! ♗h5 15 ♖xe6 ♗xf3 16 gf±) 13 ... ♗e8 14 ♘g3 h6 15 ♗d2 ♗xg3?! 16 hg ♗h5 17 ♕e1! ♖e8 18 ♗c3±.
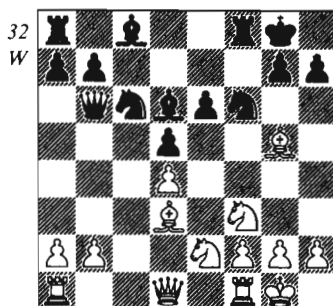
13   ♘c3   ♔h8
An outwardly simple move with some interesting tactical points. It is likewise not simple for White to gain an advantage against the old move 13 ... ♗d7, for example: 14 ♖e1 ♘g4!? (if 14 ... ♔h8, White does well to follow Akopian–Lautier, World Junior Ch, Adelaide 1988, which went 15 ♘a4 ♕c7 16 ♖c1 ♘g4 17 g3! ♖ae8 18 ♗b1 g6 19 ♖f1 ♗c8 20 ♘h4! with the initiative. Instead, 15 ♘e5 ♕xd4!? 16 ♘b5 ♕xe5 17 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 18 ♘c3 ♗d4 gave Black sufficient compensation for the queen in Tolnai–Züger, Budapest 1988) 15 ♗h4 ♘h6 (Black has to be careful; 15 ... ♔h8? 16 ♗xh7! ♕xb2 17 ♖c1 ♗f4 18 ♖c2+ Geller–Ulibin, Sochi 1989) 16 ♗g3 ♗e7 (16 ... ♗xg3 17 hg ♖f6 18 ♘a4 ♕c7 19 ♖c1±) 17 ♘a4 ♕a5 18 ♗c2! (18 ♘c5?! ♗xc5 19 dc ♕xc5 20 ♘g5 ♘f5, with quite a good game) 18 ... ♘f5 19 a3 ♘xg3 20 hg ♕c7 21 ♖c1± Nijboer–I. Farago, Dieren Open 1988.

14   ♘a4

14 ♗e3 also deserves attention.

14	...	♕c7
15	♖c1	♘g4!
16	h3	♘h2 *(33)*

33
W
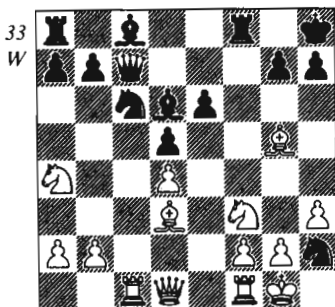
17 ♘e5!?

A wonderful mêlée arose in Kosashvili–Ulibin, Santiago 1990: 17 ♘xh2 ♗xh2+ 18 ♔h1 ♗f4 19 ♕h5 (White seems to be on the point of success, but ...) 19 ... g6! 20 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 21 ♗xg6 ♕e7! (the key move! The rook threatens to go to h4, and the white king suddenly finds itself in an unpleasant situation; in addition the pawn on d4 is *en prise*, and one may question what the knight is doing on such an out-of-the-way square as a4) 22 ♗d3?! (it was essential to play 22 g3 ♖xd4 23 ♘c5 e5∓) 22 ... ♖h4 23 ♕e2 e5! with a strong attack.

17	...	♗xe5
18	de	♘xf1
19	♕h5	h6!

White's initiative is too dangerous after 19 ... g6?! 20 ♗xg6 ♕g7 (or 20 ... ♔g8 21 ♗f6! ♖xf6 22 ef hg 23 ♕xg6+ ♔f8 24 ♕h6+ ♔g8 25 ♖c3!) 21 ♗b1! ♘xe5 (21 ... ♘g3 22 fg ♘xe5 23 ♗h6 ♕xg3 24 ♗f4!! ♘f3+ 25 ♔h1 ♕g7 26 ♖c7!±±) 22 ♗h6 ♘f3+ 23 ♔xf1 ♕f7 24 ♕xf3±. All these variations are given by Ulibin.

20 ♗f6!

White also falls short of success after 20 ♕g6 ♖f5 21 ♗xf5 ef 22 ♗f4 ♕e7 23 ♔xf1 ♕e6! 24 ♕xe6 ♗xe6 25 ♘c5 ♘d8 26 ♘b3 ♖c8=.

20	...	gf
21	♕xh6+	♔g8
22	ef	

Akopian is 'only' a rook and knight down, but he is not in danger of losing; the white pieces are too active, and Black is quite wise to force an immediate draw.

22	...	♖xf6!
23	♕xf6	♕h2+
24	♔f1	♕h1+
25	♔e2	♕xc1
26	f4!?	

Or 26 ♗h7+ at once, with perpetual check.

26	...	♕g1
27	♗h7+!	½–½

6 Tarrasch Variation: 3 ... c5

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2	c5 *(34)*

34
W
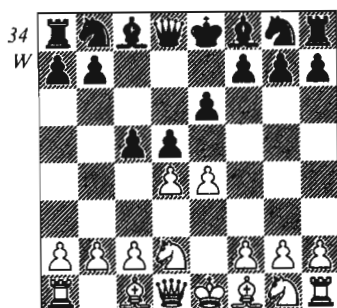
The most frequent and popular reply to 3 ♘d2. Black takes the opportunity to open the position in the centre, while allowing White to give him an isolated pawn (except in the variation 4 ed ♛xd5). In return for the pawn weakness (but *is* it one?), Black is able to develop his pieces quickly and comfortably with realistic possibilities of counterplay. White's usual replies are 4 ♘gf3 and 4 ed; we shall examine them in that order.

Kasparov–Haritonov
USSR Ch, Moscow 1988

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5

4   ♘gf3

4 dc?! deserves no extensive analysis, since the bishop reaches c5 in one go, and Black easily equalises. For example, 4 ... ♗xc5 (or 4 ... ♘f6!? 5 ed ♛xd5 6 ♘b3 ♛xd1+ 7 ♔xd1 ♘a6!) 5 ♘b3 ♗b6 6 ♗b5+ ♘c6 7 ed ed 8 a4 ♘ge7= Bronstein–Makarichev, Reykjavik Open 1990.

4   ...   ♘f6

A natural developing move. The following are also frequently seen in practice:

(a) **4 ... a6!?** is an interesting move which prevents the white bishop from coming to b5. There are two different directions which the game can now take, according to whether White steers towards 'IQP' positions with 5 ed ed, or plays 5 dc and refrains, at least temporarily, from opening the e-file.

(a1) **5 dc ♗xc5 6 ♗d3 ♘c6** (the best square for the knight, and it hardly pays Black to refrain from

this move. In Gelfand–Dolmatov, Moscow GMA 1990, White achieved the better game after 6 ... ♘f6 7 0–0 de [*7 ... ♕c7 8 a3 ♗e7 9 ♖e1 0–0 10 e5! ♘fd7 11 ♘b3± Arnason–Dreyev, Reykjavik Open 1990*] 8 ♘xe4 ♗e7 9 ♕e2 ♘bd7 10 c4 0–0 11 ♗g5±) 7 0–0 ♘f6 (White has a slight advantage after 7 ... ♘ge7 8 c3! [*less convincing alternatives are 8 a3 0–0 9 b4 ♗a7 10 ♗b2 ♘g6 11 c4 dc 12 ♘xc4 b5 13 ♘ce5 ♘cxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♗xe5 ♕g5= Ermenkov–P. Nikolić, Tunis IZ 1985; and 8 ♕e2 0–0 9 ♘b3 ♗a7 10 ed ed 11 ♗g5 h6 12 ♗h4 ♕d6! 13 ♗g3 ♕f6= Hulak–Psakhis, Plovdiv 1983. In this last line, 10 e5 is not dangerous either: 10 ... ♘g6 11 c3 f6!=*] 8 ... 0–0 9 ♖e1 [*or 9 ♕e2 ♘g6 10 ♘b3 ♗d6 11 ♗g5 ♕c7 12 ed ed 13 h3± Holmov–Dolmatov, Vologdonsk 1983*] 9 ... ♘g6 10 ed! ed 11 ♘b3 ♗e7 12 h3 ♗f6 13 ♗e3± Speelman–Schüssler, Thessaloniki Ol 1988; Black's chief misfortune is his total lack of counterplay) 8 ♕e2 (the chances are about equal after 8 ed ♘xd5! [*8 ... ed?!±*] 9 ♘e4 ♗e7 10 c4 ♘f6 11 a3 ♕c7 12 b4 ♘xe4 13 ♗xe4 ♗f6, Anand–M. Gurevich, Wijk aan Zee 1990; but it is worth considering 8 a3!? 0–0 9 b4 ♗e7 10 ♗b2 b5 11 ♖e1 ♗b7 12 e5 ♘d7 13 ♘b3± Gelfand–Dreyev, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989) 8 ... ♕c7 9 a3 (White gains no advantage from 9 ed ♘xd5 10 ♘e4 ♗e7 11 ♗c4 ♘f4 12 ♕e3 ♘g6= Smirin–

Dreyev, Borzhomi 1988) 9 ... ♗a7!? (castling is very dangerous: 9 ... 0–0 10 e5 ♘g4 11 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 12 ♘g5+ ±) 10 ed ♘xd5 11 g3 (or 11 ♘e4 0–0 12 ♘g3 ♘f4=) 11 ... 0–0 12 c4 ♘f6 13 ♘e4 ♘xe4 14 ♗xe4 ♘d4?! (14 ... e5! is considerably stronger) 15 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 16 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 17 ♕d3+ ♔g8 18 ♕xd4 e5, with some compensation for the pawn; Campora–Dreyev, Moscow GMA 1989.

(a2) **5 ed ed**, and now White has several moves available, of which 6 dc and 6 ♗e2 are undoubtedly the most common:

(a21) **6 c4** ♘f6 7 ♗e2 ♘c6 8 0–0 cd 9 cd ♘xd5 10 ♘b3 ♗e7= Rossolimo–Korchnoi, Wijk aan Zee 1968.

(a22) **6 c3** (too passive) 6 ... ♘c6 7 ♗d3 c4 8 ♗c2 ♕e7+! 9 ♕e2 ♕xe2+ 10 ♔xe2 ♗d6 11 ♖e1 ♘ge7, and Black's position is already just a little more promising; Djurić–Yusupov, Sarajevo 1984.

(a23) **6 dc** ♗xc5 7 ♘b3 ♗a7 (7 ... ♗b6!?, with similar ideas, is worth considering. Black fails to equalise with 7 ... ♗d6 8 ♗d3 ♘e7 9 0–0 h6 10 h3! ♘bc6 11 ♘bd4 0–0 12 c3± Timoshchenko–Vaganian, Baku 1977. Dolmatov usually plays 7 ... ♗e7, for example: 8 ♗d3 ♘f6 [*8 ... ♗g4!?*] 9 0–0 [*the plan of castling long is interesting: 9 ♗g5!? ♗g4 10 h3 ♗h5 11 ♕e2! 0–0 12 0–0–0± Yudasin–M. Gurevich, Baku 1986*]

9 ... ♗g4 10 ♖e1 0–0 11 c3 [*the game is level after* 11 ♗g5 ♘bd7!? 12 ♘bd4 ♗c5 13 c3 ♕c7 14 ♗h5= Lukin–Dolmatov, Klaipeda 1988*] 11 ... ♘c6 12 ♗g5 ♖e8? [*12 ... h6!?*] 13 h3 ♗h5 14 ♗xf6! ♗xf6 15 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 16 g4 with advantage; Zapata–Dolmatov, Amsterdam 1986) 8 ♗g5 (as Korchnoi demonstrated as long ago as the end of the sixties, the chances are equal after 8 ♗d3 ♕e7+! 9 ♕e2 [*9 ♗e2 ♘f6 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♘fd4 ♘c6 12 ♖e1 ♘e4= Cirić–Korchnoi, Budva 1967*] 9 ... ♘c6 10 0–0 [*10 ♗g5!? f6 11 ♗e3 ♗xe3 12 f3 ♘h6!?=*] 10 ... ♗g4 11 h3 ♗h5 12 ♗f4 ♕xe2 13 ♗xe2 ♘f6= Matanović–Korchnoi, Wijk aan Zee 1968. Black's pieces are active, and he should not be afraid of an endgame — the isolated pawn is easily defended. Much the same thing results from 8 ♕e2+ ♕e7 9 ♗g5 [*9 ♗d2 ♗e6 10 ♗c3 ♘f6 11 ♗d4 ♘c6=*] 9 ... ♕xe2+ 10 ♗xe2 ♘c6 [*or 10 ... h6 11 ♗h4 ♘c6 12 c3 ♘ge7=*] 11 0–0 h6 12 ♗f4!? ♘f6 13 ♖ad1 0–0 14 c3 ♖e8, and White has few chances of achieving anything tangible; Ivanchuk–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988) 8 ... ♘e7 (8 ... ♘f6 is rather risky, for example 9 ♕e2+ ♗e6 [*9 ... ♕e7?! 10 ♗xf6 gf 11 ♘fd4 ♘c6 12 0–0–0+*] 10 ♘fd4 [*10 ♘bd4 ♕e7 11 0–0–0 0–0 12 ♘f5 ♕d8 13 ♘3d4+*] 10 ... ♕e7 11 0–0 ♘c6 12 ♘xe6 fe 13 g3 0–0 14 ♗h3 ♖ae8 15 ♖he1±

Popović–Dizdar, Sarajevo 1984; White's pressure is acutely felt) 9 ♕d2!? (Black has no problems at all after 9 ♗e2 ♘bc6 10 0–0 h6 11 ♘h4 0–0=. With the move played, White prepares an advantageous exchange of dark-squared bishops) 9 ... ♘bc6 10 0–0–0 (White has a minimal edge after 10 ♗e3 ♗xe3 11 ♕xe3 0–0 12 0–0–0 ♗f5! 13 ♘fd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♗g6 van der Wiel–Seirawan, Biel IZ 1985) 10 ... h6 11 ♗e3 0–0!? 12 ♗xa7 ♖xa7 13 ♗e2 b5, Magem–Eingorn, Pampola Open 1991; Black is close to equality.

(a24) **6 ♗e2 c4** (an important point. It seems to me that this move is more promising than 6 ... cd or 6 ... ♘f6, but let us nonetheless examine these alternatives. After 6 ... cd 7 0–0 ♗d6 [*7 ... ♘f6 8 ♖e1! ♗e7 9 ♘xd4 0–0 10 ♘2b3 ♘c6 11 ♗f4! ♘e4 12 c3± G. Agzamov–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Frunze 1981*] 8 ♘b3 ♘e7 9 ♘bxd4 [*9 ♗g5!? is also interesting; 9 ... ♘bc6 10 ♗h4 ♕b6 11 ♗g3 ♗xg3 12 hg 0–0 13 ♘fxd4± Belyavsky–Eingorn, Moscow GMA 1990*] 9 ... 0–0 [*more exact than 9 ... ♘bc6?! 10 ♘xc6! bc 11 c4±*] 10 c3! [*10 ♗g5 ♕c7 11 ♗h4 ♘g6 12 ♗g3 ♘f4=*] 10 ... ♘bc6 11 ♗d3! h6 12 ♗c2 ♖e8 13 ♕d3, White clearly has the more active position; Rodriguez–Dokhoian, Sochi 1988. Things are not quite so simple after 6 ... ♘f6 7 0–0 ♗e7 [*of course, Black*

doesn't like to lose a tempo, but he has to develop his pieces!] 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♘b3 ♗a7 [*Black's position is passive after 9 ... ♗e7 10 ♗e3 0–0 11 ♘fd4 ♖e8 12 ♖e1 ♘bd7 13 ♘f5∓ Chandler–Razuvayev, Hungary 1981; but 9 ... ♗b6!? deserves attention*] 10 ♗g5 0–0 11 c3 ♖e8! [*a weak line is 11 ... ♘c6 12 ♗xf6! ♕xf6 13 ♕xd5 ♗d4 14 ♖fe1, and Black's compensation for the pawn is insufficient for equality; Torre–Dizdar, New York 1989*] 12 ♘fd4 h6 13 ♘h4 ♘c6 14 ♗f3 g5! 15 ♗g3 ♘e4, with adequate counterplay in Kudrin–Dreyev, New York 1991) 7 0–0 (the immediate attempt to undermine Black's bastion with 7 b3 gives him an additional possibility [*though how favourable it is, is another question*]: 7 ... cb 8 ab ♘c6 9 0–0 ♗b4!? 10 ♗b5 ♘ge7 11 ♘e5 ♕b6 12 ♗xc6 ♘xc6= Yang Xian–Eingorn, Beijing 1991) 7 ... ♗d6 8 b3 cb (in recent tournaments Black underwent some severe ordeals with 8 ... b5 9 a4 ♗b7 [*a cascade of sacrifices ensued after 9 ... c3 10 ab! cd 11 ♗xd2 ♗b7 12 ba ♘xa6 13 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 14 ♕e2+ ♕e7 15 ♕xa6! ♗xa6 16 ♖xa6, with tremendous compensation for the queen in a game Geller–Kekki, Matynkla 1986*] 10 bc bc 11 ♗xc4!! [*in Ivanchuk–Dolmatov, Irkutsk 1986, the same sacrifice was played after the insertion of 11 ♖e1 ♘e7, and proved unsound: 12 ♗xc4? dc 13 ♘xc4 ♗b4! 14 c3*

♗d5! *and the attack was repulsed. After the text move, it is quite a different story*] 11 ... dc 12 ♘xc4 ♗e7 [*the attack is irresistible after 12 ... ♘e7 13 ♘xd6+ ♕xd6 14 ♗a3 ♕c7 15 ♗e1*] 13 ♖e1 ♕c7 14 ♖b1! [*White attacks all along the front*] 14 ... ♕xc4 15 ♖xb7 ♘c6 16 ♘d2! and White had a decisive initiative in Geller–Dreyev, New York 1990) 9 ab (9 ♘xb3 ♘e7 10 c4 0–0 11 cd ♘xd5=) 9 ... ♘e7 (though a great connoisseur of this variation, Eingorn made an astonishing mistake in a game against Belyavsky, Moscow GMA 1990: 9 ... ♘f6? 10 ♗b5+! ♘c6 11 ♖e1+ ♗e6 12 ♗xc6+ bc 13 ♘g5 ♕d7 14 ♘xe6 fe 15 ♕e2±) 10 ♖e1 ♘bc6 11 ♘f1 0–0 (11 ... ♗g4 12 ♘e3 ♗h5 13 ♗a3 0–0= is not bad either) 12 ♘e3 (White gains no advantage from 12 ♘g3 ♗b4! 13 ♗d2 ♗xd2 14 ♕xd2 ♗g4 15 ♗e5 ♗xe2 16 ♖xe2 ♘xe5 17 de ♖c8= Tseshkovsky–M. Gurevich, Palma de Mallorce GMA 1989) 12 ... ♗b4!? (more convincing than 12 ... ♗f4 13 ♗d3 ♗e6 14 ♗a3 ♖e8 15 c3±) 13 ♗d2 ♗xd2 14 ♕xd2 ♕d6 15 c4 ♗d7 (White similarly faces the task of justifying his ambitions after 15 ... ♗e6 16 c5 ♕f4 17 b4 ♘f5, with unclear play) 16 c5 ♕f6 17 ♗d3! ♖ad8 18 ♘e5 ♘xe5 19 de ♕h6, with good chances of equalising; Tseshkovsky–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch, Kiev 1986.

(b) **4 ... cd** 5 ♘xd4 (5 ed ♕xd5

transposes into the variation 4 ed ♕xd5 5 ♘gf3 cd) 5 ... ♘f6 (Black has a normal type of position after 5 ... ♘c6 6 ♘xc6 bc 7 ♗d3 ♕c7 8 0–0 ♗d6 9 ♘f3 ♘f6= Smirin–Oll, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989) 6 ♗b5+ (White gains no advantage either with 6 ed ♘xd5 7 ♘2f3 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 [*8 ♗c4 0–0 9 0–0 ♘c6 10 c3 ♗f6=*] 8 ... ♘d7 9 c4 ♘5f6 10 ♕e2 ♕c7 11 b3 b6 12 ♗b2 ♗b7= Scherzer–Remlinger, New York 1991, or with 6 e5 ♘fd7 7 ♘2f3 ♘c6 8 ♘xc6 bc 9 ♗d3 ♗a6= Svidler–Danielian, Alma-Ata 1991) 6 ... ♗d7 7 ♗xd7+ ♘bxd7 8 ed ♘xd5 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 c4 ♘5f6 11 b3 ♘c5= Chiburdanidze–Luther, Graz 1991.

(c) **4 ... ♘c6**, and now apart from 5 ed ed, which leads to the main theoretical lines, White has **5 ♗b5**, to which Black's usual replies are:

(c1) **5 ... a6** 6 ♗xc6+ (Black has quite a good position after 6 ed ab 7 dc6 bc 8 dc ♗xc5 9 0–0 ♘f6 10 ♕e2 0–0 11 ♘b3 [*11 ♘e4 ♘xe4 12 ♕xe4 ♕d5=*] 11 ... ♗d6 12 ♗g5 ♕c7= Illescas–Gulko, Linares 1990) 6 ... bc 7 c3 ♘f6 8 e5 ♘d7 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 0–0 11 ♘f1 ♖b8= Rohde–Gulko, USA Ch, Long Beach 1989.

(c2) **5 ... de** 6 ♘xe4 ♗d7 7 ♗e3 ♕a5+ 8 ♘c3 cd 9 ♘xd4 ♗b4 10 0–0 ♗xc3 11 bc ♘ge7 12 ♘xc6 (12 ♖b1 0–0 13 ♗d3 ♘xd4 14 bc ♗c6= Stein–Uhlmann, Moscow 1971) 12 ... ♗xc6 13 ♗xc6+ ♘xc6 14 c4 0–0, and in view of the weakness of White's queenside pawns, the position may be assessed as unfavourable to him; Kuijf–Uhlmann, Amsterdam OHRA 1990.

(c3) **5 ... cd** 6 ♘xd4 ♗d7 7 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 (the alternative method also leads to approximate equality: 7 ... bc 8 ♗d3 ♕c7 9 ♕e2 ♘e7 10 ♘f3 ♘g6 11 e5 ♖b8 Tal–Korchnoi, Moscow 1971) 8 ♗xc6+ bc 9 c4 de (9 ... ♘f6?! 10 ♕a4 ♕d7 11 e5±) 10 ♘xe4 (10 ♕a4 ♕b6 11 ♘xe4 ♕b4+ =) 10 ... ♗b4+ 11 ♔e2 ♕a5 12 ♗e3 ♗e7 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♗xd2 ♘f6, and Black's chances are not at all worse; van der Wiel–Ehlvest, Haninge 1990.

(c4) **5 ... ♗d6** (the least frequent move, usually employed by Hungarian players) 6 e5 ♗b8 7 dc ♘ge7 8 0–0 ♘g6 9 ♖e1 0–0 10 ♗xc6 bc 11 b4, with a clear plus. So 5 ... ♗d6 is not only the most infrequent move, but also (out of those we have examined, of course) the least successful.

5   ed   ed

5 ... ♘xd5 is Black's last chance to avoid an 'IQP', and forms quite a good alternative to the text move. There can follow: 6 ♘b3 (the currently popular move. White has a microscopic edge after the seemingly more active 6 ♘e4 ♘d7 7 ♗e2 cd 8 ♕xd4 ♕b6!? 9 0–0 ♕xd4 10 ♘xd4 a6, as in van der Wiel–Hort, Reggio Emilia 1986. Black has no cause for worry

after 6 c4 ♘f6 7 ♘b3 cd [*7 ... ♘a6!?*] 8 ♕xd4 ♗d7 [*8 ... ♗b4+ =*] 9 ♗g5 ♗b4+ 10 ♘bd2 h6= van der Wiel–Korchnoi, Brussels 1986) 6 ... ♘d7 (it is difficult to find an answer to 6 ... cd 7 ♘bxd4 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 [*8 g3!?*] 8 ... 0–0 9 0–0 ♗f6 10 ♖e1 ♘b4!= King–Dolmatov, Reykjavik 1990) 7 c4 ♘5f6 8 dc (or 8 ♗e2 ♗e7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗f4 b6 11 ♘e5 ♗b7 12 ♗f3 ♕c8!= Arnason–Gulko, Groningen 1990) 8 ... ♕c7 (8 ... ♘xc5 9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10 ♘e5 ♘xb3 11 ab ♗b4+ =) 9 g3!? (setting Black more problems than 9 ♗d3 ♘xc5 10 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 11 0–0 ♗d7!=) 9 ... ♘xc5 10 ♗g2 ♘xb3 11 ♕xb3 ♗d6 12 0–0 0–0 13 ♖d1 e5, with quite good chances of equalising; Belyavsky–P. Nikolić, Barcelona World Cup 1989.

6 ♗b5+

Occasionally White plays 6 ♗e2, not a very ambitious move but quite a good one. In reply, 6 ... c4 is worth considering, but for inexplicable reasons this move is not seen in tournament practice. Black usually continues 6 ... ♘c6 (another possibility is 6 ... ♗d6 7 0–0 0–0 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♘b3 ♗b6 10 ♘fd4 ♘c6 11 c3 ♘e5= Grünfeld–Knaak, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989) 7 0–0 cd 8 ♘b3 ♗e7 9 ♘fxd4 0–0 10 ♗f4 (or 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗h4 ♕b6 12 c3 ♗d7 13 ♗f3 a5!= Wahls–Short, Bundesliga 1990) 10 ... ♘e4 (10 ... ♗d6!? 11 ♘xc6 bc 12 ♗xd6 ♕xd6

13 c4 ♖e8 14 cd cd 15 ♖c1 ♗a6 Nijboer–Dokhoian, Wijk aan Zee 1990) 11 c3 (11 c4 ♗e6 12 ♘ac6 bc 13 ♕c2 ♗g5!=) 11 ... ♗f6 12 ♖e1 ♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♕b6= Smagin–Ulibin, Moscow GMA 1989.

There are just as few dangers for Black in 6 dc ♗xc5 7 ♘b3 ♗b6!? (Black also has no problems after 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗d3 0–0 9 h3 ♘c6 10 c3 ♘e4 11 0–0 ♗f6= Adams–Ulibin, Prestwich 1990) 8 ♗b5+ ♘c6 9 ♕e2+ ♗e6 10 ♘bd4 ♕c8 11 0–0 0–0 12 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 13 ♕xe6 fe, with an equal game in Adams–Shirov, Biel 1991.

6 ... ♗d7
7 ♗xd7+

The illogical 7 ♗e2 is played by Dvoiris and Wahls. It seems to me that Black is in good shape after either 7 ... ♘c6 8 0–0 cd 9 ♘b3 ♗e7 10 ♘fxd4 0–0, Wahls–Bruk, Berne Z 1990, or the more interesting 7 ... c4!? 8 0–0 ♗d6 9 c3 ♘c6 10 ♖e1 0–0 Bischoff–Züger, Berne Z 1990.

7 ... ♘bxd7
8 0–0 ♗e7
9 dc ♘xc5 *(35)*
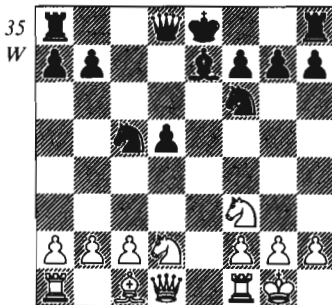
A critical position for the fortunes of the variation, which has attained unprecedented popularity through the efforts of Dokhoian and Bareyev.

10 ♘d4

Approximate equality results from 10 ♘b3 ♘ce4 (undoubtedly best; Black's isolated pawn imposes certain demands on him, and he has to avoid unnecessary exchanges. White's chances are better after 10 ... 0–0 11 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 12 ♗g5 ♖c8 13 c3 ♖c6 14 ♘e5! ♖e6 15 ♘g4± Tal–Benko, Skopje Ol 1972. If instead 10 ... ♘fe4, then 11 ♗e3±) 11 ♗e3 (11 ♘fd4 ♕d7 may transpose back into Kasparov–Haritonov) 11 ... 0–0 12 ♕d3 (or 12 ♗d4 ♖e8 13 ♕d3 ♗d6 14 ♖ad1 ♕c7 15 ♖fe1 a6=) 12 ... ♘d6 (12 ... ♕c7!?) 13 ♗d4 ♕c7 14 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 15 ♖ad1 ♖ad8= Mikhalchishin–Bareyev, Dortmund Open 1990. White's pressure against d5 is imperceptible, and Black has no other weaknesses.

10 ... ♕d7

White has a slight advantage after 10 ... 0–0 11 ♘f5 ♖e8 12 ♘b3 ♘e6 13 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 14 ♗e3± A. Sokolov–Short, Linares 1989. It pays Black to preserve his bishop if possible.

11 ♕f3

The following also occurs quite often: 11 ♘2f3 0–0 12 ♘e5 ♕c8 (or 12 ... ♕c7 13 ♗f4 ♕b6 14 ♘f5 ♗d8!? [*14 ... ♖fe8 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♘xe7+ ♖xe7 17 ♘f3±*] 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♘g4!?± Kosten–Bedos, France 1991) 13 ♘d3 (equality resulted from 13 ♕f3 ♖e8 14 ♗f4 ♘ce4 15 ♘d3 a5!? 16 ♖fe1 ♖a6 in Kr. Georgiev–Bareyev, Novi Sad Ol 1990) 13 ... ♘ce4 14 ♗f4 a6 15 ♖e1 ♗d6, and Black's chances are no worse; Arnason–Dolmatov, Moscow GMA 1990.

It is worth considering 11 ♘2b3 ♘ce4 12 f3!? ♘d6 13 ♘c5 ♕c7 14 ♘d3 0–0 15 b3 (this whole sequence of moves, depriving the black knights of such attractive squares as c4, e4 and g4, is virtually forced if White wants it) 15 ... ♖fe8 16 ♔h1 h6 17 ♕d2! ♖ac8 18 ♕f2 a6 19 a4± Akopian–Dokhoian, Erevan 1989. It is hard for Black to find substantial counterplay.

11 ... 0–0
12 ♘2b3

There is no danger at all for Black in 12 ♖d1 ♖fe8 13 ♘f1?! ♘ce4 14 ♗e3 g6! 15 c3 ♘g4= Speelman–Bareyev, Hastings 1990/1.

12 ... ♘ce4
13 ♕f5

An innovation by the World Champion, which has not, however, found any imitators as yet. Usually White occupies f5 with a different piece, admittedly without gaining much from it. Thus, 13 ♘f5 ♗d8! (better than 13 ... ♖fe8?! 14 ♘xe7+ ♖xe7 15 ♗e3 ♕b5 16 ♘d4 ♖ae8 17 ♕d3!, as in Keres–Ivkov, Bamberg 1968. White's

advantage is perhaps not very big, but Black's position is wholly unpromising from the point of view of finding counterplay) 14 ♗e3 (the verdict on the position is not altered by 14 ♖d1 ♖c8 15 c3 g6 16 ♘g3 ♖e8 17 ♗e3 ♕b5!?= Ilincić–Dizdar, Yugoslavia 1989) 14 ... g6 15 ♘g3 (sharper play results from 15 ♘h6+!? ♔g7 16 ♖ad1 ♖c8 17 c3 ♖e8 18 ♘d4 ♘d6 19 ♕f4! ♘ce4 20 h4, and White's kingside initiative may develop into something concrete; Losev–Nikolenko, Moscow 1989) 15 ... ♕c6 (Black is also close to equality after 15 ... ♖e8 16 ♖fd1 ♕c8 17 c3 a5 18 a4 ♖a6, Godena–Bareyev, Aosta 1989) 16 c3 ♘d6 17 ♘d4 ♕a6 18 ♖fe1 ♖fe8= Geller–Dokhoian, Moscow GMA 1989.

13 ...   ♖fc8!?

Black has no reason to avoid the queen exchange; given the activity of his pieces, the weakness of the d-pawn will be insignificant even in the ending.

14 ♖e1   ♗f8

It is worth considering 14 ... ♗d8!?, to bring the bishop to b6.

15 c3   ♕xf5?!

An inconspicuous but serious mistake, after which White seizes the initiative — whereas dead equality would have resulted from the correct 15 ... ♘d6!, intending to post the knight on c4.

16 ♘xf5   g6
17 ♘e3   ♖e8
18 ♖d1   ♘c5?!

One mistake leads to another.

18 ... ♖ad8! would have made White work to demonstrate his slight advantage, whereas after the move played, Black's problems significantly increase. To be fair, it was not so simple to foresee Kasparov's next move.

19 g4!! (36)
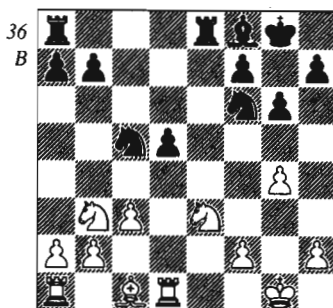
The World Champion attacks the d-pawn 'head on'; he just needs to drive the knight away from f6, and the pawn will fall of its own accord. It is amazing that against such a 'simple' plan, it is hard to find a satisfactory response.

19 ...   h6
20 h4!   ♘xb3?

Haritonov has clearly gone to pieces. The opening of the a-file helps only White. Still, even after the better 20 ... ♖e4!? 21 g5 ♘h5 22 ♘xd5 ♖xh4 23 gh (indicated by Kasparov), White's advantage is obvious.

21 ab   ♗c5

Now 21 ... ♖e4 is met by 22 ♖a4!±.

22 g5   hg
23 hg   ♘e4

24 ♘g4!

It turns out that White's target is not the pawn, but a much more important one: the black king!

24	...	♗b6
25	♔g2	♔g7
26	♗f4	

The attack by White's few but very active forces cannot be resisted.

26	...	♖ad8
27	f3	♘c5
28	b4	♘b3
29	♖a3	♖e2+
30	♔g3	♖xb2
31	c4!	

The finishing touch. The natural 31 ... d4 is met by 32 ♖d3!, and the knight unexpectedly finds itself trapped.

31	...	♖e8
32	c5	♗d8
33	♖xa7	♖ee2
34	♖xd5	

This part of the game is like harvesting on a sunny September day.

34	...	♗e7
35	♖xb7	
	1–0	

Renet–Uhlmann
Novi Sad Ol 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5
4 ed ed

The alternative capture, 4 ... ♕xd5, is considered in the next chapter.

5 ♘gf3 *(37)*
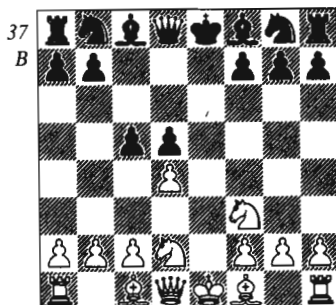
White can steer the game into a different channel with 5 ♗b5+. Black has two replies of roughly equal value:

(a) 5 ... ♘c6 6 ♕e2+ (of course, 6 ♘gf3 transposes into the main lines. 6 ♘e2 is also occasionally played, with the possible continuation 6 ... ♗d6 [6 ... c4 is not bad either: 7 b3 cb 8 ab ♗d6 9 0-0 ♘ge7 10 ♗a3 ♗xa3 11 ♖xa3 0-0= Vasyukov–Gulko, Moscow Ch 1982] 7 dc ♗xc5 8 ♘b3 ♗b6 [8 ... ♗d6?! 9 0-0 ♘ge7 10 ♗f4±] 9 0-0 [9 ♗e3 ♗xe3 10 ♗xc6+ bc 11 fe ♘f6=] 9 ... ♘f6!? [more promising than 9 ... ♘ge7 10 ♗f4 0-0 11 ♕d2 ♗g4 12 h3 ♗xe2 13 ♗xe2, when White has an advantage, however slight; Karpov–Unzicker, Munich 1979] 10 ♘ed4 0-0= 11 ♘xc6?! [11 ♗f4!?] 11 ... bc 12 ♗xc6 ♘g4! with a menacing initiative for Black; Yudasin–Vaganian, USSR 1982) 6 ... ♗e7 (the only good move, of course! An unpleasant endgame results from 6 ... ♕e7 7 dc ♕xe2+ 8 ♘xe2 ♗xc5 9 ♘b3 ♗b6 10 ♗d2 ♘ge7 11 ♗b4,

Euwe–Botvinnik, Moscow 1948) 7 dc ♞f6 8 ♞b3 0–0 9 ♝e3 (after 9 ♞f3 ♖e8 10 ♝e3 ♞e4! Black easily equalises according to *ECO*) 9 ... ♖e8 (Sax–Vaganian, Rio de Janeiro IZ 1979, saw the interesting try 9 ... ♞a5!? 10 ♞f3 a6 11 ♝d3 ♖e8 12 ♞fd4 ♝g4 13 f3 ♞xb3 14 ♞xb3 d4! with unclear play) 10 0–0–0 a5 11 a4 ♝d7 12 ♞f3 ♞a7, with chances for both sides in Parma–Vaganian, Ohrid 1973.

(b) **5 ... ♝d7** 6 ♛e2+ (White has to give this check if he wants to retain some hopes of advantage. In a game against Cabrilo, Manila IZ 1990, Ivanchuk played the risky 6 ♝xd7+ ♞xd7 7 dc [*7 ♞e2 c4!?*] 7 ... ♝xc5!? 8 ♞b3 ♝b6 9 ♛xd5 ♞gf6 10 ♛d3 0–0 11 ♞f3 ♖e8+ 12 ♝e3 ♝xe3 13 fe ♛b6, but he achieved nothing — the game is level) 6 ... ♝e7 (again the queen exchange gives White the better ending: 6 ... ♛e7 7 ♝xd7+ ♞xd7 8 dc ♞xc5 [*or 8 ... ♛xe2+ 9 ♞xe2 ♝xc5 10 ♞b3 ♝b6 11 a4±*] 9 ♞b3! ♛xe2+ 10 ♞xe2 ♞a4 [*or 10 ... ♞xb3 11 ab ♝c5 12 ♝d2 ♞e7 13 ♞f4± Karpov–Korchnoi, 16th game, World Ch match 1978*] 11 ♞bd4 0–0–0 12 b3 ♝b4+ 13 ♝d2 ♝xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♞c5 15 f3, with a secure plus; Dvoiris–Gofstein, Aktyubinsk 1985) 7 dc ♞f6 8 ♞b3 0–0 9 ♝e3 (White has no trace of an advantage after 9 ♞f3 ♖e8 10 0–0 [*10 ♝xd7 ♞bxd7 11 0–0 ♞xc5= 12 ♝e3? ♞xb3 13 ab*]

♝c5∓] 10 ... ♝xc5 11 ♛d3 ♝b6 12 ♝xd7 [*12 ♝g5 ♞c6 13 a4 h6 14 ♝h4 a6= Timman–Short, Linares 1979*] 12 ... ♞bxd7 13 ♝f4 ♖e4! 14 ♝g3 ♛e7, Armas–Dokhoian, Wijk aan Zee 1989. Problems can arise only for White after 9 ♝g5?! ♖e8 10 0–0–0 a5! 11 ♞f3 [*the pawn cannot be retained even after 11 a4 ♞a6!*] 11 ... ♞g4!? 12 ♝e3 a4 13 ♞bd4 ♝xc5∓ Holmov–Ehlvest, Vologdonsk 1983) 9 ... ♖e8 10 ♞f3 (the game is equal after 10 0–0–0 a5! 11 a4 ♞a6 12 ♝xd7 [*12 c6?! ♝xc6 13 ♞f3 ♞c7, with initiative to Black*] 12 ... ♛xd7 13 ♛b5! ♛xb5 14 ab ♞c7 15 c6!? [*15 ♞h3? a4 16 ♞d4 ♝xc5 17 ♞f5 a3∓ Gurgenidze–Psakhis, Volgograd 1985*] 15 ... ♞xb5 16 cb ♖a6 17 ♞f3 ♖b8=) 10 ... a6 (stronger than 10 ... ♝xc5?! 11 ♞xc5 ♛a5+ 12 ♛d2 ♛xb5 13 0–0–0! ♝g4 [*13 ... b6 14 ♞xd7 ♞bxd7 15 ♔b1±*] 14 h3 ♝xf3 15 gf ♞c6 16 ♖hg1, with a strong initiative for White in Sznapik–Uhlmann, Decin 1979) 11 ♝d3 (Black is close to equality after 11 ♝xd7 ♞bxd7 12 0–0 ♞xc5 13 ♖fe1 ♛c7 14 ♞fd4 ♞a4! Matanović–Henley, Surakatra 1982) 11 ... ♝a4 (both 11 ... ♞e4 and 11 ... ♞g4 are interesting) 12 ♞fd4 (Black has quite a good game after 12 ♞bd4 ♝xc5 13 0–0 ♝d7 14 h3 ♞c6 15 ♛d1 ♛b6 Gelfand–Psakhis, Minsk 1986) 12 ... ♞bd7 13 0–0–0 (Kosashvili–Sjodahl, Arnhem 1989, is worthy of close study; the game went 13

0–0 ♗xb3 14 c6! bc 15 ab ♗c5 16 ♕d1 ♕b6 17 ♖a4±) 13 ... ♗xb3!? (in the well-known game Tal–Portisch, Montreal 1979, the wizard from Riga brilliantly outplayed his opponent after 13 ... ♘xc5 14 ♘f5 ♗f8 15 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 16 ♕f3 ♗xe3 17 ♘xe3 ♖c8 18 ♗f5! ♖c5 19 ♖d4 ♗c6 20 b4! ♖b5 21 a4±) 14 ab (14 ♘xb3 ♘xc5=) 14 ... ♘xc5 15 ♔b1 ♗d6 16 ♕f3!± Psakhis–N. Zilberman, Alma-Ata 1980.

<p style="text-align:center">**5 ... ♘c6**</p>

5 ... c4!? has recently come into fashion and given Black good practical results. There can follow 6 b3 (Black has quite a good game after 6 c3 ♕a5!? 7 ♗e2 ♗d6 8 0–0 ♘e7) 6 ... cb 7 ab (the energetic 7 ♗b5+ ♗d7 8 ♕e2+ ♕e7 9 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 10 ab ♘gf6 11 ♘f1! ♕xe2+ 12 ♔xe2 ♗b4+ 13 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 14 ♘3xd2 gives White some advantage; Belyavsky–Gulko, Reykjavik World Cup 1988) 7 ... ♗b4 8 ♗b5+ ♗d7 9 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 10 0–0 ♘e7 11 ♗a3 ♗xa3 12 ♖xa3 0–0 13 c4 ♘f6= Short–Korchnoi, Hastings 1988/9.

<p style="text-align:center">**6 ♗b5**</p>

The alternative is too passive: 6 ♗e2 cd 7 0–0 ♘f6 (7 ... ♗e7!? 8 ♘b3 ♗f6 9 ♘bxd4 ♘ge7 10 c3 0–0=) 8 ♘b3 ♗e7 9 ♘fxd4 0–0 10 ♗f4 ♘e4 11 ♘b5 ♗e6= Juarez–Lputian, Manila IZ 1990.

<p style="text-align:center">**6 ... ♗d6**</p>

Apart from the text move, Black sometimes plays 6 ... cd or 6 ...

♕e7+. Let us briefly look at these moves.

(a) 6 ... ♕e7+ 7 ♗e2 ♘f6 (White has the advantage after 7 ... g5?! 8 0–0 [*8 h3?! g4! 9 hg ♗xg4 10 dc 0–0–0 with unclear play*] 8 ... g4 9 ♘e5 ♘xd4 10 ♗xg4, Torre–Ardiansyah, Manila 1981, or 7 ... cd?! 8 0–0 ♕c7 9 ♘b3 ♗d6 10 ♘bxd4 a6 11 c4!±) 8 0–0 ♕c7 9 ♖e1 (9 dc ♗xc5 10 ♘b3 ♗e7 11 ♗g5±) 9 ... ♗e6 10 dc ♗xc5 11 ♘b3 ♗b6 12 ♘fd4 0–0 13 ♗e3, with a minimal edge for White in Kosten–Korchnoi, Hastings 1988/9.

(b) 6 ... cd 7 ♕e2+ (White gains a very insignificant plus from 7 ♘xd4 ♗d7 8 ♘2f3 ♗d6 9 0–0 ♘ge7 10 ♗g5 0–0 11 ♖e1 ♖e8, Ljubojević–Hübner, Turin 1982) 7 ... ♕e7 (7 ... ♗e7 8 0–0 a6 9 ♗xc6+ bc 10 ♘xd4±) 8 ♘xd4 (many questions were raised by the game Ivanchuk–Dolmatov, Manila IZ 1990: 8 ♘e5 ♗d7 9 ♗xc6 bc 10 0–0 ♔d8! 11 ♘b3 f6 12 ♗g5!? fg 13 ♘a5! ♕e8, and the players agreed a draw!) 8 ... ♕xe2+ 9 ♔xe2 ♗d7 10 ♘2f3 ♘xd4 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5 12 ♖d1± Hübner–Korchnoi, Merano 1980.

<p style="text-align:center">**7 dc**</p>

7 0–0 cd! limits White's options; he will have to put one of his pieces on d4, but this doesn't always fit in with his plans. The result, usually, is a transposition with 8 ♘b3 ♗d6 9 ♘bxd4 ♘ge7; an analysis of this variation will be given in the notes to move 10.

7 ...   ♗xc5
7 ... ♕e7+ is rarely seen in tournament play; White secures the initiative too easily. For example, 8 ♕e2 (after 8 ♗e2 ♗xc5 9 ♘b3 ♗b6 10 ♕xd5 ♘f6 11 ♕d1 ♗g4, Black has good compensation for the pawn) 8 ... ♗xc5 9 ♘b3 ♕xe2+ (White has the better ending after 9 ... ♗b6?! 10 ♘e5 ♗d7 11 ♘xd7 ♔xd7 12 0–0 ♕xe2+ 13 ♗xe2 Short–Korchnoi, Brussels 1987) 10 ♔xe2 ♗b6 (10 ... ♗d6 11 ♗g5+! f6 12 ♗h4 ♘ge7 13 ♗g3±) 11 ♗e3 ♗g4 12 h3 ♗h5 13 ♗xb6 ab 14 ♘bd4± Tal–Korchnoi,   USSR   Ch, Moscow 1973.

8   0–0   ♘ge7
9   ♘b3   ♗d6 *(38)*
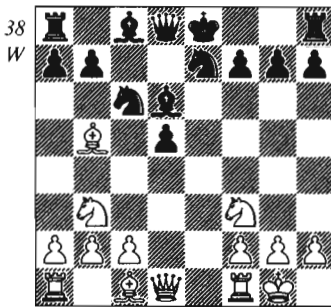
One of the main critical positions of the entire variation with 3 ♘d2 c5. In the last few years, 9 ... ♗d6 has virtually ousted 9 ... ♗b6 from tournament practice, although attempts to rehabilitate the latter move are made from time to time, thus: 9 ... ♗b6 10 ♖e1 (the immediate 10 ♗e3 also

gives White a minimal edge, for example 10 ... ♗xe3 11 ♗xc6+!? bc *[11 ... ♘xc6 12 ♖e1!]* 12 fe 0–0 *[12 ... ♗g4!? 13 ♕d4 ♗xf3 14 ♖xf3 0–0, with chances of equalising]* 13 ♕d2 ♕b6 14 ♕c3 ♖b8 15 ♖ab1! *[15 ♘fd4?! ♗a6! 16 ♘f5 ♘xf5 17 ♖xf5 ♗c4= van der Wiel–Korchnoi, Brussels 1987]* 15 ... ♖e8 16 ♖fe1 ♘g6 17 ♘c5± Botvinnik–Boleslavsky,   USSR Ch, Moscow 1941. 10 ♗g5!? is also sometimes played) 10 ... 0–0 11 ♗e3 ♗g4 (11 ... ♗xe3!? 12 ♖xe3 ♘f5 13 ♖e2!±) 12 ♗xb6 (12 h3!? ♗xf3 *[12 ... ♗h5 13 ♗xb6 ab±]* 12 ♕xf3 ♘e5 14 ♕h5! ♘7g6 15 ♖ad1± Psakhis–Lputian, Erevan 1988) 12 ... ♕xb6?! (a dubious pawn sacrifice, but 12 ... ab 13 c3 ♕d6 14 ♗e2 guarantees White a stable plus) 13 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 14 ♕xd5 ♘b4 15 ♕e4 ♗xf3 16 gf ♖ad8 17 ♖e2 ♖d6 18 c3 ♖e6 19 ♕c4± Ivanchuk–Dokhoian, Erevan 1989.

10   ♖e1
White has a wide choice of continuations here; the following are the most popular alternatives:

(a) **10 ♗xc6+** bc 11 ♕d4 (a typical manoeuvre; White's plan involves an exchange of dark-squared bishops on f4, followed by an attempt to occupy the vital point c5) 11 ... 0–0 12 ♗f4 ♘f5 13 ♕a4 (13 ♕d2 is less energetic: 13 ... ♕b6! 14 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 15 a4 ♘e4= Velimirović–Vaganian, Kragujeviac 1974) 13 ... a5!? (13 ... ♕b6 concedes the initiative to

White: 14 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 15 ♘e5
♘c4!? [*15 ... c5? 16 ♕c6!±, or 15
... ♕b5 16 ♕xb5 cb 17 ♘d4±*] 16
♘xc6 ♗b7 17 ♘ca5 ♘xb2 18 ♕d4
♕xd4 19 ♘xd4 ♗a6 20 ♖fe1
♖fe8 21 ♖xe8+! ♖xe8 22 ♘ac6±
Arnason–Vaganian, Reykjavik
Open 1990) 14 ♖fe1 ♗e6
15 ♗xd6 (15 ♘g5 c5!=) 15 ...
♕xd6 16 ♘e5 ♖e8= Smagin–
Wl. Schmidt, Copenhagen 1990.

(b) 10 ♘bd4 (or 10 ♘fd4 ♕c7
11 g3 a6 12 ♗f1 ♘e5=) 10 ...
0–0 11 ♗e3 (in recent practice
this has occurred a good deal more
often than other moves, but the
following should be mentioned: 11
b3 ♗g4 12 ♗b2 ♕b6! 13 ♗e2
♖ad8 14 h3 ♗h5 15 ♕d2 ♖fe8=
Gipslis–Korchnoi, USSR Ch,
Riga 1970; or 11 ♗g5 f6!? 12 ♗e3
♘e5 13 ♖e1 a6 14 ♗f1 ♔h8=
Geller–Uhlmann, Amsterdam
1970; or 11 c3 ♗g4 12 ♕a4 ♗h5!
[*12 ... ♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 a6 14
♗d3±*] 13 ♖e1 [*accepting the
pawn sacrifice is very risky: 13
♗xc6?! bc 14 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 15 ♕xc6
♗xf3 16 gf ♖c8∓*] 13 .. ♕c7
14 ♗f1 a6! 15 g3 ♘a5, with an
equal game; A. Sokolov–Vagan-
ian, Montpellier C 1985) 11 ...
♗g4 12 h3 (the chances are equal
after 12 ♗e2 a6 13 c3 ♗c7!
14 h3 ♗h5 15 ♕d2 ♕d6 16 g3
♕d7= Damm–Uhlmann, Amster-
dam OHRA 1990) 12 ... ♗h5
(12 ... ♘xd4 13 ♗xd4 ♗h5
14 ♖e1 ♘c6=) 13 ♕d2, and
now Marjanović suggests 13 ...
♕c7=.

(c) 10 ♗d2 0–0 11 ♗c3 ♗g4
12 ♘bd4 ♗h5 13 ♖e1 ♗g6 14
♘h4 ♕b6= Gufeld–Lputian,
Moscow 1981

(d) 10 c3 ♗g4 11 ♗e2 0–0
12 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 13 ♕xe2 ♖e8 14
♗g5 h6= Smirin–Wl. Schmidt,
Polanica Zdroj 1989.

(e) 10 ♗g5 0–0 11 ♗h4 (11
♖e1 is stronger, but for a time the
text move was highly popular)
11 ... ♕b6! (White's dark-squared
bishop is out of reach of the g1–
a7 diagonal, and the black queen
takes immediate advantage of this.
A weaker line is 11 ... ♗g4 12
♗e2 ♗h5 13 ♖e1 ♕b6 14 ♘fd4
♗g6 15 c3, with a small plus for
White; Karpov–Uhlmann,
Madrid 1973) 12 ♗d3 (or 12 ♗e2
♘f5! 13 ♕xd5? ♘b4, with powerful
play for Black) 12 ... a5! 13 a4
(practically forced; 13 c4 a4! 14 cd
♘b4 15 ♘bd4 ♘xd3 16 ♕xd3
♖a5∓ Wittmann–Vaganian,
Teesside 1974) 13 ... ♘f5! 14
♗g5!? h6 15 ♗d2 ♗e6= Rozen-
talis–Psakhis, Sevastopol 1986.

(f) 10 h3 0–0 11 c3 ♗c7 12
♗e3 ♘f5 13 ♗c5 ♖e8= Ivan-
chuk–Lputian, Erevan 1989.

10	...	0–0
11	♗d3!?	

The 'last word' in fashion. From
the beginning of the seventies until
just recently, players invariably
chose 11 ♗g5 here, but opening
variations are subject to 'wear and
tear' just like anything else, and in
the last three or four years 11
♗d3 has been incomparably

more popular than any other move in the position. Will this last? Let us look at the alternatives:

(a) **11 c3 ♗g4** (the chief difference between 11 ♗d3 and 11 c3 is that in this case Black has the chance to position his bishop actively) 12 ♗e2 ♖e8 13 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 14 ♖xe2 ♕d7 15 ♘b5 (15 ♘f3 h6 16 ♗e3 ♖ad8=) 15 ... ♗e5 16 ♘c5 ♕f5= Ljubojević– Short, Linares 1990.

(b) **11 ♗g5 ♗g4** (White has more chances of an advantage after 11 ... ♕c7 12 c3 h6 13 ♗xe7! ♘xe7 14 ♘bd4 a6 15 ♗d3± Hübner–Korchnoi, Johannesburg 1981. An interesting move is 11 ... a6!?, for example 12 ♗xc6 [*12 ♗e2 ♗g4 13 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 14 ♖xe2 ♕c7*] 12 ... bc 13 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 14 ♘bd4 ♗d7 15 ♘e5 ♗f6, with complex play in Torre–Short, Thessaloniki Ol 1988), and there are three moves for White to choose from:

(b1) **12 ♗e2** (an old move, which allows Black to equalise) 12 ... ♖e8 (12 ... h6 is also playable, since the exchange on c7 is not dangerous for Black: 13 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 14 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 15 ♘xe2 ♗f6 16 c3 ♖e8= Palac–Schmidt, Prague 1990) 13 c3 (13 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 14 ♕xe2 ♕d7=) 13 ... h6 (13 ... a6 is interesting, but there is an amusing trap that Black needs to avoid: 14 ♗h4 [*it's difficult to suggest a more useful move*] 14 ... ♕b6 15 ♘fd4 ♗xe2 16 ♖xe2 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 ♘c6 18 ♘f5

♗e5!=, but not 18 ... ♗f8?? 19 ♘h6+ ±± as in Lau–Uhlmann, Budapest 1985) 14 ♗h4 ♕b6! (a typical manoeuvre; the bishop goes to h4, the queen goes to b6) 15 ♘fd4 (Psakhis–Vaganian, Moscow 1981, continued entertainingly with 15 ♗xe7 ♖xe7! 16 ♕xd5 ♖ae8 17 ♕d2 a5! 18 h3?! ♗g3! 19 ♘bd4 ♗xf3! 20 ♗f1!! [*20 ♗xf3 ♘xd4 21 cd ♕xb2!∓∓*] 20 ... ♗xf2+ 21 ♔xf2 ♘xd4 22 cd ♗d5=. The game is similarly equal after 15 ♗g3 ♗xg3 16 hg ♘f5!? 17 ♕xd5 ♘xg3 18 ♗c4 ♗e6 19 ♗xe6!?, as in Geller–Vaganian, Reykjavik Open 1990; here Black should have continued 19 ... ♖xe6 20 ♕c5 ♘e2+ 21 ♔f1 ♘f4 22 ♕xb6 ab, with equality — Vaganian) 15 ... ♗xe2 (Black has no great problems even after the less forcing 15 ... ♗d7 16 ♗g3 ♗xg3 17 hg ♘g6=) 16 ♖xe2 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 ♘c6! 18 ♘f5 ♗f8 19 ♘xh6+!? (a sensible decision. White has no trace of advantage after 19 ♗g3 d4! 20 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 21 cd ♖xe2 22 ♕xe2 ♕xd4, Short–Vaganian, Hastings 1982/3) 19 ... gh 20 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 21 ♕g4+, with perpetual check on g4 and f5; Am. Rodriguez–Psakhis, Cuba 1983.

(b2) **12 h3 ♗h5 13 ♗xc6!?** bc 14 ♘bd4 ♖c8 15 c4 h6 16 ♗xe7 (another try, which likewise fails to guarantee a plus, is 16 ♗h4 g5!? 17 ♗g3 ♗xg3 18 fg dc!? 19 g4 ♗g6 20 ♕e2 c5!= Tseshkovsky–Gulko, Sochi 1975) 16 ... ♗xe7 17 g4 ♗g6 18 ♘e5 ♗c5! 19

b4! ♗xd4 20 ♕xd4 ♕f6= Wolff–
Gulko, New York 1987.

(b3) **12 ♗h4 ♖e8** (another
method can also be tried: 12 ...
a6 13 ♗d3 h6 14 ♗g3 ♖e8 15 c3
♕c7 16 ♖e3 f5!? with quite good
prospects; Aseyev–Epishin, Seva-
stopol 1986) 13 ♗g3 ♗xg3 14 hg
♕b6 15 a4!? (the very latest try.
White had little reason for opti-
mism with the conventional 15
♗d3 a5! 16 ♗xh7+ ♔f8 17
♗d3 a4 18 ♘bd2 ♘f5! as in A.
Sokolov–Vaganian, 6th match
game, Minsk 1986) 15 ... h6 16
♕d2 ♗xf3 17 gf ♖ad8 18 f4 a6
19 ♗f1 ♖d6! with complex play,
in which Black retains distinct
counterchances notwithstanding
White's slight advantage; Ivan-
chuk–Yusupov, 2nd match game,
Brussels C 1991.

11 ... h6!?
A good prophylactic move, the
indispensability of which was
clearly demonstrated by the game
Akopian–Vladimirov, Moscow
GMA 1990: 11 ... ♘g6?! 12 ♗g5!
♕d7 (the awkward queen move
is practically forced, since White
gains a big advantage from either
12 ... f6?! 13 ♗xg6, or 12 ... ♕c7
13 ♗xg6 hg 14 ♕xd5 ♘b4 15
♕d2 ♘xc2 16 ♖ec1) 13 c3 ♘f4 14
♗f1 ♕f5 15 ♗h4 ♕h5 16 ♗g3±.
Black also fails to equalise with 11
... ♘b4?! 12 ♗g5 ♘xd3 13 ♕xd3
f6 14 ♗h4 ♗f5 15 ♕d2±
Kudrin–Gulko, USA Ch 1986.

12 h3
Black was aiming to develop his

bishop on g4 after all.
12 ... ♘f5
Other tries have also been
made:

(a) **12 ... ♗c7** 13 ♗e3 ♖e8 14
♕d2 ♕d6 15 ♕c3! ♗e6 16 ♗c5±
Kruppa–Bareyev, Irkutsk 1986.

(b) **12 ... ♗f5** 13 c3 (13 ♗e3!?)
13 ... ♗e4 14 ♘bd4 ♗xd3 15
♕xd3 ♕d7 16 ♗e3± Adams–
Vaganian, Manila IZ 1990.

(c) **12 ... ♘b4** 13 ♘bd4 a6 14 a3
♘xd3 15 ♕xd3 ♘g6 16 ♗d2±
Wolff–Morris, New York Open
1991.

13 c3 ♕f6
White has a slight edge after 13
... ♗c7 14 ♗c2 ♕d6 15 ♕d3
g6 16 ♕d2!? (complications with
obscure consequences arise from
16 g4!? ♗b6! 17 ♔g2 ♗xf2 18
♔xf2 ♕g3+ 19 ♔e2, as in Yuda-
sin–Moskalenko, Norilsk 1987;
and now 19 ... ♘h4! 20 ♘xh4
♖e8+) 16 ... h5 17 ♗xf5 ♗xf5
18 ♕h6 ♖fe8 (18 ... ♗e4!? 19
♘bd2 f5! 20 g3 ♖f6) 19 ♗e3
♕f8 20 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 21 ♖ad1±
Smagin–Lalic, Sochi 1987.

14 ♗c2 ♗e6
There is likewise no clear equal-
ity after 14 ... ♖d8 15 ♕d3 g6 16
♕d1 (16 ♕d2!? ♖f8 17 ♘h2! ♘h4!
18 ♕e2 ♗f5 19 ♘g4 ♗xg4 20
♕xg4± is also interesting; Sma-
gin–Uhlmann, Berlin 1988) 16 ...
♗f8 17 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 18 ♘bd4
♗e4 19 ♗e3, Tolnai–Uhlmann,
Debrecen 1988.

15 ♕d3 ♖fe8
White benefits from 15 ... g6 16

♕d2! g5 17 ♕d3 ♕g7 18 ♗e3 ♘e5 19 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 20 g3± Adams–Pein, Sheffield 1991.

16 ♗d2

Equality results from 16 ♘bd4 ♘cxd4 17 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 18 ♕h7+ ♔f8 19 ed g5!?, but a suggestion of Uhlmann's deserves close examination: 16 g4!? ♘h4 17 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 18 ♕h7+ ♔f8 19 ♔g2! ♕f6 20 ♗e3 g5±.

16 ... g6 *(39)*
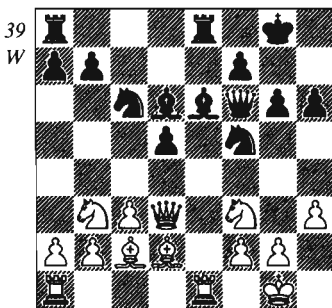
17 ♕b5?!

Too optimistically played. I prefer a quiet treatment of the position, as demonstrated in Wolff–Benjamin, San Francisco 1991: 17 ♖e2!? ♗f8 18 ♖ae1 ♘d6 19 ♘bd4 ♘e4 20 ♘xe6, with a clear advantage to White.

17 ... ♘h4!

18 ♘xh4 ♕xh4

19 ♕f1

Renet should probably have been satisfied with a draw, which he could have had for example with 19 ♕xb7 ♗xh3 20 ♕xc6 (or 20 ♖e3 ♗xg2! 21 ♔xg2 ♕h2+

22 ♔f1, as in Ernst–Vaganian, Copenhagen 1988; here Black was obliged to give perpetual check with 22 ... ♕h1+ 23 ♔e2 ♕h5+) 20 ... ♗h2+! 21 ♔h1 ♗xg2+ 22 ♔xg2 ♕g4+, again with perpetual check. The queen retreat surrenders the initiative to his opponent.

19 ... ♘e5!

20 ♘d4 ♘c4∓

21 ♗c1

He has to continue the retreat; 21 ♘xe6? loses to 21 ... ♘xd2 22 ♕d3 ♘e4.

21 ... ♗d7

22 ♖d1?!

It was essential to exchange rooks on e8 and follow with b2–b3, after which Black's position would have been just a little more active. Now there are much more formidable problems awaiting White.

22 ... ♗g4!

23 ♖d3

White has to make this ugly move, since 23 ♖e1 ♖xe1 23 ♕xe1 ♗xh3 25 gh ♕xh3 26 ♘e2 ♖e8 cannot be at all to his liking. Also after 23 f3 ♕g3 24 fg ♕h2+ 25 ♔f2 ♗g3+ 26 ♔f3 ♘e5+ 27 ♔e2 ♘xg4+ 28 ♔f3 ♗d6! it is hard to find a defence for White.

23 ... ♖e7!

White is unexpectedly faced with the problem of protecting his back rank.

24 ♖g3!?

Ingeniously played. Black cannot take the rook: 24 ... ♗xg3 25

fg ♕xg3 26 ♗f4 ♕h4 27 hg, and White wins!

24	...	♗d7
25	♖d3	♖ae8
26	♘f3	♕h5
27	♗b3	

White's position is very difficult. Black's pieces are more active, his rooks have seized the all-important e-file, and White has yet to finish his development. He would lose at once with 27 g4? ♗xg4 28 hg ♕xg4+ 29 ♔h1 ♕h5+ 30 ♔g2 ♖e4∓∓.

27	...	♘e5
28	♘xe5	♕xe5
29	f4	

Of course White doesn't like weakening himself like this, but 29 g3 loses the exchange to 29 ... ♗b5.

| 29 | ... | ♕e1 |
| 30 | ♖d1 *(40)* | |

White also fails to save the game with 30 ♖xd5 ♕xf1+ 31 ♔xf1 ♖e1+ (Uhlmann suggests 31 ... ♗c7) 32 ♔f2 ♖8e2+ 33 ♔g3 ♗c6! 34 ♖xd6 ♖xg2+ 35 ♔h4 ♔g7!, and it is hard to defend against the many threats.
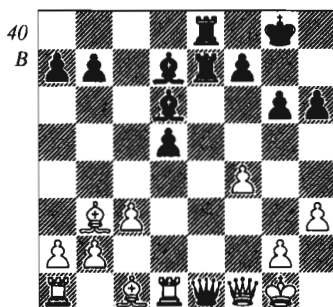
| 30 | ... | ♕g3∓∓ |
| 31 | ♗d2 | ♖e2 |

Black dominates the board, and Renet is unable to offer effective resistance.

32	♗e1	♕e3+
33	♗f2	♕xf4
34	g3	♕f6
35	♗xa7	

Fiddling while Rome burns.

35	...	♕g5
36	♕f3	♗xg3
37	♗xd5	♗f5
38	♗d4	♗f2++
39	♔h1	♗xd4
40	cd	

And in this hopeless position White overstepped the time limit

0–1

7 Tarrasch Variation: 3 … c5 4 ed ♕xd5

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2	c5
4	ed	♕xd5 *(41)*
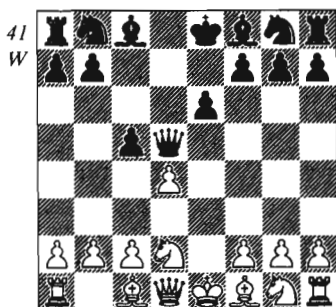
Although, in my view, defending an isolated pawn is not the most dangerous task that Black may face in the French Defence, more and more players have recently been giving preference to 4 … ♕xd5, a variation which leads to highly complex and unclear play while, of course, involving more risk. The position takes on features similar to a Sicilian, and this may come as an unpleasant surprise to White, who by playing 3 ♘d2 clearly showed his wish for a quieter type of contest. We shall now examine two games which demonstrate what active possibilities Black possesses.

Lanka–Glek
Moscow Ch 1989

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ♘gf3

| 4 | … | cd |
| 5 | ed | ♕xd5 |

Usually, the desired position is reached by a different move-order (4 ed ♕xd5 5 ♘gf3 cd).

6 ♗c4

White must play actively, or he will simply be left a pawn down — which is what happened in Veinger–Korchnoi, Jerusalem 1986. The game went 6 ♗d3? ♘f6 7 0–0 ♘c6 8 ♘b3 e5 9 ♖e1 ♗g4 10 ♗e2 ♗b4; Black has an extra pawn and an advantage in development and space, so the outcome is already clear.

6 … ♕d6

The most promising continuation, though others are also possible:

(a) 6 … ♕d8 7 0–0 ♘c6 8 ♘b3 ♘f6 9 ♕e2 (in Hübner–Petrosian, Bugojno 1982, White achieved

nothing with 9 ♘fxd4 ♘xd4 10 ♘xd4 a6 11 c3 ♗c5 12 ♗e3 ♛c7 13 ♗b3 0–0; Black has successfully completed his development and looks to the future with confidence. To gain the advantage, White has to take more energetic measures) 9 ... ♗e7 (in Sax–Andersson, Hilversum 1973, after the risky 9 ... a6 White played the very strong 10 ♖d1 b5 11 ♘bxd4 ♘xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♛b6 13 ♗d3 ♗b7 14 a4! ♗c5 15 ♖h4! b4 16 a5! ♛c7 17 ♗d2, with clearly the better chances) 10 ♖d1 a6 11 ♘bxd4 ♘xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♛b6 13 c3 ♗d7 14 ♘e5 ♗b5 15 a4 ♗xc4 16 ♘xc4 ♛c5 17 ♗e3 ♛h5 18 ♛xh5 ♘xh5 19 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 20 ♖xd6, Mestel–Petrosian, Las Palmas IZ 1982; manoeuvring with assurance, White has arrived at the better ending.

(b) 6 ... ♛c5 is an experimental move. Its shortcomings were excellently demonstrated by Belyavsky against Pr. Nikolić, Wijk aan Zee 1984: 7 ♛e2 ♘c6 8 ♘b3 ♛b6 9 0–0 ♘ge7 10 ♖d1 ♘f5 11 ♗d3 ♘d6 (in his effort to retain the extra pawn, Nikolić has had to position his pieces unfavourably, and ends up in a difficult situation) 12 a4! a6 13 a5 ♛a7 14 ♖a4! ♘b5 15 ♗xb5 ab 16 ♖axd4 ♘xd4 17 ♘fxd4. After this game, few players will wish to repeat the experiment.

7	0–0	♘f6
8	♘b3	♘c6
9	♘bxd4	

White had various continu-

ations to choose from here; admittedly, none of the others are very dangerous.

(a) 9 ♛e2 (the least frequent, and probably weakest) 9 ... ♗e7 10 ♖d1 e5 (in contrast to Belyavsky–Nikolić which we have just looked at, Black defends the pawn this time with perfectly natural moves) 11 ♗b5 (11 h3 is weak; after 11 ... a6! 12 a4 ♗e6 13 ♘bd2 0–0, White was left a pawn down with no compensation in B. Karlsson–Lein, Vestmannaeyjim 1985) 11 ... ♗g4 12 ♖bd2 ♘d7 13 h3 ♗xf3 14 ♘xf3 0–0 15 c3 ♗f6 16 ♗e3 occurred in Lobron–Henley, Indonesia 1983. White recovers the pawn, not without difficulty, and equalises the chances — not exactly a great achievement.

(b) 9 ♖e1 (stronger than 9 ♛e2, but inadequate to set Black serious problems) 9 ... ♗d7 10 g3!? (the only possibility for sharpening the play; 10 ♘bxd4 ♘xd4 11 ♛xd4 ♛xd4 12 ♘xd4 ♖c8 13 ♗d3 ♗c5= is wholly innocuous; Tseshkovsky–Luther, Sochi 1990) 10 ... ♗e7 11 ♗f4 ♛b4 12 ♛d3 ♖c8 13 a4! (trying to exploit the exposed position of the black queen; the threat is 14 a5, followed by 15 c3) 13 ... 0–0 14 a5 (after 14 ♗d2?! ♛b6 15 ♘bxd4 ♘xd4 16 ♘xd4 ♖fd8 17 ♗c3 ♗c5, White had to struggle for equality in Ljubojević–Nogueiras, Reggio Emilia 1985/6) 14 ... ♗d8! 15 ♗d2 ♛d6 16 ♘bd4 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 e5 18 ♘b5 ♛c5; this position

was reached in Ljubojević–P. Nikolić, Tilburg 1987. The game is about even.

9   ...   ♘xd4
10 ♘xd4

Strangely enough, the somewhat cowardly 10 ♛xd4 also frequently occurs. White hopes to exploit that 'legendary' asset, the queenside pawn majority, while in return allowing Black an extra pawn in the centre and an easy, free game. There are not many reefs for Black to negotiate on his way to equality, and in practice he usually obtains good results. All he has to avoid is exchanging too many pieces, which might convert White's 'legendary' asset into a concrete one. Let us see from a few examples how the struggle may continue: 10 ♛xd4 ♛xd4 11 ♘xd4 ♗d7 (I believe that rapid queenside development is more important than prophylaxis with 11 ... a6, after which White worked up a strong initiative in van der Wiel–Chernin, Wijk aan Zee 1986: 12 ♗e2! ♗d7 13 ♗f4 ♘d5 14 ♗g3 ♗c5 15 ♖fd1 ♖c8 16 c3 ♘e7 17 ♗f3. White's advantage is undeniable, but then so is the fact that Black could have improved at more than one point) 12 ♗f4 (12 ♗e2 ♗c5! 13 ♘b3 ♗b6 14 ♗f3 0–0–0 is equally harmless; Oll–Huzman, Kuybyshev 1986) 12 ... ♖c8 13 ♗b3 (or 13 ♗e2 ♘d5 14 ♗g3 ♗c5 15 ♘b3 ♗e7= Kir. Georgiev–Johansen, Thessaloniki Ol 1988)

13 ... ♗c5 14 ♖ad1 0–0 15 ♖fe1 ♖fd8! 16 c3 ♗e8, and it is impossible to speak of any advantage for White; Ermenkov–Eingorn, St John 1988.

10   ...   ♗d7 (42)
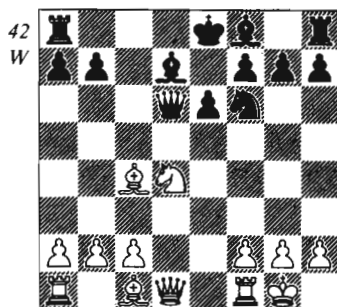
It is difficult to choose between the move played and 10 ... a6, with which Black retains the attractive option of developing his bishop on b7 after ... b7–b5. The choice is a matter of taste and disposition, and in the notes to this and the next game I shall try to illustrate Black's possibilities in both cases.

11 b3

Alternatives are:

(a) **11 ♗e3** (rarely played) 11 ... ♛c7 12 ♛e2 ♗c5 13 ♖ad1 0–0 14 ♗g5 ♘d5 15 ♗xd5 exd5 c3 ♖fe8, and Black's bishop pair and active pieces provide excellent compensation for the isolated pawn; Akopian–Ehlvest, Erevan 1988.

(b) **11 a4** ♛c7 12 b3 ♗c5 (castling is very risky, as White's attack develops very fast. A game Ljubojević–Lobron,   Reggio

Emilia 1985/6, continued 12 ... 0–0–0 13 ♕e2 ♗c5 14 ♘b5 ♗xb5 15 ab h5 16 ♗b2 g4 17 g3, and White's threats are clearly the more powerful) 13 ♗b2 0–0 (13 ... ♕f4 is weaker; it looks like a simple waste of time. Tsesh-kovsky–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987, continued 14 g3 ♕h6 15 ♕f3 0–0–0 16 ♗a6! ♘d5 17 c4!±). This position has yet to occur in tournament practice; it seems to offer scope to both sides. Incidentally, 11 ... ♗e7, with castling to follow, also looks quite good.

(c) 11 ♗b3 ♗e7 (the most solid; first bring the king into safety, and after that start thinking of more aggressive plans) 12 ♗g5 0–0 13 ♖e1 ♖fd8 14 c3 ♕c5! 15 ♗h4 b5 occurred in a game Ivanchuk–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988. Black has no reason for apprehension about the future.

(d) 11 c3, and now:

(d1) 11 ... ♕c7 12 ♕e2 (there is no danger for Black in 12 ♗b3 ♗d6 13 h3 0–0 14 ♕e2 ♗h2+ 15 ♔h1 ♗f4= Radulov–Petrosian, Moscow 1977) 12 ... ♗d6 (after the game Jansa–Marjanović, Zenica 1986, only hotheads would decide on 12 ... 0–0–0. Play went 13 a4! h5 [*13 ... ♗c5 14 ♘b5 ♗xb5 15 ab h5 16 ♗g6 ♘g4!? 17 g3 ♖d7 18 ♔g2 ♗b6 19 ♖a4!± Wolff–Bonin, Philadelphia Open 1990*] 14 h3 [*14 ♘b5!? ♗xb5 15 ab ♘g4 16 g3 ♗c5 17 ♔g2 ♔b8 18 ♖a4± Adams–Lautier, Biel*

1991] 14 ... ♗c5 15 b4! ♗xd4 16 cd ♗c6 17 b5 ♗d5 18 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 19 g3! with very strong threats. An attempt to confuse the issue with 13 ... ♘g4 would be calmly met by 14 g3 ♘e5 15 ♗f4!) 13 ♘b5 (the phlegmatic 13 h3 leaves Black with no difficulties at all after the simple 13 ... ♗h2+ 14 ♔h1 ♗f4 15 ♗b5 0–0= A. Sokolov–Ehlvest, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988) 13 ... ♗xb5 14 ♗xb5+ ♔e7 (the king is quite comfortable in the centre) 15 g3 a6 (the aggressive 15 ... h5 benefits only White; a game A. Ivanov–Hébert continued 16 h4 ♖ac8 17 ♗g5 ♕b6 18 ♖ad1 ♖c5 19 ♗a4 ♖a5 20 ♖d4, with a clear plus) 16 ♗d3 ♕c6 17 ♗g5 h6= A. Sokolov–Ehlvest, Reykjavik World Cup 1988.

(d2) 11 ... 0–0–0 12 ♕e2!, and Black would seem to have nothing better than 12 ... ♕c7, when 13 a4! transposes into Jansa–Marjanović under 'd1'. A weaker line for White is 12 ♕f3 ♕c7 13 ♗b3 h5 (13 ... e5 is also interesting; 14 ♘c2 ♗g4 15 ♕g3 ♗d6 16 ♘e3 e4, with unclear play) 14 h3 e5 15 ♘c2 e4 16 ♕e2 ♘g4! 17 hg hg 18 g3 ♕e5, with a strong attack in Salazar–Klinger, Zürich 1985.

(d3) 11 ... ♗e7 12 ♕e2 (12 ♖e1 0–0 13 ♕f3 ♕c7 14 ♗d3 ♖fe8 15 ♗g5 ♘d5 16 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 led only to equality in A. Sokolov–Nogueiras, Brussels World Cup 1988. In Juarez–Hmadi, Manila IZ 1990, White played instead 12

♕f3 ♕c7 13 ♗b3 0–0 14 ♗g5 ♘d5 15 ♗xe7 ♘xe7=) 12 ... 0–0 13 ♗g5 (in Arnason–Eingorn, Moscow GMA 1990, White set his opponent no difficult tasks with the leisurely 13 ♖e1 ♖ac8 14 ♗b3 ♕b6 15 ♗e3 ♗c5 16 ♗g5 ♗xd4 17 cd ♕b5=) 13 ... ♖ac8 14 ♗b3 (the game Collinson–McLaren, British Ch, Eastbourne 1990, saw the interesting idea 14 ♖ad1 ♕c5 15 ♘f3!? ♗c6 16 ♘e5 a6 17 ♖fe1, and White seized the initiative. I believe that after 15 ... ♕xc4 16 ♕xc4 ♖xc4 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♖xd7 ♖b8 19 ♘d2 ♖a4!, Black's powerful bishop will rid him of his difficulties) 14 ... ♕c5 15 ♗f4 ♗d6 16 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 17 ♖ad1 ♕b6= Yakovich–Huzman, Uzhgorod 1987.

11 ...   0–0–0!

The exclamation mark is for Black's consistency. However, in A. Sokolov–Smagin, USSR Ch, Riga 1985, Black obtained a splendid game with the simple 11 ... ♗e7 12 ♗b2 0–0 13 ♕e2 ♕f4! 14 ♖ad1 ♖fd8 15 ♖fe1 ♗b4!, and already it is time for White to think about equalising. In Yandemirov–Nenashev, Azov 1991, White lost quickly after 11 ... h5!? 12 ♘b5? ♕e5! 13 ♕f3 ♗xb5 14 ♕xb7 ♖b8 15 ♗xb5+ ♕xb5∓∓.

12 ♗b2   ♕c7
13 ♕e2   h5!

13 ... ♗d6 14 h3 h5, as played in Grünfeld–Herzog, Randers Z 1982, may result in a loss of tempo, since the dark-squared bishop is

also eyeing the c5-square very attentively.

14 ♘f3

14 h3 ♘g4! 15 ♘f3 merely transposes, particularly since the attempt to deviate with 15 f4 had unpleasant consequences after 15 ... ♘h6! 16 ♕xh5 ♗c5 17 ♕e5 ♘f5 18 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 19 c3 ♗c6, Grünfeld–Lobron, New York 1985; despite his extra pawn and the absence of queens, White's position leaves something to be desired.

Geller's idea, which he used against Naumkin (Palma GMA 1989) is very interesting: 14 a4!? ♘g4 15 g3 a6 16 ♘b5!? ab 17 ab ♔b8. White's attack is strong, but Black's defensive resources are also plentiful, so for those who like analysing complex positions, there is something here to work on.

A weak line is 14 ♖fd1? ♘g4 15 g3 ♗c5 16 h3 ♘xf2! 17 ♕xf2 e5∓ Diesen–Djurhuus, Norwegian Ch, Gjovik.

14 ...   ♘g4 (43)
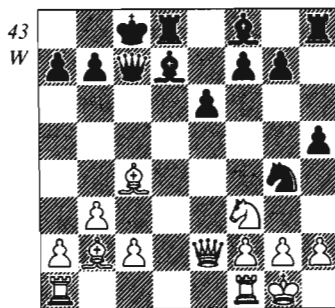
The opportunity for such active play with Black is not granted

very often. Another line sufficient for equality is 14 ... ♝c6 15 ♞e5, and only then 15 ... ♞g4. After 16 h3 ♝a3! 17 ♝xa3 ♞xe5 18 ♖ad1 ♞xc4 19 ♛xc4 ♛e5, as in Dvoiris–Dokhoian, USSR Ch semi-final 1985, Black has no problems whatever. 16 ♖ad1 ♝d6 is also perfectly good for him, though incidentally he must avoid the trap 16 ... ♖xd1?! 17 ♖xd1 ♝d6? 18 ♞xg4, Dvoiris–Eingorn, Harkov 1985; Black resigned here, since 18 ... hg is met by the decisive 19 ♝xe6+!

15   h3

Other possibilities are:

(a) **15 ♖fd1?!** ♝c5 16 ♝d4 ♝xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♝c6 18 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8∓ Müller–Huzman, Balatonbereny Open 1988.

(b) **15 ♖ad1** ♝d6 (after 15 ... ♝c5 16 h3 ♝c6 17 ♖xd8+ ♛xd8 18 ♝xe6+ fe 19 ♛xe6+ ♛d7 20 ♛xd7+ ♝xd7 21 hg hg 22 ♞d4, White acquired a material advantage and chances of victory; Yandemirov–Glek, Podolsk 1990) 16 h3 ♝c6, and now in Tseshkovsky–Glek, Philadelphia Open 1990, White's impatient winning attempt with 17 ♖xd6 ♛xd6 18 hg hg 19 ♞e5 led to the opposite result after 19 ... ♖h4! 20 ♞xg4 ♖dh8 21 f3 ♛g3∓∓, giving the happy winner victory in the tournament and a cheque for $18,000 — an excellent advertisement for the variation!

15   ...   ♝c6
16   ♖fd1

Capturing the knight brings problems only to White: 16 hg ♝xf3 17 gf (17 ♛xf3 hg 18 ♛g3 ♝d6 19 ♛g4 ♝h2+ 20 ♚h1 ♝g1∓∓) 17 ... hg 18 ♛e5 (18 ♝e5 gf 19 ♛e3 ♝d6 20 ♖fe1 ♝xe5 21 ♛xe5 ♝d4! is very dangerous for White) 18 ... ♝d6 19 ♛e4 gf 20 ♛xf3 ♝a3! and Black wins easily; Kudrin–Campos Moreno, Benidorm Open 1986.

On 16 ♞e5, Black has the pleasant choice between 16 ... ♞xe5 17 ♝xe5 ♝d6 18 ♝xd6 ♛xd6 19 ♖ad1 ♛c5, A. Geller–Arkhipov, Moscow 1988, and 16 ... ♝a3!? 17 ♝xa3 ♞xe5 18 ♖fd1 ♞xc4 19 ♛xc4 ♛e5= Daniilidis–Delchev, Arnhem 1988/9.

16   ...   ♝c5!

Evading the snares White has set; if 16 ... ♝d6, White *can* play 17 hg! hg 18 ♞e5 ♖h5 19 ♞xf7! ♝h2+ 20 ♚f1±± Ernst–Lutz, Berlin Open 1986.

17   ♖xd8+

White would lose beautifully with 17 hg hg 18 ♞e5 g3 19 ♞g4 gf+ 20 ♞xf2 ♛h2+ 21 ♚f1 ♛h1+!

17   ...   ♛xd8
18   hg

A weaker choice is 18 ♖f1 ♖h6!? 19 ♝b5?! ♝xf3 20 ♛xf3 ♛d6 21 g3 ♞xf2! 22 ♖xf2 ♖g6, Matulović–Marjanović, Yugoslavia 1986.

18   ...   hg
19   ♝xe6+!   fe
20   ♛xe6+   ♝d7!?

By way of an alternative, Glek suggests 20 ... ♔b8 21 ♕xg4! ♗xf3! 22 ♕xf3 ♖f8!=.

21	♕c4	gf
22	♕xc5+	♗c6
23	♕d4?	

A serious error. A game with roughly equal chances would have resulted from 23 ♕f5+! ♕d7 (23 ... ♔b8!?) 24 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 25 g3 ♖g8, when Black has sufficient compensation for the pawn.

23	...	♕xd4
24	♗xd4	fg
25	f3	♗xf3
26	♗xg7	♖h1+
27	♔f2	♔d7
28	♖g1?!	*(44)*

44
B
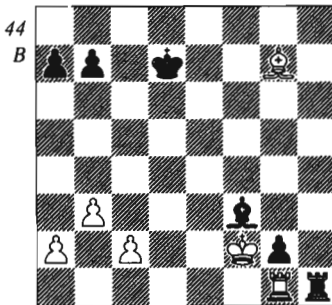
Lanka has gone to pieces. It was very important to keep the black king away from the kingside with 28 ♗d4 a6 29 ♖e1.

28	...	♗e4∓
29	♗d4	a6
30	c3	♔e6
31	a4	♔f5
32	b4	♖h3!
33	b5!?	a5
34	♖e1	♖d3!

Black's advantage is obvious, and Glek exploits it effortlessly.

35	♔g1	♖d2
36	♖a1	♔g4!
37	♗b6	♖d6!∓∓
38	♗xa5	♖h6
39	♔f2	♖f6+
40	♔g1	♖h6
41	♔f2	b6!
42	♖e1	♖f6+
43	♔g1	♔f3!

0–1

Hjartarson–Nogueiras
Thessaloniki Ol 1988

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ed ♕xd5

5   ♘gf3

This is the 'standard' move-order, from which White occasionally deviates with 5 dc, though Black then obtains an excellent game — for example with 5 ... ♗xc5 6 ♘gf3 ♘f6 7 ♗c4 (or 7 ♗d3 b6 8 ♕e2 ♗b7 9 ♘b3 ♘bd7 10 ♗f4 a6 11 0-0-0 ♕h5, with an excellent position for Black; Martinović–Marjanović, Yugoslavia Ch 1986) 7 ... ♕c6 8 ♕e2 0-0 9 0-0 a6 10 ♘e5 ♕c7 11 ♘df3 b5, and Black has no problems; Kudryashov–Petrosian, Moscow 1967.

5	...	cd
6	♗c4	♕d6
7	0-0	♘f6
8	♘b3	♘c6
9	♘bxd4	♘xd4
10	♘xd4	a6 *(45)*

45
W
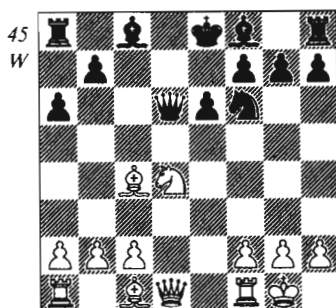
Not a bad alternative to 10 ... ♗d7. Black considers, not without reason, that the fianchetto of his bishop (after ... b7–b5) will give him many additional possibilities, besides which it is important to take control of the b5-square. The one snag is that Black's all-important piece development is delayed by one move.

11 ♖e1

The most fashionable and perhaps the most logical continuation, but by no means the only one. Let us take a close look at the alternatives:

(a) **11 b3 ♛c7!?** (Black can also play the modest 11 ... ♗d7 12 ♗b2 ♗e7 13 ♛e2 0-0-0 14 ♖fd1 ♛c5 15 a4 ♖ad8± Popović–Short, Dubai Ol 1986, but in that case it is not quite clear why the pawn went to a6) 12 ♛e2 (nor is there much promise in 12 ♗b2 ♗d6 13 ♖e1 [*or 13 ♘f3 b5 14 ♗d3 ♗b7 15 ♗xf6 gf 16 ♛e2 ♖c8∓ G. Georgadze–Henley, Tbilisi 1983; a passive line is 13 h3 0-0 14 ♖e1 b5 15 ♗f1!? ♖d8 16 ♛e2 ♗b7 17 c4 ♗c5∓ Lobron–*

Petrosian, Plovdiv 1983*] 13 ,... 0-0 14 ♘f3 b5 15 ♗d3 ♗b7 16 a4 ♖fd8 17 ♛e2 ♗b4= Psakhis–Chernin, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987) 12 ... ♗c5 (A. Petrosian and Stetsko suggest 12 ... b5 first. An alternative is 12 ... ♗d6 13 ♘f5! ♗xh2+ 14 ♔h1 0-0 15 ♘xg7! ♗e5! 16 ♗h6 ♗xa1 17 ♖xa1 ♛c5 18 ♖d1 b5, with wholly unclear play; Tseshkovsky–Shtirenkov, Belorechensk 1989) 13 ♗b2 (in Geller–Kindermann, Dortmund 1989, White scored a quick and attractive win with 13 ♘f5 0-0 14 ♘xg7?! ♔xg7 [*or 14 ... ♗d4 15 ♗h6! ♗xa1 16 ♖xa1*] 15 ♗b2 e5? 16 ♗xe5 ♗d6 17 ♗b2 ♗xh2+ 18 ♔h1 ♗f4 19 ♛h5, but it is not clear how he could have continued the attack after the cool 15 ... ♖g8! 16 ♛h5 ♗e7!) 13 ... 0-0 14 ♖ad1 b5 15 ♗d5 ♗b7 16 ♘f3 (if White tries for an immediate draw with 16 ♘xb5? ab 17 ♗xf6 gf 18 ♛g4+ ♔h8 19 ♛h4 f5 20 ♛f6+ =, he loses instead to 16 ... ♛c6∓∓) 16 ... ♛f4!? 17 ♘e5 ♛g5, and Black was close to wresting the initiative in Kotronias–Kindermann, Debrecen 1989.

(b) **11 a4** (frequently played, in the attempt to prevent Black's queenside activity) 11 ... ♗d7 (in Ljubojević–Hübner, Wijk aan Zee 1988, Black was consistent in his efforts to develop the bishop on b7. Play went 11 ... ♛c7 12 ♛e2 ♗d6 13 h3 0-0 14 ♖ad1 [*on 14 ♗g5, Hübner suggests 14 ... b6*

15 ♖ad1 ♗h2+ 16 ♔h1 ♗f4 17 ♗xf4 ♛xf4 18 ♛f3 ♛xf3 19 ♘xf3 ♗d7 20 b3 b5, and assesses the position as equal] 14 ... b6 15 ♗g5 ♗h2+ 16 ♔h1 ♗e5 17 ♖a3 ♗b7 18 ♖e3 ♗f4 19 ♗xf4 ♛xf4=) 12 b3 (12 c3 is interesting and possibly stronger, since after 12 ... ♛c7 13 ♛e2 0–0–0 we reach a position analogous to the one arising from 10 ... ♗d7 11 c3; we examined this in the notes to the previous game, Lanka–Glek, and assessed it as good for White. A game Nijboer–Luther continued 14 h3 h5 15 ♗e3 ♗c5 16 b4 ♘g4!? 17 hg hg 18 f4! gf 19 ♖xf3 ♛h2+ 20 ♔f1 ♗a7 21 ♗g1++. However, 13 ... ♗d6 deserves careful attention; this too is analogous to variations we have given before, but the interpolation of a2–a4 and ... a7–a6 turns out to favour Black) 12 ... ♛c7 13 ♛e2 ♗d6 14 h3 0–0 15 ♗b2 e5 16 ♘f3 e4 17 ♘d2 ♗h2+ 18 ♔h1 ♗e5 19 ♗xe5 ♛xe5. This position arose in Hellers–Korchnoi, Stockholm, and Zapata–Lobron, Moscow GMA 1989. Both games were won by Black, which is not surprising since his position already deserves preference.

(c) **11 c3** ♛c7 12 ♛e2 (there is no danger to Black in 12 ♗d3 ♗c5 13 ♘f3 b6 14 ♛a4+ b5! 15 ♗f4 *[or 15 ♗xb5+ ab 16 ♛xa8 0–0, and if 17 b4, then 17 ... ♗b7 18 ♛a3 ♘g4 with a strong attack]* 15 ... ♛b6 16 ♛c2 ♗b7, with a good game; Malanyuk–Speelman,

Baku 1983. Much more often White plays 12 ♗b3, but in that case too, after 12 ... ♗d6 13 h3 0–0 14 ♖e1 e5 15 ♘c2 h6 16 ♘e3 ♖e8! 17 ♘d5 ♘xd5 18 ♗xd5 ♖b8, it became clear that White had not obtained the slightest advantage in Martin del Campo–Sieiro Gonzales, Sagua la Grande 1989. If instead 14 ♗g5 ♗f4!? 15 ♗xf6 gf 16 ♛h4 ♔h8 17 ♛h4 ♗g5 18 ♛h5 ♖g8, Black's bishop pair and open lines give him excellent compensation for the spoiling of his pawn structure. White also fails to thwart Black's plans with 14 ♛f3, as in S. Arkell–Levitt, London (WFW) 1988; after 14 ... b6! 15 ♖e1 ♗b7 16 ♛d3, Black could easily have solved all his opening problems with 16 ... ♗h2+ 17 ♔h1 ♗e5, followed by 18 ... ♖fd8) 12 ... ♗d6 (12 ... ♗e7 is too passive. White easily seizes the initiative, for example with 13 ♗g5 0–0 14 ♗b3 h6 15 ♗h4 ♗d7 16 ♖fe1 ♖ac8 17 ♘f3± Zapata–Smyslov, Subotica IZ 1987) 13 h3 (the game Liang Jin-rong–Brunner, Lucerne 1989, saw the bold 13 ♗g5!? ♗xh2+ 14 ♔h1 ♗f4 15 ♗xf6 gf 16 ♗xe6 fe 17 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 18 ♛xe6+ ♔f8 19 ♛xf6 ♔g8 20 ♖fe1 ♖f8, but White's activity only partly compensated for the material deficit) 13 ... 0–0 14 ♖d1 (14 ♗g5 is parried by 14 ... ♘e4! 15 ♗h4 ♘d2!? 16 ♛xd2 ♛xc4, and already it is White who should be thinking about equalising; Kosashvili–

Holzke, Biel 1989. White also gains nothing tangible from 14 ♗d3 ♗d7 15 ♗g5 ♘d5 16 ♕e4?! f5! 17 ♕f3 h6 18 ♗d2 ♘f6∓ Blatny–Lautier, World Junior Ch, Adelaide 1988) 14 ... b5 15 ♗d3 ♗b7 16 a4 b4! (unnecessary weaknesses result from 16 ... ba?! 17 ♖xa4 a5 18 ♗g5 ♗e7 19 ♖da1±) 17 cb ♗xb4 18 ♗g5 ♘d5 19 ♖ac1 ♕c7 20 ♕e4 g6 21 ♗h6 ♖fe8!? (in a game A. Sokolov–Speelman, Reykjavik World Cup 1988, White succeeded in gaining the advantage after 21 ... ♖fc8 22 ♕e5 ♗f8 23 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 24 ♘b3!. With the text move, seeing that his e-pawn is protected, Black preserves the option of meeting 22 ♕e4 with 22 ... f6, giving him quite a good game) 22 ♘b3 ♕e7= Smagin–Levitt, Hastings Challengers 1990/1.

(d) **11 ♗b3** (a good prophylactic move) 11 ... ♗d7 (another line frequently played is 11 ... ♕c7 12 ♕f3 [*the variation 12 ♖e1 will be examined under a different move-order: 11 ♖e1 ♕c7 12 ♗b3*] 12 ... ♗d6 13 h3 0–0 14 ♗g5 ♘d7 [*Black has insufficient compensation for the material lost after 14 ... b5 15 ♗xf6 gf 16 ♕xf6 ♗e5 17 ♕h4 ♗b7 18 c3 ♔h8 19 f4!± Yudasin–Ornstein, Trnava 1983. In Yakovich–Eingorn, Harkov 1985, Black had to struggle hard for the draw after 14 ... ♗h2+ 15 ♔h1 ♗e5 16 ♖ad1 b6 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♕xa8 ♗xd4 19 ♕e4; if instead 18 ... ♗b7, then 19 ♘xe6! fe 20*

♗xe6+] 15 c3 b5 16 ♖ad1 [*or 16 ♕xa8?! ♗b7 17 ♕xf8+ ♘xf8 18 ♗d1 ♘g6, and the activity of the black minor pieces gave White immense trouble in Ernst–Wiedenkeller, Swedish Ch 1989*] 16 ... ♗b7 [*16 ... ♘c5!? doesn't look bad either: 17 ♗c2 ♗b7 18 ♕h5 ♗e4 19 ♗xe4 ♘xe4= Hellers–Hübner, Wijk aan Zee 1986*] 17 ♕g4 ♘c5! [*in A. Sokolov–Nogueiras, Clermont–Ferrand 1989, Black played the weaker 17 ... ♗h2+?! 18 ♔h1 ♘e5 19 ♘xe6! fe 10 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 21 f4 ♖fe8 22 ♕d6±*] 18 ♗f6 g6 19 ♖fe1 ♘xb3 20 ab ♖fe8 21 ♖d3 ♗h2+! 22 ♔h1 ♗f4= Adams–Levitt, London (Nat West) 1989) 12 c3 0–0–0 (Black came up against difficulties after 12 ... ♕c7 13 ♗g5! ♘e4 14 ♗h4 ♗d6 [*14 ... ♕f4 15 g3! ♕h6 16 ♕e2 ♘d6 17 f4 ♘b5 18 ♘f5 ♗c5+ 19 ♔g2 ♕g6 20 ♗c2 f6 21 ♘xg7+!±± Ivanchuk–Glek, Frunze 1988. A superb performance!*] 15 ♕e2 ♘c5 16 ♘f5 ♗xh2+ 17 ♔h1 0–0 18 ♘xg7 ♕e5 19 ♕xe5 ♗xe5 20 ♘h5 ♘xb3 21 ab f5 22 ♖fe1 in Wahls–Lautier, Biel 1990. We can conclude that in spite of Black's bishop pair, the defects in his pawn structure and his difficulties of development mean that he stands worse. I therefore think that the best reply to 13 ♗g5 is 12 ... 0–0–0) 13 ♖e1 ♕c7 (also 13 ... h5 14 h3 ♕c7 15 ♕e2 ♗d6 16 ♕c4!? ♘d5 17 ♕xc7+ ♘xc7= Ivanović–Vera, Berlin Open 1988) 14 ♕e2

♗d6 15 h3 ♔b8 16 ♗g5?! h6 17
♗h4 ♖hf8 18 ♖ad1 g5 19 ♕f3
♗h2+! 20 ♔h1 ♗f4 21 ♗g3 e5,
with a big advantage for Black
in Zapata–Ivanchuk, Manila IZ
1990. Of course, all the variations
we have given are far from being
forced for both sides, but they
fairly well demonstrate Black's
active possibilities.

11 ...   ♗d7

By now it is obvious what an
abundance of varied possibilities
exists for both sides at every move,
and it is simply not possible to
examine them all closely within
the format of a compact mono-
graph. At this point, therefore, we
will confine ourselves to the two
principal variations: the text move
and the equally popular **11 ...
♕c7**. After the latter, play may
continue: **12 ♗b3** (how easy it
is for White to stumble into a
wretched position is illustrated by
a game Smagin–Akopian, Erevan
1988, which went 12 ♗d3?! ♗d6
13 ♘f5? ♗xh2+ 14 ♔h1 ♔f8!
15 g3 ef 16 ♔h2 h5!∓. A consider-
ably stronger line is 12 ♕e2 ♗c5!?
[*Nogueiras, one of the greatest
connoisseurs of the 4 ... ♕xd5
system, played differently against
van der Wiel in the Rotterdam
World Cup Tournament 1989, and
obtained an excellent position
without difficulty: 12 ... ♗d6 13
♗g5 0–0 14 g3 ♘e4! 15 ♕xe4
♕xc4 16 ♗f4 ♗xf4 17 gf?!
♗d7∓*] 13 c3 0–0 [*Emms–Levitt,
British Ch, Plymouth 1989, fol-*

*lowed a recommendation of Speel-
man's and proved its correctness:
13 ... b5 14 ♗b3 0–0 15 ♗g5
♗b7 16 ♗xf6 gf 17 ♕h5 ♔h8,
and the game is level*] 14 ♗g5
♗xd4 15 cd ♘d5 16 ♖ac1! [*16
♗xd5 ed 17 ♗e7 ♖e8 18 ♗d8
♖xe2 19 ♗xc7 ♖xe1+ 20 ♖xe1
♗e6= Tal–Korchnoi, Brussels
1988*] 16 ... ♕d6! [*16 ... ♕b6 17
♕g4! f5? 18 ♕f3 ♕xd4 19 ♗xd5
ed 20 ♖c7± Speelman–Nogueiras,
Barcelona World Cup 1989*] 17
♕f3 ♗d7 18 ♗xd5!? ♕xd5, and
according to Speelman Black has
no difficulties) **12 ... ♗d6** (the
most astonishing thing is that after
this — an active move, and on
general grounds not a bad one —
the game can reduce, virtually by
force, to an ending in which one
of Black's chief aims will be to
defend himself by constructing
stalemate positions; such, alas, is
modern chess. For this reason, it
is perhaps worth developing the
other bishop first, for example: 12
... ♗d7 13 ♕f3 ♗d6 14 h3 [*14
♘f5? ♗xh2+ 15 ♔h1 0–0–0!
16 ♘xg7 ♗e5 17 ♕e2 ♗d4 18
c3 ♗b5∓ I. Gurevich–Akopian,
Aguadilla 1989*] 14 ... 0–0–0 15
♗g5 ♗h2+ 16 ♔h1 ♗e5 17
♕e3 ♗xd4 18 ♕xd4 ♗c6=) **13
♘f5!** (after the cautious 13 h3,
Black easily achieves equality: 13
... 0–0 14 ♗g5 b5 [*in Adams–
Luther, Oakham 1990, Black made
the mistake of 14 ... ♘d7??, and
the game lasted just four more
moves: 15 ♖xe6! h6 16 ♗e7*

♗h2+ 17 ♔h1 ♘c5 18 ♖e2
1–0] 15 c3 [*or 15 ♗xf6 gf 16*
♕h5 ♗b7 17 c3 ♔h8 18 ♕h6 ♖g8
19 ♕xf6+ ♖g7 20 f3 ♖ag8, with
excellent compensation for Black;
Jansa–Brunner, Bad Wörishofen
Open 1989] 15 ... ♗b7 16 ♗c2
♘d5 17 ♕g4 ♖fe8 18 ♕h4 g6=
Akopian–Levitt, Groningen Open
1990. Although 13 g3!? restricts
Black's   active   dark-squared
bishop, it promises White little,
for example 13 ... 0–0 14 ♗g5 b5
15 ♗xf6 gf 16 ♕d2 ♗e5 17 c3
♗b7 18 ♕h6 f5 19 ♘xe6 ♕c6 20
f3! ♕xf3 21 ♕xh7+! ♔xh7 22
♘g5+ ♔g7 23 ♘xf3= A. Ivanov–
Brunner, Gausdal Troll Masters
1991) **13 ... ♗xh2+ 14 ♔h1**
♔f8! (14 ... 0–0 is worse: 15
♘xg7! ♔xg7 16 ♕d2 ♘g8 17 ♕g5
♔h8 18 f4 with a strong attack)
15 g3 (the game Belyavsky–Hert-
neck, Munich 1991, introduced a
new twist into the variation: 15
♕d4!? h6 [*or 15 ... h5 16 ♗g5*
♘e8 17 ♗d8! Pandavos–Skal-
kotas, Athens 1991] 16 g3 [*16*
♗d2!? ef 17 ♗b4+ ♔g8 18 ♖e1
♕f4 19 ♗c3 with the initiative;
Müller–Hertneck,   Bundesliga
1991] 16 ... ef 17 ♗f4 ♕c6+ 18
♔xh2 ♔g8 19 ♖e7, with the
better game. I feel that 15 ♕d4
will be played in many games in
the next few years) **15 ... ef** (if you,
reader, possess the imagination of
Jon Speelman, you may risk 15 ...
♗xg3!?. At any rate, I failed to
refute it; a game Psakhis–Speel-
man, Moscow GMA 1990, con-

tinued: 16 ♘xg3 b5 17 ♔g2! h5!
18 ♘f1?? [*the effect of surprise; 18*
♕d4! ♗b7+ 19 f3 ♖d8 20 ♕h4!
would have led to advantage for
White] 18 ... ♗b7+ 19 f3 h4 20
c3 h3+ 21 ♔h1 h2 22 ♖e3 ♘g4,
and the black pieces cut into
White's territory like a knife into
butter. Bravo Jon!) **16 ♗f4 ♕c6+**
17 ♔h2 ♗e6 18 ♕d6+ (18
♗d6+!? requires further practical
tests, for example 18 ... ♔e8 19
c4 h5 20 c5 h4 21 f3 ♔d8 22
♗xe6 fe 23 ♖xe6, and White is in
firm possession of the initiative;
Adams–Pomes, Terrasa 1991) **18**
... ♕xd6 19 ♗xd6+ ♔e8 20
♖ad1 ♘e4 21 f3 ♘xd6 22 ♖xd6
♖c8 *(46)*, and we have reached
the ending that was mentioned
before.   Now   consider   two
examples of how it was handled
in practice:
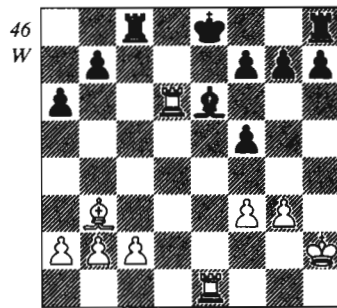
(a) Hübner–Nogueiras, Barce-
lona World Cup 1990: 23 c3 ♖c7
24 ♗xe6 fe 25 ♖exe6+ ♔f7 26
♔h3 ♖e8 27 ♖xe8 ♔xe8 28 ♔h4
h6 29 ♖b6 ♔f7 30 f4 g6 31 a4
♔g7 32 a5 ♔f7 33 ♔h3 ♔g7

34 c4 g5 35 b3 ♖d7 36 c5 g4+ 37 ♔g2 ♖e7 38 b4 ♖c7 39 c6? ♖xc6 40 ♖xb7+ ♔g6 41 ♖b6 ♔h5!! 42 b5 ♖c2+ 43 ♔f1 ab 44 ♖xb5 ♔g6 45 ♖b6+ ♔g7 46 ♖b7+ ½-½.

(b) Psakhis–Pomes, Groningen Open 1990: 23 ♖b6 ♖c7 24 ♗xe6 fe 25 ♖exe6+ ♔f7 26 c3 ♖e8 27 ♖xe8 ♔xe8 28 ♔h3 ♔f7 29 f4 ♖d7 30 a4 h6 31 a5 ♖c7 32 c4 ♔g8 33 b3 ♔h7 34 ♔g2 g6 35 b4 g5 36 c5 g4 37 ♔f2! (37 c6? ♖xc6! 38 ♖xb7+ ♔g6 39 ♖b6 ♔h5!!=) 37 ... ♔g7 38 ♖e6 ♖d7 39 ♔e3 h5 40 ♔e2 ♖c7 41 ♔d3 ♖d7+ 42 ♔e3 ♖c7 43 ♔d4 ♖d7+ 44 ♔e5 ♖d3 45 ♔xf5 ♖xg3 46 ♖e7+ ♔f8 47 ♖xb7 ♖c3 48 ♖h7 ♖c4 49 ♖xh5 g3 50 ♖g5 ♖xb4 51 ♔e6 ♖c4 52 ♔d7 g2 53 c6 ♖d4+ 54 ♔c7 ♖xf4 55 ♖xg2 ♖b4 56 ♖e2 ♔f7 57 ♔d6 ♖d4+ 58 ♔c5 ♖d1 59 ♖e4 1–0.

If Hübner sues me for breach of copyright, I fear he may win!

12   c3

It is important to free the queen for active operations. In a game Belyavsky–Nogueiras, Mont-pellier C 1985, White played 12 ♗b3 but achieved no success after 12 ... 0–0–0 13 ♗g5 ♕c5 14 ♗f4 ♗d6 15 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 16 ♕d3?! (16 ♘f3!?=) 16 ... ♘g4 17 g3 e5∓.

The quiet 12 h3 likewise gives no advantage: 12 ... 0–0–0 13 c3 ♕c7 14 ♕e2 ♗c5 15 b4 ♗a7 16 b5 e5, and White had to fight for equality in A. Sokolov–Hübner, Tilburg 1987.

It is worth considering 12 g3!? ♕c7 13 ♗f1, when White can look to the future with confidence.

12	...	♕c7
13	♕e2	♗d6
14	♗g5	0–0
15	g3!	

Playing to restrict the opponent. Malishauskas–Luther, Groningen Open 1990, went 15 h3 ♗f4 16 ♗xf6 gf 17 ♗d3 ♔h8 18 ♕h5 f5, with complex and unclear play.

| 15 | ... | ♖ae8!? |

White attained a clear plus in Speelman–Nogueiras, Belfort World Cup 1988, which went 15 ... ♔h8?! 16 ♖ad1 ♖ae8 17 ♗d3 ♘g8 18 ♘f3 h6 19 ♗b1±. Nogueiras doesn't want to withdraw into passive defence again, and prepares a counter-attack.

| 16 | ♗d3 | |

White would retain chances of an advantage after 16 ♖ad1 ♘d5 17 ♗b3 h6 18 ♗c1.

| 16 | ... | ♘d5 *(47)* |

Black's plan involves the gradual advance of his central pawns, but he does well not to hurry. The hasty 16 ... e5? loses to 17 ♗xf6 ed 18 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 19 ♕h5+ ♔g8 20 ♕g5±±.

We may now sum up the results of the opening. Both sides have completed their development, positioning their pieces effectively; they are ready for direct contact with each other in a very short time. The chances are about even.

| 17 | ♖ad1 | ♗e7 |
| 18 | h4 | |

47
W

25	♛e2	e5
26	♖d6	f4
27	♗c2!	♛c8!
28	♗g6	♖e7!?

Already Black has the pleasant choice between the game continuation and 28 ... ♛h3 29 ♖xc6 bc 30 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 31 ♛f3 e4, with a clear plus.

29	b3	♛h3
30	f3	♛xg3+
31	♛g2	♛xf3!
32	♛xf3	♗xf3
33	♖d8	♖ee8
34	♖xe8	♖xe8
35	♖d6	

White's last chance was 35 ♖f1 ♗e2 36 ♖e1 f3 37 ♗xe8 ♘xe8, although Black would still be clearly better. With the move played, Hjartarson practically resigns himself to losing. The rest is simple and needs no comment.

35 ... ♖c8 36 c4 ♗c6 37 ♗b2 f3! 38 ♗xe5 f2+ 39 ♔f1 ♘g4 40 ♗f4 ♖f8 41 ♖d4 ♘e5 42 h5 ♘f3 43 ♖d1 ♔g8 44 ♗g3 ♘d2+ 45 ♖xd2 ♗g2+ 46 ♔xg2 f1(♛)+ 47 ♔h2 ♛c1 48 ♖d7 ♛e3 49 ♖c7 ♖f2+! 50 ♔h3 ♛e6+ 0–1

Nogueiras recommends 18 ♗c1.

18 ...   ♗c5!

Now that White has rather incautiously weakened his kingside, the dark-squared bishop may come in useful.

19	♗c2	f5
20	♛f3	h6
21	♗c1	♘f6
22	♗b3	♗xd4
23	♖xd4?	

23 cd would still have led to equality. But now it is very hard to stop the onrush of pawns in the centre.

| 23 | ... | ♔h8∓ |
| 24 | ♖ed1 | ♗c6 |

8 Rubinstein and Burn Variations

Despairing of being able to memorise the complicated and lengthy variations which cannot be avoided in (for example) the Alekhine–Chatard Attack (i.e. 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e5 ♘fd7 6 h4) or the Winawer with 7 ♕g4 (i.e. 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bc ♘e7 7 ♕g4), Black has recently been choosing the good old Rubinstein Variation with increasing frequency. The critical position arises after:

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3/♘d2	de
4	♘xe4 *(48)*	

The Burn Variation goes 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5, and only then 4 …
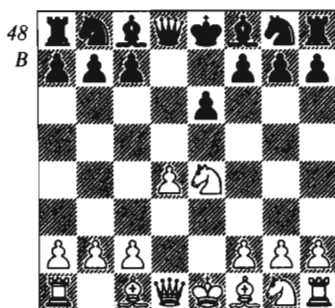
de. Often this merely amounts to a transposition, and I think both variations should be examined in one chapter. Strategically, the Rubinstein Variation is not very complex. Black voluntarily concedes a space advantage to his opponent, but in return has the opportunity for rapid piece development and pressure against the centre. An active role is often played by his light-squared bishop, which can occupy quite a good post at b7 or c6. White's chances are usually bound up with an attack on the king, so it is very important for him to decide on the correct place for his own monarch; a good refuge may be available on either wing according to circumstances. We will now look at some games that illustrate the possibilities for both sides.

Spassky–O'Kelly
San Juan 1970

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 de 4 ♘xe4
4 … ♗d7

Not wishing to weaken his queenside with ... b7–b6, Black aims to solve the problem of his queen's bishop in the simplest manner. Admittedly the bishop is less securely placed on c6 than on b7, but it will always be possible to exchange it (this, by the way, constitutes the chief advantage of the French over the Caro-Kann). the most usual move, 4 ... ♘d7, will be analysed in the next game. A word about some other lines:

(a) **4 ... b6?!** disappeared from master and grandmaster practice after the game Tal–Holmov, Moscow 1975: 5 ♕f3! c6 6 ♗f4! ♗b7 7 0–0–0 ♘f6 8 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 9 ♕g3 ♘d7 10 ♗g5 ♗d6 11 ♕h4 ♕g6 12 ♗d3 f5 13 ♘f3, with a clear advantage.

(b) **4 ... ♕d5!?** is Katalymov's somewhat artificial but interesting variation. There can follow: 5 ♘c3 (a playable alternative is 5 ♗d3 ♘f6 6 ♘xf6+ [*or 6 ♘g3 ♗d7!? 7 ♘f3 ♗b5 8 0–0 ♘c6 9 ♗xb5 ♕xb5 10 b3 0–0–0= Losev–Muratov, USSR 1976*] 6 ... gf 7 ♘f3 ♖g8 8 0–0 ♘c6 9 ♖e1 ♗d6 10 g3 ♕h5, with unclear play; Keres–Katalymov, USSR 1965) 5 ... ♗b4 6 ♘f3 (Black is set no problems by 6 a3 ♗xc3+ 7 bc ♘f6 8 ♘f3 c5 9 ♗e2 ♘c6 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♗b2?! c4! Lhagvasuren–Rogers, Novi Sad Ol 1990; or by 6 ♘ge2 ♘c6 7 ♗f4 ♕d8 8 ♕d3 ♘f6 9 0–0–0 0–0 10 h4?! e5! 11 de ♕xd3 12 cd ♘g4 Arnason–Rogers, Groningen 1990) 6 ... b6 (with the

interesting manoeuvre 6 ... ♗d7!? 7 ♗d3 ♗b5, Black managed to exchange his opponent's important bishop, but the initiative nonetheless remained with White in Razuvayev–G. Kuzmin, USSR Ch, Baku 1972: 8 0–0 ♗xc3 9 bc ♘d7 10 ♖b1 a6 11 c4! ♗xc4 12 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 13 ♖xb7±) 7 ♗d3 ♘f6 8 ♗d2 ♗xc3 9 ♗xc3 ♗a6 10 0–0 ♗xd3 11 ♕xd3 ♘c6, with quite good possibilities for Black; Malbran–M. Gurevich, Philadelphia 1989.

(c) **4 ... ♘f6** (not very popular) 5 ♘xf6+ gf!? (5 ... ♕xf6 is wholly unpromising: 6 ♘f3 h6 7 ♗d3 ♘c6 8 0–0 ♗d6 9 c3 0–0 [*or 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♖e1 0–0–0 11 b4 ♔b8 12 b5 ♘e7 13 ♘e5 ♘c8 14 ♖b1 ♗xe5 15 de ♕e7 16 c4± Abramović–Z. Nikolić, Yugoslav Ch, Pljevlja 1989; the black king is feeling highly uncomfortable*] 10 ♘d2! e5 11 ♘e4 ♕d8 12 ♕h5, and it turns out that the king can find no peace on its own side either; Gufeld–Alburt, USSR 1974) 6 ♗e3 (also 6 ♘f3 b6 7 ♗f4 ♗b7 8 c3 ♗d6 9 ♗g3 ♘d7 10 ♕a4± Aronin–Ufimtsev, USSR Ch 1947) 6 ... ♗d7 7 d5! e5 8 ♕h5 ♘b6 9 0–0–0 ♕d7 10 ♘f3, and the passivity of Black's pieces merely adds to the effect of his pawn weaknesses; Solozhenkin–Schön, Naleczow 1988.

(d) **4 ... ♗e7** (quite a good waiting move) 5 ♘f3 ♘f6 6 ♗d3 (White also has 6 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 7 ♗d3 ♗c6!? 8 c3 e5 [*after 8 ...

b6 9 ♕e2 ♗b7 10 0–0 h5?! 11 ♖d1 ♘e7 12 a4! ♕d6 13 a5, White has a dangerous initiative; Verduga–Gomez, Bayamo 1990] 9 de ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 11 0–0± — Keres) 6 ... ♗d7 7 ♘e5!? (he can also play more quietly: 7 0–0 ♘xe4 8 ♗xe4 ♗c6 9 ♗d3 ♘d7 10 ♖e1 0–0 11 ♗f4 ♗d6 12 ♘e5± Ehlvest–Ljubojević, Rotterdam World Cup 1989) 7 ... ♗c6 8 ♘g5! 0–0 9 ♗e3 h6 10 h4! ♕d5 11 ♕e2 ♘bd7 12 ♗c4 ♕xg2 13 0–0–0, with a powerful attack in Minasian–Carlier, Groningen Open. Probably 6 ... ♘bd7 is stronger, but for this see the next game.

5 ♘f3

Undoubtedly the most logical move! I cannot recommend 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 7 ♗d3 ♗c6 8 ♘f3 ♘f6 9 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6; the game is equal, and in Shabalov–Anastasian, Minsk 1990, the cavalry raid 10 ♘e5?! ♗xg2 11 ♖g1 ♗c6 12 ♕g4 0–0 13 ♕h5 g6 permitted Black to win a pawn and, after some excitement, the game.

5 c4 is more interesting; White aims to avoid the exchange of his active knight. However, in Boudre–Apicella, Val Maubuée 1989, White failed to gain an advantage after 5 ... ♗c6 6 ♘c3 ♘f6 7 ♗e3 ♗b4 8 ♕b3 ♕e7 9 ♘f3!? ♗xf3 10 gf c5! with unclear play.

5 ... ♗c6
6 ♗d3

Another ex-World-Champion, Smyslov, likes to play 6 ♕d3!?.

In Smyslov–Suba, Berlin 1979, he obtained a promising position after 6 ... ♘d7 7 ♗e2 ♗e7 8 c4!? ♗xe4 9 ♕xe4 ♗b4+ 10 ♔f1! (of course! After an exchange of bishops, Black would have nothing to fear) 10 ... c6 11 ♕g4 ♗f8 12 g3, and the white king will feel fine on g2. Eleven years later, a less well-known opponent, Adla, refrained from the tempting check and obtained quite good equalising chances: 9 ... c6 10 0–0 ♘gf6 11 ♕c2 0–0 12 ♗d2 ♖e8, with a very solid position.

Sharp play results from 6 ♘eg5!? ♗e7! 7 ♗d3 ♘d7 (the white knight must be kept out of e5. In Hector–Comas, San Sebastian 1991, White gained a dangerous initiative after 7 ... ♘f6?! 8 ♘e5 0–0 9 c3 h6 10 h4! ♘bd7 11 ♕c2 ♕e8 12 ♗f4) 8 ♕e2 h6 9 ♘e4 (White has lost two tempi, of course, but having the pawn on h6 does not embellish Black's position) 9 ... ♘gf6 10 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 11 c3 0–0!? 12 ♗f4 ♖e8, Westerinen–Nogueiras, Yurmala 1978. Nogueiras won this game, but went through quite an ordeal in the process.

6 ... ♗xe4

A crucial moment! Black is afraid that the knight may go away, and decides to solve the problem of the 'French bishop' immediately and for good. (There is a widespread myth in the chess world that the 'French bishop' is a bad piece.) However, in the last

few years Black has not hastened with this exchange, but has developed his pieces first. A frequent alternative to the text move, then, is 6 ... ♘d7 (incidentally 6 ... ♘f6 is playable too, only after 7 ♘g3 Black shouldn't be tempted into exchanges with 7 ... ♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 ♕xd4? 9 ♕xb7 ♕b4+ 10 ♕xb4 ♗xb4+ 11 c3 ♗d6 12 ♘e4 ♘bd7 13 ♘xd6+ cd, as in Hübner–Steinbacher, Bundesliga 1989. Black has saved his rook, but the resulting endgame offers him no bright prospects) 7 0–0 (7 c4 is not bad either. Then Black really should get rid of his bishop at once with 7 ... ♗xe4 [*if the knight takes up the position prepared for it on c3, the black bishop will have the threat of d4–d5 hanging over it. So it will have to be exchanged anyway, for the other knight — and it seems to me, though I may possibly be mistaken, that a knight on c3 is more dangerous to Black than one on f3. Thus, 7 ... ♘gf6 8 ♘c3 ♗e7 9 0–0 ♗xf3 10 ♕xf3 c6 11 ♖e1 0–0 12 c5!? ♖e8 13 ♗f4 g6 14 ♖e2 ♗f8 15 ♗g5! ♗g7 16 ♖d1 ♕c7 17 ♗c4± Psakhis–Chernin, Baku 1978; at move 12, White also has 12 ♗f4 ♖e8 13 ♖ad1 ♘b6 14 b3 a5 15 a4, and it is hard for Black to create any real counterplay; Kudrin–Naumkin, Kusadasi Open 1990*] 8 ♗xe4 c6 9 0–0 ♘gf6 10 ♗c2 ♗d6 11 ♖e1 0–0 12 ♕d3 ♕c7 13 ♗g5± Psakhis–Skembris, Belgrade GMA 1988. There is also some-

thing to be said for 7 ♕e2, preserving the option of castling queenside. Play may develop as follows: 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗d2 ♘gf6 9 0–0–0 [*in Sherzer–Hodgson, Philadelphia Open 1990, White gained a slight but durable advantage with 9 ♘g3!? 0–0 10 ♘e5 ♘xe5 11 de ♘d7 12 0–0–0 ♘c5 13 ♗f4 ♕e8 14 ♘h5 f5!? 15 ef ♗xf6 16 ♘xf6 ♖xf6 17 ♗e5±*] 9 ... 0–0 10 ♘eg5 ♗xf3 11 ♘xf3 c5 12 c3 a6 13 ♔b1 ♕c7, Timoshchenko–Lputian, Podolsk 1990. All this very much remains one of a Sicilian; and as in most Sicilians, especially when the players castle on opposite wings, the chances are difficult to evaluate) 7 ... ♘gf6 8 ♘g3 (*ECO* gives 8 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 9 ♗e2! ♗d6 10 c4 ♕f5 11 ♖e1 0–0 12 ♘g5!± Timman–Bukić, Bugojno 1978. A probable improvement for Black is 10 ... ♗xf3!? 11 ♗xf3 c6, and White's gains are not all that great. Headstrong characters play 8 ♘eg5!?, for example 8 ... ♗d6 9 ♖e1 [*or 9 ♕e2 ♗xf3!? 10 ♘xf3 0–0 11 c4 c6 12 b3 ♕a5 13 ♖e1 ♖ad8= Large–Hodgson, London Open 1989*] 9 ... h6 10 ♘h3 ♗xf3 11 ♕xf3 c6 12 ♘f4 0–0 13 ♘h5, and White's kingside pressure is fairly acute; Hector–La. Karlsson, Haninge 1990) 8 ... ♗e7 9 ♖e1 (there is no danger to Black in 9 b3 0–0 10 c4 ♖e8 11 ♗b2 b6 12 ♕e2 ♗xf3! 13 ♕xf3 c5= Kapengut–Holmov, USSR 1978) 9 ... 0–0 (nor is there anything wrong with implementing Black's general

defensive plan immediately, with
9 ... ♗xf3 10 ♕xf3 c6 11 c4 0–0
12 ♗d2 ♖e8 13 ♗c3 ♗f8 14 b4
g6 15 a4 ♗g7; Nunn–Lobron,
Novi Sad Ol 1990) 10 ♕e2 ♖e8
(Black may also play the more
aggressive 10 ... ♗xf3 11 ♕xf3
c5, since in comparison with the
line just given, he has castled as
an 'extra move'. There can follow
12 dc ♘xc5 13 ♗e2 a5 14 c3 ♕b6,
with a good game; Tseshkovsky–
Anastasian, Moscow GMA 1989)
11 ♗d2 ♗xf3 (at last!) 12 ♕xf3
c5 13 ♕xb7 (if 13 ♗c3, Suba
recommends 13 ... ♘d5 as the
simplest equalising line) 13 ... cd
14 b4 ♖b8 15 ♕xa7 ♗xb4 16
♗xb4 ♖xb4, with approximate
equality; Hellers–Hodgson, Reyk-
javik 1990.

	7	♗xe4	c6
	8	0–0	

Stronger than 8 c3 ♘f6 9 ♗c2
g6 10 0–0 ♗g7 11 ♗f4 ♘bd7 12
♕d2 (or 12 ♕e2 0–0 13 ♖ad1 ♕b6
14 ♗b1 ♖fe8 15 ♖fe1 a5= T.
Horvath–L. Hansen, Copenhagen
Open 1989) 12 ... ♘b6 13 ♘e5
0–0 14 ♖ad1 ♘fd7 15 ♘g4 ♕e7
16 ♕d3 ♘d5, and again Black
has no problems; Zs. Polgar–L.
Hansen, Åbenrå Active 1989.

	8	...	♘f6
	9	♗d3	♘bd7
	10	c4	♗d6 *(49)*

We may draw some provisional
conclusions: White, as usual, con-
trols more space, but Black — as
usual — has managed to construct
sturdy, almost invulnerable forti-

fications. Of course, Black's possi-
bilities are limited, and for the
time being he does best to adopt
waiting tactics, diligently prepar-
ing to free himself with ... c6–
c5 or ... e6–e5 if the situation
permits.
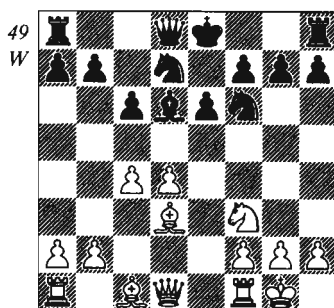
	11	b3	0–0
	12	♗b2	♕c7
	13	♕c2	♖fe8

Perhaps Black should have
played 13 ... c5 now, but he wants
to put his bishop on g7 first.

	14	♖fe1	♗f8
	15	♖ad1	g6
	16	♗f1!	

A fine move! The bishop is tired
of facing against the enemy pawn
chains; on g2 it will support the
coming offensive on the queenside.

	16	...	♗g7
	17	g3	♖ad8
	18	♗g2	♘h5

Black's possibilities have been
abruptly curtailed by the transfer
of the bishop to g2, and not finding
a good plan (*is* there one?), he
simply shifts his pieces back and
forth, hoping for a mistake by his
opponent.

19	♖e2	♖c8
20	h4	♖cd8
21	♖de1	♘hf6
22	♕c1!	

Once the queen comes to a1, Black can forget about executing any freeing manoeuvres, while the threat of a breakthrough with d4–d5! becomes imminent.

22	...	h5
23	♗h3	♘f8
24	♕a1	♘g4
25	♗c3	♘h6
26	♕b2	

Move by move, Spassky acquires more and more space for his pieces. Black is tired of simply awaiting his fate, and now tries to bring about at least some changes in the position. To his misfortune, the changes prove of benefit to White.

26	...	♘f5?!
27	♗xf5	gf
28	d5! *(50)*	

50
B
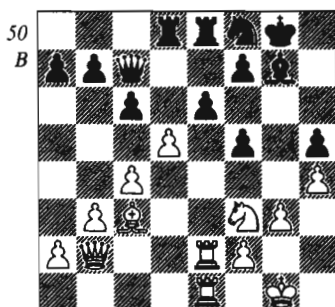
A purely positional sacrifice of a pawn, for which White obtains a queenside majority and an excellent post for his knight on d4 —

not forgetting the total passivity of his opponent's pieces.

28	...	♗xc3
29	♕xc3	cd
30	♘d4!	♕d7
31	c5	♘h7
32	b4	a6
33	a4!	

Tactics serving strategic ends. Black would be ill-advised to take the pawn: 33 ... ♕xa4 34 c6! bc 35 ♘xf5, settling matters quickly.

33	...	♖c8
34	b5	ab
35	ab	♖f8
36	c6	bc
37	bc	♕d8
38	♖c1	♘f6

White was threatening to decide the game by the further advance of his passed pawn. The knight hurries to the aid of its comrades-in-arms, but forgets its monarch!

39	c7	♕d7
40	♕e3!	♘e4
41	f3	e5
42	fe	f4
43	gf	ed
44	♖g2+	
	1–0	

A brilliant achievement by Spassky.

Rogers–Vaganian
Manila IZ 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 de 4 ♘xe4

| 4 | ... | ♘d7 |

This perhaps looks more logical than 4 ... ♗d7. Black prepares to exchange his opponent's active

knight on e4 by the most natural means, in keeping with Lasker's precept that knights should be developed before bishops.

5 ♘f3

Botvinnik's move 5 g3, which he used against Guimard at Groningen 1946, is not very ambitious but by no means bad. Black failed to equalise after 5 ... ♘gf6 (an example from more recent practice is 5 ... ♗e7 6 ♗g2 ♘gf6 7 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 8 ♘f3 0–0 9 0–0 e5 10 ♗e3 ed 11 ♗xd4± Motwani–Hempson, British Ch, Blackpool 1988) 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7 ♗g2 c5 8 ♘e2 ♕b6 9 0–0 ♗d7 10 c4 cd 11 ♘xd4, with very pleasant prospects for White.

5 ... ♘gf6

White also needs to play accurately to obtain an advantage against 5 ... ♗e7. About 90% of the time he opts for 6 ♗d3, even though there are some quite good alternatives. For example, in a game Short–Seirawan, White again successfully adopted the plan of fianchettoing his king's bishop: 6 g3!? ♘gf6 7 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 8 ♗g2 0–0 9 0–0 e5 10 ♗e3 c6 11 a4±. And in Sax–Ree, Amsterdam 1984, White avoided the knight exchange and quickly seized the initiative with 6 c4!? ♘gf6 7 ♘c3! 0–0 8 ♗d3 c5 9 0–0 cd (Black is forced to exchange without delay, since 9 ... b6?! 10 d5! is dangerous) 10 ♘xd4 ♘e5?! (10 ... ♕c7! was better: 11 ♗g5 ♘c5 12 ♗c2 ♖d8, with complex

play) 11 ♗e2 ♗d7 12 ♗f4 ♘g6 13 ♗g3 ♗c5 14 ♗f3, and White's pieces are very active.

After 5 ... ♗e7 6 ♗d3, play may continue: 6 ... ♘gf6 7 ♘xf6+ (7 c3 is too slow: 7 ... ♘xe4 8 ♗xe4 c5 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗e3 ♘f6 11 ♗c2 b6 12 ♕e2 ♗b7 13 dc bc= Belyavsky–Seirawan, Reykjavik World Cup 1991. Black's position is very solid and also quite promising) 7 ... ♗xf6 (capturing with the knight transposes into the variation 5 ♘f3 ♘gf6 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6, which will be examined later) 8 0–0 (8 ♗e3 holds no danger for Black at all: 8 ... c5 9 0–0 cd 10 ♗xd4 0–0 11 ♕e2 ♗xd4 10 ♘xd4 e5= Emms–Hodgson, British Ch, Eastbourne 1990. 8 ♕e2 is considerably sharper. Then the premature 8 ... c5 favours White, as was shown by the game A. Ivanov–Seirawan, Reykjavik Open 1990: 9 d5! ♘b6 10 de ♗xe6 11 h4 h6 12 a4! [*White conducts the attack with great vigour!*] 12 ... ♕e7 13 a5 ♘d5 14 a6 b6 15 0–0±. A stronger reply is 8 ... ♕e7!?, for example 9 g4!? h6 10 ♗d2 c5 11 0–0–0 cd 12 h4 g6 13 g5 hg 14 hg ♖xh1 15 ♖xh1 ♗g7, Adams–Hodgson, London 1990. White has good compensation for the pawn, but no concrete advantage) 8 ... 0–0 9 c3 c5 10 ♕c2! (10 ♗e3?! is weak: 10 ... cd 11 ♘xd4 g6 12 ♕e2 ♗g7 13 ♖ad1 a6 14 ♖d2 ♕c7 15 ♖fd1 ♘f6, and Black is close to taking the initiative; Brynell–Hodgson,

London 1990) 10 ... g6 11 ♗f4 cd 12 cd! ♘b6 13 ♗e4 (in the first game with this line, Liliental–Bondarevsky, USSR Ch 1940, White played 13 ♗c7!, which may be even stronger. After 13 ... ♕e7 14 ♗e4 ♘d5 15 ♗xd5 ed 16 ♗e5± Black was faced with a dreary struggle for the draw. But then, 13 ♗e4 is not bad either) 13 ... ♘d5 14 ♗e5 ♗e7 15 ♕d2 f6 16 ♗g3. White's bishops are sweeping the entire board, and his advantage is obvious; Speelman–Hodgson, New York 1990.

6 ♘xf6+

After 6 ♗d3 ♘xe4 7 ♗xe4 ♘f6, White probably does best to transpose into the main lines with 8 ♗d3. In Anand–Speelman, Linares 1991, White unsuccessfully varied with 8 ♗g5 ♕d6! 9 ♗xf6 gf 10 0–0 f5 11 ♗d3 ♗g7 12 ♕e2 0–0 13 ♖ad1 c5, and Black's chances were no worse.

6 ... ♘xf6

7 ♗d3 *(51)*

I am firmly convinced that this is White's strongest move in this crucial position. To avoid it, devotees of the Rubinstein Variation often choose a different move-order: 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 de 5 ♘xe4 ♘bd7 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7 ♘f3. But in that case Black has to reckon with 4 e5, which is not to everyone's liking.

Nonetheless, some other possibilities are also interesting:

(a) **7 ♗e2** (frankly, I find such a passive move hard to understand, but it does sometimes occur in contemporary practice) 7 ... c5 8 0–0 ♕c7 9 c4 ♗d7 10 ♘e5 ♗d6 11 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 12 g3 cd 13 ♕xd4 ♗e5 14 ♕d2 ♘c5, and already Black has some initiative; Antunes–Korchnoi, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

(b) **7 ♘e5**, Capablanca's move, has rarely been seen in tournaments in the second half of the century! Black's simplest way to equalise is 7 ... ♘d7. The tempting 7 ... ♕d5 offers White a wealth of possibilities after 8 ♗e2!, but if you are seeking complex and unclear play, you may continue something like this: 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗d3 c5 9 dc ♕a5+ 10 ♗d2 ♕xc5 11 ♕e2 0–0 12 0–0–0 ♖d8, Gomez Baillo–van Reimsdijk, Buenos Aires 1990; a little precarious, but Black does have counterchances.

(c) **7 ♗c4** c5 (or 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♗g5 0–0 9 ♕e2 b6 10 0–0–0 ♗b7 11 ♔b1 a5 12 h4 a4 13 a3 ♘e4 14 ♗d3!± Spassky–Zakharov, Sochi 1966) 8 ♗g5 cd 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♕e2!? (10 ♘xd4 leads to a dead draw after 10 ... 0–0 11 ♖e1 ♘d5 12 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 13 ♕d3 ♗d7 14 ♖ad1 ♕c7 15 ♘b5 ♗xb5 16 ♗xb5 ♘f5= King–Motwani, London 1990) 10 ... h6 11 ♗f4 0–0 12 ♖ad1 ♗d7 13 ♖xd4 ♕b6, with very unclear play; Tal–Portisch, Bled 1965. Tal finished up by giving mate. He would!

(d) **7 ♗g5!?** (the most important alternative to 7 ♗d3) 7 ... h6!? (a fairly new move and a very useful

one, making the white bishop reveal its intentions. Admittedly Black can also maintain himself after the immediate 7 ... c5, for example: 8 ♗b5+ [*8 dc is weaker: 8 ... ♕a5+ 9 c3 ♕xc5 10 ♗d3 ♗d7! 11 0–0 ♗d6 12 ♕e2 ♗c6 13 ♗xf6 gf 14 ♘d4 0–0–0= van der Wiel–Korchnoi, Amsterdam OHRA 1990*] 8 ... ♗d7 9 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 10 ♕e2 [*White has no advantage after 10 ♗xf6 gf 11 ♕e2 cd 12 0–0–0 ♗c5 13 ♘xd4 0–0–0 14 ♘b3 ♕c6= Short–Korchnoi, Rotterdam 1990*] 10 ... ♗e7!? [*White has a strong attack after 10 ... cd 11 0–0–0 ♗c5 12 ♗e5! ♗e7 13 ♘xd4 Fischer–Sarapu, Sousse IZ 1967*] 11 0–0–0 0–0 12 ♔b1 [*or 12 dc ♕a4! 13 ♔b1 ♖fd8=*] 12 ... ♕c7! 13 dc ♕xc5 14 ♘e5 ♖fd8= Timman–Korchnoi, Lucerne 1989) 8 ♗h4 (8 ♗e3 is ineffective; in Gdanski–Akopian, Adelaide 1988, Black easily obtained a good position with 8 ... ♗e7 9 ♗d3 ♘d5 10 ♕d2 ♘xe3 11 fe c5 12 0–0 0–0 13 c3 ♗f6=. Black also has a comfortable game after 8 ♗d2 c5 9 ♗b5+ ♗d7 10 ♕e2 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5 12 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 13 ♘b3 ♗e7, Hellers–Speelman, Novi Sad Ol 1990) 8 ... ♗e7 (the experimental move 8 ... g6?! brought success to Speelman in his 1988 match against Short in London, but this had nothing to do with the opening. After 9 ♗c4 ♗g7 10 0–0 0–0 11 c3 b6 12 ♕e2 ♗b7 13 ♖ad1, White's space advantage guarantees him excel-

lent prospects) 9 ♗d3 (or 9 ♗c4 c5 10 dc ♕a5+ 11 c3 ♕xc5 12 ♕e2 0–0 13 0–0 b6 14 ♖ad1 ♗b7 15 ♘e5 ♖ad8= Ivanchuk–Speelman, Reykjavik 1990) 9 ... c5 10 dc (Black has nothing to fear from 10 ♕e2 ♕a5+ 11 c3 cd 12 ♘xd4 ♗d7 13 0–0 ♕h5! 14 ♕xh5 15 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 16 f4 g6= Short–Korchnoi, Manila IZ 1990) 10 ... ♕a5+ 11 ♘d2 ♕xc5 12 0–0 ♗d7 13 ♘e4 ♘xe4 14 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 15 ♗xe4 ♖ad8, and the king feels fine in the centre; Chandler–Barᴈyev, Hastings 1990/1.
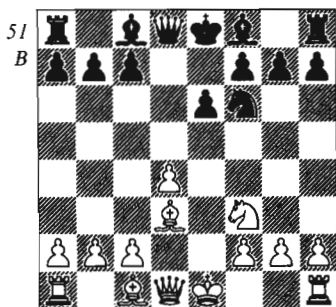
7 ... c5

Vaganian carries out the freeing advance in the centre at the first opportunity. Of course, Black cannot obtain counterplay without this move, but often (especially in the early days of the variation) he has attended to the development of his pieces first. He can prepare castling with 7 ... ♗e7, or immediately develop his queen's bishop with 7 ... b6. Thus:

(a) 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♕e2 (the plan of queenside castling is undoubtedly

the most dangerous to meet. White also has 8 0–0 0–0 9 ♗g5 [*or 9 ♘e5 c5 10 dc ♛c7! with a good game*] 9 ... h6 10 ♗xf6!? ♗xf6 11 c3 ♛d6 12 ♛e2 g6 13 ♖ad1 ♗d7, Tatai–Ljubisavljević, Forli Open 1988. White is a little more active, but Black, with the bishop pair, should not complain at the outcome of the opening either) 8 ... 0–0 (8 ... b6?! is weak: 9 ♗b5+ ♗d7 10 ♘e5 0–0 11 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 12 0–0 ♗d6 13 ♗c6± Kengis–Berger, US Open, Chicago 1989. In view of his weak light squares on the queenside, Black has a difficult and bleak defensive task ahead) 9 ♗g5 c5 10 0–0–0 (10 dc doesn't look bad: 10 ... ♛a5+ 11 . c3 ♛xc5 12 0–0–0!? g6 13 h4 b6 14 h5, with a fierce attack in Kupreichik–Katayev, Lvov 1984) 10 ... ♛a5 11 ♔b1 cd 12 h4 ♗d7! 13 ♘xd4 (a straightforward thrust with 13 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 14 ♛e4 doesn't work: 14 ... g6 15 h5 ♗c6! with an excellent game) 13 ... ♗c6! 14 ♘xc6 bc 15 ♗d2 ♛b6 16 c4! ♖fb8, and Black has good counter-chances; Nunn–Skembris, Paris 1983.

(b) 7 ... b6 8 ♛e2 (a 'cavalry raid' achieves little: 8 ♘e5 ♗b7 9 ♗b5+?! c6 10 ♛f3 [*10 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 11 ♘xc6 is wholly unconvincing: 11 ... ♛d5 12 ♘e5 ♛xg2∓*] 10 ... ♛d5! 11 ♛xd5 ♘xd5 12 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 13 ♗xc6 ♖c8 14 ♘xa7 ♖xc2 15 0–0 ♔d7 16 ♘b5 ♗e7, with excellent compensation for the pawn in

Ostojić–Bertholee, Dieren Open 1989. White also failed to gain an advantage with 8 0–0 ♗b7 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♗a6!? ♗xa6 11 ♛a4+ c6 12 ♛xa6 0–0 13 ♗g5 ♘d5 14 ♗xe7 ♛xe7= Odeyev–Akopian, Yurmala 1989) 8 ... ♗b7 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♖d1 (or 10 ♗g5 0–0 11 ♖ad1 h6 12 ♗f4 ♗d6 13 ♗e5 ♛e7 14 c3 ♖fd8 15 ♗xf6 ♛xf6 16 ♗e4 ♗xe4 17 ♛xe4 ♛e7, and Black has everything in order; Balashov–Yudasin, Podolsk 1990) 10 ... 0–0 11 c4 ♖e8 (a weak alternative is 11 ... ♛d6 12 ♘e5 ♖ae8 13 ♗c2! ♘d7 14 ♗a4 c6 15 ♗f4 ♛b4 16 ♗c2± Sax–Rewitz, Berlin 1985) 12 ♘e5 ♛c8 13 ♗g5 g6 14 ♛e3 ♘d7 15 ♗f4 c5, and Black has a somewhat passive but very solid position; Balashov–Katayev, USSR 1979.

8 dc

The 'main line' according to theory, but White has also achieved good practical results with 8 0–0, which has the advantage of not allowing Black's bishop to develop with tempo. For example: 8 ... cd 9 ♘xd4 ♗e7 (or 9 ... ♗c5 10 ♘b3 ♗d6 11 ♛f3 ♛c7 12 h3 ♗d7 13 ♘d4 ♗e5 14 ♘b5 ♛b8 15 ♖e1 a6 16 ♘c3± G. Kuzmin–Chernin, Irkutsk 1983. A much-travelled knight!) 10 ♗f4 (another good line is 10 ♖e1 0–0 11 c3 ♘d5 12 ♛h5!? g6 13 ♛f3 ♗f6 14 ♗h6 ♗g7 15 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 16 ♖ad1± Anand–Burgess, Oakham 1986) 10 ... 0–0 11 c3 ♘d5 12 ♗g3 ♗f6 13 ♘f3 ♗d7

14 ♕e2 ♕a5 15 a4 ♗c6 16 ♘d2!±
G. Kuzmin–Petrosian, USSR Ch
1977. White exerts highly unpleas-
ant pressure on his opponent's
position, while the black pieces
have no strongpoints in the centre.

8 ... ♗xc5
9 0–0

Perhaps 9 ♕e2 is more cunning,
deferring a decision as to where
the white king is going. There can
follow 9 ... ♕c7 (in Ulibin–Orlov,
Minsk 1990, the move 9 ... h6
merely gave White extra targets
on the kingside. Play went 10
♗d2 0–0 [*this would have been
better if played on move nine*] 11
0–0–0 ♕b6 12 g4 ♘xg4 13 ♖hg1
f5 14 h3, with a strong attack. In
fact, if Ulibin had not hurried with
12 g4 but had prepared it with
12 h3!, the problems facing his
opponent would have been even
greater) 10 ♗d2 ♗d7 11 0–0
♗d6 12 ♖fe1 0–0–0?! (too
optimistic. As the least of the evils,
Nunn suggests 12 ... ♗c6 13 ♘e5
♗xe5 14 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♖xe5,
with a slight endgame advantage)
13 ♖ad1 ♗c6 14 h3 h6 15 b4±
Nunn–Korchnoi, Amsterdam
OHRA 1990. It turns out that the
black king has no more peace on
the queenside than on the king-
side. Black also has difficulty
equalising with 9 ... 0–0, for
instance 10 ♗g5 ♕a5+ 11 c3
♗e7 12 ♘e5 h6 13 ♗h4 (better
than 13 ♗d2 ♖d8 14 0–0 ♘d7
15 ♘c4 ♕c7= Spiriev–Yanovsky,
Budapest 1991) 13 ... ♖d8 14

0–0 ♕c7 15 ♖ad1± Karpov–
Speelman, Reykjavik World Cup
1991.

9 ... 0–0
10 ♕e2

Holmov–Stein, USSR Ch 1964,
saw the less aggressive 10 c3 b6
11 ♗g5 ♗b7 12 ♕e2 ♗e7 13
♖ad1 ♕c7 14 ♖fe1 ♘g4! 15 ♗xe7
♕xe7 16 h3 ♘f6=.

If 10 ♗g5, Rogers suggests 10
... h6 11 ♗h4 b6 12 ♘e5 ♕d4!?,
and assesses the position as
unclear.

10 ... h6!? (52)

An interesting novelty. In a
game Balashov–Petrosian, USSR
1980, White took the initiative
after 10 ... b6 11 ♗g5 ♗b7 12
♖ad1 ♕c7 13 ♗xf6 gf 14 ♗e4
♖fd8 15 g3 ♖ac8±, although the
black position remains solid.
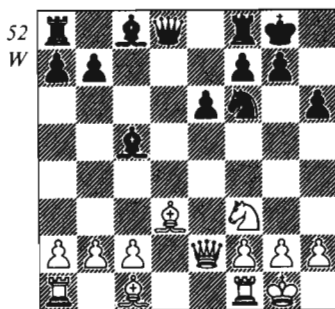
11 b3

As an improvement, Rogers
suggests 11 a3! (his exclamation
mark) 11 ... b6 12 b4 ♗e7 13
♗b2 ♗b7 14 c4. He assesses this
position as '±', but to me the
verdict doesn't seem entirely cor-

rect. After 14 … a5! 15 ♗c3 (or
15 ♖ad1 ab! 16 ♗h7+ ♘xh7 17
♖xd8 ♖fxd8 18 ab ♗xb4, and
Black has sufficient compensation
for the queen, especially since 19
♗xg7? fails to 19 ... ♗xf3 20 gf
♖d2 21 ♕e5 ♖a5! and the bishop
is lost) 15 … ab 16 ab ♖xa1 17
♖xa1 ♕c7, Black has quite a good
position.

11	…	b6
12	♗b2	♗b7
13	♖ad1	♕e7
14	c4	♖fd8

To sum up provisionally:
Vaganian has positioned his pieces
effectively, and experiences no
difficulties.

| 15 | ♘e5 | ♖d6 |
| 16 | ♗c2 | ♖ad8?! |

Black overestimates his
chances, or has simply missed his
opponent's reply. The simplest line
was 16 … ♖xd1 17 ♖xd1 ♖d8=.

| 17 | ♘d3! | ♗d4! |

Ingeniously played! After 17 …
♘e4 18 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 19 f3! White's
chances would clearly be better in
view of his two powerful bishops.

| 18 | ♗a3 | ♘e4 |
| 19 | ♗xd6 | ♖xd6 |

Black has come out the
exchange down, but his strong
dark-squared bishop will afford
some compensation.

| 20 | ♕h5! |

20 ♕g4? is weak; White ends up
in a highly unpleasant situation
after 21 … e5! intending 21 …
♖g6.

| 20 | … | ♕f6! |

If now 20 … e5, White could
shut out the black queen's bishop
with 21 ♘b4! followed by ♘d5.

21 a3?!

According to Rogers, 21 ♔h1
is stronger. Black cannot then play
21 … ♗xf2? 22 ♘xf2! ♘xf2+ 23
♔g1! ♖xd1 24 ♗xd1, and the
knight is lost. But I think that
after 21 … ♘c3 22 ♖de1 ♘xa2 23
♘e5 ♘b4 Black is not risking
much, with a pawn for the
exchange and an active position.

| 21 | … | e5 |
| 22 | ♔h1! | (53) |

The time for forced moves has
arrived. 22 b4?! g6! 23 ♕xh6 ♕f5
looks dangerous for White.
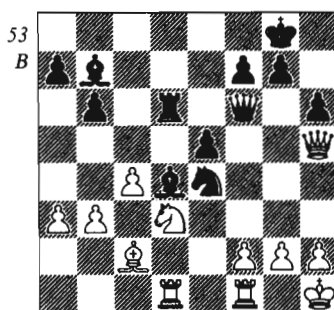
| 22 | … | g6! |
| 23 | ♕xh6 |

A draw could already be agreed
after 23 ♕h3 ♘g5 24 ♕g3 ♘e4 25
♕h3, but the players were feeling
aggressive.

23	…	♕f5
24	f3	g5
25	fe

Aggressiveness has given way to
discretion! Indeed, Black's threats
appear formidable after 25 ♕h3

♕xh3 26 gh ♘c3, and it is hard to find a defence against 27 ... e4.

25	...	♕xf1+
26	♖xf1	♖xh6
27	♘b4	♗c5

Don't be deceived by White's extra pawn; Black's chances are not at all worse, thanks to those bishops.

28	♘d5!	♗xd5
29	ed	♗xa3
30	g3	

Cautiously played; after 30 ♖a1? ♖f6! Black would seize the initiative, but now the game heads towards a draw with giant strides.

30 ... a5 31 ♔g2 ♔g7 32 h3 ♗c5 33 ♗f5 ♖f6 34 ♗e4 ♖h6 35 ♖f5 f6 36 ♖f1 ♔f7 37 ♗f5 ♔e7 38 ♔f3 ♔d6 39 ♔g4 b5 40 cb ♔xd5 41 ♖a1 ½-½

A very interesting game in spite of the peaceful outcome.

Hebden–Kaidanov
Hastings Challengers 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3

3	...	♘f6
4	♗g5	de
5	♘xe4	♗e7 *(54)*

The 5 ... ♗e7 variation has attained unprecedented popularity of late, making up for long years of oblivion. Conversely, the once fashionable 5 ... ♘bd7 has become a rarity in recent tournaments. But I think we should spend some time on the latter move too, since chess fashion is capricious — what was in vogue yesterday is completely forgotten today, and *vice versa*. Thus, 5 ... ♘bd7 6 ♘f3 (positions resulting from 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7 ♘f3 have been examined already. There is no serious danger to Black in 6 ♕f3 h6 7 ♗h4 ♗e7 8 0-0-0 ♘xe4 9 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 10 ♕xe4 ♘f6 11 ♕e5 0-0 12 ♘f3 b6, Sax–Bareyev, Hastings 1990/1; the numerous exchanges have enabled Black to equalise) 6 ... ♗e7 (another possibility is 6 ... h6 7 ♗xf6!? ♘xf6 8 ♗d3 ♗e7 9 0-0 ♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 0-0 11 c3 ♕d6 12 ♖e1 c5 13 ♕e2 cd 14 cd ♗f6 15 ♖ad1± Gligorić–Akopian, Erevan 1989) 7 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 (the most thematic. Black also has 7 ... ♘xf6 8 ♗d3 c5 9 dc [*or 9 0-0 cd 10 ♘xd4 0-0 11 c3 ♘d5 12 ♕h5!? g6 13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 14 ♕f3 ♘f6 15 ♖fe1, with a small plus; Portisch–Petrosian, Palma de Mallorca 1974*] 9 ... ♕a5+ 10 c3 ♕xc5 11 ♕e2 ♗d7 12 ♘e5 ♗c6 13 h4, and again White has the initiative; Spassky–Petrosian, 11th game, World Ch match 1966. Anyway, capturing with the knight rather takes us back to the previous game, Rogers–Vaganian) 8 h4 (this has been considered strongest for 30 years. Relying on the fact that an exchange of bishops on g5 would clearly be in his favour, White tries to induce a weakening of his opponent's kingside. There have also been attempts to fight for the initiative with 8 ♕d2 or 8 ♗xf6. Thus, 8 ♕d2 ♗xg5 [*a weaker line is 8 ...*

*c5 9 dc ♘xc5 10 ♗b5+ ♗d7 11
♗xf6 gf 12 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 13
♕e3 ♕d5 14 0–0 ♖d8 15 c4± De
Firmian–Rivas Pastor, New York
Open 1989]* 9 ♘xg5 ♘f6 10
0–0–0 0–0 *[10 ... ♗d7?! is pass-
ive: 11 ♘f3 ♕e7 12 ♘e5 0–0 13
♗d3! ♖fd8 14 g4 ♗e8 15 g5±
Inkiov–Lobron, Novi Sad Ol 1990]*
11 ♗d3 b6 12 h4 ♗b7 13 ♖h3
♕e7 14 ♕e2 ♖ad8 15 c4 ♕d6 16
♖e3 c5, and Black's position is
satisfactory; Valvo–Lein, New
York Open 1990. If 8 ♗xf6,
Black's best reply is 8 ... ♕xf6
*[after 8 ... ♘xf6 9 ♗d3 c5 10
♕d2 cd 11 ♕b4! ♘d5 12 ♕xd4
0–0 13 0–0–0 ♕c7 14 ♖he1, White
has a considerable space advan-
tage; Spassky–Unzicker, Bad Kiss-
ingen 1980]* 9 ♕d2 *[or 9 ♗d3 c5
10 c3 cd 11 ♘xd4 0–0 12 0–0 ♘e5
13 ♗c2 ♖d8= Stein–Lobron, Bun-
desliga 1989. Black also obtains
equal chances after 9 ♗c4 c5 10
♕e2 0–0 11 0–0–0 a6 12 dc ♘xc5
13 ♕e3 b6 14 ♖d6 ♖b8 15 ♘e5
♗b7!= Brunner–Lobron, Dort-
mund 1990]* 9 ... 0–0 10 0–0–0 e5
11 ♕c3 e4 12 ♘d2 ♕xf2 13 ♘xe4
♕f4+ 14 ♘d2 ♘f6 15 g3 ♕f2=
Tseshkovsky–Eingorn, Tashkent
1980) 8 ... c5 (it's no good comply-
ing with his opponent's plan by
playing 8 ... h6. After 9 ♗xf6
♕xf6 10 ♕d2 0–0 11 0–0–0 b6 12
♗b5! ♕e7 13 ♖h3 ♗b7 14 ♖g3,
the insertion of h2–h4 and ... h7–
h6 turned out clearly in White's
favour; Fischer–Bilek, Havana
1965) 9 ♕d2 (after 9 dc, Black

obtained a very comfortable posi-
tion in Sax–Korchnoi, Lucerne
1989: 9 ... ♕a5+ 10 c3 ♕xc5 11
♗e3 ♕c7 12 ♘g5 b6 13 ♗b5 a6
14 ♗e2 ♗b7 15 ♕c2 ♘c5! 16
♗xc5 ♕xc5∓) 9 ... 0–0 (again
Black should not hurry with 9 ...
h6, as Gligorić proved in a well-
known game against Balashov,
Skopje 1970: 10 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 11
0–0–0 0–0 12 ♗e2 e5 13 de ♘xe5
14 ♕xe5 15 f4! ♕e7 16 ♗f3, and
the exchanges benefited White,
who took control of the open files
in the centre) 10 0–0–0 cd 11 ♘xd4
♕b6 12 ♗c4 h6 13 ♗e3 ♘e5
14 ♗b3 ♘g4, with a complex
position which may be assessed
as roughly equal; Chandler–
Nogueiras, Moscow GMA 1990.
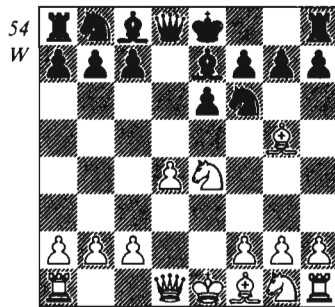
6   ♗xf6   ♗xf6
This is played just about as
frequently as 6 ... gf, which will
be considered in the next game.
7   ♘f3
White gains nothing from 7
♘xf6+ ♕xf6 8 c3 0–0 9 ♗d3 ♘c6!
10 ♕h5 g6 11 ♕f3 ♕g7!? 12 ♘e2
e5 13 d5 ♘e7, and Black has

solved all his problems; Mecking–
Petrosian, San Antonio 1972.

7 ... 0–0

7 ... ♗d7 has lost its sup-
porters; White obtains the better
game all too simply. For example,
8 ♕d2 ♗c6 9 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 (nor
does Black solve all his problems
with 9 ... gf 10 ♗e2 ♕d6 11 0–0
[*11 c4! is even stronger, according
to Dolmatov's analysis: 11 ... ♖g8
12 0–0 ♘d7 13 ♖fd1± with the
threat of 14 d5*] 11 ... ♘d7 12 c4
0–0–0 13 ♖fd1, with the better
game for White; Dolmatov–Lein,
Moscow GMA 1989) 10 ♘e5 0–0
11 0–0–0 ♖d8 (Black has many
weaknesses after 11 ... ♘d7? 12
♘xc6 bc 13 h4! ♖ab8 14 ♖h3
c5 15 ♕g5! with a large plus;
Spassky–Petrosian, 23rd game,
World Ch match 1966) 12 ♕e3
♗e8 13 g3 ♘d7 14 ♗g2 c6 15
f4, with strong pressure; Spassky–
Donner, Leiden 1970.

Occasionally Black plays 7 ...
♘d7. White does best to reply with
either 8 ♕d2 ♗e7 9 0–0–0 ♘f6
10 ♗d3 0–0 11 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 12
♕f4 with the initiative, Fischer–
Benko, Curaçao C 1962, or 8 ♗c4
♗e7 9 ♕e2 c6 10 0–0–0 ♕c7 11
♔b1 b6 12 h4! and it is hard to
find anything to oppose against
White's mounting attack; Short–
Nikolaiczuk, Dortmund 1986.

8 ♕d2

White also has the following
lines at his disposal:

(a) **8 ♘xf6+** (somewhat prema-
ture) 8 ... ♕xf6 9 ♕d2 (the game

is level after 9 ♕e2 c5 10 ♕e5
♕xe5 11 de ♗d7 12 0–0–0 ♗c6=
Vitolins–Lputian, Kiev 1984, or 9
♗d3 c5 10 c3 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♗d7!
12 ♕f3 ♕xf3 13 ♘xf3 ♗c6=
Zhuravlev–Savchenko, Leningrad
1989) 9 ... b6 10 0–0–0 ♗b7 11
♘e5 c5 12 ♘g4?! (in Bareyev's
view, White would retain chances
of a minimal plus after 12 ♕e3! cd
13 ♕xd4) 12 ... ♕h4! 13 ♗e2 cd
14 ♕xd4 ♘c6 15 ♕d7 ♖ab8=
Dvoiris–Bareyev, Lvov Z 1990.

(b) **8 ♕d3** (Speelman's move) 8
... ♘d7 (after 8 ... ♘c6 9 0–0–0
♗e7 10 a3 ♕d5 11 ♘c3 ♕a5
12 ♕e3, White retains pressure;
Speelman–Nogueiras, Lucerne
1989) 9 0–0–0 b6 10 h4 ♗b7 11
♘fg5 ♗xg5! 12 ♘xg5 (it is no
good sacrificing a pawn with 12
hg?! ♗xe4 [*bishops are better than
knights in the sense that you can
always exchange them!*] 13 ♕xe4
♕xg5+ 14 ♔b1 ♘f6 15 ♕c6 ♕f4∓
King–Chernin, Moscow GMA
1990) 12 ... ♘f6 13 ♗e2 ♕d6 14
♗f3 ♗xf3 15 ♕xf3 ♕d5 16 ♕xd5
ed, with equality; van der Wiel–
Vaganian, Lucerne 1989.

(c) **8 ♗c4** ♘c6!? (more interest-
ing than 8 ... ♘d7 9 ♕e2 ♘b6 10
♗b3 ♗d7 11 0–0 ♗c6 12 ♘xf6+
gf 13 ♖ad1, with advantage to
White; Spassky–Czerniak, Göte-
borg 1972) 9 c3 e5 10 d5 ♘b8 11
0–0 ♗g4 12 h3 ♗xf3 13 ♕xf3
♗e7= Ivanchuk–Ehlvest, Reggio
Emilia 1989/90.

(d) **8 c3** ♘d7 (a playable alterna-
tive, though not without its dan-

gers, is 8 ... b6 9 ♗d3 ♗b7 10 ♕c2 ♘d7 11 0-0-0 ♕e7 [*how careful Black has to be is demonstrated by the game Fedorowicz–Vaganian, Reykjavik 1990, in which Vaganian very quickly came under a devastating attack: 11 ... g6? 12 h4 ♗g7 13 h5 ♘f6 14 hg hg 15 ♘eg5 ♗xf3 16 ♘xf3 ♕d6 17 ♖h4! and the game was over in a few moves*] 12 h4 ♖fd8 13 ♘eg5 g6 14 ♗e4?! ♗xe4 15 ♘xe4 ♗g7, and the chances gradually levelled out in Z. Nikolić–Kovacević, Yugoslav Ch 1989) 9 ♕c2 e5 10 0-0-0 (Black has quite a good position after either 10 d5 g6 11 0-0-0 ♗g7 12 ♗c4 ♘b6 13 ♗b3 a5 14 a4 ♗f5= Hellers–Vaganian, Reykjavik Open 1990, or 10 ♗d3 ed 11 cd g6 12 h4!? ♗g7 13 h5 ♘f6 14 hg hg 15 0-0-0 ♘xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗g4= Spassky–Petrosian, 21st game, World Ch match 1966) 10 ... ed 11 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♕e7 13 h4! (stronger than 13 ♘g5 ♘c5 14 ♗c4 a5= Djurhuus–Kovacević, Novi Sad 1990) 13 ... ♘e5 (after 13 ... h6 14 ♘g5! hg 15 hg ♕xg5+ 16 f4 ♕g6 17 ♗d3 f5 18 ♗c4+ ♔f7 19 ♖d3! White has a powerful attack — analysis by Gurevich) 14 ♘g5 g6 15 ♕e2 ♕f6 16 ♘e4 ♕f4+ 17 ♘d2 ♕f6 18 h5± Short–M. Gurevich, Rotterdam 1990.

8 ... b6

After 8 ... ♘d7, White's chances are a little better: 9 0-0-0 b6 10 ♗c4 ♗b7 11 ♖he1 ♗d5 12 ♗d3 c5 13 c4 ♗b7 14 dc bc 15 ♘xf6+

♕xf6, Hübner–Short, Novi Sad Ol 1990; and now with 16 ♗e4 ♗xe4 17 ♖xe4 White could have acquired an advantage.

8 ... ♗e7, as played in Kosten–Bareyev, Hastings 1990/1, deserves attention. Black avoids the unpleasant exchange on f6 which is possible after 8 ... b6. The game continued 9 0-0-0 b6 10 ♗d3 ♗b7 11 h4 ♘d7, and the result was merely a transposition; we shall see this position again in Hebden–Kaidanov.

9 0-0-0 *(55)*

In addition to this natural move, an idea of Chandler's is very interesting: 9 ♘xf6+!?. As we have repeatedly seen, a second exchange on f6 usually alleviates Black's problems, but here it is quite a different matter! 9 ... ♕xf6 10 ♗d3 (this is the whole point. The unpleasant 11 ♘g5 is threatened, and if Black tries to prevent it with 10 ... h6, White has a positional bind after 11 ♗e4) 10 ... ♗b7 11 ♘g5 h6!? (it is hazardous to venture 11 ... g6 12 0-0-0 ♘c6 [*not 12 ... ♕xd4 13 ♘xh7!*] 13 h4! ♘xd4 14 h5 ♗xg2!? 15 ♘xh7! with a strong attack; Sax–M. Gurevich, Manila IZ 1990) 12 ♘h7 ♕xd4 13 ♘xf8 ♔xf8 (I believe 13 ... ♕xb2!? is stronger; after 14 ♗h7+! ♔h8 15 0-0 ♘a6 16 ♘xe6 ♔xh7 Black has every reason to count on drawing) 14 c3 ♕h4!? 15 g3! (in Chandler–Psakhis, Moscow GMA 1990, White played the less convincing

15 0–0–0 ♗xg2 16 ♖hg1 ♗c6 17 f4 ♘d7, and Black's position is not so bad) 15 ... ♕f6 16 ♖f1 ♘d7 17 f4 ♘c5 18 0–0–0, and Black faces a hard struggle for the draw; Chandler–Prasad, Novi Sad Ol 1990.
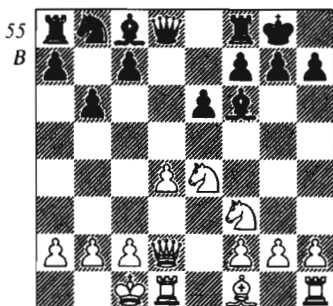
9 ... ♗b7
10 ♗d3

Again the most natural move. It is indeed hard to imagine an attack on the king without the bishop on d3, yet other attempts have also been made. For example, 10 ♕f4 ♗e7 (quite a good reply to 10 ... ♘d7 is 11 ♗c4!? ♗xe4 *[11 ... ♗e7 12 d5!?±; 11 ... ♗d5!?]* 12 ♕xe4 ♗e7 13 ♘e5 ♘f6 14 ♕f3± Kindermann–Chernin, Dortmund 1990) 11 ♘e5!? (11 ♗c4 ♗d5!?) 11 ... ♘c6 (after 11 ... ♘d7 12 h4 ♘f6 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♖h3 a5 15 ♗d3 c5 16 ♖g3 ♔h8 17 dc ♕b8 18 ♖g5! White has good attacking chances; Mohr–Kovacević, Vidmar Memorial 1989) 12 ♗b5 ♘b4 13 ♔b1 c6 14 ♗e2 ♕c7, and Black has

everything in order; Koch–Bareyev, Marseille 1990.

10 ... ♘d7
11 h4

White's position looks very menacing. His pieces are all 'eyeing' the enemy king, and with his last move he has taken control of the crucial square g5. On the other hand against 11 ♕f4, Black has achieved good results. There can follow 11 ... ♗e7 12 h4 (or 12 ♔b1 ♘f6 13 c4 ♕b8!? 14 d5 c5! 15 d6 ♗xe4 16 ♗xe4 ♗xd6 17 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 18 ♘g5+, and in this equal position a draw was agreed in A. Sokolov–Vaganian, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989. It is not clear who benefits from the insertion of 12 ♖he1 a5 before 13 h4, as occurred in Timman–Ehlvest, Belfort World Cup 1988. You get the impression that the rook could be just as useful on h1; at any rate, Ehlvest equalised after 13 ... ♘f6 14 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 15 ♗e4 ♗d5! 16 ♔b1 ♖c8 17 h5 h6) 12 ... ♘f6 13 ♘eg5 (after 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♘g5 h6 15 ♘h7 ♖e8 16 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 17 ♕xf6 gf 18 f3 f5, an equal ending arises; van der Wiel–Dokhoian, Wijk aan Zee 1990) 13 ... ♗xf3! (in Sax–Ehlvest, Rotterdam 1989, Black won beautifully with 13 ... ♕d6 14 ♘e5 ♖ad8 15 ♖h3 c5 16 ♖g3? ♕xd4! 17 ♗xh7+ ♘xh7 18 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 19 ♕e3 ♘xg5 20 hg ♖e4 with more than enough compensation for the queen, but if White had played 16 dc! *[instead of 16 ♖g3?]* 16 ...

♕xc5 17 ♘exf7!! ♖xf7 [*or 17 ...* ♖*d4 18* ♗*xh7+ ±±*] 18 ♗xh7+!, the result would have been the opposite) 14 ♘xf3 ♕d6 15 ♘e5 c5! with excellent counterplay in Minasian–Tukmakov, Lvov Z 1990.

| 11 | ... | ♗e7 |
| 12 | ♘fg5 | |

Black also faces no easy task after 12 ♖h3, though in a game Chandler–Dolmatov, Hastings 1989/90, he succeeded in repulsing the onslaught. After 12 ... ♘f6 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♘g5 h6 15 f4, Black opened the game in the centre with 15 ... c5! 16 ♕e2 cd 17 ♗h7+ ♔h8 18 ♗e4 ♗xe4 19 ♕xe4 g6, and the chances were level. Perhaps White's play can be improved.

| 12 | ... | h6 |
| 13 | ♖h3 | |

Hebden has a very active position, but Black's bastions are very sturdy. The continuation of Kosten–Bareyev, Hastings 1990/1, which we have mentioned before, was interesting. White played the prophylactic 13 ♔b1, and after 13 ... ♘f6 14 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 he supported the knight on g5, the pride of his position, with 15 f4. Astonishingly, in this complex situation Black proved to have a forced draw. Bareyev coolly played 15 ... ♕xd4! 16 ♗h7+ ♔h8 17 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 18 ♖xd4 hg 19 hg ♗xg2 20 ♖h2, and now the unexpected 20 ... g6!! 21 ♗xg6+ ♔g7 22 ♗d3 ♖h8! demonstrated

the futility of White's efforts; a draw was very soon agreed.

| 13 | ... | ♖c8!? |

An attempt to improve on a game Hebden–Machulsky, in which White seized the initiative after 13 ... ♘f6 14 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 15 ♘h7 ♖e8 16 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 17 g4 e5 18 ♗b5!

14	♔b1	c5
15	dc	bc
16	♕e2!	

16 ♘d6 ♗xd6 17 ♗h7+ ♔h8 18 ♕xd6 is tempting but bad; after 18 ... ♘e5! the weakness of the back rank makes itself felt.

| 16 | ... | ♕c7? *(56)* |

Black's wish to keep his queen closer to the rest of his pieces is understandable, and in any case White's combination was difficult to foresee. Yet the text move is the decisive error, whereas after 16 ... ♕b6 Black's position would be no worse.

56 W
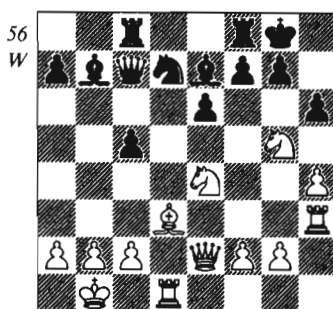
| 17 | ♘xe6! | fe |
| 18 | ♘g5! | |

The combination is elegant though not complicated. Black now loses with 18 ... hg 19 ♕xe6+ ♖f7 20 hg ♗xg5 21 ♗h7+ ♘f8 22 ♗g6 ♖f6 23 ♖h8+, or 18 ... ♕e5 19 ♖e3 ♕f4 20 ♘xe6 ♕xf2 21 ♘xf8±±. There only remains ...

18	...	♔h8
19	♘xe6	♕b6
20	♘xf8	♗xf8
21	♗f5	

After being momentarily restored, the material balance is again disrupted, this time in White's favour.

21	...	♘f6
22	♗xc8	♗xc8
23	♖e3	♗d7
24	♕c4	

For the moment, the strange distribution of material (two rooks and two pawns against three minor pieces) prevents the game from being treated as a mere matter of technique, but the bad position of the black king should ease Hebden's task.

24	...	♗d6
25	f3	h5!?
26	♖b3	♕c6
27	♖e3	♕b6
28	b3?	

Now the game will drag on a long time, whereas with the elegant 28 ♕f7 ♗f5 29 ♖e8+ ♔h7 30 ♖g8! (Kaidanov) it would have had a fitting conclusion.

28	...	♗f5
29	g4?!	

He didn't have to give up this pawn!

29	...	hg
30	fg	♗xg4
31	♖f1	♕b4
32	♕d3	♕d4

32 ... ♗f5 would have given Black better chances of prolonging the resistance.

33	♕xd4	cd
34	♖d3	♗c5
35	♖f4	♔h7
36	♖dxd4!	

Simplest! A rook and two pawns, especially with passed pawns on the board, are a good deal stronger than a bishop and knight in the endgame.

36	...	♗xd4
37	♖xd4	a6
38	♖a4	♗c8
39	♖a5	♘e4
40	♔c1	♘g3
41	♖c5	♗d7
42	♖c7	♗e8
43	♖a7	♘f5
44	♖xa6	♘xh4
45	♔d2	g5
46	a4	g4
47	♖f6	g3

Thanks to Kaidanov's ingenuity the game remains interesting right to the end, but with a series of precise moves White conducts it to its logical conclusion.

48 ♔e2! ♗h5+ 49 ♔f1 ♗d1 50 ♖f4 ♘g6 51 ♖c4 ♗f3 52 ♖c3 g2+ 53 ♔g1 ♗a8 54 b4 ♘f4 55 ♖e3 ♘d5 56 ♖h3+ ♔g7 57 b5 ♘f4 58 ♖e3 ♔f6 59 a5 ♗d5 60 a6 ♗c4 61 a7 1–0

van der Wiel–M. Gurevich
Wijk aan Zee 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 de 5 ♘xe4 ♗e7 6 ♗xf6

6 ...   gf!? *(57)*
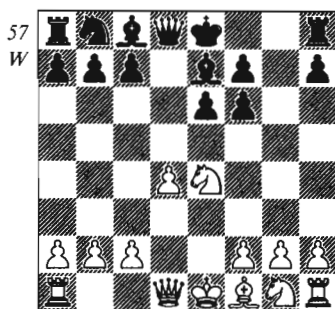
A double-edged continuation! After the solid 6 ... ♗xf6 Black has to occupy himself with defence at least for a while, and this does not suit everybody. 6 ... gf reveals a lot — about your combative mood, your readiness for risks, and also your theoretical preparedness, for without serious preparation you may not even last to move 20.

7   ♘f3

The most natural continuation of course, but about ten others, very unequal in value, have also been employed in recent practice.

(a) **7 g4?!** ♗d7! (stronger than 7 ... b6 8 ♗g2 c6 9 ♘f3, with a good game) 8 ♘g3 (or 8 ♗g2 ♗c6, threatening 9 ... f5) 8 ... ♗c6 9 f3 (not a very pretty sight, is it?) 9 ... h5 10 gh! (White gets into a dangerous mess with 10 ♘xh5 f5 11 h3 ♗h4+! 12 ♔e2 ♖xh5 13 gh ♗b5+) 10 ... f5 11 ♕d2 ♗g5 12 ♕c3 f4, with a superb position for Black; Hector–Pytel, Nantes Open 1987.

(b) **7 ♗e2** (not the most active way to play with White!) 7 ... b6 8 ♗f3 c6 9 ♘e2 ♗b7 10 ♕d2 ♘d7 11 ♕f4 ♘f8 12 ♘4g3 ♘g6, and already White has to think about how to equalise; A. Ivanov–Nikolenko, Ashkhabad 1990.

(c) **7 c3** f5! 8 ♘g3 c5 9 ♗b5+ (9 ♘f3 ♕b6!? is also interesting) 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♗xd7+ (the game is equal after 10 ♕a4 ♗xb5 11 ♕xb5+ ♕d7) 10 ... ♕xd7! 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 dc ♕xd1 13 ♖xd1 ♗xc5 14 0–0 ♖d8= Ljubojević–Lautier, Manila IZ 1990.

(d) **7 c4** (a little premature) 7 ... f5 8 ♘c3 ♗f6 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 d5 ♘e7 11 ♕b3 c6! 12 0–0–0 cd 13 cd ed∓ Tischbierek–Luther, East German Ch 1989.

(e) **7 ♕d2** b6 (or 7 ... f5 8 ♘c3 c6 9 g3 b6 10 ♗g2 ♗b7, with a complex position) 8 ♘c3 (as usual in this variation, it doesn't pay to check on b5; the move ... c7–c6 is part of Black's plan anyway. For example, in Renet–Andersson, Cannes 1989, Black had no problems whatever after 8 ♗b5+ c6 9 ♗c4 ♗b7 10 0–0–0 b5!? 11 ♗e2 ♘d7 12 ♘f3 ♕c7 13 ♖he1 0–0–0) 8 ... c6! 9 0–0–0 ♗b7 10 f4?! (optimistically played) 10 ... f5 11 ♘f3 ♘d7 12 ♗d3 ♕c7= Arbakov–Bareyev, Moscow 1989. Of course, placing the pawn on f4

makes it easier for Black to create kingside counterplay.

(f) **7 ♗c4** (not a bad move) 7 ... f5 (or 7 ... a6!? 8 a4 b6 9 ♘f3 ♗b7 10 ♕e2 c6 11 0–0 ♘d7 12 ♖ad1± Ehlvest–Korchnoi, Skelleftea World Cup 1989) 8 ♘g3 ♖g8 9 ♘f3 ♘d7 10 ♕e2 ♘b6 11 ♗b3 ♘d5, with an unclear position; Minasian–Savchenko, Belgorod 1989. An accurate assessment of 7 ♗c4 requires wider practical experience.

(g) **7 g3** (Fischer's favourite move) 7 ... f5! (passive play quickly lands Black in difficulties, for example 7 ... ♗d7 8 ♘f3! ♗c6 9 ♕e2 f5 [*better late than never; Smyslov–Boleslavsky, USSR Ch, Moscow 1941, went 9 ... ♕d5 10 ♘ed2 ♘a6 11 a3! 0–0–0 12 ♗g2 ♘b8 13 0–0, and White conducted a queenside attack with little resistance from his opponent*] 10 ♘ed2 ♗f6 11 c3 ♕e7 12 ♗g2 ♘d7 13 0–0 0–0 14 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 15 b4!± Fischer–Minev, Havana Ol 1966) 8 ♘c3 ♗f6 9 ♘f3 (nobody is perfect; Fischer–Petrosian, Buenos Aires 1971, went 9 ♘ge2?! ♘c6!, and White had to sacrifice a pawn with obscure consequences: 10 d5 ed 11 ♘xd5 ♗xb2 12 ♗g2!? 0–0 13 0–0 ♗h8∓) 9 ... c5 10 dc ♕a5 11 ♕d2 ♗d7 12 ♘d4! ♕xc5 13 0–0–0 ♗xd4 14 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 15 ♖xd4, with an insignificant advantage in the ending; Psakhis–King, Dortmund 1989.

7 ... b6

Gurevich is in the mood for a lengthy manoeuvring game. Black will place his bishop on b7, prepare queenside castling, and only afterwards look for possibilities of active play. Other moves that occur are 7 ... ♘d7 and (a particularly frequent choice of late) 7 ... f5:

(a) **7 ... ♘d7** is played rarely, despite good practical results with it. For example, 8 ♗d3 (in Tseshkovsky–Bronstein, Moscow 1981, White gained no advantage with *ECO*'s recommendation 8 ♗c4. After 8 ... c5!? 9 d5 ♘b6 10 ♗b5+ ♗d7 11 ♕e2 ♗xb5 12 ♕xb5+ ♕d7 13 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 14 de+ fe 15 0–0–0 ♔c7, an equal position arose. Things turned out worse for White in Kaplan–Bronstein, Hastings 1975/6: 8 ♕d2 c5 9 d5 [*9 dc!?*] 9 ... f5 10 de fe 11 ed+ ♕xd7 12 ♕c3?! 0–0 13 ♘d2 ♕f5 14 0–0–0 ♕xf2∓. It is fair to add that after 12 ♕xd7+ the game is level) 8 ... c5 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♕d2 f5 11 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 12 dc ♗f6!? 13 c3 ♗d7 occurred in a game Rogers–Short, Novi Sad Ol 1990; Black has good compensation for the pawn.

(b) **7 ... f5!?** has attained wide popularity in the last few years. There can follow: 8 ♘c3 (the usual move, with a view to a central break with d4–d5. But 8 ♘g3, keeping the knight nearer to the kingside, also has some point. For example, 8 ♘g3 c5 [*in a game against Zhu Dinglong in the Rome Open 1990, one of the chief special-*

ists in the Rubinstein Variation, Bareyev, didn't hurry with ... c7–c5 but prepared it with 8 ... ♘d7!?. In the sharp struggle he not only equalised but obtained the better game: 9 ♗c4 c5 10 ♕e2 ♘b6 11 ♗b5+ ♔f8! 12 dc ♘d5 13 0–0 ♕c7 14 ♖ad1 ♕xc5 15 ♖fe1 h5!? 16 ♘e5 ♗f6∓. Such a respected expert's treatment of the position is worth studying. A weaker line is 8 ... ♗f6 9 ♕d2 c5 10 0–0–0 cd 11 ♗b5+ ♘c6 12 ♘h5! h6 13 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 14 ♘xd4 0–0 15 ♗xc6 bc 16 ♘xc6± J. Polgar–Kuijf, Amsterdam OHRA Open 1990] 9 ♗b5+ [*Black has no problems after 9 ♕d2 cd 10 0–0–0 h5!? 11 h4 ♘c6 12 ♗b5 ♗d7 13 ♘xd4 ♗f6 Hoi–Sax, Lugano 1989] 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 11 d5!? [the only way to obtain a plus. White has nothing after either 11 0–0 cd 12 ♘xd4 ♗f6 13 c3 ♘c6, Tolnai–Galego, Novi Sad Ol 1990; or 11 dc ♕b5 12 ♕d4 ♖g8 13 0–0–0 ♕xc5 13 ♕d2 ♘c6= Gligorić–Dizdar, Yugoslav Ch 1990] 11 ... ed 12 ♕d3 [or 12 ♘e5 ♕e6 13 f4 ♘c6 14 0–0 ♘xe5 15 fe 0–0= van der Wiel–Kuijf, Dutch Ch 1990] 12 ... ♘c6 13 0–0–0 f4 14 ♘h5! ♕g4 [it looks as if White has miscalculated and will lose, but ...] 15 ♕xd5 ♖d8 16 ♕f5! ♕xf5 17 ♘g7+ ♔f8 18 ♘xf5, with an endgame advantage; Shabalov–Savchenko, Tbilisi 1989) 8 ... ♗f6* (preparing the freeing advance ... c7–c5. A passive alternative is 8 ... c6 9 ♗c4 ♘d7 10 ♕d2 ♘f8

11 0–0–0 ♗d7 12 ♖he1 ♘g6± Luther–Yanovsky, Sverdlovsk 1989. Black's position is exceedingly solid, but he can hardly even dream of active play) 9 ♕d2 (another method is 9 ♗c4. White is ready to parry 9 ... c5 with 10 d5, so Black changes his plan: 9 ... ♘c6!? 10 ♘e2 [*10 ♗b5 gives Black no problems: 10 ... ♕d6! 11 ♕d2 ♗d7 12 ♕h6 ♕e7 13 0–0–0 0–0–0= Rohde–Speelman, London 1984*] 10 ... 0–0 11 c3 b6 12 ♘f4 ♗b7 13 ♕e2 ♘e7!= Marjanović–Bareyev, Trnava 1988) 9 ... c5 (9 ... 0–0 invites an attack. In a game Gipslis–Chernin at St John 1988, Black succeeded in defending, but to do so he had to keep finding the only move: 10 g4!? fg 11 ♖g1 e5! [*not 11 ... ♔h8 12 ♗d3 ♖g8 13 ♕h6 ♖g7 14 ♖xg4±*] 12 ♗d3! ♗g7! 13 de ♔h8 14 0–0–0 f5! 15 ef ♕xf6, and in this wholly unclear position the players agreed a draw) 10 d5!? (sharp play similarly arises from 10 0–0–0 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♘c6 12 ♗b5 ♗d7 13 ♘xf5!? [*the endgame resulting from 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♘xc6 ♕xd2+ 15 ♖xd2 bc 16 ♖d6 ♖c8 offers advantage to neither side; Zhidkov–Luther, Leningrad 1989*] 13 ... ef 14 ♕d6! ♗e5! 15 ♖he1 ♕g5+ 16 ♔b1 0–0–0! 17 ♖xe5 ♗e6, and Black maintained the balance in Liberzon–Botvinnik, Moscow 1966. Attempts to gain advantage from the once fashionable 10 ♗b5+ have not been successful, for example 10 ... ♗d7 11 dc [*White is

only furthering Black's plans with
11 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 12 0–0–0 ♕a5
13 ♔b1 0–0–0 14 ♕h6?! ♖hg8! 15
g3 ♗g7 16 ♕f4 cd 17 ♘xd4 a6!∓,
as in a game Sax–Andersson] 11
... a6 12 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 13
0–0–0 [*or 13 ♘a4 ♕c7 14 0–0–0*
♘xc5 15 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 16 ♕d7+
♔f8 17 ♕d6+ ♕xd6 18 ♖xd6
♖g8= Wedberg–Agdestein, Han-
inge 1988. With such a powerful
bishop, Black has nothing to fear]
13 ... ♕c7 14 ♕d6 ♖c8! 15 ♘d5!
♕xc5 16 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 17 ♕xc5
♖xc5= Sax–Lautier, Clermont–
Ferrand 1989) 10 ... 0–0!? (Arna-
son won two good games against
10 ... ed. Arnason–Bjarnason,
Reykjavik 1989, went 11 ♕e3+!
♗e6 12 ♕xc5 ♘d7 13 ♗b5 ♖c8
14 ♕e3 0–0 [*Black also has prob-*
lems after 14 ... a6 15 ♗xd7+
♕xd7 16 ♘d4 ♖g8 17 0–0 ♗xd4!?
18 ♕xd4 ♖c4 19 ♕e5 d4 20
♖ad1± Arnason–Skembris, Thess-
saloniki Ol 1988] 15 0–0 a6 16
♗xd7 ♕xd7 17 ♘d4 ♕d6 18
♘ce2±) 11 0–0–0 e5 12 h4 ♗g7
13 ♔b1 ♘d7, and Black has quite
good possibilities for queenside
counterplay; Vujaković–Dizdar,
Yugoslavia 1989.

8   ♗c4 *(58)*
Once again, developing the
bishop on g2 promises no great
gains: 8 g3 ♗b7 9 ♕e2 ♕d5! 10
♘ed2 ♘c6 11 c3 0–0–0 12 ♗g2
♕h5 13 0–0 e5= Hellers–Anders-
son, Haninge 1989.
Strangely enough, in many
games White has checked on b5,

which may be judged an outright
loss of tempo, since ... c7–c6 fits
into Black's plan. I won't insist
that White stands worse after 8
♗b5+?!, but to a large extent he
is forfeiting his chances of advan-
tage. Play may continue: 8 ... c6
9 ♗d3 ♗b7 10 ♕e2 ♕c7 11
0–0–0 (alternatively 11 a4 a5!? 12
0–0 ♘d7 13 c4 0–0= Ivanović–
Dizdar, Yugoslav Ch 1990; or 11
0–0 ♗b7 12 ♖fe1 0–0–0 13 a4
a5!? [*in the present case this move*
is more risky of course, but Black
wouldn't like to allow the further
advance of White's pawn] 14 c3
♘f8 15 ♗a6 ♘g6 16 ♗xb7+
♔xb7 17 g3 f5, with complex play;
Shabalov–Luther, Sochi 1990) 11
... ♘d7 12 ♔b1 0–0–0 13 ♗a6
♖hg8 (Black can also play 13 ...
♘f8 14 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 15 c4 ♘g6
16 g3 f5 17 ♘c3 ♗f6= Sanz–
De la Villa, Salamanca 1990) 14
♗xb7+ ♔xb7 15 c4 ♔b8 16 d5
♘c5! 17 de fe 18 ♘xc5 ♗xc5, with
an excellent game; Hermann–
Meister, Bundesliga 1990.
8 ♗d3, retaining the option of
gaining space in the centre with
c2–c4, is a good deal more un-
pleasant for Black to meet. There
can follow: 8 ... ♗b7 9 ♕e2
♘d7 10 0–0!? (10 0–0–0 is also
interesting: 10 ... c6 11 ♔b1 ♕c7
12 c4 [*an amusing trap is 12 ♗a6??*
♗xa6 13 ♕xa6 b5!, and nothing
can save the queen from capture by
14 ... ♘b8!] 12 ... 0–0–0 13 d5!
♘e5!? [*better than 13 ... ♘f8?! 14*
♘d4! ed 15 cd ♖xd5 16 ♗c4 ♖d8

17 ♗xf7] 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 15 de fe 16 g3, with a minimal edge for White; Hamann–Minev, Denmark 1973) 10 ... c6 (he shouldn't be in a hurry to castle; White quickly works up pressure in the centre without worrying about counterplay on the g-file. For example, 10 ... 0–0?! 11 c4 c6 12 ♖ad1 ♕c7 13 ♗c2 ♔h8 14 ♘g3 *[already threatening 15 d5 or 15 ♘f5]* 14 ... ♖fe8 15 ♖fe1 ♘f8 16 ♕e3± Gligorić–Dizdar, Yugoslav Ch 1990) 11 ♖fe1 ♕c7 12 a4 a5 13 c3 ♘f8 14 ♕d2 ♘g6 15 b4 f5, with a complex game in which Black has his trumps; Anand–Dreyev, 2nd game, Madras 1991.
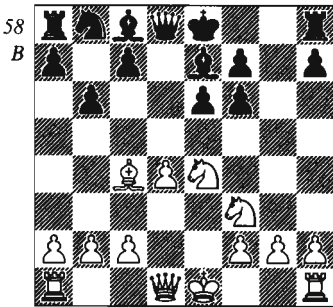
8	...	♗b7
9	♕e2	♘d7
10	0–0–0	

10 0–0 is possible too, but Black's chances of kingside counterplay should not be underestimated. In Kindermann–Meister, Bundesliga 1990, White made that mistake and paid for it: 10 ... c6 11 ♖fe1 ♕c7 (this position was actually reached by a slightly different move-order) 12 ♘g3 (a redundant move; on g3 the knight will be subject to attack) 12 ... 0–0–0 13 a4 a5 14 ♗a6 h5! 15 c3 h4 16 ♘f1 ♘f8 (Meister is playing skilfully; he now brings his knight to its 'rightful' place — f4 — by the shortest route) 17 b4 ab 18 cb ♘g6 19 ♖ec1 ♘f4, and it became clear that Black had seized the initiative.

| 10 | ... | c6 |
| 11 | ♔b1 | |

An excellent prophylactic move. No one likes to end up facing an unexpected check on the c1–h6 diagonal. However, as in any non-forcing situation, White has several other continuations to choose from. Let us look at them:

(a) **11 ♖he1** ♕c7 12 ♘c3!? (an interesting idea; having concentrated all his pieces in the centre, White is ready to carry out the break d4–d5!, even against 12 ... 0–0–0. An inferior choice is 12 g3, which subsequently allows Black to exchange his weak h-pawn; for example 12 ... 0–0–0 13 ♗a6 ♗xa6 14 ♕xa6+ ♔b8 15 ♕e2 f5 16 ♘ed2 h5! 17 ♘c4 h4= Pfrommer–Luther, Badenweiler Open 1990) 12 ... ♘f8 13 ♗a6 ♗xa6 14 ♕xa6 ♘g6 15 ♕c4! ♕d7 16 g3 h5 (16 ... 0–0–0 17 d5!) 17 h4 b5 18 ♕d3 ♔f8 19 ♘d2!± Ljubojević–M. Gurevich, Amsterdam 1991. The knight is heading for b3, and from there it is not far to c5. Black has too many pawn weaknesses.

(c) **11 ♗a6** (White usually brings about this bishop exchange after his opponent has castled long, but this does not basically alter the character of the struggle) 11 ... ♗xa6 12 ♕xa6 ♕c7 13 ♕e2 0–0–0 14 ♔b1 f5 15 ♘ed2 ♗f6 16 ♘c4 b5!?= De Firmian–Andersson, Reggio Emilia 1989/90.

(c) **11 ♘fd2!?** (clearing a path to h5 for the queen) 11 ... ♘d7 12 ♕h5 ♘f8 (on g6 the knight will neutralise the effect of the white queen) 13 ♖he1 (or 13 f4!? f5 14 ♘g5 ♗xg5 15 ♕xg6 ♘g6 16 g4!? h6! with unclear play; Minasian––Itkis, Frunze 1989) 13 ... ♘g6 14 g3 0–0–0 15 c3 ♔b8 16 f4 f5 17 ♘g5 ♗xg5 18 ♕xg5 c5= Chandler–Kosten, Hastings 1990/1.

11	**...**	**♕c7**
12	**♖he1**	

At this point, offering a bishop exchange would lead to loss: 12 ♗a6? ♗xa6 13 ♕xa6 b5!, and to save his queen (but not the game!) White was forced to play 14 ♘c5 ♘xc5 15 dc ♗xc5∓∓ Lugo–Gomez, Cuban Ch 1989.

12	**...**	**0–0–0** *(59)*

An important position for the fate of the entire variation with 6 ... gf. Both players have effectively completed their development, and the time has come for working out a concrete plan of action.

13	**♗a6**

After the bishop exchange,
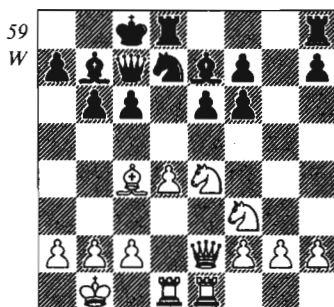
Black's possibilities of counterplay are reduced.

13	**...**	**♖hg8**

White has a minimal plus after 13 ... ♗xa6 14 ♕xa6+ ♕b7 15 ♕e2 ♖hg8 16 g3 ♔b8 17 a3! b5!? 18 ♖d3, Klovan–Petrosian, USSR Ch, Erevan 1975.

It doesn't pay to weaken the central pawn front without need: 13 ... f5?! 14 ♘eg5 ♖df8 15 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 16 g3 h6 17 ♘h3 ♗d6 18 c4± Chandler–S. Arkell, London 1989.

An idea deserving careful attention is 13 ... ♖he8, postponing for a while Black's ambitions of counterplay in the g-file. There can follow 14 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 15 c4 (or 15 a3 ♘f8 16 g3 f5 17 ♘eg5 ♗f6 18 h4 ♖e7, with a solid position; van der Wiel–Lautier, Wijk aan Zee 1991) 15 ... ♘f8 16 ♕c2 f5 17 ♘c3 ♗f6 18 ♖e3 ♖e7= Korchnoi–Andersson, Reykjavik World Cup 1988.

14	**♘g3**

An innovation. White usually continues 14 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 15 g3, keeping his knight in the cen-

tre. Black's best reply is 15 ... f5 16 ♘ed2 h5! (he should try to exchange his h-pawn at the first opportunity. In the well-known game Geller–Lengyel, Budapest 1973, Black played the weaker 16 ... ♘f6 17 c3 ♗f8 18 ♘c4 h5 19 ♖d3 ♗h6 20 ♖ed1, and found himself condemned to passivity) 17 ♘c4 h4 18 ♖d3! (after 18 ♘ce5 ♘xe5 19 ♘xe5 ♗d6, the game is level) 18 ... hg 19 hg f4 20 gf ♕xf4 21 ♘fe5 ♘xe5 22 ♘xe5 ♖g7= Sariego–Borges, Pihal del Rio Z 1990.

| 14 | ... | ♗b4!? |

The game has entered a man-oeuvring phase. Both sides have entrenched themselves so well that it is hard for the pieces even to come into contact, and for the moment each player is 'probing', trying to create some weaknesses in his opponent's set-up.

| 15 | c3 | ♗f8 |

Intending to play ... f6–f5 at a suitable moment, and then fianchetto the bishop.

| 16 | ♗xb7+ | ♔xb7 |
| 17 | c4!? | |

Otherwise Gurevich might play ... b6–b5, and in any case if White is seeking an active game, he cannot do without a break in the centre.

| 17 | ... | ♔b8 |
| 18 | d5 | |

The threat is stronger than the execution. After the careful 18 a3!, White's position probably deserves preference.

18	...	♗b4
19	♖g1	♖ge8
20	de	fe
21	♖d4?!	

The start of an unsound plan. 21 ♘d4 would more or less have maintained the balance.

21	...	e5
22	♖h4?!	♘f8
23	a3	♗c5
24	♘e4	f5

With his pieces so powerfully centralised, Black should not, of course, be afraid of having his pawns doubled, especially since his control of the important square d4 is thereby strengthened.

| 25 | ♘xc5 | bc |
| 26 | ♖h5 | |

Consistent at least.

| 26 | ... | e4 |
| 27 | ♘h4 | ♘e6! |

Definitely establishing Black's advantage. The knight is ready to fork on f4 or (in answer to 28 ♖xf5) on d4.

28	g3	♘d4
29	♕e3	♕f7
30	♖h6	♔a8! *(60)*
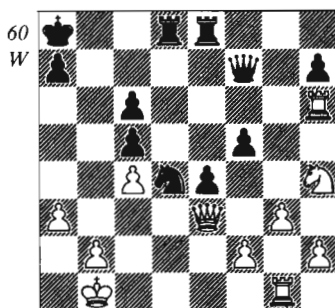
With his pieces on the kingside hopelessly stuck, van der Wiel will have great difficulty defending his king against a massed attack by all Black's forces.

31	♖c1	♖b8 .
32	♖d6	♕e7!
33	♖xd4	

White already has to resort to extreme measures. After 33 ♕f4 ♖xb2+ 34 ♔xb2 ♖b8+ 35 ♔a2 ♕b7 he would quickly be mated.

33	...	cd
34	♕xd4	♕xa3
35	♖c2	

The final error in a very difficult position. He could have prolonged his resistance with 35 ♘xf5! ♖xb2+ 36 ♕xb2 ♖b8 37 ♕xb8+ ♔xb8 38 ♘e3.

| 35 | ... | e3! |

The beginning of the end. The rook enters the game with decisive effect.

36	♕f6	♕c5
37	fe	♖xe3
38	♘g2	♖d3
39	♕h4	♖d1+
40	♖c1	♕e5
	0–1	

9 Steinitz Variation

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♘f6
4	e5 *(61)*	

61
B
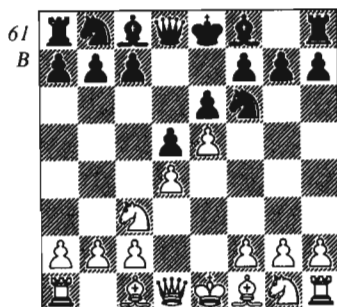
An old variation which has risen to unprecedented popularity in the last few years. White seizes space in the centre, and, making use of his considerable manoeuvring freedom, is ready to take the initiative on the kingside or queenside according to circumstances. Black's task is not at all simple. In his search for counterplay he is obliged to undermine White's pawn centre with ... c7–c5 or ... f7–f6, or (as often happens) with both; but at the same time it should not be forgotten that ... f7–

f6 may seriously weaken Black's king position, while after ... c7–c5 a white knight will replace the pawn on d4 with pleasure. White should not strive to maintain his centre at any cost; it is better to play d4xc5 or e5xf6 at the right moment than to allow Black strong play on the c- and f-files. Let us examine the possibilities for both sides in the light of practical examples.

Spassky–Petrosian
19th game, World Ch match 1966

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e5
4 ...   ♘fd7

The natural 'French' continuation. 4 ... ♘e4 and 4 ... ♘g8 are also played, by eccentrics. On 4 ... ♘e4, White's simplest way to gain an advantage is 5 ♘xe4 de 6 ♗e3. This possibility was analysed under the Tarrasch Variation (3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘e4). Instead, the attempt to trap the black knight with 5 ♘ce2 fails against 5 ... f6! 6 f3 ♘g5. A game Nijboer–Kuijf, Wijk aan Zee 1991, continued 7 ♗xg5 (or 7 f4 ♘e4 8 ♘f3 f5 9 g3

b6 10 ♗e3 ♗a6 11 ♘g5!? ♘xg5 12 fg ♕d7= Psakhis–Shestakov, USSR 1987) 7 ... fg 8 ♕d2 c5 9 h4!? gh 10 f4 c4!? 11 ♘f3 ♗e7, with unclear play.

If 4 ... ♘g8, White should probably continue with simple development: 5 ♘f3 (in Arnason–Petrosian, Tallinn 1983, Black obtained quite a good position after 5 f4 b6 6 ♗e3 ♘h6 7 ♘f3 ♕d7 8 ♕d2 ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♗f2 c5=. In Berg–Bronstein, Gausdal Arnold Cup 1990, Black adopted a similar plan: 5 ♗e3 ♘e7 6 f4 ♘f5 7 ♗f2 h5! 8 ♘f3 b6 9 g3 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♘e2 ♕d7 12 0-0 c5=) 5 ... b6 6 ♗d3 ♗a6 7 ♘e2 ♗xd3 (or 7 ... ♕d7 8 ♘f4 ♘e7 9 h4 ♗xd3 10 ♕xd3 ♕c6 11 ♗e3 ♘d7 12 a4 ♘g6 13 ♘h5± Wittmann–Nogueiras, Thessaloniki Ol 1984) 8 ♕xd3 ♕d7 9 0-0 ♘c6 10 ♗d2 ♘ge7 11 ♖ac1 0-0-0 12 a4± Abramović–Z. Nikolić, Vrnjacka Banja 1988. The black king has not found peace on the queenside.

5 ♘f3

This quiet developing move clearly shows that White is not playing to keep his whole pawn centre intact, but is prepared to pin his hopes on reinforcing the important pawn (or outpost square) on e5. He has two alternatives:

(a) **5 ♘ce2** (this move pursues just the opposite purpose; White grounds his strategy on maintaining his pawn centre) 5 ... c5 6 c3 ♘c6 (6 ... ♕a5!?, as played in Kristiansen–Chernin, Copenhagen 1984, is interesting; Black achieved equality after 7 f4 b5 8 dc b4! 9 a3 ♗xc5 10 cb ♗xb4+ 11 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 ♕b6 13 ♘d4 ♗a6=. In Ehlvest–Dolmatov, Clermont–Ferrand 1989, White gained a plus after 6 ... ♕b6 7 f4 f6 8 ♘f3 cd? 9 cd ♗b4+ 10 ♘c3! ♘c6 11 a3 ♗xc3+ 12 bc ♘a5 13 a4±. But Dolmatov made an obvious, gross mistake: the exchange 8 ... cd, giving White's knight an excellent post on c3, is premature) 7 f4 (White has nothing after 7 ♘f3 b5! [*Black can also play 7 ... cd 8 cd f6 9 ♘f4 ♗b4+ 10 ♗d2 ♕e7 11 ♗xb4 ♕xb4+ 12 ♕d2 ♕e7, with complex play; Velimirović–Moskalenko, Belgrade GMA 1988*] 8 ♘f4 ♕b6 9 ♗e2? [*a serious error, strange thought it may seem. It is worth considering 9 h4! or 9 ♗e3*] 9 ... cd 10 cd g5! [*a characteristic thrust! The e2-square is occupied by the bishop, and it turns out that the central pawns cannot be defended. If 11 ♘h5, then simply 11 ... g4*] 11 ♘xg5 ♕xd4, and now White's desperate outburst merely led to an attractive finale: 12 ♘gxe6 fe 13 ♗h5+ ♔e7 14 ♘xd5+!? ed 15 ♗g5+ ♔e6 16 ♗g4+ ♔xe5∓∓ Novoselski–Bareyev, Rome Open 1990) 7 ... b5!? 8 ♘f3 b4 9 f5 (the game is level after 9 cb ♘xb4 10 ♘c3 ♗e7 11 ♗b5 a5 12 a3 ♘a6 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♗e3 ♘b6= Sax–King, Hastings 1990/1) 9 ... bc 10

fe fe 11 bc cd 12 cd ♗b4+ 13 ♗d2 0–0 14 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 15 ♕d2 ♕a5= Sax–Korchnoi, 8th match game, Wijk aan Zee 1991.

(b) **5 f4** c5 6 dc (the astonishing popularity of the 4 e5 system is above all based on the continuation 6 ♘f3 ♘c6 7 ♗e3!?, but this will be examined in detail in the next game. Incidentally, after 6 ♘f3 Black has the interesting 6 ... cd 7 ♘xd4 ♕b6 8 ♗e3! ♕xb2? [*of course 8 ... ♘c6 is correct*] 9 ♘db5 ♕b4 [*Black seems to be all right, but ...*] 10 ♘c7+ ♔d8 11 ♗d2!!, and we see that White has outwitted him! After the forced 11 ... ♔xc7 12 ♘b5+ ♕xb5 13 ♗xb5, no more than elementary technique was required of White; Kruppa–Bareyev, USSR 1988) 6 ... ♘c6!? (more precise than 6 ... ♗xc5 7 ♕g4! 0–0 8 ♘f3 [*in Fischer–Benko, Curaçao 1962, Black obtained the better game after 8 ♗d3?! f5 9 ♕h3 ♗xg1! 10 ♖xg1 ♘c5 11 ♗g2 ♘c6 12 ♘b5 ♕b6∓*] 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♗d3 f5 10 ♕h3 ♘d4 11 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 12 ♘e2 ♗b6 13 ♗e3 ♘c5 14 0–0–0±) 7 ♘f3 ♗xc5 8 ♗d3 f6!? (interestingly, in contemporary practice Black usually refrains from this natural move in favour of 8 ... a6. For example, 9 a3 b5 10 b4 ♗a7 11 ♗d2 f5!? [*or 11 ... h6 12 ♘e2 ♘b6 13 0–0 ♘c4 14 ♔h1 ♗d7 15 ♕e1 ♘e7 16 ♘ed4± Liu Wenze–Voiska, Belgrade GMA 1988*] 12 g4!? ♘b6 13 gf ef 14 ♘e2 ♘c4 15 ♗xc4 bc 16 ♗c3 ♗b7,

with unclear play in Liu Wenze–Vaiser, Belgrade GMA 1988) 9 ef ♘xf6 10 ♕e2 0–0 11 ♗d2 ♘d4! 12 ♘xd4 ♗xd4, and according to Keres's analysis the game is equal.

5	**...**	**c5**
6	**dc**	

Gurgenidze's 6 ♗b5 has been employed rarely, though not without practical success. The best reply is 6 ... ♘c6 (Black has been unsuccessful in his attempts to equalise with either 6 ... a6 7 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 8 ♗e3! ♕b6 [*or 8 ... ♘c6 9 dc ♕c7 10 0–0 ♘xe5 11 ♖e1 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 ♗c6 13 ♗d4 ♕d7 14 ♕h3!± Chikovani–Lputian, USSR 1978*] 9 ♕d2 ♘c6 10 dc ♗xc5 11 ♘a4! ♗xe3 12 ♘xb6 ♗xd2+ 13 ♔xd2 ♖d8 14 ♖he1± Gurgenidze–Kupreichik, Sverdlovsk 1984; or 6 ... b6 7 0–0 a6 8 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 9 ♘e2 ♘c6 10 c3 ♗b7 11 ♗g5 ♗e7 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 ♖e1 0–0 14 ♘f4, with a slight advantage to White; Gurgenidze–McDonald, Tbilisi 1986) 7 0–0 ♕c7 8 ♖e1 h6 9 ♗f4 a6 10 ♗xc6 bc 11 ♕d3 ♗e7, with approximate equality; V. Ivanov–Grebennikov, Leningrad 1990.

6	**...**	**♘c6**
7	**♗f4**	

Seeing that White has not been achieving much with this move lately, it is worth considering 7 ♗b5!?, an idea of the Hungarian master Rigo. White is prepared to part with his important bishop in order to reduce the pressure against his pawn on e5. There can

follow 7 ... ♗xc5 8 0–0 0–0 (or 8 ... a6 9 ♗xc6 bc 10 ♘a4 ♗e7 11 c4 a5 12 ♘d4 ♗b7 13 cd cd 14 ♕g4± Rigo–van Heste, Dieren Open 1990; White has a strong blockading position, and the bishop on b7 is condemned to a miserable role) 9 ♘a4 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 f6 11 ef ♘xf6 12 c4 a6 13 ♗xc6 bc 14 ♘e5, and again White's prospects turned out to be clearly better; Rigo–Kinsman, Dieren Open 1990. For a more accurate appraisal of 7 ♗b5, more tournament experience is needed.

7 ... ♗xc5

A logical move; the bishop is developed, while the knight is already quite well placed on d7. All the same, it is interesting that even after 7 ... ♘xc5 White has no clear way to gain the advantage. For example, 8 h4 (Rogers–Delay, Martigny 1985, went 8 ♗d3 ♗e7 9 h4!?, and now Black could easily have equalised with Rogers's recommendation 9 ... ♗d7, followed by 10 ... ♖c8) 8 ... a6 9 h5 (very optimistically played!) 9 ... d4 10 ♘b1 ♕d5! (stronger than 10 ... ♘a4 11 b3 ♕a5+ 12 ♗d2 ♘c3 13 ♘xc3 dc 14 ♗f4± Rogers–Maksimović, Belgrade 1984) 11 ♘bd2 b5 12 a3 f6!∓ Rogers–Züger, Mendrisio Open 1987. White's play can, of course, be strengthened.

8 ♗d3 f6

Petrosian is consistent in carrying out his general plan of attacking the white e-pawn. Other possi-

bilities for Black are revealed by the game Pozin–Budnikov, Vladivostok 1990, which went 8 ... a6 9 0–0 ♗e7 (a good deal stronger than 9 ... b5 10 a3 ♗b7 11 ♖e1 h6 12 b4 ♗a7 13 ♗g3±) 10 ♗g3 g5! (a blow at the e-pawn from the side; its main defender, the knight, cannot avoid being attacked) 11 h3 h5 12 ♖e1 ♖g8 13 ♕e2 g4 14 hg hg 15 ♘h2 ♗h4! with an excellent game.

Spassky himself made a serious mistake against Gufeld in Leningrad, 1960. His move 8 ... h6 solved only one problem, that of a possible ♗xh7+ after Black castles; but now ... f7–f6 can never be played in view of the weak light squares on the kingside. The further course of the game demonstrated unsoundness of Black's strategy: 9 ♗g3 a6 10 0–0 b5 11 ♖e1 0–0 12 ♘e2 b4 13 c3! bc 14 bc a5 15 ♘f4, with a clear advantage.

9	ef	♘xf6
10	0–0	0–0
11	♘e5	

The struggle, as before, revolves round the e5-point. If White succeeds in blockading it, he is assured of an advantage. If Black achieves the freeing move ... e6–e5, he can reckon on seizing the initiative. White has tried other moves here, but without success. For example, 11 ♕e2 ♗d7 (11 ... ♘h5 is also good: 12 ♗g5 ♘f4! 13 ♕d2 ♕c7 14 ♘b5 ♕b8= Larsen–Spassky, Stockholm 1969) 12

♖ad1 a6 13 ♘a4? (not a bad positional idea, but it has a tactical flaw) 13 ... ♗a7 14 c4? (hard though it is to stop halfway, it would be better to bring the knight back) 14 ... e5!! (it now becomes clear that White must lose a piece in all variations, since the knight on a4 comes under attack) 15 cd ♘d4! 16 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 17 ♗c2 ♗b5, and White resigned a few moves later; Rigo–Gulko, Rome 1988. White showed no constructive ideas in Tolnai–Farago, Budapest 1990, which went 11 ♗g5 ♗d7 12 a3 a6 13 ♗h4 ♕c7 14 ♖e1 ♗d6 15 ♕e2 ♖ae8, and it was clear that Black faced no problems at all. Finally, after the prophylactic 11 ♗g3, Black easily equalises with 11 ... ♗h5!

11 ...   ♗d7

The most accurate move, but another possibility is 11 ... ♗d6 12 ♕e2 a6 13 ♖ae1 ♕c7 14 ♗g3 b5= Aleksić–Vaiser, Rome 1990.

12 ♘xc6   ♗xc6 *(62)*
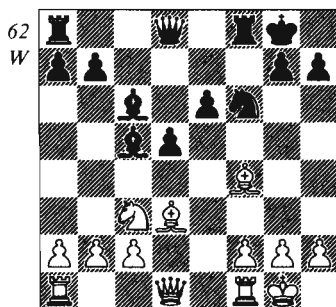
We can now state the results of the opening: Black has come out

of it well, his pieces are effectively placed and the pawn on e6 can hardly be called weak, since White cannot mount an attack against it. The chances are about equal.

13 ♕e2   ♕e7

Farago later discovered that 13 ... ♘e4!? is even stronger: 14 g3 (or 14 ♗e3 ♗xe3 15 fe ♘xc3∓) 14 ... ♘xf2! 15 ♖xf2 ♗xf2+ 16 ♔xf2 ♕b6+ 17 ♔g2 e5!, Vogt–Farago, Kecskemet 1979. White has to play with great ingenuity to avoid getting the worse position.

14 ♖ae1   ♖ae8
15 ♗g3   a6
16 a3   ♕f7

After a series of preparatory moves, Petrosian is at last ready to carry out the long awaited ... e6–e5.

17 b4   ♗d4
18 ♗e5

Spassky brings his last reserves to the blockade. Not 18 ♘d1 e5 19 c3 ♗a7 20 ♗xe5?? ♘d7∓∓.

18 ...   ♗xe5
19 ♕xe5   ♘d7
20 ♕g3   e5

Done it! We should not, however, forget that by a sequence of accurate moves Black has 'merely' secured comfortable equality, and that attempts to squeeze too much out of the position can have the reverse effect.

21 f3   ♕f4?!

A move dictated purely by the situation in the match, in which a draw would have suited Petrosian very well. But strangely enough,

after the queen exchange White seizes the initiative, while the pride of Black's position — his pair of pawns in the centre — is transformed into a weakness. What this excellently illustrates is that players may err not only by demanding too much of their position, but also by demanding too little of it.

22	♕xf4	♖xf4
23	♖f2	g6
24	♖d2	♘b6
25	♖de2	♘d7
26	♘d1	

White cannot be said to have made noticeable gains over the last few moves, but there is no need for him to hurry. Spassky now prepares to transfer his bishop to b3.

26	...	b5
27	c3	♖f7
28	♗c2	♔g7
29	♗b3	h5
30	♘e3	♘b6
31	♘c2	♘d7

Defending passive positions for long periods is difficult. A sounder method was 31 ... ♖fe7 32 f4 e4 33 ♘d4 ♗d7, and there is nothing clear for White as yet.

32	♖e3	h4
33	h3	♖f6
34	♘d4!	♗b7
35	a5	

White's pressure is finally bringing its first results: Black is unexpectedly faced with the problem of defending his queenside.

35	...	♖d8
36	♘e2	ba?!

It was worth considering 36 ... ♔h6!?

37	♗xa4	♘b6
38	♗b3	e4

Unfortunately, this weakening move is practically forced. After 38 ... ♖e8 39 ♘d4 ♘d7 40 ♗a4, Black would come out a pawn down.

39	♘d4	♔h6
40	♖d1!	♖c8?

After 40 ... ♖d7 Black could still hold on his difficult position.

41	fe	de
42	♘e6!	*(63)*
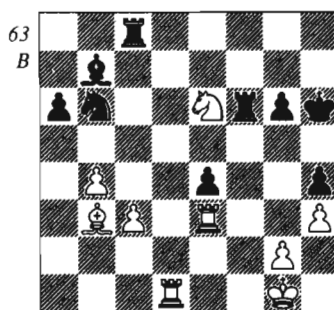
The threat is 43 ♘c5, and the attempt to break up the white pawns with 42 ... a5 is beautifully refuted: 43 ♖d6! ♘c4 44 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 45 ♘d8!! ♖xd6 46 ♘f7+ ♔h7 47 ♘xd6, with a decisive advantage.

42	...	♘c4
43	♗xc4	♖xc4
44	♘c5	♖f7
45	♖a1	♔g5
46	♖a5!	

It was not too late to throw away the advantage which he has

taken such pains to procure; after
46 ♘xb7? ♖xb7 47 ♖xa6 ♖d7,
Black has good chances of saving
the game.

46	...	♔f4
47	♔f2	♗d5
48	♘b3!	♔e5+

The king is forced to retreat,
since 48 ... ♗b7 is met by 49
♘d4, threatening 50 ♘e2 mate!

49	♔e2	♖c6
50	♘d2	♔e6
51	♘xe4	

The time has come to reap the
harvest. The black pawns are
weak, and fall one by one. The rest
of the game is only of historical
interest, but we should observe
that Spassky is accurate to the
very end.

51 ... ♗c4+ 52 ♔d2 ♖d7+ 53
♔c2 ♔f7 54 ♖e5 ♔g7 55 ♘d2
♗b5 56 ♘f3 ♗a4+ 57 ♔b2 ♖d1
58 ♖5e4 ♖f1 59 ♖e1 ♖xe1 60
♖xe1 ♖f6 61 ♖e4 g5 62 ♘xg5
♖f2+ 63 ♔a3 ♗c6 64 ♖xh4
♗xg2 65 ♘e4 ♖e2 66 ♘c5 ♗f1
67 ♖f4 ♖e1 68 h4 1–0

Kir. Georgiev–Dolmatov
Moscow GMA 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e5
♘fd7

5	f4	c5
6	♘f3	♘c6
7	♗e3!?	*(64)*

A move introduced into practice
by Boleslavsky. White fortifies the
d4-point, and at the same time
prepares to castle long. Black now
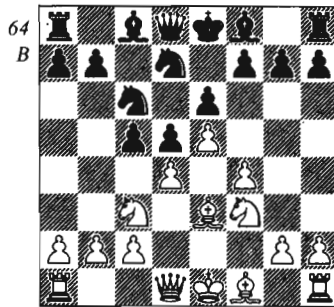
has a wide choice of continuations.
Depending on his wishes and
mood, he can resolve the central
tension with 7 ... cd, increase the
pressure on d4 with 7 ... ♕b6, or
initiate queenside play at once
with 7 ... a6. Other moves too are
sometimes encountered.

7   ...   cd

The current fashion. In the early
days of the variation Black invari-
ably played 7 ... ♕b6, then 7 ...
a6 took over, at present 7 ... cd is
played, and it is hard to imagine
what move the analysts will be
concentrating on in a year's time.
Let us venture into the labyrinth
of the various alternatives.

(a) 7 ... ♗e7 (rather passive) 8
♕d2 0–0 (or 8 ... f6 9 ef ♗xf6 10
dc ♕a5 11 ♘b5 ♕xd2+ 12 ♔xd2
♔e7   13   c3± Tosić–Vucinić,
Cetinje 1990) 9 ♗e2 cd 10 ♘xd4
♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♘b8 12 0–0, with
a slight but secure plus; Timman–
Hort, Linares 1983.

(b) 7 ... ♕b6 (the most thematic
reply, but it has lost some of its
popularity in recent years) 8 ♘a4
(White has to play this way if he

is hoping for an advantage! 8 ♗e2 and 8 a3 have also been played, seeing that the white b-pawn is inedible, but Black equalises by similar means in the two cases. For example, 8 a3 cd [*not 8 ... f5?! 9 ♘g5! cd 10 ♘xe6 de 11 ♘xd5, with a decisive attack in Murey–Mirallès, Marseille 1987. If 8 ... a6!?, White should reply 9 ♗e2, but on no account 9 ♘a4? ♕a5+ 10 c3 c4! 11 ♗e2 ♕c7 12 0–0 b5, and Black already had a won position in Kärner–Vaganian, Tallinn 1983*] 9 ♘xd4 ♗c5 10 ♘a4 ♕a5+ 11 c3 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 13 ♕xd4 [*White has many pawn weaknesses after 13 b4 ♘f3+! 14 gf ♕d8*] 13 ... b6! 14 ♕b4 ♕xb4 15 ab ♔e7 16 ♗b5 ♗b7 17 0–0 ♖hd8 18 ♔f2 f6, and Black comfortably solved his opening problems in Nunn–Ehlvest, Reykjavik World Cup 1988. Black similarly has no difficulties after 8 ♗e2 cd 9 ♘xd4 ♗c5 10 ♘a4 ♕a5+ 11 c3 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 13 ♕xd4 b6 14 ♗d1 [*here is the difference between this variation and the last; defending his knight, White aims to play 15 b4*] 14 ... ♕b5! 15 b4 ♗a6 16 ♘b2 ♕c6 17 ♔f2 0–0 18 ♖e1 f6!, and in view of his backward development White has to be careful; Aseyev–Dolmatov, Irkutsk 1986) 8 ... ♕a5+ 9 c3 cd (Vaganian likes to play 9 ... c4. It usually doesn't pay to take the pressure off d4, but here Black hopes to create queenside counterplay by exploiting the bad

position of the knight on a4. White has not yet found a clear way to gain the advantage, for example 10 b4 ♕c7 11 ♗e2 [*on 11 ♘c5, Black does best to continue developing with 11 ... ♗e7 12 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 13 a4 0–0–0 14 g3 f5 15 h3 h5= Halifman–Vaganian, Moscow GMA 1990; whereas the headstrong 11 ... a5? merely plays into White's hands: 12 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 13 b5 ♘e7 14 a4 ♘f5 15 ♗c1!± Dvoiris–Bagirov, Podolsk 1990. The queenside position has been stabilised, while on the other wing White has a clear plus*] 11 ... ♗e7 12 0–0 0–0–0 [*12 ... ♘f8 is passive: 13 ♕d2 ♘d8 14 ♗d1 b6 15 ♗c2 ♗d7 16 ♗f2!± Nunn–Schmittdiel, Dortmund 1987*] 13 ♕b1!? b5 14 ♘c5 a5 15 a3 ♘xc5 16 bc ♖b8 17 ♘g5 g6 18 ♕e1 Oll–Vaganian, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989. White has a slight initiative, but Black cannot complain at the results of the opening either) **10 b4 ♘xb4** (in a way, the sacrifice is forced; after the cowardly 10 ... ♕c7, White's chances are clearly better. This conclusion is well illustrated by the following examples: 11 ♘xd4 a6 [*11 ... g5?! 12 ♗b5 ♘b6 13 ♘xb6 ab 14 0–0 gf 15 ♗xf4 led to a quick win for White in Nunn–Wockenfuss, Bundesliga 1984*] 12 ♕d2 b5 13 ♘b2 ♘b6 14 ♗d3 ♗e7 15 0–0 ♗d7 16 ♖ae1, and Black is condemned to passivity; Apicella–Harris, Oakham 1990) **11 cb ♗xb4+ 12 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 13 ♘xd2 b6!?** *(65)*

Black prepares to offer a knight exchange on c5. A game Korchnoi–Gurgenidze, USSR 1967, saw the weak 13 ... b5? 14 ♘b2 ♘c5 15 ♗d3 0–0 16 0–0±. Occasionally Black plays the sharp 13 ... g5, but without particular success, for instance 14 ♘b2 (a recommendation of Ghinda's deserves attention: 14 ♖b1! gf 15 ♗b5 a6 16 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 17 ♘b6 ♖d8 18 a4!) 14 ... gf 15 ♘d3 b6 16 ♔f2 ♗a6 17 ♘f3 ♖c8 18 ♘f4 ♘c5 19 g3, Anand–Dreyev, 6th match game, Madras 1991. White's chances are better; there is no safe place anywhere for the black king.

65
W
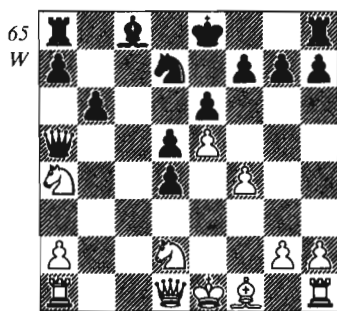
From diagram 65, White has several continuations, at least two of which give him the advantage:

(b1) **14 h4?!** (a provocative move) 14 ... 0–0 15 ♖h3 f6! 16 ♖b1 ♗a6 17 ♗xa6 ♕xa6, and Black has excellent chances of seizing the initiative; Yurtayev–Vaiser, Frunze 1987.

(b2) **14 ♖b1 ♗a6** 15 ♕b3 ♖c8 16 a3 ♗xf1 17 ♖xf1 ♖c4, with an unclear position; Bronstein–Portisch, Amsterdam IZ 1964.

(b3) **14 ♕c2 ♗b7** (14 ... ♗a6 is also playable at once) 15 ♕c7 ♗a6 16 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 17 ♕c6 ♖c8 18 ♘c5! (pretty!) 18 ... ♖xc6 19 ♘xa6 g5! 20 0–0 gf, again with unclear play; Timman–Yusupov, Tilburg 1986.

(b4) **14 ♔f2 ♗a6** (or 14 ... 0–0 15 ♘f3 ♘c5 16 ♘b2 ♘e4+ 17 ♔g1 ♗a6= Tseshkovsky–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Kiev 1986) 15 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 16 ♘f3 (16 ♖c1!? 0–0 17 ♖c7 ♘c5 18 ♘xc5 bc 19 ♖xc5 ♕xa2+ 20 ♖c2± Gavrikov–Chernin, Moscow 1985) 16 ... d3 17 ♘e1 ♕c4 18 ♘xd3 ♕d4+ 19 ♔f1 0–0, with adequate counterchances; Chandler–Speelman, London 1986.

(b5) **14 ♕b3!?** g5!? (White retains a plus after the 'normal' 14 ... ♗a6 15 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 16 ♘b2 ♘c5 17 ♕b4 ♕d3!? 18 ♕a4+! ♘xa4?! 19 ♘xd3± Timman–Yusupov, Bugojno 1986) 15 ♕b5! gf 16 ♕xa5 (Black is all right after 16 g3?! fg 17 hg ♔e7 18 ♕xa5 ba 19 ♘f3 ♖b8= van der Wiel–Yusupov, Brussels 1986) 16 ... ba 17 ♘f3! (the path to an advantage consists of a sequence of accurate moves. Black has no cause for worry after 17 ♗b5?! ♔e7 18 ♘f3 ♖b8 19 ♗c6 f6! 20 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 21 ♘c5 ♗b5= Ehlvest–Monin, Pinsk 1986) 17 ... ♖b8 18 ♖c1! (it is not too late for White to miss his way with 18 ♗d3? 0–0 19 ♖c1 f6! 20 ♘xd4 ♘e5 21 ♗c2 ♖b4∓

Ehlvest–Ivanchuk, Tallinn 1986) 18 ... 0–0 19 ♘c5 ♘xc5 (or 19 ... ♖b2?! 20 ♘d3! ♖xa2 21 ♘xf4 ♘b6 22 ♗d3± Ghinda–Dizdar, Sarajevo 1987) 20 ♖xc5 ♖b1+ 21 ♔d2 ♗a6 22 ♖c1 ♖b2+ 23 ♖c2 ♖b1 24 ♘e1!± Yudasin–Palatnik, Kiev 1987.

(b6) **14 ♗d3!?** ♗a6 (Black is in a dangerous position after 14 ... ♘c5 15 ♘xc5! bc 16 0–0 g6 [*castling is unplayable for the moment; Timman gives 16 ... 0–0? 17 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 18 ♕h5+ ♔g8 19 ♘f3 f6 20 ♘g5!±±*] 17 ♖c1 ♕b6 18 ♕a4! ♗d7 19 ♕a3±. It is worth considering 16 ... ♗d7!? 17 ♖c1 ♖c8 18 f5 ef 19 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 20 ♖xf5±) 15 ♘b2 ♘c5!? (it doesn't pay to allow the white knight to cross from b2 to the kingside: 15 ... ♗xd3?! 16 ♘xd3 ♘c5 17 ♘f2! ♘a4 18 0–0 ♘c3 19 ♕g4 0–0 20 ♘f3± Timman–Korchnoi, Brussels 1987; storm clouds are gathering above the black king) 16 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 17 ♕e2 (offering to go into an ending that is clearly in White's favour. 17 a4!?, keeping the queen out of a3, is also interesting) 17 ... ♕a3!? (White retains the better chances after 17 ... d3 18 ♕e3! ♕a3 19 ♕d4 0–0 20 0–0 ♖ac8 21 ♘d1! ♖fd8 22 ♘f2± Psakhis–Dizdar, Portoroz 1987) 18 ♕b5+ ♔e7 19 0–0 ♕e3+ 20 ♖f2 ♖he8 21 ♘d1! (an improvement on White's play in Chandler–M. Gurevich, Leningrad 1987, which went 21 ♖d1 g6 22 ♘f1 ♕a3 23 ♖xd4 ♕xa2 with

unclear play) 21 ... ♕c3 22 ♖f3 d3 23 ♖d1 ♕d4+ 24 ♔h1± Nunn–Zysk, Bundesliga 1987.

In fact, I believe that the moves 14 ♗d3 and 14 ♕b3 were responsible for making Black virtually drop the whole variation with the piece sacrifice on b4.

(c) **7 ... a6** (preparing a massed pawn advance on the queenside) **8 ♕d2** (White pursues his strategy of fortifying the d4-point. Other moves promise him little. For example, 8 a3 [*or 8 ♗e2 b5 9 0–0?! ♕b6 10 dc ♗xc5 11 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 12 ♔h1 b4 13 ♘b1 a5∓ Nicholson–Drasko, Budapest 1990. Nor does White achieve anything with 8 ♗d3 ♕b6 9 ♘a4 ♕a5+ 10 c3 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 12 b4 ♘f3+! 13 gf ♕c7 14 ♖c1 b5∓ Vokler–Moskalenko, Groningen Open 1990. On 8 dc, play transposes back into the main line with 8 ... ♗xc5! 9 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 10 ♕d2 b5; we examine this under 'c5'*] 8 ... cd! 9 ♘xd4 ♗c5 10 ♕d2 ♗xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♕b6 13 ♕xb6 ♘xb6 14 ♗d3 ♗d7 15 ♘e2 f6!= Psakhis–Drasko, Protvino 1988) **8 ... b5** (the consistent follow-up! In Wojtkewicz–Drasko, Polanica Zdroj 1988, Black decided to switch plans, and came under a devastating attack: 8 ... ♕b6?! 9 0–0–0 c4 10 ♗xc4! dc 11 d5 ♕c7 12 dc bc 13 f5!±. Black has also played 8 ... cd 9 ♘xd4 ♗b4?! [*better 9 ... ♗c5*] 10 ♗d3 [*alternatively 10 a3 ♗a5 11 ♗d3 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 ♘b8 13 ♕f2! ♘c6*

14 ♗c5± Nunn–Timman, Reykjavik World Cup 1988] 10 ... 0–0 11 0–0 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 ♗c5 13 ♘e2 ♕b6 14 c3 ♗xd4 15 ♘xd4 ♘c5 16 ♗c2± Short–Timman, Amsterdam 1989), and now White has been seeking an advantage in the following ways:

(c1) **9 a3** ♗b7 10 ♗d3!? (10 ♕f2?! is weak: 10 ... ♕a5! 11 ♖a2 ♕b6 12 ♘e2 b4 13 ♘d2 a5 14 ♘b3 c4∓ Hodgson–Chandler, London 1990) 10 ... cd 11 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 ♗c5 13 ♘e2 ♗xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♘c5 15 0–0–0± Vasyukov–Dokhoian, Moscow 1990. White's firm control of the d4-point guarantees him the initiative.

(c2) **9 g3** ♕b6 10 ♗g2 ♗b7 11 0–0 cd 12 ♘xd4 ♗c5 13 ♘ce2 0–0 14 c3 a5= Westerinen–Tisdall, Espoo Z 1989. White's play was not energetic enough.

(c3) **9 ♗e2** ♕b6 10 ♘d1!? (the game is equal after 10 0–0 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5 12 ♖ad1 ♗b7 13 ♗f2 ♘xd4 14 ♗xd4 ♖c8= Meister–Glek, Belgorod 1989) 10 ... b4 11 0–0 cd 12 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 13 ♗xd4 ♕xd4!? (13 ... ♗c5 14 c3±) 14 ♕xd4 ♗c5 15 c3 bc 16 bc ♔e7= De Firmian–Dreyev, Manila IZ 1990.

(c4) **9 h4!?** ♗b7 (in Kir. Georgiev–M. Gurevich, Reggio Emilia 1989, Black's position offered few prospects after 9 ... cd 10 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗b7?! 12 ♗d3 ♘c5 13 0–0–0 ♕a5 14 ♔b1 b4 15 ♘e2 ♗e7 16 g4±. An improvement is 11 ... b4!? 12 ♘a4 ♕a5 13 b3 ♘c5 14 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 15 a4!±) 10 h5 b4 11 ♘a4 ♘xd4! (it might seem to make no difference whether Black takes on d4 with the knight or the pawn, but in Anand–Dreyev, 4th match game, Madras 1991, White calmly answered 11 ... cd with 12 ♗f2! and gained the advantage after 12 ... ♕c7 13 ♗d3 ♘a5 14 ♘d4 ♘c4 15 ♕c1 ♗c6 16 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 17 b3±) 12 ♘xd4 cd 13 ♗xd4 ♗c6 14 b3 ♗xa4 15 ba ♕a5, with complex play.

(c5) **9 dc** (resolving the tension in the centre) 9 ... ♗xc5 (usually the exchange of dark-squared bishops in such positions favours White, but the present case is an exception. White's bishop is potentially the more active, and is also the chief defender of the d4-point, the importance of which we have constantly emphasised. In recent tournaments Black has also been playing 9 ... b4!?, against which White has yet to demonstrate a way to gain advantage. There can follow 10 ♘a4 *[10 ♘e2 doesn't look very convincing; Yudasin–Machulsky, Haifa Open 1989, continued 10 ... ♘xc5 11 ♘g3 ♗e7 12 ♕f2 ♕a5 13 ♗e2 h5!? 14 h4 g6 15 0–0, when Black could easily have equalised with 15 ... ♘a4!. But the piece sacrifice 10 ♘xd5!? is of interest: 10 ... ed 11 ♕xd5 ♘db8 12 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 13 ♘d2!?, with three pawns for the piece and a variety of attacking possibilities]* 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♘b6

♘xb6 [*11 ... ♖b8!? 12 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 13 ♗d3 ♗c5 14 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 15 ♗xa6 0-0, with some compensation*] 12 cb ♗c5 13 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 14 ♕f2 [*14 0-0-0 ♕xb6 15 h4 a5! results in a sharp game with an unclear verdict*] 14 ... ♕xf2+ 15 ♔xf2 ♖b8 16 ♔e3 ♖xb6 17 ♘d4, with highly problematic chances of an advantage; Motwani–Hynes, Blackpool Z 1990. After the game Short–Agdestein, Naestved 1985, no players proved willing to repeat the experiment 9 ... ♕a5?!. After 10 ♗d3 b4 11 ♘e2 ♗xc5 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♔h1 ♗b7 14 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 15 ♘g5+, White had a decisive attack) 10 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 11 ♕f2!? (at present it is on this move of Nunn's that White sets his hopes of advantage. Black has no problems after 11 ♗d3 b4 12 ♘e2 [*there is no point in retreating to the back rank; Maus–Kindermann, Bad Wörishofen 1989, went 12 ♘d1?! f6 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♘f2, when Black could have played 14 ... f5!∓*] 12 ... ♕b6 13 ♘ed4 [*after 13 0-0-0 0-0 14 ♔b1 a5 15 ♘ed4 ♘xd4 16 ♘xd4 a4 17 ♕e3 ♗a6 18 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 19 f5 ♘e4, it is White who is running the greater risk, as has repeatedly been demonstrated — notably in Chandler–Andersson, Haninge 1988*] 13 ... ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 a5 15 ♕e3 [*or 15 ♗b5+ ♗d7 16 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 17 0-0 0-0 18 ♖ae1 ♖ac8= Rohde–Gulko, New York Open 1989*] 15 ... 0-0 16 0-0 ♗a6 17 f5 ef 18 ♘xf5 ♘d7 19 ♕xb6 ♘xb6= Motwani–Korchnoi, Thessaloniki Ol 1988. However, in Chandler–Darga, Bundesliga 1989, White seized the initiative by simple means: 11 ♘d4 ♕b6 [*11 ... ♗d7 12 ♕f2 ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4 ♕b6 14 a3± Abramović–Popović, Stara Pazova 1988*] 12 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 13 ♕d4 ♖b8 14 ♗d3 b4 15 ♘e2 ♗b6 16 0-0±. White's play here is worth examining) 11 ... ♕b6 (White has a plus after either 11 ... ♘e4?! 12 ♘xe4 de 13 ♘d2 ♗b7 14 0-0-0± or 11 ... d4 12 0-0-0 b4 13 ♘b1!± — Nunn) 12 ♗d3 b4 (another plan was demonstrated in Bareyev–King, Hastings 1990/1: 12 ... ♖b8 [*defending the queen and preparing the knight excursion to a4*] 13 0-0 ♘b4 [*better 13 ... ♘a4, even though White has the better chances after 14 ♘xa4 ba 15 b3!*] 14 ♖fd1 ♘a4 15 ♘xa4 ba 16 b3!±) 13 ♘e2 a5 14 0-0 ♗a6 (White has the better endgame after 14 ... ♘a4 15 ♕xb6 ♘xb6 16 ♗b5!? ♗d7 17 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 18 ♘ed4 ♗b7 19 b3± Schlosser–M. Marić, Oakham 1990) 15 ♔h1 (he shouldn't hurry with his pawn-breaks; after 15 f5?! ♗xd3 16 cd ef 17 ♘f4 ♘e7, Black has a sound position) 15 ... ♗xd3 16 ed ♖b8 (the threat was 17 ♖ac1) 17 ♖ad1! (again 17 f5 does not frighten Black: 17 ... ef 18 ♘f4 ♘e6! 19 ♕g3 0-0 20 ♘xd5 ♕d8∓ Nunn–Nogueiras, Rotterdam World Cup 1989) 17 ... 0-0 18 ♕h4 f6!? 19

♘g3, with a slight edge for White in Mokry–Bruk, Haifa 1989.

8 ♘xd4   ♛b6!?

8 ... ♘xd4, releasing the central tension at once, is good for White: 9 ♗xd4 ♘b8 (White also has the better position after 9 ... ♗c5 10 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 11 ♛d4 ♛b6 12 0–0–0 ♗d7 13 f5± Hodgson–K. Arkell, London 1988) 10 ♗d3 ♘c6 11 ♗f2 ♗e7 (or 11 ... ♛a5 12 0–0 ♗c5 13 ♘b5 ♗xf2+ 14 ♖xf2 0–0 15 ♘d6± van der Wiel–Mirallès, Budel Z 1987) 12 ♛h5! ♛a5 13 0–0 g6 14 ♛h6± Nunn–Sutton, Peterborough 1984.

A lively debate has recently developed concerning the variation **8 ... ♗c5 9 ♛d2**. Black is faced with the choice of whether to carry out multiple exchanges at once with 9 ... ♘xd4 or to play 9 ... 0–0, going in for a complex game with the players castled on opposite sides. We shall consider the possibilities in that order.

(a) **9 ... ♘xd4** 10 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 11 ♛xd4 ♛b6 (Black does well to exchange the queens too, exploiting the fact that the white queen cannot withdraw since the b-pawn is undefended) 12 ♛xb6 (considered the most precise. Black is close to equality after 12 0–0–0 ♛xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♔e7 14 h4!? [*or 14 ♗e2 ♘b8 15 ♖e1 ♘c6 16 ♖d2 ♗d7 17 ♘b5 g5!= Abramović–Kaidanov, New York 1990*] 14 ... h5 15 ♖h3 a6 16 ♗e2 ♘b8!= Makarichev–Dreyev, Reykjavik Open 1990. Clearly the d4-square

is meant for a knight, not a rook. A more logical move than 12 0–0–0 is 12 ♘b5, but it sets Black no great problems. After 12 ... ♛xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♔e7 14 g3 ♘b8! 15 ♔d2 ♗d7 16 ♗d3 ♘c6, White had only a nominal plus in Short–Chernin, Montpellier C 1985) 12 ... ♘xb6 13 ♘b5 (in Nunn–Korchnoi, Lucerne 1985, White transferred his knight to d4 by a different route: 13 0–0–0 ♗d7 14 ♗d3 h5!? 15 ♘e2 ♔e7 16 ♘d4 g6 17 g3 ♗c6 18 ♖de1±. An idea employed in Kir. Georgiev–M. Gurevich, Manila IZ 1990, is of interest: 13 a4!? a5 14 ♘b5 ♔e7 15 b4 f6! [*better than 15 ... ♗d7 16 ♔d2, and White manages to fortify e5*] 16 ef+ gf 17 ♔d2 ♗d7 18 ♖e1, and Black has to play accurately to neutralise White's small plus) 13 ... ♔e7 14 ♗d3 (in Chandler–Chernin, Moscow GMA 1990, White chose 14 0–0–0, whereupon Black equalised with some precise play: 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♘d4 a6! 16 g3 ♘c8 17 ♗g2 ♘a7, and by transferring his knight to c6 Black solved all his problems) 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♘d4 ♘a4!? (bringing the knight to a good post with tempo. Dolmatov twice directed his knight along other routes, but failed to attain full equality. Arnason–Dolmatov, Reykjavik 1988 went 15 ... ♘c4!? 16 b3 ♘a5 17 ♔d2 ♘c6 18 ♔e3±. De Firmian–Dolmatov, Reykjavik 1990, went 15 ... a6 16 ♔d2 h5 17 b3 g6 18 a4 ♘c8 19 b4! ♘a7

20 b5±) 16 0–0–0 ♘c5 17 ♔d2 (17 ♖hf1!?) *(66)*
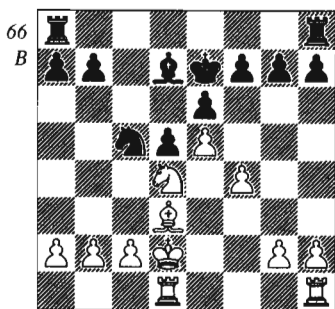
17 ... g5! (abruptly transforming the situation. Black may also choose less committal continuations, but in that case he has to be content to defend passively for a long time. For example, in Nunn–Hjartarson, Linares 1989, Black played 17 ... h5 18 ♖hf1 h4!? 19 ♖f2 ♖ac8 20 ♖df1 f5±. If Black defends passively on the kingside, White's plan will involve advancing his pawns on the queenside, on the lines of De Firmian–Dolmatov) 18 fg ♖ag8 19 h4 (19 ♘f3? ♘e4+ ∓) 19 ... h6 20 ♘f3 (20 g4!? hg 21 h5) 20 ... hg 21 ♘xg5 (or 21 hg ♖xh1 22 ♖xh1 ♘e4+ 23 ♔e3 ♘xg5= Nunn–M. Gurevich, Wijk aan Zee 1990) 21 ... ♘xh4! 22 ♖xh4 ♖xg5 23 ♖e1 (Black also has good compensation for the exchange after 23 g4!? ♖xe5 24 ♖h5 ♘e4+ 25 ♗xe4 ♖xe4, De Firmian–Andersson, Biel 1990) 23 ... ♖xg2+ 24 ♖e2 ♖g5, and with accurate play Black need not be anxious about the results; Chris-

tiansen–M. Gurevich, Reykjavik 1990.

(b) 9 ... 0–0 (leaving the king in the centre is dangerous: 9 ... a6 10 0–0–0 ♕c7 11 h4 ♗b4?! [*11 ... 0–0!*] 12 ♔b1 ♖b8 13 a3 ♗e7 14 ♗d3 ♘c5 15 ♕f2!, and all White's pieces are ready for active operations; Rechlis–Dreyev, Manila IZ 1990) 10 0–0–0 (strangely enough, after 10 ♘b3? ♗xe3 11 ♕xe3 f6! White loses a pawn. For example, 12 ef ♕xf6 13 0–0–0 ♕xf4 14 ♕xf4 ♖xf4∓ ∓ Palkovi–Knaak, Stara Zagora Z 1990) 10 ... a6 (capturing at once on d4 increases White's possibilities: 10 ... ♗xd4 11 ♗xd4 a6 12 ♕e3! b5 13 ♗d3 ♘xd4 14 ♕xd4 ♕c7 15 ♖he1 ♕c5 16 ♘e2!± Kruppa–Vainerman, USSR 1989) *(67)*.
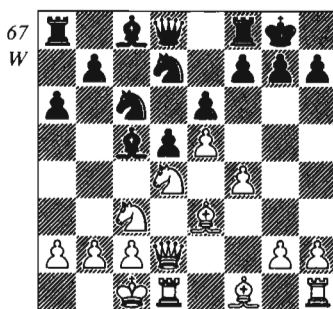
The players have divided the board into spheres of influence; White is clearly more active on the kingside and in the centre, Black has been preparing countermeasures on the queenside. Practice has not yet determined whose threats are the more substantial.

White now has a wide choice of quite good continuations:

(b1) **11 g4?!** (setting out on the wrong track; the advance of the g-pawn brings White nothing) 11 ... ♗xd4! 12 ♘xd4 b5 13 ♗e3 (13 g5? is weak: 13 ... b4 14 ♘a4 a5 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♖g1 ♘e7! and already Black stands better; Hodgson–Bareyev, Sochi 1987) 13 ... ♕c7 14 ♕f2 ♗b7 15 ♖g1 ♖fc8 16 ♗d3 ♘b4= Bittner–Knaak, Badenweiler Open 1990. 11 g4 proved to be a waste of a tempo.

(b2) **11 h4 ♕c7!?** (Bareyev's move. 11 ... ♗xd4 also has a good reputation, for example 12 ♗xd4 b5 13 h5 [*or 13 ♖h3 b4 14 ♘e2 ♕a5 15 ♔b1 ♘c5 16 ♗xc5 ♕xc5∓ Gallagher–Huzman, Baku 1988*] 13 ... ♕a5 [*if 13 ... b4, White shouldn't play 14 ♘a4? because of 14 ... ♕a5 15 b3 ♘xd4 16 ♕xd4 ♗b7 17 ♖h3?! ♗c6∓ Nikas–Marinković, Yugoslav Ch 1991. The right move is 14 ♘e2=*] 14 ♔b1 b4 15 ♘e2 ♘c5 16 ♕e3 ♘e4, with sharp play; Hickl–Bischoff, Munich 1988) 12 h5 (in Mokry–Bareyev, Trnava 1989, the game gradually levelled out after 12 ♖h3 ♘xd4 13 ♗xd4 b5 14 ♕e3!? [*stronger than 14 ♖g3 ♗b7 15 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 16 ♕d4 ♖ac8 17 ♔b1 ♘e4, with a good game; Westerinen–Jackelen, Porz 1990*] 14 ... ♗b7 15 ♗d3 f6! 16 ef ♖xf6=. 12 ♘ce2!? is also interesting; for this, see 11 ♘ce2 ♕c7 12 h4 in variation 'b5') 12 ... ♘xd4

13 ♗xd4 b5 14 h6 g6 15 ♘e2 ♗b7 16 ♕e3 f6!? with chances of equalising; De Firmian–Bareyev, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

(b3) **11 ♕f2 ♗xd4** 12 ♗xd4 b5 13 ♔b1 (great complications arose in R. Mainka–Lautier, Dortmund 1989: 13 ♗d3 b4 14 ♘e2 e5 15 ♔b1 ♗a6 16 g4 a4 17 g5 ♕c7, with wholly unclear play) 13 ... ♗b7 14 ♗d3 ♘xd4 15 ♕xd4 ♕e7 16 ♖he1 ♖fd8= Arnason–M. Gurevich, Reykjavik 1988.

(b4) **11 ♘b3 ♗b4!?** (trying to provoke White into weakening his queenside. After 11 ... ♗e7 12 ♗d3 b5 13 ♕e2?! ♘b6 14 ♕h5 g6 15 ♕f3 ♘a4 16 h4!? ♘b4 17 h5, White's attack develops faster; Marić–Dizdar, Belgrade GMA 1988) 12 ♗d3 b5 13 ♖hf1 ♘b6 14 ♕f2 ♘c4 15 ♗xc4 bc 16 ♘d4 ♘e7! with quite a good game for Black; Cabrilo–Bareyev, Belgrade GMA 1988.

(b5) **11 ♘ce2!?** (like a good many other ideas in the Steinitz Variation, this move comes from Nunn. The important role of the d4-square has been repeatedly stressed, and no harm can come of over-protecting it) 11 ... ♕c7 (Nunn disapproved of this move, and as an alternative suggested 11 ... ♘a5, which underwent its baptism of fire in van de Oudeweetering–Luther, Groningen Open 1990: 12 ♘g3 b5 13 ♕e1?! [*13 b3!?*] 13 ... ♘c4 14 ♗f2 ♕c7 15 ♘b3 ♗e7 16 ♗d4 a5,

and Black was the first to start hostilities against his opponent's king) 12 h4 b5 (again 12 ... ♘a5!? was worth considering) 13 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 14 ♖h3 (in Luther–Knaak, Berlin Open 1990, Black repulsed the attack after 14 ♘d4 ♕c7 15 ♘f3 b4 16 ♘g5 ♖e8 17 ♖h3 ♖e7 18 ♗d3 h6 19 ♘f3, and went over to the counter-attack with 19 ... a5) 14 ... ♗b7 15 ♘d4 ♕c7 16 ♖g3 (16 ♗d3! — Nunn) 16 ... ♗e7! 17 ♕e2, with a dangerous initiative.

(b6) 11 ♔b1 (not a bad prophylactic move) 11 ... ♗xd4!? (the usual question of which piece to take with. My own inclination is to take with the bishop, but 11 ... ♘xd4 also has its supporters, for example: 12 ♗xd4 b5 13 h4!? [*Black has a good game after 13 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 14 ♕f2 ♕c7 15 ♗d3 ♗b7 16 ♕h4 ♘e4!∓ Nunn–Timman, Rotterdam 1989*] 13 ... ♗b7 14 h5 b4 15 ♘e2 a5 16 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 17 ♘d4± De Firmian–Short, Manila IZ 1990) 12 ♗xd4 b5 13 ♗e2 (on 13 ♗f2, Black should immediately advance his pawns: 13 ... b4!? 14 ♘a4 a5, with a good game. He similarly has no problems after 13 ♕e3 b4 14 ♘e2 ♕c7 15 ♘g3 a5 16 ♗b5 ♘xd4 17 ♖xd4 f6! Sznapik–Lautier, Dortmund 1989) 13 ... b4 14 ♘a4 ♕a5 15 b3 ♘xd4 16 ♕xd4 ♗b7 17 ♗f3!? ♗c6 18 ♘b2 ♕c5= Chandler–King, British Ch, Plymouth 1989.

9   ♕d2

9 ♗e2 and 9 a3 have already been analysed in the notes to 7 ... ♕b6.

After 9 ♘a4 ♕a5+ 10 c3, White comes out two pawns down: 10 ... ♘xd4 11 b4 ♗xb4 12 cb ♕xb4+ 13 ♗d2 ♕e7 14 ♗d3 ♘c6∓ Rosić–Nikolenko, Pula Open 1990. So if White wants to avoid a contest in theoretical preparation, there only remains 9 ♘cb5!?, yet another suggestion of Nunn's. There can follow 9 ... ♗c5 10 c3 (10 a3 ♘xd4!? 11 ♗xd4 0–0 12 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 13 ♕d4 ♗d7=) 10 ... a6!? (better than 10 ... 0–0?! 11 b4 ♗xd4 12 ♘xd4 f6 13 ♕d2 ♘xd4 14 ♗xd4± Nunn–Züger, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 11 b4 ab (11 ... ♘xb4!?) 12 bc ♕xc5 13 ♕d2 ♘xd4, as in Nunn–Welin, Lugano Open 1989. With 14 ♗xd4 ♕c6 15 ♖b1, White preserves a small plus.

9   ...   ♕xb2 *(68)*
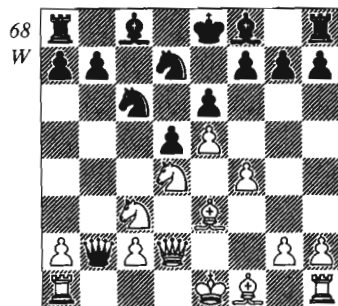
10   ♖b1   ♕a3

Rather reminds one of the Najdorf Sicilian, doesn't it?

11   ♗b5

White doesn't make much impression with 11 ♘cb5 ♕xa2 12 ♖b3 ♘c5 13 ♘c7+ ♔d7 14 ♘xa8 ♘xb3 15 ♘xb3 ♗b4, Kosten–Drasko, Berlin Open 1986.

11 ... ♘xd4

Black comes under a fierce attack after 11 ... ♘a5? 12 f5! ♔d8 13 ♗g5+ ♗e7 14 fe ♘xe5 15 ♘f5+ Seret–Mercier, France 1985.

11 ... ♘db8?! leaves Black with disastrously backward development, although White took some time to find the correct plan of attack. There can follow: 12 0–0 a6 13 f5! (White just needs to open the f-file, and the black king will immediately feel uncomfortable. In Chandler–Klinger, Vienna 1986, White chose a different method: 13 ♗xc6+ bc 14 ♖b3 ♕a5 15 ♖xb8!? ♖xb8 16 ♘xc6 ♕c7 17 ♘xb8 ♕xb8 18 ♖b1 ♕c7, but Black succeeded in defending) 13 ... ab 14 fe ♗xe6! (Black is in a very bad way after 14 ... fe 15 ♘dxb5! ♕a5 16 ♕f2!) 15 ♘xe6 fe 16 ♘xb5 ♕a5 17 ♕f2, and Black is at a loss for a defence; Polulyakhov–O. Ivanov, USSR 1989.

12 ♗xd4 ♗b4
13 0–0!

It is not yet time for a central break: 13 f5?! ef 14 0–0 0–0 15 ♖f3 ♗c5! 16 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♘xd5 ♕xa2∓ Nunn–Züger, London 1987.

Interesting complications arise from 13 ♖b3 ♕a5 14 a3 ♗e7! 15 f5!? ef 16 ♘xd5 (or 16 e6 fe 17 ♗xg7 ♖g8 18 ♕h6 ♔f7 19 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 20 ♗e5 d4, with unclear consequences; van der Wiel–Ree, Holland 1986) 16 ... ♕xd2+ 17 ♔xd2 ♗d8 18 ♖g3 a6!= de Wit–Ree, Amsterdam 1985.

13 ... a6!

The natural-seeming 13 ... 0–0 has unpleasant consequences for Black after 14 ♖b3 ♕a5 15 ♕f2!, for example 15 ... f5 (not 15 ... a6 16 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♗b6+−. Black has many problems after 15 ... f6 16 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17 ef gf 18 ♖fb1 ♗d6 19 ♕g3+ ♔h8 20 ♖xb7+ Kruppa–Nikolenko, Budapest 1990) 16 ♖fb1 ♗e7 (or 16 ... ♗xc3 17 ♗xc3 ♕c7 18 ♗b4 ♖e8 19 ♗d6, with a clear plus) 17 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 18 ♖xb7 ♕d8 19 ♗c5!+ Kruppa–Kaidanov, USSR 1988.

14 ♖b3 ♕a5
15 ♖fb1!

Georgiev improves on his own play! In Kir. Georgiev–Ehlvest, Reggio Emilia 1989/90, Black seized the initiative after 15 ♗xd7+?! ♗xd7 16 ♗fb1 ♗c5 17 ♖xb7 ♖c8 18 ♖1b3 ♗a4! 19 ♗xc5 ♕xc5+ 20 ♔h1 ♕c4!. With the text move, the verdict on the position turns through 180 degrees.

15 ... ♕xb5

The only move. Both 15 ... ab 16 ♖xb4 and 15 ... ♗e7 16 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 17 ♖xb7 are unsatisfactory for Black.

16 ♖xb4 ♕c6
17 f5! h6!

Dolmatov defends coolly. The game could have ended quickly with 17 ... ef? 18 ♕g5 0–0 19 e6! f6 20 ♕xf5 ♘e5 21 ♖b6±±.

18	f6	gf
19	ef	♕d6!?
20	a4! *(69)*	

Georgiev conducts his attack across the whole board. Black is quite unable to breathe, so Dolmatov resolves to take a desperate step.

69 B
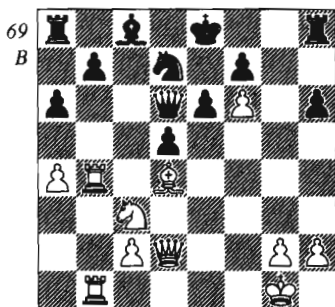
20	...	b5!?
21	♖xb5?!	

Pretty, but unconvincing! With the simple 21 ab, White could keep all his positional trumps with material equality. For example, Georgiev gives the variations 21 ... e5 22 ♗f2 ♘xf6 23 ba± and 21 ... ♖b8 22 ♖4b3! e5 23 ♖e1±.

21	...	♖g8!

The rook could not be taken: 21 ... ab? 22 ♘xb5 ♕c6 23 ♕b4±±.

22	♖e1	ab
23	♘xb5	♕c6
24	♕b4	♘c5
25	♗xc5	♖xa4?!

Time-trouble has arrived, bringing inevitable mistakes. After 25 ... d4! 26 ♖e2 ♗b7 27 ♘d6+ ♔d7 28 ♕xb7+ ♕xb7 29 ♘xb7 ♔c6, the game is about equal.

26	♕xa4?	

White in turn goes wrong; he should have played 26 ♘d6+! ♔d7 27 ♘xf7! ♖xb4 28 ♘e5+ ♔c7 29 ♘xc6±. To be fair, calculating such a variation when very short of time is not easy.

26	...	♕xc5+
27	♔h1	♔d8
28	♕a5+	♔d7
29	♖e3!	♖g4!
30	♖c3	♖b4!
31	g4	♖b1+?

And a draw was agreed, in view of the continuation 32 ♔g2 ♕g1+ 33 ♔h3 ♕f1+ 34 ♔h4 ♕f2+ 35 ♔h3=. Instead Black could have seized the initiative with 31 ... ♖c4!. Still, the half point was well earned by both players.

10   MacCutcheon Variation

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♘f6
4	♗g5	♗b4 *(70)*

70
W
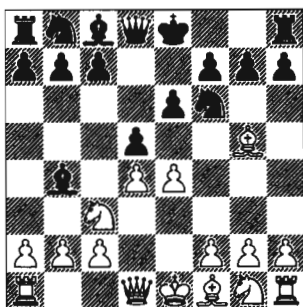
The player who gave the variation its name employed this sharp move back in the last century. The resulting positions are very complicated to play. White cannot advantageously avoid the doubling of his pawns on the c-file, though for this achievement Black has to pay quite a high price: his dark-squared bishop, so important in defence and attack, disappears from the board. 4 ... ♗e7, which has been investigated much more fully and played much

more often, will be examined in the next chapter.

Fischer–Rossolimo
USA Ch 1965/6

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗b4
  5   e5
White utilises the absence of Black's dark-squared bishop from the kingside and starts active operations there. The following continuations are also seen:
  (a) **5 ♗d3** (this fails to set Black serious problems) 5 ... c5 (Black also has a perfectly acceptable game after 5 ... de 6 ♗xe4 h6 7 ♗xf6 ♛xf6 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 0-0 ♘d7=) 6 dc!? (the game is dead level after 6 ♘f3 cd 7 ♘xd4 de 8 ♗xe4 h6 9 ♗xf6 ♛xf6=, or 6 e5 cd 7 a3 [*7 ef dc 8 fg cb+ 9 ♔f1 ♗c3! 10 gh(♛)+ ♗xh8 11 ♖b1 ♛xg5∓*] 7 ... ♗e7 8 ♘b5 a6 9 ♘xd4 ♘fd7=) 6 ... de 7 ♗xe4 ♛xd1+ 8 ♖xd1 ♘bd7 9 ♗f3 ♘e5, and Black has no reason to complain about the outcome of the opening; Vitolins–Mariasin, USSR 1979.

(b) **5 ♘ge2** de 6 a3 ♗e7 (after
6 ... ♗xc3+ 7 ♘xc3 ♘bd7 8 ♘xe4
h6 9 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 10 ♗h4, White's
chances are better) 7 ♗xf6 ♗xf6
(7 ... gf is also quite playable: 8
♗xe4 f5 9 ♘4c3 b6 10 ♘g3 ♗b7
11 ♗b5+ c6 12 ♗c4 ♕d6
13 ♕d3 ♘d7 14 0-0-0 0-0-0
with equality, Kuijf–Ree, Amster-
dam 1983) 8 ♘xe4 ♘c6 9 c3 0-0
(if he likes, Black can retain his
dark-squared bishop: 9 ... ♗e7
10 g3 0-0 11 ♗g2 a5 12 f4 a4
13 0-0 ♗d7, with unclear play
in Sibarević–Rogers, Mendrisio
1988) 10 ♘2g3 e5 11 d5 ♘b8 12
♘xf6+ ♕xf6 13 ♗d3 c6!= Zso.
Polgar–Dolmatov, Rome Open
1989.

(c) **5 ed!?** (the only serious alter-
native to 5 e5) 5 ... ♕xd5 (5 ...
ed 6 ♕f3! leads to difficulties for
Black; see chapter 2) 6 ♗xf6
(Black has a comfortble game after
6 ♘f3 ♘e4! [6 ... c5?! 7 ♗d2!
♗xc3 8 ♗xc3 ♘e4 9 ♕d3 ♘d7
10 ♗e2 ♘xc3 11 ♕xc3 cd 12
♕xd4 ♕xd4 13 ♘xd4± Malan-
yuk–M. Gurevich, USSR Ch,
Minsk 1987] 7 ♗d2 ♗xc3 8 bc
♘xd2 9 ♕xd2 ♘d7=) 6 ... ♗xc3+
(the crucial question is whether
Black should part with such an
important bishop at once. Recent
practice has demonstrated an
advantage for White after 6 ... gf,
for example: 7 ♘ge2! [7 ♕d2 is
weaker: 7 ... ♕a5! 8 ♘ge2 ♘d7 9
♘c1 ♗b6 10 ♘b3 ♕g5= Capa-
blanca–Bogoljubow, New York
1924. 8 ♗d3 also fails to bring

*advantage after 8 ... c5 9 ♘f3
♘c6 10 dc ♗d7 11 0-0 ♕xc5=
Kindermann–M. Gurevich, Buda-
pest 1987]* 7 ... ♘c6 *[White clearly
has the better endgame chances
after 7 ... c5 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 ♘xc3
♕xd4 10 ♕xd4 cd 11 ♘b5 ♘a6 12
♘xd4 ♘c7 13 0-0-0± Chandler–
Carton, Blackpool Z 1990]* 8 a3!?
*[Black has more hope of equalising
after 8 ♕d2 ♗xc3 9 ♕xc3 ♗d7
10 ♕b3 ♕xb3 11 ab ♘b4 12 0-0-0
♘c6, Smirin–Shereshevsky, Minsk
1985]* 8 ... ♗xc3+ 9 ♘xc3 ♕xd4
10 ♕xd4 ♘xd4 11 0-0-0 c5 *[or
11 ... e5? 12 ♘d5]* 12 ♘e4 b6 *[12
... ♔e7 13 ♘xc5 ♘c6 14 ♗b5 is
also good for White]* 13 c3 ♘f5?!
*[the knight should probably have
gone the other way: 13 ... ♘b3+
14 ♔c2 ♘a5 15 b4 ♘b7, with
chances of gradually equalising.
After the move played, Black is
very much worse off]* 14 g4! ♘h4
15 ♘xf6+ ♔e7 16 g5, with the
initiative; Chandler–King, Has-
tings 1990/1) 7 bc gf 8 ♕d2! (White
has no trace of an advantage after
the less precise 8 ♘f3 b6! 9 ♗e2
*[9 g3! hands the initiative to Black:
9 ... ♘d7! 10 ♗g2 ♗a6 11
♔d2 0-0-0 12 ♖e1 ♕a5 13
♖e3 ♘e5!∓ Hoi–Murey, Copen-
hagen 1986]* 9 ... ♗b7 10 0-0
♘d7 11 a4 ♖g8!? with an excellent
game; Conquest–Skogen, Gaus-
dal 1991) 8 ... ♘d7 (8 ... ♗d7?
doesn't solve Black's problems: 9
c4 ♕e4+ 10 ♘e2 ♗a4 11 0-0-0
♘a6 12 ♘c3 ♕c6 13 d5± Laketić–
Borges, Belgorod 1990) 9°c4 ♕e4+

10 ♘e2 b6 (10 ... ♘b6?! 11 f3 ♕c6 12 c5 ♘d5 13 c4 ♘e7 14 ♘c3± Capablanca–Alekhine, New York 1924) 11 f3 ♕g6 12 ♘g3 ♗b7, and according to Alekhine's analysis White has a small plus. So Black still has to find a way to full equality after 5 ed!?, a move so innocuous at first sight.

5 ... h6
6 ♗d2

The most natural and probably the strongest move, but by no means the only one. White also has the choice between:

(a) **6 ♗c1** ♘e4 7 ♕g4 (or 7 ♘ge2 c5 8 a3 ♗a5 9 b4! ♘xc3 10 ♘xc3 cd 11 ♘b5 ♗c7 12 f4 0-0 13 ♗d3 ♘c6= Heidl–Lalić, Biel Open 1989) 7 ... ♔f8 8 ♘ge2 (8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc c5 10 ♗d3 ♘xc3 11 dc ♘c6= is not dangerous for Black) 8 ... c5 9 a3 ♗a5 (9 ... ♕a5? is a mistake: 10 ab! ♕xa1 11 ♘xe4 de 12 bc) 10 b4 ♘xc3 11 ♘xc3 cb 12 ♘b5 b3+, with great complications in Veresov–Bagirov, USSR 1955. In our day, 6 ♗c1 is seen extremely rarely.

(b) **6 ♗h4** (another visitor from the past) 6 ... g5 7 ♗g3 ♘e4 8 ♘ge2 c5, with good counterplay.

(c) **6 ♗e3** ♘e4 7 ♕g4 g6 (7 ... ♔f8 occurs rarely, though this is unjustified; 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc c5 10 ♗d3 ♘xc3 11 dc ♘c6 [*11 ... ♕a5?! 12 ♕b4!*] 12 ♘f3 f5 [*12 ... ♕a5 is weaker: 13 0-0 ♘a4? 14 ♗d2 ♘c3 15 ♘d4 ♘e7 16 c6!±± Mokry–Chinchilla, Dubai Ol 1986. Of course 13 ... ♘a4? was a mis-* *take, but even after the better 13 ... ♕a4! White's chances are preferable*] 13 ef ♕xf6 14 ♕h5 e5, with approximately equal chances; Klovan–Shereshevsky, USSR 1977. The sharp 7 ... g5!? is also worth studying, for example 8 a3 h5! 9 ♕f3 ♗xc3+ 10 bc c5 11 ♗d3 ♘xc3 12 ♕g3 [*12 dc ♘c6 13 ♕g3 ♕a5 also leads to unclear play*] 12 ... g4 13 dc d4 14 ♗d2 ♕d5, with chances for both sides; Govedarica–Ruckschloss, Trnava Open 1990) 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc ♘xc3 (it is worth eating the pawn, taking advantage of the absence of the bishop from d2. It is not easy to achieve equality after 9 ... c5 10 ♗d3 cd [*it is worth considering 10 ... ♘c6!? 11 ♗xe4 de 12 ♘e2 cd 13 cd ♕a5+ 14 c3 b6, with unclear consequences; Hernandez–Arencibia, Cali Z 1990. On the other hand White has the better position after 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♘e2 cd 12 ♗xd4 ♘c5 13 0-0±*] 11 cd ♕a5+ 12 ♔e2 ♗d7 13 f3 ♘c3+ 14 ♔f2 ♘c6 15 ♕f4, and the weakness of the dark squares is very noticeable; Coleman–Lautier, London 1988) 10 ♗d3 ♘c6 11 h4 ♕e7 (there is complex play after 11 ... ♗d7 12 h5 g5 13 ♘h3 ♕e7 14 f4 gf 15 ♗f2 ♕f8! 16 ♕xf4 0-0-0, Kuijpers–Ree, Dutch Ch 1983. 11 ... ♘e7 is weak: 12 f3! ♗d7 13 ♕f4 ♘f5 14 ♗f2±) 12 h5 g5 13 f4 gf 14 ♕xf4 ♗d7 15 ♘f3 0-0-0 occurred in Klovan–Makarichev, USSR 1978. Both sides have got what they

were after: White has the initiative and Black has an extra pawn.

(d) **6 ef** hg **7 fg** ♖g8 **8 h4** gh (it doesn't pay to let the pawn advance further) **9 ♕h5** (or 9 ♘f3 ♖xg7 10 ♖xh4 ♖g8!=. White also fails to gain advantage by 9 ♕g4 ♕f6 10 ♖xh4 ♕xg7 11 ♕xg7 ♖xg7 12 ♖h8+ ♗f8, and with his bishop pair Black can face the future without worry) 9 ... ♕f6 10 ♖xh4 ♘c6 11 ♗b5 ♗d7 12 ♘f3 0–0–0 13 0–0–0 ♖xg7= Timman–Ree, Wijk aan Zee 1982.

6	**...**	**♗xc3**
7	**bc**	

There are good reasons why 7 ♗xc3 is seen extremely rarely. Black equalises with ease, for example: 7 ♗xc3 ♘e4 8 ♗d2 (alternatives can bring trouble only to White: 8 ♗a5? 0–0 9 ♗d3 ♘c6 10 ♗c3 ♘xc3 11 bc f6!∓ Fischer–Petrosian, Curaçao C 1962; or 8 ♗b4 c5 9 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 10 dc ♘d7=; or 8 ♘e2 0–0 9 f3 ♘xc3 10 ♘xc3 c5 11 dc ♕h4+! 12 g3 ♕b4 13 ♕d3 ♘c6∓ Koch–Murey, Paris 1985; or finally 8 ♗d3 ♘xc3 9 bc c5 10 ♕g4 0–0 11 dc ♕c7 12 f4 ♕xc3∓ Mukhin–Makarichev, USSR 1975) 8 ... ♘xd2 (the complications arising from 8 ... c5 are entertaining: 9 ♗e3 cd 10 ♗xd4 ♘c6 11 f3 ♕h4+ 12 g3 ♘xg3 13 ♗f2 ♕b4+ 14 c3 ♕xb2 15 ♗xg3 ♕xc3+ — Djurić) 9 ♕xd2, and now the simplest route to equality is 9 ... c5 10 dc ♘d7 11 ♗b5 0–0 12 ♗xd7 ♗xd7=.

7	**...**	**♘e4**
8	**♕g4** *(71)*	

71 B
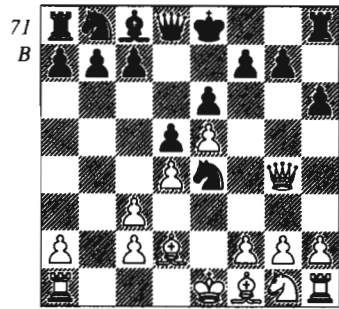
A crucial position for the assessment of the entire variation. Black's kingside is in danger, and to defend the pawn on g7 he has to make concessions, either weakening his dark squares with 8 ... g6 or renouncing his castling rights with 8 ... ♔f8. On the other hand Black has made considerable gains on the queenside, and this forces White to play energetically. Black has no problems after 8 ♘f3 ♘xd2 9 ♕xd2 c5 10 f4 ♘c6 11 ♘f3 ♕a5 12 ♖d1 ♗d7= Yurtayev–Guseinov, Tallinn 1983.

8	**...**	**g6**

The way to gain advantage against 8 ... ♔f8!? is none too clear. There can follow: 9 h4 (the game is level after 9 ♗d3 ♘xd2 10 ♔xd2 ♕g5+!? 11 ♕xg5 hg 12 f4 gf 13 ♖f1 ♘c6 14 ♖xf4 ♗d7=. Black has to play accurately against the cunning 9 ♗c1!?, which retains the powerful bishop. The best answer is 9 ... c5 10 ♗d3 ♘xc3! [*10 ... ♕a5 is weak: 11*

♘e2 cd 12 0–0 dc 13 ♗xe4 de 14 ♕xe4 ♘c6 15 ♖d1± Klovan–K. Grigorian, USSR 1972. *The game has opened up, the white bishop is clearly stronger than its opposite number, and the king on f8 is, to put it mildly, not in the best of places*] 11 dc ♕a5 12 ♗d2 ♕a4! 13 h3 [*13 ♕h3?! ♘e4 14 ♘f3 ♘xd2 15 ♘xd2 ♕f4 gives Black the better game*] 13 ... ♘e4 [*13 ... ♕xg4 14 hg ♘e4 15 ♗xe4 de 16 f4 ♗d7 also gives approximate equality; Hebden–Lautier, London 1988*] 14 ♗xe4!? [*14 ♘e2 ♘d7 15 ♗xe4 ♕xe4 16 ♕xe4 de 17 0–0–0 ♘xe5 18 ♗c3 ♘d7∓ Klovan– Dvoretsky, USSR 1974*] 14 ... ♕xe4 15 ♕xe4 de 16 0–0–0 ♘d7=)

9 ... c5 (Euwe's move 9 ... f5?! fails to equalise: 10 ef ♕xf6 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 ♕f4 ♘xd2 13 ♕xd2 e5 14 0–0–0 ed 15 cd± — *ECO*; however, it is worth considering 9 ... b6!? 10 ♗d3 ♘xd2 11 ♔xd2 ♗a6, with complex play) 10 ♖h3 ♘c6 11 ♗d3 ♘xd2 12 ♔xd2 c4!? (Black renounces his pressure on the centre and aims to transfer the attack from d4 to c3; on the kingside he is forced to conduct a laborious defence. Standard theory frowns on this move, but in practice Black achieves good results with it) 13 ♗e2 b5 14 ♖g3 (or 14 ♕f4 ♗d7 15 a3 a5 16 ♗g4 ♕e7 17 ♘e2 ♖a7 18 ♕e3 ♔g8 19 ♘g3 b4, with chances for both sides in Spiriev–Monin, Zalakaros Open 1991) 14 ... ♖g8 15 ♕f4 a5 16 ♗h5 ♕e7 17 ♖f3 ♘d8 18

♘e2 b4, with a completely unclear position; Yurtayev–Shabalov, Riga 1988.

9 ♗d3

Just as in the 8 ... ♔f8 variation, White can try retaining his bishop: 9 ♗c1 c5 10 ♗d3 ♘xc3 (stronger than 10 ... cd 11 ♘e2 ♘c6 12 ♗xe4 de 13 cd ♘xd4 14 ♕xe4±) 11 dc (after 11 ♗xg6 fg 12 ♕xg6+ ♔d7 13 ♕g7+ ♔c6 14 ♘f3 b6, Black has excellent chances of resisting the attack) 11 ... ♕a5 12 ♗d2 ♕a4 13 h3 ♘e4! (White has a clear advantage after 13 ... ♕xg4? 14 hg ♘e4 15 ♗xe4 de 16 ♘e2 ♘d7 17 ♘g3, Gligorić– Pachman, Amsterdam IZ 1964) 14 ♘e2 (14 ♗xe4 ♕d4!? 15 ♖d1 ♕xe5 is not unfavourable to Black) 14 ... ♘xc5 15 ♕f3 ♕d7 (or 15 ... ♕h4 16 0–0 ♘c6 17 g3 ♕e7 18 ♕e3 ♗d7, with unclear play; Tal–Vooremaa, Tallinn 1981) 16 0–0 b6 17 a4 ♗a6, Arbakov–M. Gurevich, USSR 1978. White has enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn, but no more.

9 ...   ♘xd2

9 ... ♗d7?! only makes it easier for White to develop his initiative: 10 h4! c5 11 h5 g5 12 f4 ♘xd2 13 ♔xd2 c4 14 ♗e2± Pasman– Murey, Beer-Sheva 1978.

10 ♔xd2   c5
11 ♘f3

White had to make quite a difficult choice between several reasonable continuations, and it is quite possible that the natural

move played by Fischer is not the most exact. Let us look at the alternatives:

(a) **11 dc?!** ♘d7 (or 11 ... ♕c7 12 ♕d4 ♗d7 13 f4 ♘c6 14 ♕e3 ♘a5, Connell–Ryan, Dublin 1991) 12 ♗b5 ♕c7 13 ♕d4 0–0 14 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 15 ♘f3 ♖fc8, with an excellent game; Martinović–Padevsky, Kragujevac 1984.

(b) **11 h4!?** (White commences active operations, intending to use his f-pawn too if the case arises) 11 ... ♘c6 (in Seirawan–Makarichev, Reykjavik 1990, Black played 11 ... ♕a5 and quickly gained the advantage after 12 h5?! g5 13 f4 cd 14 ♘f3 dc+ 15 ♔e2 ♕a4!. However, after 12 ♖h3!? cd 13 ♗xg6, White's threats are very powerful. White also does well out of 11 ... ♕e7 12 h5 g5 13 f4 gf 14 ♕g7 ♕f8 15 ♕xf8+ ♖xf8 16 ♖f1± Kovalev–Gusev, Leningrad 1989) 12 ♕f4!? (12 ♖h3 is not bad either: 12 ... ♗d7 *[12 ... cd!? 13 cd ♗d7 14 c3=]* 13 ♕f4 ♕a5 14 dc! 0–0–0 15 ♘f3 ♕xc5 16 ♘d4± Belyavsky–Padevsky, Baku 1980) 12 ... ♗d7 (or 12 ... cd 13 cd ♗d7 14 c3 ♕e7 15 ♕f6 0–0–0 16 ♕xe7 ♘xe7 17 h5± Zs. Polgar–Dreyev, New York 1989) 13 ♘f3 ♕e7 14 h5 g5 15 ♕f6 ♕xf6 16 ef c4 17 ♗f1, with a small but noticeable advantage; Kovalev–Vaiser, Clichy Open 1991.

(c) **11 ♕f4!?** (we shall see that quite a good reply to ♘f3 is 11 ... ♕c7, aiming to meet 12 ♕f4 with 12 ... f5!. The text move forestalls

this idea, and deserves serious examination. Play may continue as follows) 11 ... cd 12 cd ♕a5+ 13 ♔e2 (13 ♔e3!? ♘d7 14 ♘e2 b6 15 h4 ♗a6 16 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 17 ♔d2±) 13 ... ♘d7 14 a4 b6 15 ♕d2! ♕xd2+ 16 ♔xd2± Wedberg–Binham, corr 1982.

11 ...   ♘c6

11 ... ♕c7!?, as recommended by Fischer, deserves attention. There can follow 12 ♕h4 (Black is given no problems by 12 dc ♘d7 13 ♗xg6 fg 14 ♕xe6+ ♔d8 15 ♕xg6 ♖e8, van der Sterren–Ree, Dutch Ch 1981, or by 12 ♕f4?! f5! 13 h4 ♘d7 14 g3 c4 15 ♗e2 ♘b6, with a good position in Gorbachev–Savchenko, Simferopol 1990. However, 12 h4!? is interesting; 12 ... cd 13 cd ♘c6 14 ♕f4 f5 occurred in Aseyev–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Odessa, and now 15 g4! transposes into Fischer–Rossolimo) 12 ... ♕e7!? (Black is also close to equality after 12 ... cd 13 cd ♕e7 *[13 ... ♗d7 is risky: 14 ♕f6 ♖g8 15 h4, with the initiative in Ivanchuk–M. Gurevich, Reggio Emilia 1989/90]* 14 ♕f6 ♕xf6 15 ef a6! 16 ♘e5 ♘d7; Hazai–S. Mohr, Budapest 1991) 13 ♕f4 c4 (recommended by Keres) 14 ♗e2 ♘c6 15 ♖ab1 a6 16 h4 ♗d7 17 h5 g5= Tischbierek–S. Mohr, Bundesliga 1991.

11 ... ♗d7 is rarely played, although in a game Spassky–Relange, French Team Ch 1991, Black obtained quite a good position after 12 dc ♕e7 13 ♖ab1 ♗c6

14 h4 ♘d7 15 ♖he1 ♘xc5.

12   ♛f4 *(72)*

Fischer takes control of the weakened dark squares on the kingside. 12 dc promises little in view of the simple 12 ... ♛c7 13 ♖he1 ♘e7=. White can try to put a brake on the opponent's queenside activity by occupying the b-file with a rook. But which one? 12 ♖hb1 ♛c7! (12 ... cd 13 cd ♛a5+ 14 c3 b6 15 a4! ♗a6 16 ♗b5± Gallagher–Schwartzmann, Berne Open 1990) 13 ♛f4 cd 14 cd f5! 15 h4 ♗d7= J. Polgar–Knaak, Dortmund 1990; or 12 ♖ab1 cd 13 cd ♛a5+ (White has a small plus after 13 ... ♘a5 14 ♛f4 ♗d7 15 h4 ♖c8 16 h5 g5 17 ♛f6± Spassky–Petrosian, Amsterdam C 1956; while 13 ... ♛c7 can be answered by 14 ♔e2 ♗d7 15 ♖hc1±) 14 ♔e3!? (an equal game results from 14 ♔e2 b6 15 ♛f4 ♗a6 16 ♔d2 ♛xd2+ 17 ♔xd2 ♗xd3= Anelli–Frank, Acasusso Cup 1991) 14 ... b6 15 ♛f4 ♗a6 16 ♖he1. *ECO* assesses this position as '±', and there is no reason to disagree.

Black experiences no problems after 12 h4 ♛a5! (or 12 ... ♗d7 13 ♛f4 ♛e7 14 ♖ab1 0-0-0 15 dc ♛xc5 16 ♘d4 f5!= Sznapik–Knaak, Stara Zagora Z 1990) 13 ♛f4 cd (in Marjanović–Kontić, Belgrade GMA 1988, Black played the less convincing 13 ... ♗d7 14 ♖hb1 c4 15 ♛f6 ♖g8 16 ♗e2±. However, 13 ... b6!? is worth studying) 14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15

♛xd4 ♗d7 16 ♖ab1 b6 17 ♛b4 ♛xb4 18 cb a6= Brunner–Glek, Bundesliga 1991.

72 B
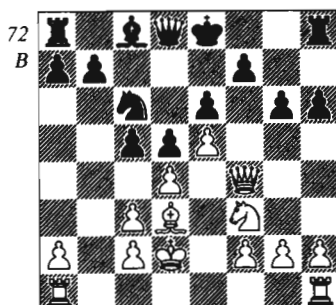
12   ...   ♛c7

Fischer recommends 12 ... ♛a5 (12 ... g5 13 ♛f6 ♛xf6 14 ef g4 15 ♘e5 cd 16 cd ♘xd4 17 h3± Fischer) 13 ♖hb1 b6 14 a4 ♘a6 15 ♗b5 ♖c8, and assesses the position as equal. It is difficult to argue with such an authoritative opinion, yet it seems to me that after 16 h4!? the initiative is in White's hands. Nor does Black have full equality after 12 ... cd 13 cd ♛c7 14 ♛f6 ♖g8 15 ♖ab1 ♗d7 16 h4 ♖ac8 17 ♔e2! Kindermann–Knaak, Dortmund 1991.

13   h4

On the analogy of Kindermann–Knaak, it was worth considering 13 ♛f6!? ♖g8 14 h4 with an excellent position.

13   ...   f5!

This advance, of undoubted benefit to Black, was made possible by White's somewhat inaccurate 13th move.

14   g4!   cd

15	**cd**	**♘e7?!**

It is obvious that White has the initiative, and Rossolimo should have removed his king to a safe place without delay: 15 ... ♗d7 16 gf gf (16 ... ef 17 ♕g3 ♘e7 18 e6! with a powerful attack — Fischer) 17 ♖hg1 0-0-0±.

16	**gf**	**ef**
17	**♗b5+!**	**♔f8?**

An exchange of bishops would allow the white e-pawn to advance: 17 ... ♗d7 18 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 19 e6!. As the least of the evils, Fischer suggests 17 ... ♔d8 18 ♗d3 ♗e6±.

18	**♗d3**

The bishop returns after doing its work.

18	**...**	**♗e6**
19	**♘g1!** *(73)*	

73
B
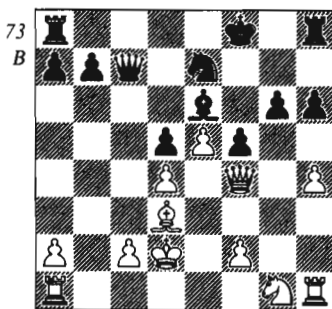
Fischer conducts the attack in his usual precise and methodical manner. The best square for the knight is f4, and he loses no time in bringing it there.

19	**...**	**♔f7**
20	**♘h3**	**♖ac8**
21	**♖hg1**	**b6?!**

It would have been hard for Black to save the game even with a more active defence, as Fischer demonstrates by giving a long and virtually forced variation: 21 ... ♕c3+ 22 ♔e3 ♘c6 23 ♖ab1! ♘b4 24 ♖xb4! ♕xb4 25 h5 ♖hg8 26 hg+ ♖xg6 27 ♖xg6 ♕e1+ 28 ♔f3 ♔xg6 29 ♕h4! ♕d1+ 30 ♔g2 ♖g8 31 ♔h2! and Black has no defence against the numerous threats.

22	**h5**	**♕c3+**
23	**♔e2**	**♘c6**
24	**hg+**	

Of the black king's formerly sturdy shelter, only ruins remain.

24	**...**	**♔g7**
25	**♖ad1!**	**♘xd4+**
26	**♔f1**	**♖he8**
27	**♖g3!**	

The hasty 27 ♕h4 ♘f3! 28 ♕f6+ ♔g8 would have left Black with some hope of survival even now.

27	**...**	**♘c6**
28	**♕h4**	**♘xe5**
29	**♘f4**	

The knight's arrival at f4 means that the game is close to its end.

29	**...**	**♘g4**
30	**♘xe6+**	**♖xe6**
31	**♗xf5**	**♕c4+**
32	**♔g1**	
	1-0	

11 Classical System

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♘f6
4	♗g5	♗e7 *(74)*

74
W
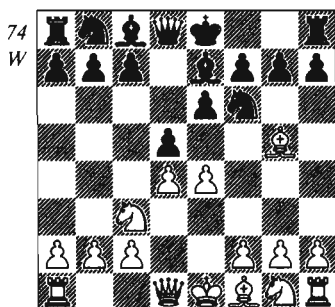
The 4 ... ♗e7 system might be as old as chess itself. Black induces White to release the central tension and takes on fewer positional liabilities than in the MacCutcheon Variation. White now has several options. He can immediately exchange on f6 (Anderssen's attack), intending to work up a kingside initiative — although he will sorely miss his dark-squared bishop. After the more modern 5 e5 ♘fd7, White can choose between 6 ♗xe7 and the sharp 6 h4!?. Black will do well to keep his nerve in all circumstances (White's attacking possibilities are quite substantial), defending himself calmly and patiently, and trying to exploit any opportunities for counterplay the moment they arise.

Rossetto–Stahlberg
Vina del Mar 1947

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g4 ♗e7

5 e5

In our day 5 ♗xf6 is played extremely rarely. This is not surprising, since Black easily obtains at least an equal game. For example, 5 ... ♗xf6 6 ♘f3 (Black's problems are solved even more simply after 6 e5 ♗e7 7 ♕g4 0–0 8 0–0–0 f5 9 ♕h3 c5 10 dc ♘c6, when White should be thinking about maintaining equality) 6 ... c5 (Black shouldn't be in a hurry to castle: 6 ... 0–0 7 ♗d3 c5 8 e5 ♗e7 9 h4!, with good attacking chances) 7 ed (or 7 e5 ♗e7 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♗d3 ♘c6 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♘a4 ♗e7 12 c4?! dc 13 ♗xc4 ♕c5!∓ Stanciu–Foisor,

Romanian Ch, Predeal 1988) 7 ... ed 8 ♗b5+ ♘c6 9 0–0 0–0=.

5 ... ♘fd7

The most logical retreat. 5 ... ♘g8?! hardly merits serious attention. Exploiting his lead in development, White easily seizes the initiative: 6 ♗e3 (Black is drastically short of space, and exchanges would help him: 6 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 7 f4 b6 8 ♘f3 ♕d7 9 ♕d2 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 0–0 c5= Moutousis–Gonzales, Novi Sad Ol 1990) 6 ... c5 (perhaps Black ought to continue with waiting tactics, for example 6 ... b6 7 ♕g4 g6 8 h4 h5 9 ♕g3 ♗a6 10 ♘f3 ♗xf1 11 ♔xf1 ♕d7, and White has no more than a small plus; Sämisch–Nimzowitsch, Berlin 1928) 7 dc ♘d7 8 ♗b5! ♕c7 9 ♕d4 ♘h6 10 ♗xh6 ♗xc5 11 ♕f4 gh 12 ♘f3± Oll–Borges, Tallinn 1989.

5 ... ♘e4!? is more interesting: 6 ♗xe7 (a harmless alternative is 6 ♘xe4 ♗xg5 7 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 8 ♘f3 ♕e7 9 c3 c5 10 ♗d3 [*10 dc ♕xc5 11 ♗d3 ♗d7 12 ♕e2 ♘c6= Ivkov–Geller, Leningrad 1957*] 10 ... cd 11 ♘xd4 ♘c6 12 f4 0–0= Savon–Glek, Odessa 1989) 6 ... ♘xc3!? (White has a clear advantage after 6 ... ♕xe7 7 ♘xe4 de 8 c3 [*or 8 ♕e2 b6 9 0–0–0 ♗b7 10 g3 c5 11 ♗g2± Flohr–Alekhine, Bled 1931*] 8 ... 0–0 9 ♕c2 f5 10 ef ♕xf6 11 f3! ♘c6 12 ♕xe4 e5 13 d5± Lanc–Glek, Prague 1985) 7 ♕g4 (if White is happy with a small endgame advantage, he can

continue with 7 ♗xd8 ♘xd1 8 ♗xc7 ♗xb2 9 ♖b1 ♘c4 10 ♗xc4 dc 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 ♗d6± Spassky–R. Byrne, Moscow 1985) 7 ... ♕xe7 8 ♕xg7 ♕b4 9 ♕xh8+ ♔d7 10 ♗d3 ♕xb2 11 ♖d1 ♘xd1 12 ♔xd1 ♘c6! 13 ♕xh7 ♘xd4 14 ♕xf7+ ♔c6 15 ♕f4, Rantanen–Lputian, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989. White stands better thanks to his strong passed pawn on the h-file, but Black is not without counterchances.

6 h4!? *(75)*
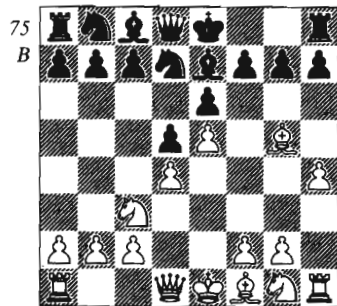
This very dangerous move for Black to meet was used repeatedly by the French player Chatard at the beginning of the century, but became really well known after the famous game Alekhine–Fahrni, Mannheim 1914. Thus it was that the names of a modest amateur and a long-reigning World Champion were coupled together to form the title of this popular variation, which has been striking terror into players of the Black side for nearly a hundred years now. In return for the sacrificed pawn,

White opens the h-file (for himself), creates the opportunity for pressure with massed forces on the kingside, and makes Black withdraw (even if only temporarily) into passive defence. To this day the variation remains topical, even though, through trial and error, more or less sound methods of defence have been discovered.

6 ... c5

The main question is whether to accept the pawn sacrifice. The answer is, I think, a matter of personal taste, depending on whether you prefer a defensive game with extra material to a double-edged game with material equality. Let us look at Black's alternatives:

(a) **6 ... h6?!** (don't weaken yourself in the place where you are weaker already — this general rule applies one hundred per cent to the current position) 7 ♗e3 (White can also count on somewhat the better game after 7 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 8 ♕g4 [*or 8 f4 a6 9 ♕g4 f5 10 ef ♘xf6 11 ♕g6+ ♕f7 12 ♗d3, with a clear advantage in Velimirović–Lontoc, Nice Ol 1974*] 8 ... 0–0 9 ♘f3 f5 10 ♕f4±) 7 ... c5 8 ♕g4 g6!? (in an old game Dubinin–Rabinovich, USSR Ch, Leningrad 1934, White acquired a big advantage after 8 ... ♔f8 9 ♘f3! ♘c6 10 0–0–0 cd 11 ♗xd4 ♕a5 12 ♖h3 ♘c5 13 ♖g3) 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 dc ♘xc5 11 0–0–0 a6 12 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 13 ♘e4 ♗e7 14 ♕f4, with the initiative; Hellers–

Bareyev, Gausdal 1987.

(b) **6 ... 0–0?!** (hoping to hide his king in a safe place, Black jumps out of the frying-pan into the fire!) 7 ♗d3 (complex play results from 7 ♕g4 f5! 8 ef ♘xf6 9 ♕g3 c5 10 dc ♘bd7 11 0–0–0 ♘xc5 Kupreichik–Moskalenko, Pinsk 1986) 7 ... f5 (7 ... c5 is dangerous: 8 ♘h3!? [*or 8 ♕h5 g6 9 ♕h6, with a strong attack*] 8 ... ♖e8 9 ♘b5 f5 10 ♘d6, Bogoljubow–Spielmann, Vienna 1922) 8 ♘h3!? (8 g4 leads to wild complications: 8 ... c5 9 gf cd 10 f6 ♗xf6! [*10 ... ♘xf6? 11 ef ♗xf6 12 ♕h5 g6 13 ♗xg6++ Sax–Donner, Amsterdam 1976*] 11 ef ♘xf6 12 ♘ce2 e5, with unclear play. White has somewhat the better chances after 8 ef ♘xf6 9 ♘f3 c5 10 dc ♘c6 11 ♕e2 ♗xc5 12 0–0–0, Shabalov–Budnikov, Leningrad 1989) 8 ... ♘c6 (Black is in severe difficulties after 8 ... ♘a6?! 9 ♗xa6 ba 10 ♘a4 ♕e8!? 11 0–0! c5 12 ♘f4 ♕f7 13 c4! dc 14 d5, Halifman–Ulibin, Sochi 1989; according to Halifman's analysis, an even stronger reply is 9 g4! ♘b4 10 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 11 gf ♘xd3+ 12 ♕xd3 ♖xf5 13 ♘b5±) 9 ♘e2 ♘b4 10 ♘ef4 ♘xd3+ 11 ♕xd3 ♘b6 12 0–0–0 ♗d7 13 ♖hg1 ♘c4 14 g4± Zezulkin–Lempert, Czestochowa 1991.

(c) **6 ... f6** (another move of less than the highest quality) 7 ♕h5+ (the game Panov–Yudovich, USSR Ch, Tbilisi 1937, took an amusing course: 7 ♗d3!? c5! [7

... *fg?* 8 h5+ ♔f8 9 ♖h3] 8 ♕h5+ ♔f8 9 ♘xd5? [*9 ef!*] 9 ... fg 10 ♖h3 g4 11 ♘f4 ♘xe5! 12 de gh 13 ♗xh7 ♖xh7! 14 ♕xh7 h2, and the pawn cannot be stopped) 7 ... ♔f8 (considerably stronger than 7 ... g6?! 8 ef! ♘xf6 9 ♕e2 a6 10 0–0–0 c5 11 dc ♕a5 12 ♘h3!±) 8 ef ♘xf6 9 ♕f3 (probably more convincing than 9 ♕e2 c5 10 dc ♘a6! 11 ♘f3 ♘xc5 12 0–0–0 b5 13 ♘xb5 [*13 ♕e3!? b4 14 ♗xf6 gf 15 ♕h6±*] 13 ... ♖b8 14 ♘bd4 ♕a5 15 ♘c6 ♕xa2, with wild complications in Spassky–Guimard, Göteborg IZ 1955) 9 ... c5 10 dc b6!? (or 10 ... ♘bd7 11 0–0–0 ♘xc5 12 ♘h3±) 11 h5 h6 (White also has the better position after 11 ... bc 12 h6 g6 13 0–0–0 ♘bd7 14 ♖e1 ♕b6 15 ♗b5± Unzicker–Stahlberg, Stockholm 1960) 12 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 13 ♘h3 c6 14 ♘f4± Keres–Stahlberg, telegraph game 1960.

(d) **6 ... a6** (a few years ago this move still enjoyed a certain popularity, but the latest experiences with it have been unfavourable) 7 ♕g4 ♗xg5 (White gains a clear advantage from 7 ... ♔f8 8 ♕f4 c5 9 dc ♘c6 10 ♘f3 ♘xc5 [*or 10 ... ♕c7 11 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 12 0–0–0 ♘g6 13 ♕g3, with the initiative*] 11 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 12 h5 h6 13 ♕e3± Kosenkov–Seelinger, corr 1987. After 7 ... f5 8 ♕h5+ [*White also has 8 ♕g3 c5 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 0–0–0, with the better game*] 8 ... g6 9 ♕h6 ♗xg5 10 hg ♕e7 [*stronger than 10 ... ♔f7 11*

♘ge2 c5 12 ♘f4 ♘f8 13 dc ♘c6 14 g4!± Unzicker–Czerniak, Amsterdam Ol 1954] 11 0–0–0 ♘c6 12 ♘ge2 ♘d8 13 f4 ♘f7 14 ♕g7 ♘f8, the initiative is in White's hands, but penetrating Black's defences is not at all simple; Vogt–Wiemer, Bundesliga 1991) 8 hg c5 9 dc!? (with a lead in development, opening the game in the centre looks very natural. But 9 g6 has also been played frequently, for example: 9 ... f5 10 ♕f4 [*10 ♕g3 h6 11 ♘f3 0–0 12 0–0–0 ♘c6 13 ♘e2 cd 14 ♘exd4±* *Halifman–M. Gurevich, Moscow 1987*] 10 ... h6 11 ♘f3 [*unclear play arises from 11 dc ♘xc5 12 0–0–0 0–0 13 ♗c4!? ♕e8 14 ♘xd5! ♘e4! 15 ♖d3 ♕xg6 Chinchilla–Machulsky, Managua 1987*] 11 ... ♘c6 12 0–0–0 0–0 13 dc!, Lutikov–Bastrikov, USSR 1959. Black is in a very dangerous position, given the numerous threats to sacrifice on d5 or h6) 9 ... ♘xe5 10 ♕g3 ♘bc6 11 0–0–0 ♗d7 12 f4 ♘g6 13 f5 with the advantage; Bosboom–Peek, Eindhoven 1986.

(e) **6 ... ♗xg5** (true to principle, at least) 7 hg ♕xg5 8 ♘h3 (in Velimirović–V. Kovacević, Yugoslav Ch 1988, White was unsuccessful with 8 ♖h5; there followed: 8 ... ♕e7 9 ♕g4 f5! 10 ♕h3 ♘f8 11 0–0–0 ♗d7 12 g4 fg 13 ♕xg4 ♘c6, and Black's chances were no worse) 8 ... ♕e7 (8 ... ♕h6?! 9 g3! c6 10 ♕f3 g6 11 ♘f4 ♕f8 12 0–0–0 was good for White in Velimirović–Kovacević, Stara

Pazova 1988) 9 ♘f4 g6 (in the original game Alekhine–Fahrni, Mannheim 1914, Black played too passively with 9 ... ♘f8?! 10 ♛g4 f5 11 gf ef 12 0–0–0 c6 13 ♖e1±. But 9 ... ♘c6!? is interesting and deserves further practical tests; Halifman–Gulko, Reykjavik World Cup 1991, continued 10 ♛g4 ♘xd4 [*10 ... f5? 11 ♛h5+ ♛f7 12 ♘xe6!*] 11 0–0–0 ♘f5 12 ♘fxd5! ed [*12 ... ♘xe5? 13 ♛a4+!*] 13 ♘xd5 ♛xe5 14 ♗b5 0–0 15 ♗xd7 ♘h6!. Practice has also seen 9 ... a6!? 10 ♛g4 g6 11 0–0–0 ♘b6 12 ♗d3 ♘8d7 13 ♖h6, with more than enough compensation for the pawn; Acevedo–Palacios, corr 1982) 10 ♛g4 (10 ♗d3 is also quite good; if then 10 ... ♘b6, White has 11 ♗xg6! with the better game) 10 ... ♘c6 11 0–0–0 ♘b6 (or 11 ... ♘f8 12 ♛g3 ♛d8 13 ♗b5! a6 14 ♗xc6 bc 15 ♘a4, with advantage) 12 ♖h6 ♗d7 13 ♗b5! 0–0–0 14 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♖hd1 ♗e8 16 ♘d3, with strong pressure; Goldberg–Knaak, Nordhausen 1986.

7 ♘b5

After 7 ♛g4, Black retains quite good equalising chances: 7 ... ♘c6 (7 ... ♔f8!? is also worth studying) 8 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 9 ♛g5+ ♔f8 10 ♛xd8+ ♔xd8 11 f4 ♘c6 12 ♘f3 a6 13 0–0–0 b5, and White can only count on a minimal plus; Liliental–Menchik, Moscow 1935.

An interesting alternative to the text move is 7 ♗xe7. There can follow:

(a) 7 ... ♛xe7 (clearly showing his resolve to fight for the initiative, even at the cost of sacrifices) 8 ♘b5 0–0 (surely not 8 ... ♔d8?) 9 ♘c7 cd 10 ♘xa8 f6 (unfortunately Black doesn't have full compensation for the sacrificed material after 10 ... ♘xe5 11 ♛xd4 ♘bc6 12 ♛d2 ♛d6 13 ♗e2 ♗d7 14 h5! f6 15 f4 ♘f7 16 0–0–0; Halifman–Levin, Riga 1988) 11 ♛xd4 (the situation is very unclear after 11 ♘c7 fe 12 ♘b5 ♘f6!) 11 ... ♘c6 12 ♛d2 fe 13 0–0–0 ♘f6 14 f3 ♛d6 15 ♘e2 ♗d7 16 ♘c3 ♖xa8, Bronstein–Stahlberg, Budapest C 1950. For the exchange, Black has a pawn and domination of the centre; with correct play he is not risking much.

(b) 7 ... ♔xe7 8 f4 (8 ♛d2 ♘c6 9 ♛g5+ ♔f8 leads to variations we have looked at already. In Kovalev–Dreyev, Simferopol 1988, White quickly forfeited his pawn centre with 8 ♘f3?! cd 9 ♛xd4 ♘c6 10 ♛f4 ♛c7 11 0–0–0 ♘dxe5 12 ♔b1 ♛b8!∓. Black shouldn't be afraid of the endgame after 8 ♛g4 ♔f8 9 ♘f3 cd 10 ♛xd4 ♛b6 11 ♛xb6 ab!=) 8 ... ♛b6 (not 8 ... cd? 9 ♛xd4 ♘c6 10 ♛d2 a6 11 ♘f3 ♔f8 12 h5! h6 13 ♗d3± Zolnierowicz–Ramensberger, Berne Open 1991) 9 ♘f3 ♛xb2! (it's no good stopping halfway with 9 ...♘c6?! 10 ♘a4 ♛a5 11 c3 cd 12 b4! ♛c7 13 ♘xd4± Gligorić–Yanofsky, Saltsjöbaden IZ 1948) 10 ♘b5 a6 (White has a strong initiative after 10 ... ♛b4+

11 ♔f2 a6 12 ♘c7 ♖a7 13 c4!) 11 ♖b1 ♕xa2 occurred in Maksimović–Ulibin, Chelyabinsk 1990. White now has the choice between heading for an unclear position with 12 ♘d6 ♕a5+ 13 ♔f2 ♘c6, and repeating moves with 12 ♖a1 ♕b2 13 ♖b1 ♕a2.

7 ... f6!

White has too many active possibilities after 7 ... cd 8 ♘d6+ ♔f8 9 ♗xe7+ (not, however, 9 ♕h5? ♘xe5! 10 ♗xe7+ ♕xe7 11 ♕xe5 ♘c6 12 ♕g3 e5 with a good position; G. Kuzmin–Huzman, Kherson 1989) 9 ... ♔xe7 10 ♕h5!

8 ♗d3

The game is roughly equal after 8 ef ♘xf6 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 ♗f4 0-0 11 ♗c7 ♕d7 12 ♘e5 ♘xe5 13 ♗xe5 a6; Ivanović–Drasko, Nikšić 1991.

8 ... a6! *(76)*

Black's position is impossible to defend after the reckless 8 ... fg? 9 ♕h5+ ♔f8 10 hg ♗xg5 11 ♘d6.

Lyuboshits–Shagalovich, Minsk 1956, ended quickly with 8 ... ♕a5+? 9 ♗d2 ♕b6 10 ♕h5+ ♔f8 11 ♖h3! cd 12 ♖g3 fe 13 ♖xg7! ♔xg7 14 ♗h6+ ♔g8 15 ♕g6! 1-0. This game well illustrates the dangers that Black faces.

9 ♕h5+ ♔f8
10 ♖h3

White too has little choice; 10 ♘h3? cd 11 ♘f4 ♘xe5 12 ♘xd4 ♕b6 13 0-0-0 ♕xd4 gave Black a big advantage in Ragozin–Yanofsky, Saltsjöbaden IZ 1948.
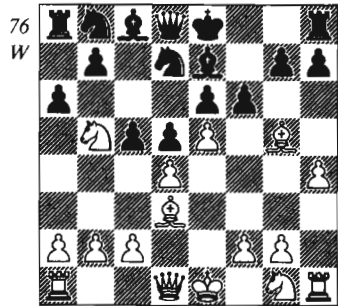
10 ... ab
11 ♗h6 ♕a5+

It was possible to conclude the struggle at once by 11 ... gh 12 ♕xh6+ ♔f7 13 ♕h5+, with perpetual check.

12 ♗d2 ♕c7
13 ♖g3 cd
14 ♘f3 ♘xe5
15 ♖xg7! h6!

Accuracy prevails to the end; 15 ... ♘xf3+ loses to 16 ♔d1!

16 ♗h7! *(77)*
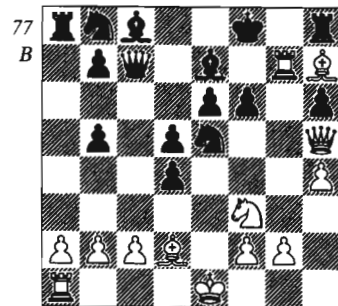
16 ♗xh6 is wholly bad: 16 ... ♖xh6 17 ♕xh6 ♗b4+!∓∓. Black also has a won position after 16 ♖g3? ♘xf3+ 17 ♖xf3 ♘c6 18 ♔f1

♕e5 19 ♕g6 f5 Pavlović–Züger, Mitropa Cup 1990.

16	...	♔xg7
17	♕xh6+	♔f7
18	♕h5+	
	½–½	

It is interesting that forty-four years later, the game Sorokin–Ulibin, Chelyabinsk 1991, took exactly the same course, except that the draw was agreed after one more move.

van der Wiel–Korchnoi
Amsterdam 1991

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e5 ♘fd7

6	♗xe7	♕xe7 (78)
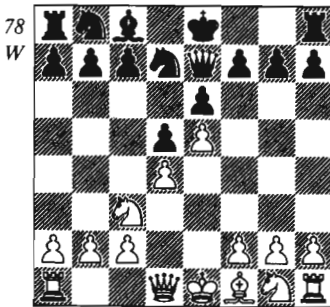
A very important position for the assessment of the entire variation with 3 ... ♘f6. White's spatial advantage is fairly substantial; his pawn centre is sturdy and powerful, and the f- and c-pawns can be brought to its support; his pieces can be developed wholly unhindered in excellent positions. Everything indicates that, for the time being, White should hold an undisputed initiative. But Black too is quite well prepared for the struggle; undermining the centre from two directions (... f7–f6 and ... c7–c5), he will be able to organise counterplay along the files that have been opened.

7 f4

This move, which fits naturally into White's plan, has virtually enjoyed a monopoly in recent tournaments. A word about the alternatives:

(a) 7 ♗d3 0–0 8 ♘f3 (nothing good comes from 8 ♘ce2, an attempt to maintain the pawn centre at a moment when this is no longer possible on objective grounds. After 8 ... c5 9 c3 f6 10 ef [*10 f4 fe! 11 fe cd 12 ♘xd4 ♘xe5 13 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 14 ♕h5+ ♔g8 15 ♕xe5 ♘c6 is rather in Black's favour*] 10 ... ♕xf6 11 ♘f3 ♘c6, Black has no difficulties at all) 8 ... c5 9 dc ♘c6 10 ♕e2 f6 11 ef ♕xf6 12 0–0 ♘xc5 13 ♖ae1 ♗d7= Savon–Rozentalis, Odessa 1989.

(b) 7 ♕g4 (a premature thrust) 7 ... 0–0 8 ♘f3 c5 9 ♗d3 f5 10 ef ♗xf6 11 ♕h4 ♘c6, with an excellent game.

(c) 7 ♘b5 (an old move of Alapin's, which shows too much regard for the pawn centre at the expense of valuable time) 7 ... ♘b6 (Black achieves approximate equality with 7 ... ♕d8 8 c3 0–0 9 f4 b6 10 ♘f3 ♗a6 11 a4 c6 12 ♘d6 ♗xf1 13 f6! Kindermann–Quinteros,

Dortmund 1986; but the text move is more thematic) 8 a4 (or 8 c3 a6 9 ♘a3 c5 10 f4 ♘c6 11 ♘c2 ♘a4! 12 ♖b1 b5= Em. Lasker–Liliental, Moscow 1936) 8 … a6 9 a5 ab 10 ab ♖xa1 11 ♕xa1 c6!? 12 ♕a8 (White's bridges are burnt! He is left a pawn down after 12 ♗d3 ♘d7 13 ♘f3 ♘xb6, L. Bronstein–Ladines, Acasusso 1991) 12 … ♕b4+ 13 c3 ♕xb2 14 ♘e2 b4 15 ♕xb8 0–0 16 cb ♕xb4+ 17 ♔d1 c5 (also 17 … ♕b3+ 18 ♔d2 ♕b4+ 19 ♔d3?! [*19 ♔e3!?*] 19 … c5 20 ♕c7 c4+, with a powerful initiative for the sacrificed pawn; Browne–Tan, Skopje Ol 1972) 18 ♕c7 ♕a4+ 19 ♔d2 ♗d7, and it would seem to be White who will have to worry about maintaining equality; Ljubojević–Korchnoi, Belgrade 1987.

(d) **7 ♕d2** (not a bad move, but I should add that it hardly has any independent significance; usually it soon transposes into the 7 f4 line) 7 … 0–0 8 ♘d1 (8 f4 is stronger) 8 … c5 9 c3 ♘c6 10 f4 f6 11 ♘f3 cd 12 cd fe, and after 13 fe (13 de ♕b4=) 13 … ♖xf3! 14 gf ♕h4+, Black seizes the initiative.

7	…	0–0

If Black is afraid to castle (a wholly understandable fear, since White is able to work up a strong kingside attack), he may continue with 7 … a6!?, preparing for preventive action on the other wing. Let us see how the game may then continue: 8 ♘f3 (White gains no advantage from 8 ♕h5 c5 9 ♘f3

♘c6 10 0–0–0 cd 11 ♘xd4 ♘c6 [*the chances are about equal after 11 … ♘xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♘b6 13 ♗d3 g6! 14 ♕g5 ♕xg5 15 fg ♘d7, Sariego–Moskalenko, Capablanca Memorial 1989; but 14 ♕h6 deserves attention*] 12 ♘f3 ♗d7 13 ♕g4 0–0 14 ♗d3 f5! with a good game; Mateo–Korchnoi, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 8 … c5 (sometimes Black postpones this standard move for a short while. For example, 8 … b5!? 9 ♗d3 b4 10 ♘e2 a5 11 0–0 c5 12 c3 g6 13 g4 h5!, and Black's chances are no worse; Wedberg–Schmittdiel, Gausdal Arnold Cup 1991. Or 8 … b6 9 h4!? [*9 ♕d2 c5 10 ♘e2 ♘c6 11 c3 0–0 12 g3 f5!= Fernandez Garcia–Arencibia, León 1991*] 9 … c5 10 h5 ♘c6 11 h6 g6 12 ♕d2 ♗b7 13 0–0–0± Halifman–Müller, Hamburg 1991) 9 dc (it is worth considering 9 ♕d2 ♘c6 10 0–0–0 [*more ambitious than 10 g3 b5 11 ♗g2 b4 12 ♘e2 a5 13 0–0 ♗a6= Hjartarson–Seirawan, Rotterdam World Cup 1989*] 10 … b5 11 dc [*the difference is that Black has already played … b7–b5, and this circumstance probably benefits White*] 11 … ♕xc5 [*11 … ♘xc5 is inadequate for full equality; 12 ♕e3! b4 13 ♘e2 0–0 14 g4 ♗b7 15 ♖g1 ♘e4 16 ♘g3, with advantage; Rogers–Soffer, Biel Open 1990*] 12 ♘e2! [*the most precise move! White also has somewhat the better game after 12 ♗d3 b4 13 ♘a4 ♕a5 14 b3 ♘c5 15 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 16 ♕e2± Pein-*

Soffer, Tel-Aviv 1989. Black is set no problems by 12 ♘d4?! ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4 b4 14 ♘a4 ♕a5 15 b3 ♗b7= Zaichik–Dzhandzhgava, Tbilisi 1991] 12 … ♘b6 [*or 12 … b4 13 ♘ed4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 0–0 15 ♔b1 a5 16 h4± Am. Rodriguez–Moskalenko, Holquin 1989*] 13 b3! ♗d7 14 a3! [*the sign of a great master!*] 14 … f6 15 ♘ed4 ♘xd4 16 ♘xd4 fe 17 fe 0–0 18 ♕b4! *with an endgame advantage in Tal–Lahav, Tel-Aviv 1990*) 9 … ♘c6 (9 … ♕xc5 is also playable, since 10 ♕d4 b6! 11 ♗d3 ♗b7 12 ♘e2 ♘c6= is not dangerous for Black; Frick–Bruk, Berne Z 1990) 10 ♕d2 (10 ♗d3 usually transposes with 10 … ♕xc5 11 ♕d2. Instead, 10 … ♘xc5 11 0–0 f5 12 ef ♕xf6 13 ♕e2! 0–0 14 ♘e5 is obviously good for White; Liberzon–Benzion, Israel 1974) 10 … ♕xc5 (in the World Cup, Reykjavik 1991, Seirawan played 10 … ♘xc5 a few times with varying success. There can follow: 11 ♗d3 [*11 0–0–0 b5 12 ♗d3 b4 13 ♘e2 a5 14 f5 ♘xd3+ 15 ♕xd3 ♗a6= Chandler–Seirawan*] 11 … 0–0 12 ♕e3! [*12 0–0 f5 13 ef ♕xf6 14 g3 ♗d7 15 ♖ae1 ♖ac8= Hjartarson–Seirawan*] 12 … f5 13 ef ♘xd3+ 14 ♕xd3 ♕xf6 15 g3 ♗d7 16 ♘g5! with a small plus, Ljubojević–Seirawan) 11 ♗d3 (Black has more chances of equalising after 11 0–0–0 ♘b6! 12 h4 [*12 ♘d4 ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 14 ♖xd4 h5 15 h4 ♘d7= Hellers–Visser, Amsterdam OHRA 1990;*

or 21 ♗d3!? ♗d7 13 ♔b1 ♘a5 14 b3!±] 12 … ♗d7 13 ♖h3 ♖c8 14 ♖g3 g6, Borkowski–Moskalenko, Moscow 1991) 11 … b5 (11 … ♘b6 12 a3! ♘c4 13 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 14 0–0–0±) 12 a3! (White should prepare a favourable queen exchange on f2. But 12 ♕f2? is weak because of 12 … ♕b4!) 12 … ♗b7 13 b4! (more convincing than 13 ♕f2 b4! 14 ab ♘xb4 15 ♘d4 0–0 16 0–0 ♖ae8, with equality; Gonzalez–Korchnoi, Salamanca 1991) 13 … ♕b6 14 ♕f2 ♖c8 15 ♘e2, with a permanent advantage in King–Landerberque, Lucerne 1989.

8 ♘f3   c5
9 ♕d2

Black has to be extremely careful against 9 ♗d3. Thus, White has a winning attack after 9 … cd? 10 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 11 ♘g5+ ♕xg5! 12 fg dc (Black has a full material equivalent for the queen, but the attack is only just beginning!) 13 ♕h5+! (far stronger than 13 ♕d3+ ♔g8 14 ♕xc3 ♘c6) 13 … ♔g8 14 0–0 ♘xe5 15 ♖ae1 ♘g6 (or 15 … ♘bc6 16 ♖e3 ♖d8 17 ♖h3 ♔f8 18 ♕h8+ ♔e7 19 ♕xg7±±) 16 ♘e3 e5 17 g4! ♖d8 (he can't save himself with 17 … ♘f4 18 ♖xf4 ef 19 ♖h3 f6 20 g6±±) 18 ♖h3 ♖d6 19 ♕h7+ ♔f8 20 ♖h6! ♖f6 21 ♖xf6!, and in this picturesque position Black ceased resistance in Szilagyi–Harding, corr. 1988. Black does better if the bishop's aggressive designs are nipped in the bud: 9

... f5!? (9 ... f6 is not bad either, for example 10 0–0 fe 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 de c4 13 ♗e2 ♘c6 with a good position; Aseyev–Orlov, Leningrad 1989) 10 0–0 (or 10 ef ♛xf6 [*White has a slight advantage after 10* ... *♖xf6 11 ♛d2 ♘c6 12 dc ♘xc5 13 0–0 ♘xd3 14 cd±, Bronstein–Yanofsky, Saltsjöbaden IZ 1948*] 11 ♘g5 ♛xf4 12 ♗xh7+ ♔h8 13 ♛h5 ♛f2+ [*13* ... *♘f6!? 14 ♘f7+ ♖xf7 15 ♛xf7 ♔xf7 16 ♖f1, with unclear play*] 14 ♔d1 ♘f6 15 ♛h3 ♛xd4+! 16 ♗d3 ♔g8 17 ♘xe6 ♛e5! 18 ♖e1 ♗xe6= — Paoli) 10 ... ♘c6 11 ♔h1 a6 12 ♛d2 b5 13 a3 ♖b8, with roughly equal chances; Aseyev–Psakhis, Klaipeda 1988.

9 dc is also frequently played. The further course of the game is often analogous to 9 ♛d2; let us look at some variations of more or less independent significance: 9 ... ♘c6 (Bagirov–Knaak, Berlin 1989, went 9 ... ♘xc5 10 ♗d3 ♘xd3+ 11 cd d4 12 ♘e4 ♘c6 13 a3 f6 14 ef gf 15 0–0 e5, and now White could have laid claim to a small advantage if he had continued 16 ♛e1! f5 17 ♘g3±, instead of 16 fe fe 17 ♘fd2 ♗e6=) 10 ♗d3 f6 (in Plachetka–Bareyev, Trnava 1989, Black's innovation was not a theoretical success: 10 ... f5?! 11 0–0 ♘c5 12 ♘e2 ♗d7 13 ♘ed4 ♗e8 14 ♛d2 ♘e4 15 ♛e3, and the undisputed control of d4 guaranteed White the better game. As to 10 ... ♛xc5, the continuation of Spassky–Lautier,

Cannes 1989, deserves quite a close examination: 11 ♛d2 ♘b6 12 b3! ♗d7 13 ♘e2 ♘b4 14 ♘ed4 f6 15 a3! ♘c6 16 c3 ♖ac8 17 ♔e2!±) 11 ef ♛xf6 (11 ... ♖xf6 is weaker: 12 ♛d2 ♘xc5 13 0–0 ♗d7 14 ♖ae1 ♛d6 15 ♘g5 g6 16 ♗b5!± Hebden–Vazzosi, Lugano 1988) 12 g3 ♘xc5 13 0–0 (in Wittmann–Züger, Mitropa Cup 1990, Black achieved equality after 13 ♛e2 ♗d7 14 0–0–0 ♗e8! [*14* ... *♘d4? 15 ♘xd4 ♛xd4+ 16 ♛f2 ♛b4 17 a3! ♛b6 18 ♛d4±*] 15 ♘g5 ♘xd3 16 ♖xd3 ♗g6 17 ♖d2 ♖ae8=) 13 ... ♗d7 (more promising than 13 ... b6 14 ♗b5 ♗b7 15 ♖e1, with enduring pressure) 14 ♛d2 (14 ♗b5!? ♘b4 15 ♛d4! is worth considering) 14 ... ♘xd3 (White benefits from 14 ... ♗e8 15 ♖ae1 ♗g6 16 ♗xg6 ♛xg6 17 ♘e5 ♘xe5 18 ♖xe5± Castillo–De Meyer, Tunja 1989. Black's un-attractive-looking light-squared bishop was in fact playing an important defensive role, and its exchange has exposed Black's pawn weaknesses in the centre) 15 cd e5! (a forced move. Black is in a difficult position after the passive 15 ... ♗e8? 16 ♖fe1 ♗g6 17 ♘b5 e5 18 ♘c3! d4 19 ♘e4 ♗xe4 20 ♖xe4± Capablanca–Réti, New York 1924) 16 ♖ae1 ef (16 ... ♗h3!? is not bad either: 17 ♖f2 d4 18 ♘e4 ♛f5 19 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 20 fe ♛xe5= De Firmian–Chernin, New York 1988) 17 ♘xd5 ♛d6! (a mistake would be 17 ... ♛f7?! 18

♘f4 ♕xa2 19 d4! ♕a5 20 ♕xa5 ♘xa5 21 ♖e7± Am. Rodriguez–Chernin, Subotica IZ 1987) 18 ♘f4 ♗g4 19 ♕e3 ♗xf3 (more complex positions result from 19 ... ♖ad8 20 ♖f2 h6 21 h4 ♖f7 22 ♘d2 ♕b4, with sufficient compensation for the pawn in Arnason–Bareyev, Sochi 1988) 20 ♖xf3 ♘xd4 21 ♖f2 ♖ad8= Am. Rodriguez–Züger, Thessaloniki Ol 1988.

9   ...   ♘c6
10   0-0-0   ♘b6!? (79)
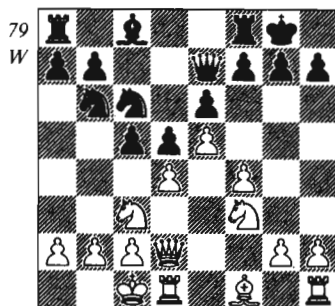
Korchnoi's patent, which has come into widespread use in contemporary tournaments. Black clearly reveals his unwillingness to sit tight and defend, and prepares the ground for active operations on the queenside. Let us also look closely at the alternatives:

(a) **10 ... a6** (a few years ago this move was still the last word in the theory of the position, but in our day variations don't usually have a very long life) 11 dc! (stronger than 11 h4 b5 12 ♖h3 f6! 13 dc ♕xc5 14 ♖g3 ♘b6 15 ♗d3 f5=

De Firmian–Dreyev, New York 1989) 11 ... ♘xc5 (after 11 ... ♕xc5 12 ♗d3, White is already eager to sacrifice his bishop on h7 [*in fact, in the Classical System Black always has to watch out for this danger*]. The threat was carried out in Chandler–Agnos, London 1989: 12 ... b5 [*played with remarkable sang-froid!*] 13 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 14 ♘g5+ ♔g8 15 ♕d3 ♖e8 16 ♕h7+ ♔f8 17 ♕h5! ♘d8 18 ♘h7+ ♔g8 19 ♖d3! ♕e7 20 ♖h3 f6 21 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 22 ef 1-0. We shall see this kind of attacking scheme again) 12 ♕e3! (the queen's best square, from which it keeps the important g1–a7 diagonal under observation. Things go better for Black after 12 ♗d3 ♗d7 13 ♘e2?! [*13 ♕e3!*] 13 ... ♖ac8 14 ♔b1 ♘xd3 15 cd f6! 16 ♘ed4 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 fe 18 fe ♕h4!= Dolmatov–Bareyev, Sochi 1988) 12 ... ♖fd8 (12 ... b5 13 ♗d3 ♘xd3 14 cd f6 15 ♖hf1 ♗d7 16 ♘e2! fe 17 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 18 ♕xe5± Arnason–Dolmatov, Sochi 1988) 13 ♘e2 ♗d7 14 ♘ed4± Aseyev–Bareyev, Lvov Z 1990.

(b) **10 ... c4** (Black is ready to bring up his b-pawn into an attack on the enemy king) 11 h4 (another quite good line is 11 g4 ♖b8 12 ♘b5!? ♘b6 13 ♘d6 ♗d7 14 c3 f6 15 ♗e2 ♘c8 16 ♘xc8 ♖bxc8 17 ♖df1, with a slight advantage in Campora–Gomez Baillo, Buenos Aires 1990) 11 ... ♖b8 12 ♘b5 ♘b6 13 g4 ♗d7 14 ♘d6 ♘c8 15

f5!? ♘xd6 16 f6! gf 17 ed ♕xd6
18 ♕h6, with a strong attack;
Kapengut–Westerinen, Vilnius
1969.

(c) **10 ... f6** (better than its
reputation) 11 ef ♘xf6!? (11 ...
♕xf6 has been considered good
for White ever since the classic
game Rubinstein–Levenfish,
Karlsbad 1911, which went 12 g3
a6 13 ♗g2 ♘b6 14 ♖he1 ♘c4
[*Black has made some minor gains,
but the weakness of the dark
squares proves fatal to him*] 15 ♕f2
b5 16 dc! ♘xb2 17 ♔xb2 b4 18
♘d4! bc+ 19 ♔a1±) 12 dc ♕xc5
13 ♗d3 ♗d7 14 ♖he1 ♖ac8 15
♔b1 a6, and White has no more
than a minimal edge; Striković–
Drasko, Vrnjacka Banja 1987.

11 dc

11 ♕e3!?, making Black commit
himself in the centre, needs further
practical tests. So far Black has
not found a reliable antidote to
this cunning move. Perhaps he
should follow this example: 11 ...
cd (what else?) 12 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 (12
... ♕c5 is a mistake; the rooks,
not the queen, should play the
major role in the c-file. This was
demonstrated effectively in Short–
Gulko, Hastings 1988/9, which
went 13 h4 ♗d7 14 ♖h3 ♖ac8 15
♖g3 ♘xd4 16 ♖xd4 ♕e7. The loss
of two tempi makes itself felt, and
White is obviously ahead in devel-
oping his initiative. Even such a
French specialist as Bareyev failed
to equalise against Larsen in
another game played at Hastings,

this time in 1990/1: 12 ... ♗d7 13
♔b1 ♕c5?! 14 h4 ♖ac8 15 ♖h3
♘a5 16 ♘b3!±. Evidently the
Hastings air is not good for devo-
tees of the Classical System!) 13
♕xd4 ♗d7 14 ♗d3 ♗fc8 15 ♘e2
♘c4 16 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 17 ♕d2 ♖ac8,
with fairly good counterchances;
Nemet–Züger, Suhr 1991.

11 ... ♕xc5

12 ♗d3

12 ♔b1 is best answered by the
simple 12 ... ♗d7 (12 ... ♘c4 13
♗xc4 ♕xc4 14 ♘d4 ♗d7 15 b3±
Pasman–Korchnoi, Beer-Sheva
1984); then 13 ♗d3 transposes
into the note to White's 13th move.

12 ... ♗d7

An interesting idea is 12 ... f6!?
13 ♘e2 fe 14 fe ♘c4 15 ♗xc4
♕xc4 16 ♔b1 ♗d7= Kinder-
mann–Dizdar, West Berlin 1988.

13 ♗xh7+!?

An innovation, though we have
seen the same idea in Chandler–
Agnos. In Sax–Timman, Rotter-
dam World Cup 1989, the sacrifice
was carried out one move later:
13 ♔b1 ♖ac8 (13 ... ♖fc8 favours
White after 14 ♘b5! h6 [*14 ...
♘xe5? 15 ♘xe5 ♗xb5 16 b4+±*]
15 ♘d6± Sax–Korchnoi, Rotter-
dam 1988) 14 ♗xh7+ (14 ♗e2
♘xd4 15 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 leads to
equality; interesting complications
can arise from 14 ♘b5!? f6! 15 ef
♖xf6 16 ♖he1 ♘a4! 17 b3 a6!,
with chances for both sides in Am.
Rodriguez–Züger, Aosta 1990) 14
... ♔xh7 15 ♘g5+ ♔g8 16 ♕d3
♖fe8! 17 ♕h7+ ♔f8 18 ♕h5 (18

♘ge4!? de 19 ♘xe4 ♕b4=) 18 ...
♔e7 19 ♘xf7 ♘a5! 20 ♘d6; and
in this position, in which, as the
Russians put it, the very devil
would get his leg broken, the play-
ers agreed a draw.

13	...	♔xh7
14	♘g5+	♔g8
15	♕d3	♖fe8
16	♕h7+	♔f8
17	♖he1	

Korchnoi gives this move an
exclamation mark, while Ftacnik
considers it dubious. Such a diver-
gence of opinions is not surprising
in such a complicated position.
As Korchnoi demonstrates, the
tempting 17 ♕h8+ ♔e7 18 ♕xg7
does not work: 18 ... ♕e3+ 19
♔b1 ♕xf4 20 ♖hf1 ♖g8! and
Black beats off the attack. The
position is unclear after 17 ♕h5
♔e7 18 ♘xf7 ♘a5! — Ftacnik.

17 ... ♕b4 *(80)*

The game Nielsen–Ulibin,
World Junior Ch, Romania 1991,
took a different course: 17 ... ♘c4
18 ♕h8+ ♔e7 19 ♕h4 ♖h8 20
♘h7+! f6 (20 ... ♔e8? 21 ♘f6+
♔e7 22 ♘exd5+ + ±±) 21 ef+
♔d8 22 fg+ ♔c7 23 fg(♕). Not
a bad career for the pawn! It went
forward to queen so quickly that
I don't think White fully appreci-
ated what had happened, for at
this point he agreed a draw. Yet
after, for example, 23 ... ♖xh8 24
a3, White's big material plus ought
to decide the game, even though
Black's threats should not be
underestimated.

80
W
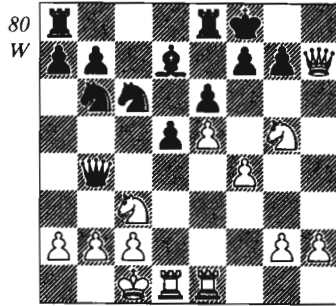
18 ♕h8+

It would also be interesting to
try 18 ♕h4!? ♘c4 19 ♘h7+ ♔g8
20 ♘a4!, with great complications.

18	...	♔e7
19	♕h4	♔d8!

Korchnoi gives some very inter-
esting variations: 19 ... ♖h8!? (the
punctuation is his. There is no joy
for Black in 19 ... ♘c4? 20 ♘xe6+!
♔xe6 21 ♕h3+ ♔e7 22
♘xd5+ ±±, or in 19 ... f6? 20
a3! ♕a5 21 ef+ gf 22 ♘xe6 ♗xe6
23 f5) 20 ♘h7+! f6 (20 ... ♔e8?
21 ♘f6+!) 21 ef+ ♔f7 22 fg (Black
holds on by the skin of his teeth
after 22 ♕h5+ g6 23 ♕h6 ♕f8!!) 22
... ♖xh7 (White has an irresistible
attack after 22 ... ♔xg7? 23 ♕g5+
♔h7 24 ♖d3 e5 25 ♕h5+ ♔g7
26 ♖g3+ ♔f6 27 fe+ — Korch-
noi) 23 ♕xh7 ♖g8. Korchnoi
assesses this position as equal, but
I cannot agree. In my view, 24 f5
ought to do the trick, for example
24 ... ♘c4 25 fe+ ♗xe6 26 ♘a4!
♕xa4 27 ♖xe6.

20 ♘xe6+

Black has an excellent game

after 20 ♘xf7+ ♔c7 21 ♘d6
♘xe5! 22 ♘xe8+ ♖xe8.

| 20 | ... | ♔c8 |
| 21 | a3 | |

21 ♘xg7? loses to 21 ... ♘c4 22
♘a4 ♕xa4 23 ♘xe8+ ♖xe8∓∓.

21	...	♕e7
22	♘g5!	f6
23	e6?	

A serious mistake, which hands
the initiative over to Black. With
23 ef! ♕xf6 24 ♖xe8+ ♗xe8 25
♘xd5 ♘xd5 26 ♖xd5, White could
have restored the material balance
while keeping the more active pos-
ition.

23	...	fg
24	ed+	♕xd7
25	♕xg5?!	

Misfortunes don't come singly!
White could more or less have
maintained the balance with 25
♖xe8+ ♕xe8 26 ♕xg5 ♕f7.

25	...	♖xe1
26	♖xe1	a6
27	f5? *(81)*	

The final error. 27 ♖d1 was
essential.

| 27 | ... | ♔b8 |
| 28 | ♖e6 | ♔a7∓ |

81
B
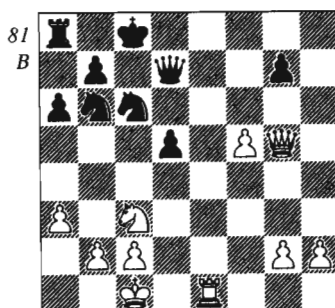
At last the king has found a
secure refuge. Black's advantage is
obvious, and the game is over in
a few moves.

29	♖g6	♖e8!
30	♖xg7	♖e1+
31	♘d1	♕e8
32	f6	♕e4!

Korchnoi's moves are very ener-
getic. The white pawn is danger-
ously close to its queening square,
but doesn't manage to take the
last two steps; White would lose
with 33 f7 ♕d4 34 ♕d2 ♖xd1+
35 ♔xd1 ♕xg7.

33	♕d2	♘c4
34	♕f2+	♘e3!
	0-1	

12 Winawer Variation: White's Fourth Move Alternatives

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♗b4 *(82)*
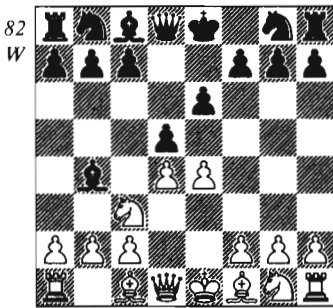
Strategically the most difficult variation of the entire French Defence: the Winawer Variation, which creates the greatest tension and provokes the widest controversy. Just as in the Classical System (3 ... ♘f6), Black immediately puts pressure on the central pawn on e4; but this time the advance of the pawn will not attack the knight. On the other hand, the active bishop sortie also has its minus side: the kingside has been deserted by one of its principal defenders.

The variation has a long and illustrious history. It began to be played more than 100 years ago, but it was given its theoretical foundation by Nimzowitsch, in his articles and books and also his games, after which Botvinnik moulded it into a strategic system. In no other variation, perhaps, has Black suffered such severe defeats, though these must be set against numerous memorable victories. I am convinced that it is only with 4 e5 that White can assert a serious claim to an advantage, but in the present chapter other possibilities will be considered.

Kir. Georgiev–Psakhis
Sarajevo 1986

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4

Incidentally, apart from the most thematic moves 3 ... ♗b4, 3 ... ♘f6 and 3 ... de, some others are occasionally seen. Let us take a brief look at them:

(a) **3 ... ♘c6** (a favourite weapon of Nimzowitsch's) 4 ♘f3 (White

also has some advantage after 4 e5, for example: 4 ... b6 [*against the premature 4 ... f6, White easily seizes the initiative with 5 ♗b5! ♗d7 6 ♘f3 7 0–0 0–0–0 8 ♖e1 ♕f7 9 ♕e2 ♘ge7 10 a4 f5 11 a5± Kindermann–Schulz, Altensteig 1987. Black also fails to equalise with 4 ... ♘ge7 5 ♘f3 ♘f5 6 ♘e2! ♗e7 7 g3 h5 8 h4 b6 9 ♘f4 ♕d7 10 c3 a5 11 ♘g5!, when White has strong kingside pressure; Chandler–Meister, London 1990*] 5 f4 [*White goes for the maximum gain of space, but restricts his dark-squared bishop. It is worth considering 5 ♘f3 ♕d7 6 a3!? a5 7 h4 ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 9 h5 h6 10 a4 ♖a8 11 ♘e2, with excellent prospects; van der Wiel–Prie, Cannes 1990*] 5 ... ♗b7 6 ♘f3 ♕d7 7 a3 ♘h6 8 ♗b5 f5 9 ♗d2 ♗e7 10 h3 a6 11 ♗d3 a5, Karpov–Agdestein, 3rd match game, Gjovik 1991. White is a little more active, but Black's position is very solid) 4 ... ♘f6 (now that the c-pawn is blocked by the knight, 4 ... ♗b4 is unconvincing, for example 5 e5 ♘ge7 6 a3 ♗xc3+ 7 bc h6 8 ♗d3 ♘a5 9 0–0 b6 10 a4 ♗b7 11 ♘d2!± Charushin–Arnstam, European corr Ch 1980) 5 e5 (in the well known 9th game between Fischer and Petrosian, Buenos Aires 1971, White played 5 ed!? ed 6 ♗b5 ♗g4?! 7 h3 ♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 ♗e7 9 ♗g5 a6 10 ♗xc6+ bc 11 0–0 0–0 12 ♖fe1±, and went on to win. However, Black's sixth move is clearly not best. He has

better chances of equalising with 6 ... ♗e7 [*alternatively 6 ... ♗b4 7 0–0 0–0 8 ♗xc6 bc 9 ♘e5 ♕d6!? 10 ♗f4 ♗xc3 11 bc ♘e4, with complex play; Kindermann–Hertneck, Altensteig 1987*] 7 ♘e5 ♗d7 8 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗f4 a6, Vogt–Sahović, Biel Open 1990. A less convincing move than 5 e5 is 5 ♗g5, for example 5 ... ♗e7 6 e5 ♘e4 7 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 8 ♗d3 [*or 8 ♘xe4 de 9 ♘d2 ♘xd4 10 ♘xe4 ♘c6 11 ♕d2 ♘xe5, and it is hard for White to demonstrate sufficient compensation for the pawn; Zakić–Rozentalis, FL Open 1991*] 8 ... ♕b4 9 ♗xe4 de 10 a3 ♕xb2 11 ♘xe4 ♕b5, and Black's position is no worse; Vogt–Thesing, Bundesliga 1991. Finally, White acquires a slight edge with 5 ♗d3 ♘b4 [*5 ... ♗b4!?*] 6 ♗g5 ♗e7 7 e5 ♘d7 8 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♖e1 c5 11 dc ♘xc5 12 a3 ♘c6, Karpov–Agdestein, 1st match game, Gjovik 1991) 5 ... ♘e4 6 ♗d3 (unclear play results from 6 ♘e2 f6 7 ef [*Mainka–Thesing, Dortmund 1991, saw the interesting 7 ♘g3!? f5 8 c3 ♗e7 9 h4 b6?! 10 ♘e2! ♕d7 11 ♘fg1! ♕d8 12 g3 0–0 13 f3, and the knight is trapped! But Black had the stronger 9 ... ♘xg3 10 fg h5 11 ♗g5 b6, with a satisfactory game*] 7 ... ♕xf6 [*stronger than 7 ... ♘xf6 8 ♘g3 ♗d6 9 ♗b5 0–0 10 0–0, with the better game*] 8 ♘g3 e5 9 de [*9 ♗b5 ed 10 0–0 ♗d7 11 c4 dc3 12 ♕xd5 0–0–0 13 ♘xe4 cb is not dangerous for

Black; Hellers–Klinger, Gausdal 1986] 9 ... ♘xe5 10 ♕xd5 ♗b4+! 11 c3 ♘xf3+ 12 gf ♘xc3, with wild complications; Luther–Keitlinghaus, Bundesliga 1990) 6 ... ♗b4 (White benefits from 6 ... ♘xc3 7 bc ♗e7 8 h4!±) 7 ♗d2 (if 7 0–0, Black can very well accept the pawn sacrifice with 7 ... ♘xc3 8 bc ♗xc3 9 ♖b1 ♗b4!? 10 ♘g5 ♗e7 11 ♘xh7 [*11 ♕h5!?*] 11 ... g6 12 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 13 ef ♕xf6, leading to unclear play in Koch–Prie, Paris 1989) 7 ... ♘xd2 8 ♕xd2 f6 9 a3 (it is worth considering 9 ♗b5 ♗d7 10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 11 a3 ♗xc3 12 ♕xc3 ♕e7 13 ef gf 14 0–0–0± Lau–Klinger, Munich Z 1987) 9 ... ♗e7!? 10 ♘e2 0–0 11 h4!? fe 12 de ♖xf3! 13 gf ♘xe5 14 0–0–0 ♕f8, with chances for both sides; G. Kuzmin–Rozentalis, USSR Ch, Leningrad 1990.

(b) **3 ... a6** (this move often occurs in the games of the French International Master Prie) 4 ♘f3 (another possibility is 4 ♗d3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♘b4!? 6 ♗e2 ♘f6 7 e5 ♘e4 8 0–0 ♘c6 9 ♘e3± Kindermann–Prie, Uzès 1990) 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6 ed ♘xd5 7 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 8 ♕d2 ♕b4!? 9 ♘xd5 ♕xd2+ 10 ♔xd2 ed 11 ♖e1+ ♔f8 12 ♖e5 ♗e6 13 ♘g5± Koch–Prie, Marseille 1990.

(c) **3 ... ♗e7** 4 ♘f3 (White also has a slight advantage after 4 ♗d3 c5 [*or 4 ... ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♘b4 6 ♗b5+! c6 7 ♗e2 de 8 ♘xe4 ♘f6 9 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 10 0–0 0–0 11*]

c4± Gulko–Romanishin, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976] 5 dc ♘f6 6 ed ed 7 ♗g5 0–0 8 ♘ge2 ♘c6 9 0–0 ♗e6 10 ♘f4± Schnabel–Tightman, corr 1990. Unclear play arises from 4 e5 b6 5 g4!? ♗a6 6 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 7 f4 h5! 8 gh ♗h4+ 9 ♔f1 ♘e7 10 ♕e2 ♘b8; Velimirović–Romanishin, Tallinn 1977) 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♗d3 c5 6 ed ed (6 ... cd was unsatisfactory in Lukin–Romanishin, USSR 1978: 7 ♗b5+ ♗d7 8 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 9 de ♕xe6+ 10 ♘e2 ♗b4+ 11 ♗d2 ♗c5 12 0–0±) 7 dc 0–0 8 0–0 ♘bd7 9 ♗g5 ♘xc5 10 ♖e1 ♗e6 11 ♘d4± Sax–Ambroz, Baile Herculane 1982.

4   a3

A move which has figured in the active repertoires of such masters as Fischer, Smyslov and Alekhine is worthy of close study, but in recent years Black has managed to find several fairly reliable methods of defence.

Let us also examine some other possibilities for White here:

(a) **4 ♕g4?!** (an old move, which in our day has practically gone out of use. No wonder, for Black easily obtains an excellent game) 4 ... ♘f6 5 ♕xg7 ♖g8 6 ♕h6 ♖g6 (stronger than 6 ... de 7 ♘ge2 b6 8 ♗g5 ♘bd7 9 ♘g3! ♗b7 10 ♗b5 ♖g6 11 ♕h4, with some advantage for White in Planinc–Andersson, Amsterdam 1973) 7 ♕e3 c5 8 ♗d2 ♘g4! (8 ... ♘c6 is inferior: 9 ♗b5! ♗d7 10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 11 ♘ge2 de 12 dc± Plan-

inc–Byrne, Moscow 1975) 9 ♕d3 ♘c6, and according to *ECO* Black's chances are not at all worse.

(b) **4 ♕d3** (a move which has gained acceptance in modern tournament practice thanks to improvements by Chiburdanidze and Kuzmin in the mid-1980s) 4 ... de (White's position is a little better after 4 ... c5 5 ed ed 6 dc d4 7 a3 ♗xc5 8 ♘e4 ♗e7 9 ♕g3 ♕d5 10 ♗d3± Hector–Ulibin, Budapest Open 1989; but it is worth considering 4 ... ♘e7!? 5 ♗d2 *[an equal game results from 5 ♗g5 0–0 6 ♘f3 ♗xc3+! 7 bc f6 8 ♗d2 b6 9 ♕e3 ♗b7 10 ♗d3 fe 11 ♗xe4 ♘f5= Smirin–Vaganian, USSR Team Ch 1988]* 5 ... b6 6 ♗e2 *[or 6 0–0–0 ♗a6! 7 ♕g3 ♗xf1 8 ♖xf1 0–0=; it may well be that 6 ♕g3!? sets Black the greatest problems]* 6 ... 0–0 7 a3 ♗xc3 8 ♗xc3 a5! 9 ♘f3 ♘d7 10 ed ed= Anand–Short, Wijk aan Zee 1990) 5 ♕xe4 ♘f6 6 ♕h4 ♗d7!? (6 ... ♘d5 can lead to a roughly equal ending, for example: 7 ♕xd8+ *[7 ♕g3!?]* 7 ... ♔xd8 8 ♗d2 ♘xc3 9 bc ♗d6 10 ♗d3 ♘d7 11 f4, as in Rogers–Walker, British Ch, Eastbourne 1991, and now with 11 ... b6!? 12 ♗e4 ♗b7 13 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 14 ♘e5 ♔e8 Black could have obtained equal chances. 6 ... ♕d5!? leads to complex play that is not bad for Black) 7 ♗d3 (or 7 ♘f3 ♗c6 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc ♗e4 10 ♗d3 ♗xd3 11 cd 0–0 12 0–0 c5= Smirin–

Eingorn, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988) 7 ... ♗c6 8 ♘ge2 ♘bd7 9 ♗d2 (nor is there danger for Black in 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♖ae1 ♘b6! 12 f4?! ♖g8 13 ♗xf6 gf! 14 ♖f2 f5 15 ♕xh6 ♕d7, and Black seized the initiative in Hector–Eingorn, Debrecen 1989) 9 ... ♘d5 10 ♕g3 ♘7f6 11 0–0–0 ♗d6 12 ♕h3 ♘xc3 13 ♘xc3 ♕e7= Schmittdiel–Kindermann, Dortmund 1991.

(c) **4 ♗d3** de (on 4 ... ♘e7, White has good chances of taking the initiative if he plays energetically enough: 5 ♕g4! *[5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bc c5 7 dc?! ♕d7=]* 5 ... 0–0 6 e5 c5 7 ♘f3 *[with the simple threat of 8 ♗xh7+]* 7 ... ♘f5 8 ♗g5, and White's threats are very powerful; Sariego–Arencibia, Cuban Ch 1989. It is harder for White to demonstrate an advantage against 4 ... c5!?, for example 5 ed ♕xd5 6 ♗d2 *[6 a3 ♗xc3+ 7 bc ♕a5 8 ♗d2 c4 9 ♗f1 ♘f6, with excellent chances]* 6 ... ♗xc3 7 ♗xc3 cd 8 ♗xd4 e5 *[White has more than enough compensation for the pawn after 8 ... ♕xg2 9 ♕f3! ♕xf3 10 ♘xf3 f6 11 ♖g1 ♔f7 12 0–0–0 ♘c6 13 ♗c5; Tal–Gipslis, Riga 1955]* 9 ♗c3 ♘c6 10 ♕f3 ♘ge7 11 a3 0–0 12 0–0–0 ♕c5= Sariego–Vilela, Cuban Ch 1989) 5 ♗xe4 ♘f6 6 ♗f3 (6 ♗g5 permits Black to equalise with either 6 ... h6 7 ♗xf6 ♕xf6, or 6 ... ♘bd7 7 ♕d3 c5 8 ♘f3 cd 9 ♕xd4 ♕b6! 10 ♕xb6 ♘xb6= Lutikov–Petrosian,

USSR 1979. Nor is Black's task very difficult after 6 ♗d3, for example: 6 ... c5 7 a3 [*or 7 dc ♘bd7 8 ♗d2 ♘xc5 9 ♗c4 0–0 10 ♘f3 ♘ce4! 11 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 12 ♗xb4 ♕b6 13 0–0 ♕xb4= Dolmatov–N. Zilberman, Frunze 1983*] 7 ... ♗xc3+ 8 bc ♘bd7 9 ♘f3 ♕c7 10 0–0 c4 11 ♗e2 ♘d5, with a splendid position; Barlov–I. Farago, Belgrade 1982) 6 ... c5 (probably the simplest path to equality. White maintains some pressure after 6 ... ♘bd7 7 ♘ge2 0–0 8 0–0 e5 9 ♗g5 ♗e7 10 ♖e1! [*10 ♘g3 h6 11 ♗e3 cd=*] 10 ... h6 11 ♗h4± Sariego–Matlak, Palanica Zdroj 1989) 7 a3 (or 7 ♘ge2 cd 8 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 9 ♘xd4 a6=) 7 ... ♗xc3+ 8 bc ♘c6 9 ♘e2 e5 10 ♗g5 (after 10 ♗xc6+ bc 11 0–0 ed 12 cd 0–0 13 ♖e1 ♗a6, White already has to struggle for equality; Grigorov–I. Farago, Prague 1985) 10 ... ed 11 cd h6 12 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 13 c3 0–0= Ortega–Uhlmann, Polanica Zdroj 1967.

(d) **4 ♗d2** de (the most thematic move, but it is also worth studying 4 ... ♘f6 5 e5 ♗xc3 6 bc ♘e4 7 ♕g4 ♔f8 8 ♗d3 ♘xd2 9 ♔xd2 c5, with a position from the Mac-Cutcheon Variation except that Black's pawn is on h7 instead of h6; Romero Homes–Pomes, Terrassa 1990. Also 4 ... ♘e7 5 a3 [*5 ♗d3 de 6 ♘xe4 ♕xd4 7 ♘f3 ♗xd2+ 8 ♕xd2 ♕d5! 9 0–0–0 ♘bc6 10 ♕c3 f6∓ Timman–Vaganian, Amsterdam 1986*] 5 ... ♗xc3+ 6 bc b6!? with unclear play — Vaganian) 5 ♕g4 (in Alekhine–Flohr, Nottingham 1936, the first game in which 4 ♗d2 was played, White continued in adventurous style with 5 ♘xe4?! ♕xd4 6 ♗d3 ♗xd2+ 7 ♕xd2, and if Black had now taken the pawn on b2, his advantage would have been obvious) 5 ... ♘f6!? (by way of an alternative, 5 ... ♕xd4 may be suggested, for example 6 ♘f3 [*6 0–0–0 h5! 7 ♕g3 ♗d6, with a good game*] 6 ... ♘h6! 7 ♕f4 e5 8 ♕xe5+ [*8 ♕xh6 favours Black after 8 ... gh 9 ♘xd4 ed 10 ♘xe4 ♗xd2+ 11 ♔xd2 ♗e6 12 ♘c5 ♗d5 13 ♖e1+ ♔f8∓ Thorhallsson–Seirawan, Reykjavik Open 1990*] 8 ... ♕xe5 9 ♘xe5 ♘g4=) 6 ♕xg7 ♖g8 7 ♕h6 ♕xd4 8 0–0–0 ♗f8!? (Bronstein's move, which secured him the decisive win in his Candidates play-off match against Boleslavsky) 9 ♕h4 ♖g4 10 ♕h3 ♕xf2 11 ♗e2! *(83)*
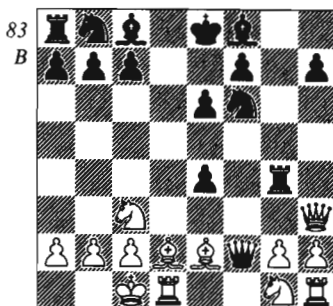
(in the Boleslavsky–Bronstein game, Budapest C 1950, White

soon ended up in a lost position after 11 ♘b5? ♘a6 12 ♔b1 ♗d7 13 ♗e3 ♕f5 14 ♘d4 ♕g6) 11 ... ♖h4!? (11 ... ♖g6 12 g4 ♕c5 also deserves attention) 12 ♕xh4! ♕xh4 (stronger than 13 ... e3 14 gh ed+ 15 ♔b1! ♗b4! 16 ♘b5 ♗a5 17 ♘f3±) 14 ♗xh6 ♗xh6+ 15 ♔b1 ♗d7 16 ♘h3 ♗e3! 17 ♖hf1 ♔e7, with a complex game in which Black's chances are no worse; Rasmussen–Czibulka, corr 1988.

(e) **4 ed** ed transposes to the Exchange Variation.

(f) **4 ♘e2** is considered in the next game.

| 4 | ... | ♗xc3+ |
| 5 | bc | de |

If Black wants, he can side-step the well-known variations by playing 5 ... ♘e7, but this does not bring him full equality, for example: 6 ♗d3 c5 7 ed (7 ♘f3 is weak: 7 ... c4! 8 ♗e2 ♕a5 9 0-0 ♘bc6 10 ♗d2 f6, and already Black's position is the more promising; Toshkov–Chernin, St John 1988) 7 ... ed (White has the better chances after 7 ... ♘xd5 8 ♕g4 g6 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 ♗g5 ♕c7 11 c4± Kovalev–Yermolinsky, Simferopol 1988) 8 dc! ♕a5 9 ♘e2 0-0 10 0-0 ♘d7 11 ♗g5! ♘g6 12 ♗xg6 hg 13 ♕xd5 ♕xc5 14 ♕xc5 ♘xc5, G. Kuzmin–Chernin, Kiev 1984. Black has reasonable chances of a draw, but that is all.

6	♕g4	♘f6
7	♕xg7	♖g8
8	♕h6	♘bd7 *(84)*

The important question is: how dangerous is the white queen on h6, and is it worth driving it away? Let us see how play may continue if Black does so: 8 ... ♖g6 9 ♕d2 (probably more accurate than 9 ♕e3, for on that square the queen will inevitably come under attack. For example, 9 ... ♘c6 [*it is also worth considering 9 ... ♗d7!? 10 f3 ♗c6 11 fe ♗xe4 12 ♘f3 ♘c6, with a fully satisfactory position; Hector–I. Farago, Tastrup 1990*] 10 ♗b2 [*Black has an easy game after 10 ♘e2 ♘e7 11 ♘g3 ♗d7! 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♕xe4 ♗c6*] 10 ... ♘e7! [*10 ... ♕d6?! favours White after 11 f3! ef 12 ♘xf3 ♗d7 13 0-0-0 0-0-0 14 c4, and the white bishops are very powerful; Fischer–Uhlmann, Rovinj–Zagreb 1970*] 11 c4 [*on 11 0-0-0, Black has quite a pleasant choice between 11 ... ♘ed5 12 ♕e1 ♗d7 13 c4 ♘b6 with unclear play, and the blockading manoeuvre 11 ... b5!? 12 ♕e1 ♕d7 13 f3 ♗b7 14 fe ♗xe4= Hector–L. Hansen, Graested 1990. If White accepts the pawn sacrifice, then after for example 12 ♗xb5+ ♗d7 13 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 14 c4 ♕a4, Black obtains adequate compensation*] 11 ... ♘f5 12 ♕c3 e3! 13 f3 b5!, and Black seized the initiative in Mayr–Ambrosewicz, corr 1985. Black similarly has no problems after 9 ♕h4 c5 10 ♗b2 ♘bd7) 9 ... c5 (alternatively, Black can very well adopt a more restrained strategy: 9 ... b6!? 10 ♘e2 ♗b7 11 a4?! ♘c6! 12 ♗a3

♛d7, with an excellent game in Conquest–Vladimirov, Hastings Challengers 1990/1. In Byrne–Shrezer, New York 1988, White played more accurately with 10 ♗b2 ♗b7 11 0–0–0 ♛e7 12 c4 ♘bd7 13 ♘e2 0–0–0 14 0–0–0 c5, but Black still had no reason to complain about the outcome of the opening) 10 ♘e2 ♘bd7 (according to *ECO*, White has the better chances after 10 ... ♘c6 11 dc! ♗d7 [*11 ... ♛a5 12 ♘d4 a6 13 ♘b3±*] 12 ♖b1 ♛c7 13 ♛d6! 0–0–0 14 ♛xc7+ ♔xc7 15 ♘c3! [*15 ♘d4?! a6! 16 ♗f4+ ♔c8 17 ♗d6! ♘d5= Hector–Levitt, Graested 1990*] 15 ... h5 16 h4± Botvinnik) 11 g3!? b6 12 ♗g2 ♗b7 13 0–0 ♛c7 14 a4 ♖c8 (castling long is risky: 14 ... 0–0–0?! 15 a5 ♘e5 16 ab ab 17 ♛f4 ♘f3+ 18♗xf3 ef 19 ♛xc7 ♔xc7 20 ♖f4± G.Kuzmin–Dolmatov, Moscow 1981) 15 a5 b5 (15 ... a6 16 ab ♘xb6 17 ♖b1±) 16 a6! ♘c6 17 ♗a3± Vasyukov–Naumkin, Moscow 1987.
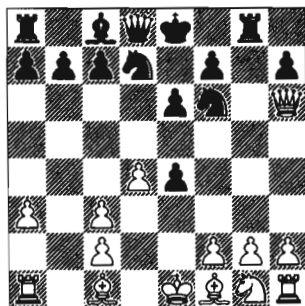
9 ♘e2

Precise play by Black is required after 9 h3 b6 10 g4!?. A good example for him to follow is Vorotnikov–Uhlmann, Leningrad 1984, which went 10 ... ♗b7 11 ♗g2 ♛e7! 12 g5 ♛f8! 13 ♛xf8+ ♘xf8 14 h4 h6! 15 f4 0–0–0, with an excellent position.

9 ♘h3 acquired a certain popularity after being played with success in Ljubojević–Korchnoi, Tilburg 1986: 9 ... c5 10 ♗e2 ♛a5 11 ♗d2 ♖xg2 12 ♘g5! cd 13 ♛g7! ♖xg5 14 ♛xg5 ♛xg5 15 ♗xg5 dc 16 0–0–0±. In Byrne–Raicević, Philadelphia 1987, Black reacted more effectively with 9 ... b6!? 10 ♗g5 ♗b7 11 ♗b5 (11 ♘f4 ♘g4! 12 ♗xd8 ♘xh6 gives approximate equality) 11 ... ♖g6 12 ♛h4 h6!, and according to Byrne's analysis White should have continued 13 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 14 ♗xf6 ♛xf6 15 ♛xf6 ♖xf6 16 ♖g1!=.

9 ... c5

Intense elation was caused by the game Fischer–Kovacevic, Rovinj–Zagreb 1970, in which the great American had to face a tremendous attack in the very opening, and suffered a crushing defeat. The game went 9 ... b6!? 10 ♗g5 ♛e7 11 ♛h4 ♗b7 12 ♘g3 h6! 13 ♗d2 (the pawn is poisoned: 13 ♛xh6 ♘g4! 14 ♗xe7 ♘xh6 15 ♗h4 ♖g4∓∓) 13 ... 0–0–0 14 ♗e2 ♘f8!? 15 0–0? (a serious mistake. After 15 ♘h5! things are by no means all that bad for White) 15 ... ♘g6 16 ♛xh6 ♖h8 17 ♛g5 ♖dg8 18 f3! e3! 19 ♗xe3 ♘f8, with a winning attack.

10 g3

Perhaps not the soundest method, but then Black has a perfectly acceptable position after either 10 a4 b6 11 a5 ♗b7 12 dc bc 13 ♘g3 ♘g4! 14 ♕f4 ♕f6= Basman–Vaganian, Hastings 1974/5, or 10 ♘g3 ♕c7 (10 ... ♕a5!?) 11 ♕e3 ♕c6 12 a4 a6 13 dc ♕xc5 14 ♕xc5 ♘xc5= Fischer–Byrne, USA Ch 1967.

10	...	b6
11	♗g2	♗b7
12	0–0	♕e7
13	a4	♘g4!
14	♕f4	

Taking the pawn on h7 would merely open up one more file on the kingside, which would clearly not be in White's interest.

14	...	f5

The opening has concluded quite pleasantly for Black. The pawn on e4 is securely defended, and all his minor pieces are centrally placed and active.

White, for his part, possesses the bishop pair and a very solid position; after the correct 15 ♕c7! ♘f8, the chances would be about equal. The unfortunate fifteenth move that White plays abruptly shifts the balance in his opponent's favour.

15	a5?	♘df6!∓

The first concrete threat has already arisen: 16 ... ♘d5 17 ♕d2 e3, opening the game to White's disadvantage.

16	c4	

It was worth considering 16 ♕d2!? e3!? 17 fe ♗xg2 18 ♔xg2

♕b7+ 19 ♔g1 ♘e4 20 ♕d1 ♘g5 21 ♘f4 0–0–0, and although Black's threats are very strong, White would still retain some hopes of a satisfactory outcome.

16	...	cd
17	♗a3	♕d7
18	h3	e5 *(85)*
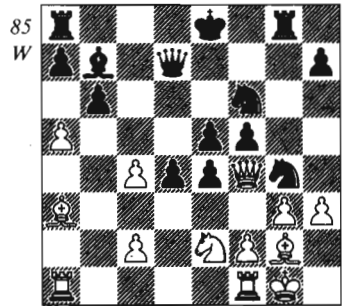
19	♕c1	f4!

It was also tempting to play 19 ... ♘xf2 20 ♖xf2 f4, and if 21 ♘xf4? then 21 ... e3! and Black wins. However, after 21 ♖xf4!! ef 22 ♕xf4 (which, by the way, is what Georgiev intended), the struggle flares up with new vehemence.

20	♘xf4!	

White is playing very ingeniously. He would lose without a fight after 20 hg? f3.

20	...	♘xf2!

Black also has the advantage after 20 ... ef 21 ♕xf4 ♘h5! 22 ♕d6 ♕xd6 23 ♗xd6 ♘gf6, but on this day the players were not in a prosaic mood.

21	♘h5!?	

21 ♖xf2 would lose to 21 ...

e3! 22 ♖f1 ef∓∓, but interesting complications would result from 21 a6!?, for example: 21 ... ♗c6 22 ♘h5!? (22 ♘d5 is unsatisfactory for White after 22 ... ♘xd5 23 cd ♘xh3+ 24 ♔h2 ♕g4 25 ♕e1 ♗d7∓∓) 22 ... ♘xh3+! (Black has to be careful: 22 ... ♘xh5 23 ♕h6! ♘xg3 24 ♖f2 0-0-0? 25 ♖f7! and White can seize the initiative) 23 ♔h2 ♘g4+ 24 ♔xh3 0-0-0, with a very strong attack.

| 21 | ... | ♘xh5 |

Again 21 ... ♘xh3+ 22 ♔h2 ♘g4+ 23 ♔xh3 0-0-0 was very strong, but this time Black has the choice between two good continuations.

| 22 | ♕h6! | ♘xg3 |

Astonishingly, there seems to be no decisive continuation of the attack after 22 ... ♘xh3+ 23 ♗xh3! (23 ♔h2? ♘3f4!∓∓) 23 ... ♖xg3+ 24 ♔f2! (24 ♗g2 e3∓∓) 24 ... ♖f3+ 25 ♔e1 ♕xh3 (or 25 ... ♖xf1+ 26 ♗xf1) 26 ♖xf3 ef 27 ♕f8+, and White gives perpetual check.

| 23 | ♖xf2 | 0-0-0 |
| 24 | a6! | ♗a8 |

Not 24 ... ♗c6, on account of 25 ♖f7!

| 25 | ♔h2 | ♖g6 |
| 26 | ♕f8! | *(86)* |

Aside from his ineffective opening play, Georgiev has been making the best moves available.

| 26 | ... | e3 |

The prosaic 26 ... ♖xf8 was also quite sufficient to win: 27
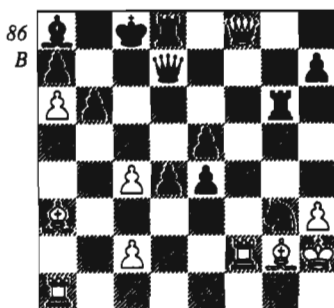
♖xf8+   ♕d8!   28   ♖xd8+ ♔xd8∓∓.

| 27 | ♗xa8! |

The only move. 27 ♖f7 would lose beautifully to 27 ... ♘f1+!! 28 ♗xf1 ♕c6 29 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 30 ♖f8+ ♔d7 31 ♖f7+ ♔e6 32 ♖e7+ ♔f6, and the checks run out.

| 27 | ... | ef |

27 ... ♖xf8 is weaker: 28 ♖xf8+ ♔c7 29 ♗d5, and White is quite all right.

28	♕xf2	♕f5
29	♕xf5+	♘xf5
30	♗e4	*(87)*
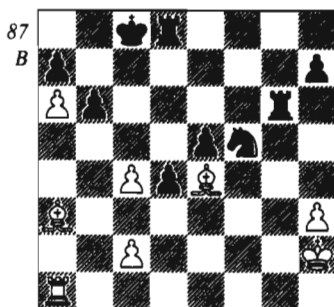
Black has a big material plus, but in converting it into a win he

is severely hindered by his opponent's two strong bishops.

30	...	♘e3
31	c5!?	

After 31 ♗xg6? hg, White could stop the clock with a clear conscience.

31	...	b5
32	c6	♖f6!
33	♖g1	

Again Black offers the exchange, and again White declines it! After 33 ♗e7 ♖f4 34 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 35 ♗xh7 ♔c7, the endgame is dismal for White.

33	...	♘f1+
34	♔h1	♘d2
35	♗xh7	♖xc6
36	♗b4	♘c4
37	♖a1	

If the rook is forced to occupy such a passive position, the end cannot be far away.

37	...	♘e3
38	♗e4	♘xc2!

An amazingly agile knight!

39	♗xc6	♘xa1
40	♗b7+	♔b8
41	♔g2	♘c2
42	♗e7	♖d7
43	♗f6	♘e3+
44	♔g3	♘c4

The knight has arrived back in time, so ...

0–1

Shirazi–Yusupov
St John 1988

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4
4 ♘e2 *(88)*
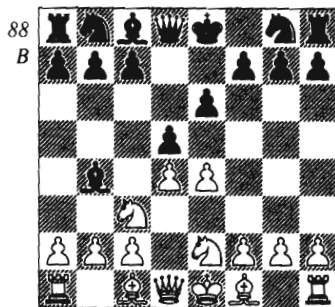
White offers a pawn sacrifice which is usually only temporary, since playing to retain the material entails serious positional concessions by Black.

4 ... de

The usual reply. To put a little variety on the menu, let us examine some alternatives:

(a) **4 ... ♘e7** (provoking White's fire) 5 a3 ♗a5 6 ♕d3 (White would weaken his queenside unnecessarily with 6 b4?! ♗b6 7 ed ed 8 ♘g3 c6=) 6 ... de 7 ♕xe4 ♘bc6 8 ♗e3 (White also obtains a small plus from 8 ♗d2 0–0 9 0-0-0 ♘d5 10 h4 ♘xc3 11 ♗xc3 ♕d5 12 ♕xd5 ed 13 ♗xa5 ♘xa5 14 ♘f4 ♖d8 15 ♖e1±) 8 ... ♘d5 9 0-0-0 0–0 10 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 11 ♕xd5 ed 12 ♘f4 ♖d8 13 ♗e2 ♘e7 14 g4!± Shirazi–Benjamin, Las Vegas 1986.

(b) **4 ... b6!?** (a rarely played) 5 a3 ♗e7 6 ed ed 7 ♘f4 ♘f6 8 ♗e3 0–0 9 h3 ♗b7 10 ♕f3 c6 11 g4!? a5, with complex play in Hartmann–Short, Bundesliga 1986.

(c) **4 ... ♘f6** (this has acquired a fair popularity in recent years)

5 e5 (5 ♗g5 transposes to the MacCutcheon Variation) 5 ... ♘fd7 (5 ... ♘e4 also has its supporters. There can follow: 6 ♕d3!? *[6 a3 is less convincing: 6 ... ♘xc3 7 ♘xc3 ♗xc3+ 8 bc 0–0 9 ♕h5 f5! 10 g4 ♗d7 11 gf ♖xf5 12 ♕h3 ♗e8! 13 ♗d3 ♗g6 14 ♖g1 ♕f8 15 ♗xf5 ♗xf5, with more than enough compensation for the exchange in Martin Gonzalez–Dolmatov, Barcelona 1983]* 6 ... 0–0 7 a3 ♗xc3+ 8 ♘xc3 ♘xc3 9 ♕xc3± Westerinen–Naumkin, Moscow 1989) 6 a3 (Black has quite a good position after the sharp 6 ♕d3 0–0 *[not 6 ... c5? 7 ♕g3! cd 8 ♕xg7 ♖f8 9 ♘xd4 ♕b6 10 ♗e3± Mokry–Pytel, Polanica Zdroj 1984]* 7 a3 ♗e7 8 h4 *[8 ♕g3!?]* 8 ... c5 9 ♕g3 ♔h8 10 ♗e3 ♘c6= Mokry–Timman, Reggio Emilia 1984/5) 6 ... ♗e7 7 f4 c5 (the prophylactic 7 ... g6 is interesting, for instance 8 g4 h5! 9 f5 hg 10 fg fg 11 ♘g3 c5 12 ♕xg4 ♘f8 13 ♗b5+ ♗d7 14 0–0 ♕b6, with an excellent game; Ligterink–Böhm, Dutch Ch 1983) 8 ♗e3 ♘c6 9 dc! ♘xc5 10 ♘d4 0–0 11 ♗e2 ♗d7 12 0–0 ♖c8= Epishin–Neverov, Minsk 1990.

5   a3   ♗e7

Theory has yet to give a clear answer to the question whether 5 ... ♗e7 or 5 ... ♗xc3+ is better. The text move, which preserves the important dark-squared bishop, is the one I prefer, especially since even after 6 ... ♗xc3+ there is no saving the pawn on e4.

Let us look in detail at the possibilities for both sides after 5 ... ♗xc3+ 6 ♘xc3. There can follow: 6 ... ♘c6 (that 6 ... f5? concedes too many attacking chances to White was proved long ago, in the game Alekhine–Nimzowitsch, Bled 1931, which went 7 f3! ef 8 ♕xf3 ♕xd4?! *[8 ... ♕h4+ 9 g3 ♕xd4 is stronger, but even then Black is in a very dangerous position after 10 ♘b5! ♕e5+ 11 ♗e3 c6 12 0–0–0! cb 13 ♗d4]* 9 ♕g3! ♘f6 10 ♕xg7 ♕e5+ 11 ♗e2 ♖g8 12 ♕h6 ♖g6 13 ♕h4, and White achieved a formidable attacking position. Nor is Black's position improved by 6 ... ♘f6 7 ♗g5) 7 ♗b5 (the chances are equal after 7 d5 ♘ce7! *[7 ... ed 8 ♕xd5 ♘f6 9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10 ♗g5±]* 8 de ♕xd1+ 9 ♔xd1 ♗xe6 10 ♘e4 0–0–0+ 11 ♔e1 ♗f5= Oll–Vaganian, Tallinn 1983. An equally innocuous line is 7 ♗f4 ♘ge7! 8 ♘xe4 ♘g6 9 ♗e3 f5! 10 ♘c3 f4 11 ♗d2 ♘xd4 12 ♘b5 ♘xb5 13 ♗xb5 ♗d7, and it is up to White to demonstrate his compensation for the pawn; Westerinen–Uhlmann, Porz 1990. 7 ♗e3 gives Black no trouble either, since it allows 7 ... ♘f6 and thus reduces White's chances of advantage at a stroke; for example, 8 ♕d2 ♘e7!? *[White has somewhat the better game after 8 ... h6 9 0–0–0 ♘e7 10 ♗f4! ♗d7 11 ♗e5 ♗c6 12 ♗b5! ♕d7 13 ♗xf6 gf 14 ♘xe4± Campora–Bonin, New York 1987]* 9 ♗g5 ♘ed5 10

0-0-0 ♗d7 11 f3 ♘xc3 12 ♕xc3 ♘d5 13 ♕d2 e3! 14 ♗xe3 ♘xe3 15 ♕xe3 0-0= Kotronias–Foisor, Moscow 1987) 7 ... ♘ge7 8 ♗g5 (it is always useful to provoke a weakness, however slight. Black has easy equality after 8 ♗e3 0-0 9 ♕d2 e5! 10 de [*10 d5 ♘d4 11 ♗c4 ♘ef5 12 0-0-0 ♘d6 13 ♗a2 ♘4f5 is in Black' favour; Garcia Martinez–Uhlmann, Leipzig 1983. Black also has an excellent game after 11 ♗xd4 ed 12 ♕xd4 c6! 13 ♗c4 ♘f5! — Uhlmann*] 10 ... ♘xe5 11 ♘xe4 ♗f5= Mokry–Knaak, Bratislava 1983) 8 ... f6 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♕d2 f5 (the pawn on f6 will not be embellishing Black's position in the event of a central break: 10 ... e5 11 d5 [*or 11 de ♕xd2+ 12 ♗xd2 f5 13 ♗c4+ ♔h8 14 ♘b5 ♘e5 15 ♘xc7 ♘xc4 16 ♗b4! with the initiative; Gipslis–Toshkov, Yurmala 1987*] 11 ... ♘d4 12 ♗xd4 ed 13 ♕xd4 ♘f5 [*13 ... c6 14 ♗c4 ♘f5 is no good in view of the simple 15 dc+*] 14 ♕xe4 ♘d6 15 ♕a4 ♘xb5 16 ♕xb5 ♖e8+ 17 ♔d2 c6 18 ♕c5 cd 19 ♖ad1! with advantage, Vujadinović–Gavrić, Yugoslavia 1991) 11 0-0-0 (11 f3 gives Black the additional possibility of 11 ... ef 12 gf f4! 13 ♗f2 e5 14 ♗c4+ ♔h8= Weill–I. Farago, Montpellier 1989) 11 ... a6 (11 ... ♘d5 is also playable. However, after the correct 12 ♘xd5 [*not 12 ♗g5? e3! 13 ♗xe3 f4 14 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 15 ♗xf4 ♕xb5∓∓ Pavlov–Uhlmann, Halle*

1981*] 12 ... ed 13 ♗xc6 bc 14 ♗f4, although Black may not have much chance of losing, he has absolutely no chance of winning; the difference in strength of the bishops is too great) 12 ♗xc6 (12 ♗c4 ♘d5 relieves Black of all worries) 12 ... ♘xc6 13 f3 (or 13 ♗g5 ♕d7!? 14 f3 ef 15 gf e5! 16 de ♕xd2+ 17 ♗xd2 ♗e6=. Black shouldn't insist on keeping the extra pawn; if he does, White's initiative may grow into something more tangible. Thus, in Miles–Reefschläger, Porz 1982, White already had a winning attack after a few more moves: 13 ♗g5 ♕e8?! 14 f3 ef 15 gf ♘d8?! 16 ♖hg1 c6 17 ♖g3 ♖f7 18 ♖dg1 b5 19 ♗f6±±) 13 ... e5! 14 de (Black has a promising position after 14 d5 ♘a5! 15 ♗c5 ♘c4 16 ♕e2 ♘d6 17 fe ♕g5+ 18 ♔b1 f4; Hartmann–Hertneck, Bundesliga 1989) 14 ... ♕xd2+ 15 ♗xd2 ef 16 gf ♗e6 17 f4 ♖ad8= Cools–Claessen, Odessa 1990.

6 ♘xe4   ♘f6
White also has difficulty demonstrating an advantage against 6 ... ♘c6, for exmple: 7 ♗f4 (if 7 g3, Black can equalise with 7 ... ♘f6 [*7 ... e5 8 d5 ♘d4 9 ♘xd4 ♕xd5 10 ♗g2! ♕xd4 11 ♕xd4 ed 12 ♗f4! with strong pressure for the pawn; Morgato–Nobrega, corr 1982*] 8 ♗g2 0-0 9 0-0 e5=. He also has nothing to fear from 7 ♗e3 ♘f6 8 ♘xf6+ [*or 8 ♘2c3 0-0 9 ♘g3 ♘d5 10 ♘xd5 ed 11 ♗d3 f5!= Dvoretsky–Vaganian, USSR*

Ch, Leningrad 1974] 8 ... ♗xf6 9
♕d2 0–0 10 0–0–0 ♘e7! 11 ♘c3
♘f5 12 ♘e4 ♗e7 13 ♗g3 b6=
Campora–Petrosian, Vrsac 1981;
there are no weaknesses in Black's
position, and his pieces can occupy
active posts without hindrance) 7
... ♘f6 8 ♕d3 (the only move to
present Black with any problems)
8 ... 0–0 9 0–0–0 (the illogical 9
♖d1?! b6 10 ♘2c3 ♘d5 11 ♘xd5
ed 12 ♘g3 ♗f6 13 c3 g6 14 ♗e2
h5! hands the initiative to Black) 9
... b6 10 h4 (Black has comfortable
equality after 10 ♘2c3 ♘d5 11
♘xd5 ed 12 ♘c3 ♗f6 13 ♕f3
♗e6, Stoica–Uhlmann, Bucha-
rest 1978) 10 ... ♗b7 11 ♘xf6+
♗xf6 12 ♕g3 ♖c8 13 ♗g5 ♕d6!=
Westerinen–Ostenstad, Gausdal
Troll Masters 1991.

7   ♕d3

It is worth considering 7 ♘2g3
0–0 (White has a small plus after
7 ... ♘c6 8 c3 e5 9 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6
10 d5 ♘e7 11 c4, Ma. Tseitlin-
Vilela, Trnava 1979) 8 ♗c4 ♘bd7
9 0–0 ♘xe4 10 ♘xe4 ♘f6 11
♘xf6+ ♗xf6 12 c3 e5 13 de ♕xd1
14 ♖xd1 ♗xe5 15 ♖e1! with
a minimal endgame advantage
in   Vyzmanavin–Panchenko,
Moscow 1981.

The simplest answer to 7 ♘2c3
is 7 ... ♘c6 8 ♗e3 (or 8 ♗b5
♘xe4 9 ♘xe4 ♕d5 10 ♕e2 a6
11 ♗xc6+ ♕xc6 12 0–0 0–0=
Balandin–Moroz,   Simferopol
1991) 8 ... 0–0, transposing into
the game Dvoretsky–Vaganian
which we have seen before.

7   ...   0–0
8   ♗f4   ♘d5

This is *ECO*'s recommendation,
though in practice 8 ... ♘bd7!? has
been tried much more frequently,
with quite good results. For exam-
ple, 9 0–0–0 (White has no trace
of an advantage after 9 ♘2c3 ♘d5
10 ♘xd5 ed 11 ♘c3 c6 12 ♗e2
♖e8, Bosboom–Dokhoian, Wijk
aan Zee II 1989) 9 ... ♘xe4
(White's pressure is not all that
strong after 9 ... b6 10 ♘xf6+
♘xf6 11 ♕g3 ♘e4 12 ♕e3 ♗b7
13 f3 ♘f6 14 ♗e5 ♕d7, Shirazi-
Lein, St John 1988) 10 ♕xe4 ♘f6
(another perfectly playable line is
10 ... c5 11 ♘c3 ♘f6 12 ♕e1!? cd
13 ♗e5 ♕a5 14 ♖xd4 ♖d8=
Gipslis–Krogius, Moscow 1991)
11 ♕d3 (or 11 ♕f3 ♗d5 12 ♗e5
b5! 13 ♘c3 c6=) 11 ... b6 12 ♘c3
(better 12 ♕g3, transposing into
Shirazi–Lein) 12 ... ♗b7, and
now in Harlov–Lputian, Azov
1991, an unsound pawn sacrifice
led to a lost position for White:
13 ♗e2? ♗xg2 14 ♖hg1 ♗b7 15
♗e5 g6 16 ♕h3 ♘d7.

9   ♗d2   b6
10   c4   ♗a6
11   g3

ECO recommends 11 b4, and
Yusupov 11 ♘2g3. Shirazi has his
own views.

11   ...   ♘d7
12   ♗g2   ♘5f6!? (89)

The calm 12 ... ♖b8 would have
led to a quiet game with a space
advantage for White. The unex-
pected move played by Yusupov

abruptly alters the character of the contest, and forces White, at least temporarily, into the role of defender.

89
W
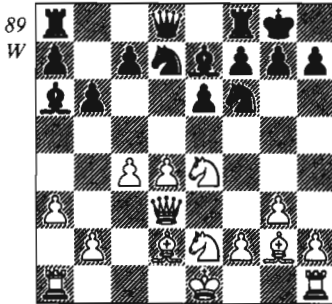
13 ♘xf6+   ♗xf6
14 ♗xa8   ♘e5!

The start of a combination. Yusupov had to foresee this move.

15 ♕e4

Black's task would be simpler after 15 ♕c2 ♕xa8 16 0-0-0 ♘xc4, with tremendous compensation for the exchange.

15 ...   ♕xa8
16 ♕xa8   ♘d3+
17 ♔f1   ♖xa8
18 b3   ♗b7
19 ♖g1   c5
20 ♗e3?!

The series of virtually forced moves has led to a position in which White must seek means of salvation in spite of his material plus; and the first independent move by Shirazi proves to be a mistake. He had to go in for the following variation (given by Yusupov), whether he liked its consequences or not: 20 ♗c3!

♖d8 21 dc ♘xc5 22 ♗xf6 gf 23 ♔e1! (the only move, since Black was threatening to take on b3 and follow with deadly checks on d2 and f3) 23 ... ♘xb3 (or 23 ... ♘d3+ 24 ♔d2!) 24 ♖d1 ♖c8, with about equal chances.

20 ...   ♖d8
21 ♘f4

If 21 ♖d1, Black wins with 21 ... ♘e5! (I think this is what White must have missed when playing his 20th move).

21 ...   cd
22 ♘xd3   de *(90)*

90
W
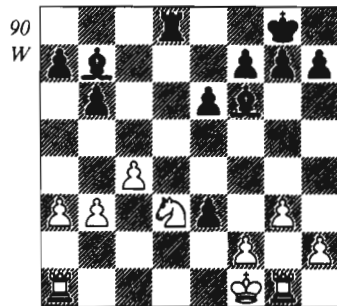
The game has opened up, the black bishops are strafing the entire board, and in addition White cannot avoid losing material. For Black to win, all that is required is a minimum of accuracy. Yusupov conducts the game to its victorious end in a thoroughly sound manner.

23 ♔e2   ef
24 ♘xf2   ♗xa1
25 ♖xa1   f6
26 ♖c1   ♔f7
27 ♔e3   e5

All very scientific: the pawns place themselves on squares of the opposite colour to the bishop.

28 a4 ♔e6 29 a5 f5 30 c5 bc 31 ♘d3 ♗d5 32 ♘xc5+ ♔d6 33 b4 g5 34 ♘a6 f4+ 35 ♔f2 e4 36 h4 h6 37 ♘c7 ♔e5 38 hg hg 39 gf+ gf 40 ♖c5 e3+ 41 ♔e2 ♔e4 0-1

13 Winawer Variation: 4 e5 b6 and others

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	e5	

In this chapter we shall examine variations in which Black refrains from the natural ... c7–c5, at least temporarily. The moves which come under this heading are 4 ... b6, 4 ... ♕d7 and 4 ... ♘e7. This kind of strategy is usually chosen by players who are not afraid of prolonged and difficult defence, seeing that by exploiting his advantage in space (and often development too) White quite easily assumes the initiative. Black's strategy counts such distinguished figures as Korchnoi, Petrosian and Bronstein among its devotees; in our own day it is frequently seen in the games of Vaganian and Seirawan, and is occasionally used by the author of these lines. I have to admit, though, that if this system were judged purely on the results of my games, it would have to be prohibited by law, so low is my score with it.

Cabrilo–Arencibia
Manila IZ 1990

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5

4	...	b6 *(91)*

91
W
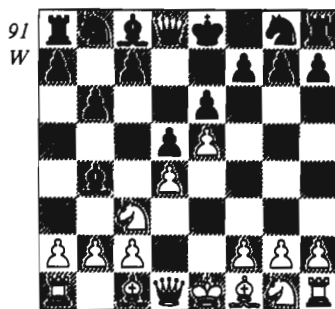
Black prepares the exchange of light-squared bishops which is strategically advantageous to him, but in so doing he loses too much time which could have been put to more useful purposes. Let us also look at 4 ... ♕d7 and 4 ... ♘e7.

(a) **4 ... ♕d7** is very similar in intention to 4 ... b6 (Black is merely postponing the latter by one or two moves), and therefore

transpositions are frequent. We shall here analyse some variations in which the position of the queen on d7 makes an important difference. Thus, 5 a3 (naturally, White has a wide — perhaps *too* wide — choice of good alternatives, and we shall briefly look at two of them. First, 5 ♗d2 [*played several times by Nunn — a significant fact*] 5 ... ♘e7 [*for 5 ... b6!?, see 4 ... b6 5 ♗d2 ♕d7*] 6 ♕g4 ♘f5 7 ♗d3 h5 8 ♕f4 ♘c6 9 ♗xf5 ef 10 ♘f3 ♗xc3 11 ♗xc3 ♕e7 12 ♕g3± Nunn–Hort, Amsterdam 1988. Secondly, 5 ♕g4!? f5 6 ♕g3 [*White also gains a small plus from 6 ♕h5+ g6 7 ♕h3 b6 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bc ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 a4 ♘b8 12 ♘e2 ♘c6 13 ♘f4± Bouaziz–Kosten, Torcy 1991*] 6 ... b6 7 ♘h3 [*White brings his knight to f4 without loss of time. There is less danger to Black in 7 ♗d2 ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♘ge2 ♗f8! 10 h4 ♘b4 11 0–0–0 0–0–0 12 ♕h3 c5, with a satisfactory position in Tringov–Bronstein, Amsterdam IZ 1964*] 7 ... ♗a6 [*delaying this important exchange can have unpleasant consequences: 7 ... a5?! 8 ♘f4 ♕f7 9 a3 ♗xc3+ 10 ♕xc3! ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 12 ♘xe6! ♕xe6 13 ♕xc7 ♘c6 14 ♕xg7±± Ljubojević–Seirawan, Tilburg 1983*] 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 0–0 [*9 ♘f4 ♗f8 10 ♘ce2! also deserves attention*] 9 ... c6 [*9 ... ♗xc3!?±*] 10 ♘f4 ♘c7 11 ♘ce2! ♕f7 12 b3, with strong pressure in Hjartarson–Adams, Manila IZ

1990) 5 ... ♗xc3+ (5 ... ♗f8!?) 6 bc b6 7 ♕g4 (the problems Black faces are simpler in the case of 7 ♘h3 ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 [*8 ♗d3!?*] 8 ... ♘xa6 9 ♘f4 [*9 ♕g4!? f5 10 ♕h5+ g6 11 ♕e2*] 9 ... 0–0–0 10 a4 ♘e7 11 ♕e2 ♘b8 12 a5 ♘ec6 13 ab cb 14 ♗a3 ♘a5, Chandler–Luce, London 1990. Black's queenside position is solid and he has no other weaknesses. There is still not full clarity about 7 a4, for example: 7 ... ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♕g4 f5 10 ♕h5+ g6 11 ♕e2 ♘b8 12 h4 [*12 ♘f3!? ♘c6 13 c4±*] 12 ... h6 13 ♘h3 ♘c6 14 ♘f4 ♘ge7 15 g4!? [*a loss of tempo automatically means forfeiting chances of an advantage: 15 ♗a3?! ♖g8 16 ♗b4 ♘xb4! 17 cb a5 18 b5 ♖c8 19 0–0 c6∓ Velimirović–Szabo, Amsterdam 1986*] 15 ... 0–0–0 16 gf gf 17 ♗a3 ♖dg8 18 ♘h5± Timman–Planinc, Banja Luka 1974. I think there will be further improvements for both sides) 7 ... f5 8 ♕g3 (8 ♕h5+!? ♕f7 9 ♕f3) 8 ... ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♘e2 (it isn't worth wasting time driving the knight from a6; it will have to move in any case. Watson–Vaganian, St John 1988, went 10 ♕d3?! ♘b8 11 a4 ♘c6 12 ♘e2 ♘a5 13 h4 ♘c4 14 h5 ♘h6, and Black was all right) 10 ... 0–0–0 (10 ... ♘b8?! is a mistake: 11 ♘f4 ♔f7 [*11 ... ♘c6 12 ♘xe6! ♕xe6 13 ♕xg7 ♕g6 14 ♕xh8 ♘d8 15 e6! ♕xg2 16 ♗f4 ♕xh1+ 17 ♔d2±±*] 12 c4 c6 13 cd cd 14 ♘h5± Pinkowezky–Weyerstrauss, corr 1987) 11

a4!? (another possibility is interest-
ing: 11 ♘f4 ♘b8 12 a4 ♘c6 13
a5!? ♘xa5 14 ♖xa5 ba 15 ♘d3 [or
15 0–0 ♔b8 16 ♗a3 ♘e7 17
♗xe7 ♕xe7 18 ♕d3 c6, with
unclear play; J. Polgar–Adams,
Haifa 1989] 15 ... g6! 16 0–0 ♕b5
17 ♘c5 ♖e8, again with unclear
prospects; Fedorowicz–Seirawan,
USA Ch 1988) 11 ... ♔b7 12
0–0 ♕f7 (12 ... ♘b8 13 a5 b5?! 14
♘f4 a6 15 ♗a3± Holmov–N.
Zilberman, Belgorod 1990) 13 c4
♘e7 14 ♗g5 dc 15 ♕c3 ♘d5
16 ♕xc4± Fischer–Bisguier, USA
Ch 1957.

(b) **4 ... ♘e7** 5 a3 (the slow
5 ♗d2 gives Black a breathing
space: 5 ... b6 [5 ... c5 is probably
even stronger, but in the present
chapter we agreed not to hurry with
that move] 6 ♘f3 [the chances are
about equal after 6 ♘b5 ♗xd2+
7 ♕xd2 a6 8 ♘a3 a5! 9 ♘b5 0–0 10
♘f3 ♗a6 11 ♗d3 c5, Ljubojević–
Seirawan, Mar del Plata 1982. It
is worth studying 6 ♕g4!?] 6 ...
♗xc3!? [White gains a small but
stable advantage from 6 ... ♕d7 7
♘e2! ♗xd2+ 8 ♕xd2 ♗a6 9 h4
c5 10 c3 ♘c6 11 ♘f4 ♗xf1 12
♔xf1, when his secure centre and
greater command of space promise
him the better chances; Psakhis–
Short, Hastings 1987/8] 7 ♗xc3
a5! 8 h4 [clearly White's chances
lie only on the kingside, and he
increases his pawn power there.
Black also has a good position if
White goes for piece pressure with
8 ♘g5!? ♘g6! 9 ♕h5 ♕d7 10 ♗d2 h6

11 ♘f3 ♗a6 12 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 13 0–0
♘b4! 14 ♖fc1 c5= Strikovic–
Psakhis, Belgrade GMA 1988] 8
... ♕d7 9 h5 h6 10 ♗d2 ♗a6 11
♗xa6 ♘xa6 12 0–0 a4! 13 ♘h4
c5= Geller–Seirawan, London
1982. If at move 5 White plays 5
♕g4, Black has quite good chances
of equality with 5 ... ♘f5 6 ♘f3
♘c6 7 ♗d3 [7 ♗b5 ♗d7 8 ♗g5
h5! 9 ♕xf5 ef 10 ♗xd8 ♔xd8
11 ♗d3 c6 12 h4 g6= Spassky–
Korchnoi, USSR Ch, Riga 1958]
7 ... h5 8 ♕f4 ♗e7 9 ♗xf5 ef 10
h4 ♗e6 11 ♕e3 ♕d7= Hebden–
Ivkov, Belgrade 1985) 5 ...
♗xc3+ 6 bc b6 (for 6 ... c5! see
chapters 15 and 16) 7 ♕g4 (7 h4
is not dangerous, since the black
king finds sufficient time to take
refuge on the queenside: 7 ... ♗a6
8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 h5 h6 10 ♕d3
♘b8 11 ♘f3 ♘bc6 12 ♘h4 ♕d7
13 g4 0–0–0= Arnason–Rohde,
Beer-Sheva 1987. On the other
hand, 7 ♘h3!? may give Black
quite a severe headache, for
instance 7 ... ♘g6! [the white
knight must be prevented from
reaching h5] 8 a4 ♗a6 [a stronger
line is probably 8 ... c5 9 a5 ♗a6
10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 0–0±] 9 ♗xa6
♘xa6 10 0–0 ♘b8 11 f4! [a signifi-
cant improvement on White's play
in Karpov–Seirawan, Mar del
Plata 1982, in which Black
achieved an excellent game after 11
♕g4 ♘c6 12 ♘f4 ♘xf4 13 ♗xf4
♖g8! 14 ♗g5 ♕d7 15 f4 f5!] 11
... ♕d7 12 f5! ef 13 ♕h5 ♘f8 14
g4!± Nunn–L. Hansen, Lugano

1989) 7 ... ♘g6 (7 ... 0–0? presents White with a strong attack for absolutely nothing: 8 ♗g5 ♕d7 9 ♗d3 ♘g6 10 h4±. It is also difficult to recommend 7 ... ♔f8 8 ♘f3 [*8 a4!? ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♘e2±*] 8 ... ♗a6 9 ♗d3!? c5 10 dc ♗xd3 11 cd bc 12 0–0 ♘d7 13 a4!?± J. Polgar–L. Hansen, Vejstrup 1989, or 7 ... ♘f5 8 ♗d3 h5 9 ♕h3 c5 10 ♘f3 ♕c7 11 0–0 ♘c6 12 a4 cd 13 ♗xf5 ef 14 ♕g3!± Tseshkovsky–Smyslov, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976) 8 h4 (8 ♗g5 is less precise: 8 ... ♕d7 9 h4 h6! 10 ♗d2 h5 11 ♕f3 ♕a4 12 ♗d3 ♗a6, with a good game in Fischer–Ivkov, Santiago de Chile 1959) 8 ... h5 9 ♕d1 (the simplest and clearest way to gain an advantage, but White also has the better game after 9 ♕f3!? ♘xh4 [*9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♗g5 ♕d7 12 a4± Ivkov–Byrne, Havana Ol 1966*] 10 ♕h3 ♘f5 11 g4 ♘e7 12 g3± — ECO. It is a third retreat, 9 ♕g3, that allows Black the best equalising chances, for example 9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♘e2 ♕d7! 12 ♘f4 ♘xf4 13 ♗xf4 ♔f8 14 a4 ♘b8, with a satisfactory position; De Firmian–Rohde, San Francisco 1987) 9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♗g5 ♕d7 12 ♘e2 ♕c6 (or 12 ... ♘e7 13 ♘f4 0–0–0 14 ♘xh5 ♖dg8 15 ♘g3± Dolmatov–Panno, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989) 13 0–0 (13 ♖h3? is weaker: 13 ... ♔d7! 14 ♕d3 ♕c4, and Black is all right) 13 ... ♔d7 14 f4! (the battle cannot be won by the

pieces alone, so the pawn reserves enter the fray) 14 ... ♖af8 15 f5 ef 16 ♕d3! ♘b8 17 ♖xf5± Abramović–Lputian, Erevan 1982.

5 a3

The most popular move in the position, though it would not be simple, for example, to prove it superior to 5 ♕g4. Let us see what happens if White chooses other paths:

(a) **5 ♗d2 ♕d7** (5 ... ♘e7, which leads to positions we have already examined, is probably stronger) 6 ♗b5! (a common manoeuvre in this variation, which is all the stronger when the queen is on d7) 6 ... c6 7 ♗a4 a5 (the verdict on the position is not altered by 7 ... ♗a6 8 ♘ce2! ♗f8 9 c3 ♗b5 10 ♗c2 c5 11 a4 ♗a6 12 a5± Luther–Brynell, Leningrad 1989) 8 a3 ♗xc3 (Black is in even worse trouble after 8 ... ♗f8?! 9 ♘ce2! ♗a6 10 c3 ♗b5 [*10 ... ♘e7 11 ♘f3 ♘f5 12 0–0 ♗e7 13 ♖e1 ♗xe2 14 ♕xe2± Nunn–Hübner, Brussels 1986*] 11 ♗c2 c5 12 ♘f3 ♘c6 13 0–0 ♘ge7 14 ♖e1 ♘c8?! 15 ♘f4± Kindermann–Sahović, Biel Open 1990) 9 ♗xc3 ♗a6 10 ♗d2!? (or 10 ♕g4 f5 11 ♕g3!? ♗b5 12 ♗xb5 cb 13 ♘e2 ♘c6 14 0–0 g6 15 ♗d2± Hernandez–Gonzalez, Mexico 1991) 10 ... ♗b5 (10 ... ♘e7 11 c3 ♘f5±) 11 ♗xb5 cb 12 ♕g4 f5 13 ♕h5+! g6 14 ♕e2 ♕c6 15 h4 h6 16 ♖h3, with strong pressure in Halifman–Brynell, Leningrad 1989.

(b) **5 ♘h3!?** (an interesting move

which is frequently seen in practice) 5 ... ♕d7 6 ♘f4 c5 (White has a slight edge after 6 ... ♗a6 7 ♕g4 ♗f8 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♕e2 ♘b8 10 0-0 ♘c6 11 ♗e3 0-0-0 12 a4± Nijboer–Brennikmeijer, Dutch Ch 1991. He also has the more promising position after 6 ... ♘c6 7 a3 ♗f8?! 8 ♗e2 ♗b7 9 0-0 0-0-0 10 ♖e1 ♔b8 11 ♗g4!, Suetin–Katalimov, USSR 1969) 7 a3 ♗xc3+ 8 bc ♗a6 9 h4 (9 ♘h5 g6) 9 ... ♗xf1 10 ♔xf1 ♕a4, with unclear consequences; Skovgard–Pedersen, corr 1985.

(c) **5 ♕g4!?** *(92)*

92
B
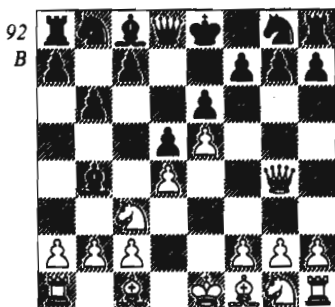
A powerful move. Black has to exercise extra caution to avoid ending up in a highly unpleasant situation. After **5 ... ♗f8** (regrettable though it may be, there is no other move; neither 5 ... ♔f8 nor 5 ... g6 merits consideration), White has several interesting continuations at his disposal. Let us examine the most poular of them:

(c1) **6 ♘h3 ♘e7** (6 ... ♗a6 7 ♘b5! ♕d7 8 a4 ♘e7 9 ♘f4 ♘g6

10 ♘h5 ♖g8 11 ♗h6!± Tal–Kärner, USSR 1979) 7 ♗g5 ♘bc6 (if 7 ... h6 8 ♗xe7 ♕xe7, then 9 ♘xd5? fails to 9 ... h5! 10 ♘xe7 hg 11 ♘xc8 gh∓∓, but 9 ♘f4 gives White a secure plus) 8 ♗b5 ♗d7 9 0-0-0! (more aggressive than 9 0-0 h6 10 ♗e3 ♘b4! 11 a3 ♗xb5 [*11 ... ♘xc2? 12 ♖ac1 ♘xe3 13 fe ♘f5 14 ♕f3±±*] 12 ♘xb5 ♘bc6 13 ♘f4 ♕d7= Sax–Vaganian, Biel IZ 1985) 9 ... h6 10 ♗e3 a6 11 ♗e2 ♕c8 12 ♘f4± Perenyi–Portisch, Hungary 1987.

(c2) **6 ♘f3 ♕d7 7 ♗e2** (7 ♗b5!?; or 7 ♗d2 ♗a6 8 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 9 ♘e2! ♘e7 10 b3 ♘f5 11 0-0 ♘b4 12 c4± Yurtayev–Romanishin, USSR 1979) 7 ... ♗a6 8 0-0 ♘e7 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♘e2 ♘b4 (or 10 ... ♘f5 11 c3 ♗e7 12 ♕h3, followed by 14 g4±) 11 c3 ♘d3 12 b3± Hübner–Nikolac, Bundesliga 1988.

(c3) **6 h4 h5!?** (if the pawn is allowed to advance further, White's kingside initiative will be very difficult to neutralise, for example 6 ... ♘c6 7 ♗g5 ♕d7 8 ♘f3 h6 9 ♗f4 ♗b7 10 h5 ♘ge7 11 0-0-0, and it is hard for Black to find objects against which to direct his counterplay; Tseshkovsky–Psakhis, Irkutsk 1983) 7 ♕d1!? (7 ♕g3 is less convincing, as after 7 ... ♘h6 the knight reaches f5 with gain of tempo) 7 ... c5 (7... ♗a6 8 ♗g5 ♕d7 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♘ce2!±) 8 ♗g5 ♕d7 9 ♗b5 ♘c6 10 ♘ge2 a6 11 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 occurred in Blatny–

Psakhis, Amsterdam OHRA II 1989. White's position is the more promising, but Black is not without counterchances.

(c4) **6 ♗g5!?** ♕d7 7 f4 (or 7 ♗b5 ♘c6! 8 ♘f3 ♗b7 9 0-0-0 h6 10 ♗f4 a6 11 ♗e2 0-0-0 12 h4 h5!= Honfi–Bronstein, Monte Carlo 1969. Black has quite good chances of equalising after 7 0-0-0 ♘c6! [*7 ... ♘e7?! 8 ♗xe7! h5 9 ♕h3 ♗xe7 10 f4 ♗b7 11 ♘f3 ♘c6 12 ♘g5!± Hjartarson–Vaganian, Eu-Cup 1991*] 8 ♔b1 ♗b7 9 ♘ge2 h6 10 ♕h3 ♘ge7 11 g4 ♘a5! 12 ♗c1 c5; Aseyev–Huzman, Sevastopol 1986) 7 ... ♘c6 8 0-0-0 (in Timman–Portisch, Bugojno 1986, Black achieved an excellent position after 8 ♘f3 ♘ge7 9 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 10 ♗b5 c6 11 ♗d3 h5 12 ♕h3 ♖h6! 13 0-0 g6) 8 ... ♘ge7 9 ♘ge2 ♗b7 10 ♘g3 h6 11 ♗xe7 (the disappearance of such an important bishop undoubtedly counts as a gain for Black, but then White has no advantage after 11 ♗h4 0-0-0 12 ♘h5 ♘f5! 13 ♗xd8 ♘e3) 11 ... ♘xe7 12 h4 was played in Lputian–Psakhis, Sochi 1985; and now 12 ... ♘f5 would have given Black a good game.

(c5) **6 a4** ♗a6 (White's chances are a little better after 6 ... ♘c6 7 ♘f3 [*7 ♗b5 ♗d7 8 ♗g5 ♘ge7 9 ♘f3 h6 10 ♕h3 ♘b4! 11 ♖c1 a6 12 ♗e2 c5= Belyavsky–Petrosian, Moscow 1981*] 7 ... ♕d7 8 ♗d2 ♘ge7 9 ♘d1! ♘f5 10 ♘e3 ♗b7 11 ♘xf5 ef 12 ♕f4± Murey–

Akhsharumova, New York 1987) 7 ♘b5! ♘e7 8 ♘f3 ♘g6! 9 ♘g5 (9 h4 h5 10 ♕g3 c6 relieves Black of all worries) 9 ... ♕d7 10 h4 c6 11 h5! ♘xe5! 12 de cb 13 ♗d3 ♘c6 14 ♘xh7 ♘xe5, with great complications in Murey–Vaganian, Hastings 1982/3.

(c6) **6 ♘d1!?** c5 7 c3 ♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♕c7 9 ♗f4± Campora–Gulko, Biel 1987.

I think a close study of these variations shows how difficult it is for Black to obtain normal (let alone good) play against 5 ♕g4.

5 ...   ♗f8

The standard bishop retreat in this variation. Instead, 5 ... ♗xc3+ 6 bc ♗a6 (6 ... ♕d7 was considered earlier) 7 ♕g4 forces a concession from Black; he must either give up his castling rights (7 ... ♔f8) or seriously weaken his kingside (7 ... g6).

6 ♗b5+!? *(93)*

White presents his visiting card. In games played with this variation in the last three or four years, White has seldom refrained from the bishop sortie to b5, with or without check.

6 f4 promises him little; the activity of the dark-squared bishop is diminished at a stroke, and Black obtains quite good play on the light squares. For example, 6 ... ♘e7 ♘f3 ♘f5 (or 7 ... h5 8 ♗e3 ♘f5 9 ♗f2 ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♕d3 ♘b8 12 ♘d1 c5 13 c3 c4= J.Diaz–Psakhis, Cienfuegos 1983) 8 ♗d3 h5 9 0-0 ♗a6 10

♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 ♕d3 ♘b8 12 ♘d1 c5= Kupper–Petrosian, Venice 1967.

The simple developing move 6 ♘f3 sets Black quite a few problems. There can follow: 6 ... ♘e7 (or 6 ... ♕d7 7 ♗b5 ♘c6 [*7 ... c6 8 ♗a4 ♗a6 9 ♘e2! h5? 10 0–0 ♘h6 11 ♖e1 ♗e7 12 c3 g6 13 ♘f4 ♘f5 14 ♘h3!± Chandler–Vaganian, Dubai Ol 1986; after the correct 9 ... ♗b5 10 ♗b3 c5, we reach positions that are complex and difficult to handle*] 8 ♘e2 [*the continuation of Hellers–Karlsson, Stockholm 1990, comes to much the same thing: 8 0–0 a6 9 ♗d3 ♗b7 10 ♘e3 0–0–0 11 b4±*] 8 ... ♗b7 9 ♘f4 a6 10 ♗a4 [*10 ♗d3!?*] 10 ... 0–0–0 11 0–0 h6 12 c3 ♔b8 13 b4± Psakhis–Karlsson, Tallinn 1987) 7 ♗b5+ (Black is given no problems by 7 b4 c5! 8 ♗g5!? [*8 bc bc 9 ♗b5+ ♗d7 10 0–0 ♘g6 11 ♖b1 ♗e7= Yurtayev–Gulko, USSR 1982*] 8 ... a6! 9 bc bc 10 dc h6 11 ♗d2 ♘d7 12 ♗d3 ♘c6= Tal–Dizdar, Yurmala 1983. All according to chess science: don't weaken yourself on the flank where you are weaker already. Black also equalises easily after 7 ♘e2 ♗a6! 8 ♘f4 ♗xf1 9 ♔xf1 h5!=. Dolmatov's patent 7 h4!? may give him more trouble; in Dolmatov–Gulko, Volgograd 1985, White quickly gained the advantage after 7 ... c5?! 8 h5 h6 9 ♘e2! ♗a6 10 c3 ♘ec6 11 b4! ♗e7 12 ♖h3±. In A.Sokolov–Portisch, Moscow GMA 1990,

Black reacted more strongly with 7 ... h5?! 8 ♗g5 ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 0–0 ♕d7, and obtained a satisfactory position) 7 ... ♗d7!? 8 ♗d3 c5 9 ♘b5 (9 0–0 ♘bc6 10 ♗g5!) 9 ... ♘f5 10 ♗g5 ♕c8 11 dc bc (11 ... ♗xc5 12 b4! ♗f8 13 0–0±) 12 c4 dc, with unclear play.
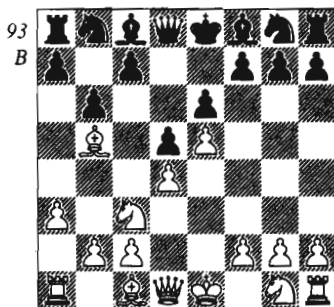
6   ...   c6

In Timoshchenko–Shtirenkov, Budapest 1991, White brought off an elegant stratagem; the game went 6 ... ♗d7 7 ♗d3 c5 8 ♘f3 ♘c6 9 0–0 ♘ge7 10 ♗g5! (stronger than 10 ♘b5 ♘g6 11 c4 dc 12 ♗xg6 hg 13 d5 ♘a5! with unclear play; Cabrilo–Dizdar, Yugoslav Ch 1990) 10 ... a6 (it was essential to play 10 ... ♕b8 11 ♖e1 ♘g6 12 ♗xg6! hg 13 ♘e2±) 11 ♗xa6!! ♕b8 (or 11 ... ♖xa6 12 ♘b5 ♗c8 13 ♘d6+ ♔d7 14 ♘xf7+±) 12 ♗d3 ♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 cd 14 ♘b5±.

7   ♗a4   ♗a6

Black's light-squared bishop is very restricted, and Arencibia takes the first opportunity to lead it out of captivity. White has the

better game after 7 ... ♘e7 8 ♘ce2
♘f5 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♘f3 e5 11 0–0
h5!? 12 h3! ♗a6 13 ♖e1 g6 14 g4!
Rogers–Dizdar, West Berlin 1986.

| 8 | ♘ce2 | ♗b5 |
| 9 | ♗b3 | |

Not exchanging it for a weak
piece!

9	...	c5
10	c3	♘c6
11	♘f3	♘ge7
12	0–0	♘f5 (94)

94
W
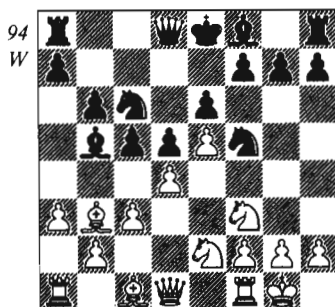
Black is close to completing his
development successfully. He has
created some pressure against
White's centre and partly solved
the problem of his light-squared
bishop. It can nonetheless be
stated that the opening has turned
out in White's favour; his minor
pieces are more active than his
opponent's, and he controls more
space.

Instead of Black's last move,
12 ... ♕d7 is probably stronger,
preparing to castle long. There can
follow 13 ♖e1 0–0–0 (in Oll–
Epishin, Tbilisi 1989, Black played

the weaker 13 ... h5 14 ♗g5
♗xe2 15 ♖xe2 ♘f5 16 dc ♗xc5
17 c4!±) 14 ♗c2 ♘g6 15 ♘g3
♔b7 16 h4± Chandler–Timman,
Amsterdam 1987.

Black also fails to obtain full
equality with 12 ... a5 13 ♖e1 a4
14 ♗c2 ♕d7 15 ♘f4 ♘g6 16
♘h5± Cabrilo–Bronstein, Pan-
cevo 1987.

| 13 | ♖e1 | ♗e7 |
| 14 | ♗c2 | g6 |

14 ... ♘h4 15 ♘xh4 ♗xh4 16
♘f4 is good for White.

| 15 | ♘f4 | cd |
| 16 | cd | ♖c8 |

Rather naively hoping that
White will overlook the threat of
17 ... ♘cxd4!

| 17 | ♗xf5 | ef |
| 18 | h4! | 0–0 |

The pawn on h4 is poisoned:
18 ... ♗xh4? 19 ♘xh4 ♕xh4 20
♘xd5±±.

| 19 | g3 | ♕d7 |

Aiming to transfer the knight to
e6, but ...

| 20 | e6! | fe |
| 21 | h5! | |

White isn't very interested in
the pawn on e6, he has a more
attractive target in view: the black
king!

21	...	♖f6
22	hg	hg
23	♘h3	

Freeing a path for the bishop.

| 23 | ... | ♖ff8 |
| 24 | ♗g5 | ♗d6 |

If the bishops are exchanged,
what will there be left to defend

the entire complex of weak dark squares on the kingside?

25	♘f4	♕f7
26	♖c1	

Bringing his last reserves into the battle.

26	...	♖fe8
27	♖c3	♘a5

Unfortunately (for Black), the freeing move 27 ... e5 is unplayable: 28 de ♘xe5 29 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 30 ♖xc6±±.

28	♖ce3	♘c4
29	♖3e2	♘a5 *(95)*

95
W
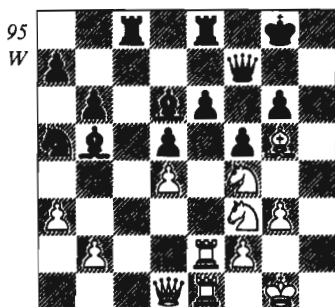
30 ♘e5!

Tactics in the service of strategy! Black is finally forced to exchange his bishop, since he would lose at once with 30 ... ♗xe2 31 ♘xf7 ♗xd1 32 ♘xd6.

30	...	♗xe5
31	♖xe5	♗d7

32 ♔g2!

Cabrilo is not tempted by minor tactical strokes (32 ♘xd5 ed 33 ♖e7 ♖xe7 34 ♖xe7 ♖e8 35 ♖xf7 ♔xf7±), but pursues his long-prepared plan with iron logic: once a white rook reaches h6, the game will be over.

32	...	♘c4
33	♖h1	

Trivial things like the exchange are no longer of interest. After 33 ... ♘xe5 34 de, the fatal arrival of the bishop at f6 cannot be stopped. In any case, the end of the game is near.

33	...	♕g7
34	♖h6	♘xe5
35	de	♔f7
36	♖xg6	♕xg6
37	♘xg6	♔xg6
38	♗f6	♖g8
39	♕d2	♔h7
40	♕b4!	

The queen is ready to deliver the final blow on e7 or h4, and the black pieces, which have long since been mere onlookers, are powerless to prevent it.

40	...	♗c6
41	♕h4+	♔g6
42	♕g5+	

1–0

14   Winawer Variation: 4 e5 c5

Short–Timman
Amsterdam 1991

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	e5	c5
5	a3	

White can choose between this move, which without any doubt is the most popular, and the following alternatives:

(a) **5 ♕g4 ♘e7**, and now:

(a1) **6 dc** (6 a3?! is a mistake because of 6 ... ♕a5! 7 ♘ge2 [*or 7 ab ♕xa1 8 ♔d1 cd 9 ♘b5 0–0 10 ♘f3 ♘bc6 11 ♗d3 ♘g6∓ Jansa–Korchnoi, Luhacovice 1969; Black also has the advantage after 7 ♗d2 cd 8 ab ♕xa1 9 ♘d1 ♘bc6*] 7 ... cd 8 ab [*8 ♕xd4 ♘bc6 9 ♕g4 ♗xc3+ 10 bc 0–0∓*] 8 ... ♕xa1 9 ♘b5 0–0! 10 ♘c7 ♘a6! 11 ♘xa8 ♗d7 12 ♕g5 ♘g6, and again Black has the better game; Tumurkhuyag–Uhlmann, Novi Sad Ol 1990. Nor has Black any problems after 6 ♕xg7 ♖g8 7 ♕h6 [*7 ♕xh7? cd 8 a3 ♕a5∓∓*] 7 ... cd 8 a3 ♗xc3+ [*this time 8 ... ♕a5? doesn't work: 9 ab! ♕xa1 10*

♘b5! with a strong initiative] 9 bc ♕c7 10 ♔d1 dc 11 f4 ♘bc6 12 ♘f3 ♗d7, with a good position; Westerinen–Lahlum, Gausdal 1991) 6 ... ♘bc6 (White probably has the better of it after 6 ... ♗xc3+ 7 bc ♘d7 [*7 ... 0–0 8 ♗d3 ♘g6 9 ♘f3 f5 10 ef ♕xf6 11 0–0 e5 12 ♕h5 ♗f5 13 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 14 ♕xf5 ♖xf5 15 ♖d1±* G. Kuzmin–Vladimirov, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989] 8 ♘f3 ♕c7 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕xh7 ♘xe5 11 ♕h5 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 ♗d7 13 h4! ♕xc5 14 ♕f6 ♘f5 15 ♗g5± Okher–Grigorian, corr 1986) 7 ♗d2!? (approximate equality results from 7 ♗b5 ♕a5 8 ♗xc6+ bc 9 ♗d2 ♘f5 10 ♘ge2 h5!? 11 ♕f4 ♕xc5, Yudasin–Lputian, Simferopol 1988) 7 ... 0–0 (or 7 ... ♘f5 8 ♘f3 ♗xc5 9 ♗d3±; White also has somewhat the better game after 7 ... ♘g6 8 ♘f3 0–0 9 ♗d3 ♗xc5 10 ♕h5 ♘b4 11 0–0 ♘xd3 12 cd ♗e7 13 d4± Tischbierek–L.Hansen, Warsaw 1990) 8 0–0–0 f5 9 ef ♖xf6 10 ♗d3 ♗xc3 (10 ... e5 11 ♕h4 h6 12 ♘e4! de 13 ♗c4+ ♔h8 14 ♗xb4±) 11 ♗xc3 e5 12 ♕e2 ♕c7

13 ♗b5± Heemsoth–Rittner, corr 1987.

(a2) 6 ♘f3 ♘bc6 (another interesting line is 6 ... cd 7 ♘xd4 ♘g6!? *[in Spassky–Uhlmann, Manila IZ 1976, White managed to gain the advantage after 7 ... ♕c7 8 ♗b5+ ♘bc6 9 0–0 ♗xc3 10 bc ♗d7 11 ♗xc6! bc 12 ♗a3, when the difference in strength between the bishops is very noticeable]* 8 ♘f3 *[stronger than 8 ♗b5+ ♗d7 9 0–0 0–0 10 ♗d3 ♘xe5! 11 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 12 ♕h5+ ♔g8 13 ♕xe5 ♘c6, with an excellent position for Black in Murey–Sigurjonsson, Brighton 1982]* 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♗d2 d4 10 ♘e4 ♗xd2+ 11 ♔xd2 ♕a5 12 0–0–0! ♕xa2 13 h4 h5, with great complications; G. Kuzmin–Dolmatov, Minsk 1982. A new move, 6 ... ♕c7, was played with success in Murey–Soffer, Tel-Aviv 1990, which continued 7 ♗b5+ ♗d7 8 0–0 ♗xc3 9 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 10 bc ♘f5=) 7 ♗b5 (Black is not given any problems by 7 ♗d2 0–0 8 ♗d3 f5 9 ef ♖xf6 10 ♕h5 h6 11 a3 ♗a5= Sax–Mednis, Budapest 1976) 7 ... ♗xc3+ (or 7 ... cd 8 0–0!? ♗xc3 9 bc ♕a5 10 a4, with the initiative) 8 bc ♕a5 9 ♗xc6+ bc 10 ♗d2 ♕a4!? 11 0–0 (11 ♕xg7 ♖g8 12 ♕xh7 ♗a6) 11 ... ♘f5 12 ♖fc1 0–0= Hebden–Vaganian, Hastings 1982/3.

(b) 5 dc (played with success by Fine against Botvinnik in the AVRO tournament of 1938) 5 ... ♘c6 (or 5 ... ♘e7 6 ♘f3 ♘d7 7 ♗d3! [7 ♕d4 ♕a5 8 ♗d2 ♘c6 9 ♕g4 0–0 10 ♗d3 ♘cxe5!∓ Jadoul–Korchnoi, Brussels 1986] 7 ... ♘c6 8 0–0 ♘cxe5 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 10 ♗f4 ♗xc3 11 bc ♘xd3 12 cd± Hodgson–Webster, London 1989. It is worth considering 5 ... ♕c7 6 ♘f3 ♘d7 7 ♗f4 ♘e7 8 ♗d3 ♘xc5 9 0–0 ♗xc3 10 bc ♘xd3 11 ♕xd3 ♗d7= Gallagher–L.Hansen, London 1987) 6 ♘f3 ♘ge7 7 ♗d3 (the game is equal after 7 ♗b5 ♗xc5 8 0–0 a6 9 ♗xc6+ ♘xc6 10 ♘e2 0–0 Fernandez Garcia–Eingorn, Pamploma Open 1991) 7 ... d4 (White has the better game after 7 ... ♘g6 8 ♗xg6!? fg 9 ♗e3 0–0 10 0–0± Yurtayev–Dolmatov, Frunze 1983) 8 a3 ♗a5 (8 ... ♕a5?! is very dangerous for Black: 9 ab! ♕xa1 10 ♘b5 0–0 11 0–0 ♘g6 12 c3!± Winants–Brenninkmeijer, Wijk aan Zee II 1987) 9 b4 ♘xb4 10 ab ♗xb4 11 0–0 (the Fine–Botvinnik game already mentioned continued 11 ♗b5+ ♘c6? 12 ♗xc6+ bc 13 ♖a4! ♗xc3+ 14 ♗d2±, but after 11 ... ♗d7 12 ♕xd4 ♗xc3+ 13 ♕xc3 ♗xb5 Black would have had no problems) 11 ... ♗xc3 12 ♖b1 h6 13 ♘d2! ♗xd2 14 ♗xd2 ♗d7! 15 ♖xb7 ♗c6, with complex and unclear play; Hodgson–S. Arkell, London (WFW) 1988.

(c) 5 ♗d2 (an old move, introduced into practice by Bogoljubow. For many years it was treated as a 'poor relation' by theorists. However, it received a

new lease of life in the mid-1980s, and since then it has frequently occurred in games by the world's strongest players) **5 ... ♘e7** (5 ... ♘c6 occurs a good deal more rarely. It allows White to retain some advantage, for example: 6 ♘b5 ♗xd2+ 7 ♕xd2 cd [*or 7 ... ♘xd4 8 ♘xd4 cd 9 ♘f3 ♘e7 10 ♕xd4 0–0 11 ♗d3 ♘c6 12 ♕e3± Zhelnin–Guseinov, Kherson 1990*] 8 f4 ♘h6 9 ♘d6+ [*White also has a minimal edge after 9 ♘f3 ♘f5 10 0–0–0 a6 11 ♘bxd4 ♘fxd4 12 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4, Machulsky–Luther, Sverdlovsk 1989*] 9 ... ♔f8 10 ♘f3 ♘f5 11 ♘xf5 ef 12 ♘xd4± Spassky–Garcia Palermo, West Germany 1989), and now:

(c1) **6 f4** has only been seen quite rarely, and standard theory has not passed a definite verdict on it. There can follow: 6 ... ♘f5 7 ♘f3 cd (or 7 ... ♘c6 8 dc ♗xc5 9 ♗d3 ♘h4 10 ♕e2 ♘xf3+ 11 ♕xf3 ♘b4 12 0–0–0 ♗d7, with about equal chances in Hebden–McDonald, British Ch, Plymouth 1989) 8 ♘b5 ♗c5 9 b4 ♗b6 10 ♗d3 ♗d7 11 g4 ♘e3 12 ♘d6+ ♔e7 13 ♕e2 ♕c7 14 ♖c1 ♘c4!? 15 ♘xc4 dc 16 ♗xc4 ♗c6, with chances for both sides in Watson–Lputian, Belgrade GMA 1988.

(c2) **6 a3** ♗xc3+ 7 ♗xc3 ♘bc6 (7 ... cd 8 ♕xd4!? ♘bc6 9 ♕g4 ♘f5 10 ♘f3 ♕b6 11 ♗d3 d4 12 ♗d2 ♘ce7 13 ♕h5!± Spassky–Apicella, French Ch 1990. The ex-World Champion produced some interesting opening play in a game

against S. Mohr, Bundesliga 1988: 7 ... b6 8 ♗b5+!? ♗d7 9 ♗d3 ♘bc6 10 f4 cd 11 ♗d2 0–0 12 ♘f3 f6 13 ♕e2 fe 14 fe h6 15 0–0 ♘f5 16 b4!±) 8 ♘f3 cd 9 ♘xd4 (9 ♗xd4 ♘f5 10 c3 ♗d7 11 ♗d2 ♖c8 12 0–0 0–0 13 ♕d2 ♘fxd4! 14 cd ♘a5= Savon–Hort, Skopje 1968) 9 ... ♘xe5 10 ♘xe6 fe 11 ♗xe5 0–0 12 ♗d3 ♘c6 13 ♗g3! (13 ♗c3?! d4 14 ♗d2 ♘e5!∓) 13 ... ♕f6 14 ♖b1 ♖ac8 15 0–0, with no more than a nominal advantage to White; Spassky–Vladimirov, EU-Cup 1991.

(c3) **6 ♘b5** ♗xd2+ 7 ♕xd2 0–0 8 c3 (there is little promise for White in 8 dc ♘d7 [*8 ... ♘bc6 9 ♘f3 b6! 10 cb ♕xb6, with compensation for the pawn*] 9 f4 ♘xc5 10 ♘d4 [*10 0–0–0 ♘e4 11 ♕e1 ♕b6 12 ♘d4 ♗d7=*] 10 ... ♕b6 11 0–0–0 ♗d7 12 ♘gf3 ♖fc8= Karpov–Nogueiras, Rotterdam World Cup 1989, or 8 f4 a6 [*Black can also play 8 ... ♕b6 9 dc ♕xc5 10 ♘f3 ♘bc6=*] 9 ♘d6 cd 10 ♘f3 ♘bc6 11 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♘c6 13 ♕e3, as in Knox–McDonald, British Ch, Eastbourne 1991, when 13 ... ♕a5+! would have equalised at once) 8 ... ♘bc6 (not the only move; Black also has a good game after 8 ... f6!? 9 ef ♖xf6 10 dc ♘d7 11 b4 a5 [*11 ... b6!?*] 12 f4! [*12 ♘f3=*] 12 ... b6! 13 cb ♕xb6∓ Martinez–Arencibia, Cuba 1988) 9 f4 a6 10 ♘d6 cd 11 cd f6 (11 ... ♘f5 12 ♘xf5 ef 13 ♘f3±) 12 ♘f3 (12 0–0–0 fe 13 de g5!? 14 g3 gf 15 gf ♘g6=) 12 ...

♘g6 (White's central position has suddenly become shaky; in particular, 13 g3? loses to 13 ... fe 14 de ♘gxe5∓∓) 13 ♘xc8 fe 14 de (14 fe ♖c8 15 ♗e2 ♕b6 is good for Black) 14 ... ♖xc8 15 g3 ♕b6, and Black was ready to seize the initiative in Timman–Agdestein, Taxco IZ 1985.

5 ... ♗a5 *(96)*

96
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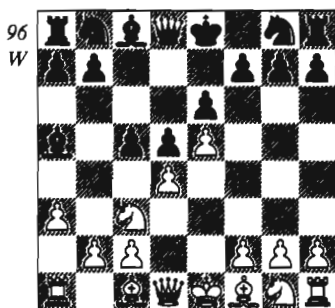
The variation commencing with this move should by rights be called the Armenian Variation, since it was Armenian players — Vaganian and Lputian — who gave it a new lease of life, playing it with success in some games of crucial importance. And although, in the last two or three years, Chandler and Short have been coming to grips with it effectively, I believe that the last word has yet to be spoken.

Apart from the text move and the 'normal' 5 ... ♗xc3+, Black very occasionally chooses 5 ... cd?!, after which White obtains a clear plus by accurate play. For example, 6 ab dc 7 ♘f3! (theory is

critical of 7 bc, although even then matters are not so clear: 7 ... ♕c7 8 ♘f3 ♘d7?! *[8 ... ♘e7!]* 9 ♕d4 ♘e7 10 ♗f4 ♘b6 11 ♗d3 ♗d7 12 0–0 a6 13 ♗g5!± Chandler–Rogers, Wellington 1986) 7 ... ♘e7 (after the desperate 7 ... cb, White develops his initiative without difficulty: 8 ♗xb2 ♘e7 9 ♗d3 b6 10 0–0 ♗b7 11 ♘d4 a6 12 ♕h5 g6 13 ♕h6± Kristiansen–C. Hansen, Reykjavik 1981. Also, 7 ... ♕c7 8 ♕d4! does nothing to alter the verdict) 8 ♗d3 ♘d7 (after 8 ... ♕c7 9 ♖a3!, the rook's entry into the game creates new problems for Black) 9 0–0 ♘c6 10 ♖e1 ♘xb4 11 bc ♘xd3 12 cd 0–0 13 ♖a4± Nunn–Eingorn, Reykjavik 1990. At the moment Black's extra pawn has no effect at all on the play, while White's pieces are considerably more active.

6 ♕g4!?

The popularity of this move is due in large measure to some fine wins by Short. The following moves are also seen:

(a) **6 ♗d2 ♘c6!** (more precise than 6 ... cd 7 ♘b5 ♗c7 *[or 7 ... ♗xd2+ 8 ♕xd2 ♘c6 9 f4 ♘h6 10 ♘d6+ ♔f8 11 ♘f3± Sax–Korchnoi, Lugano 1986]* 8 ♘f3 *[it is also hard for Black to become active after 8 f4 ♘h6!? 9 ♗d3 a6 10 ♘xd4 ♘c6 11 c3± Hort–Lputian, Dortmund 1988]* 8 ... ♗d7 9 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 10 ♗b4! ♘h6 11 ♗d3 ♕b6 12 0–0 ♘c6 13 ♗d6, with powerful pressure in Ehlvest–Lputian, Erevan 1988) 7

♘b5 (7 dc ♘xe5 8 ♘b5 ♗c7! 9 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 10 ♗f4 ♘d3+ 11 ♕xd3 ♕xf4 leads to equality) 7 ... ♘xd4 (White retains a small advantage after 7 ... ♗xd2+ 8 ♕xd2 ♘xd4 9 ♘xd4 cd 10 ♘f3 *[10 ♕xd4 ♘e7 11 ♘f3 0-0 12 ♗d3 ♘c6 13 ♕e3 ♕b6!? 14 ♕xb6 ab± A.Sokolov-Vaganian, 2nd match game, Riga 1986]* 10 ... ♘e7 11 ♘xd4 0-0 12 0-0-0 ♘c6 13 f4 f6 14 ef ♕xf6 15 g3± Davies-Karlsson, Oslo 1988) 8 ♘xd4 (or 8 ♗xa5 ♕xa5+ 9 b4 ♕b6 10 ♘xd4 cd 11 ♘f3 ♘e7 12 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♘g6= Tseshkovsky-Budnikov, Vladivostok 1990) 8 ... cd 9 ♗b5+ (9 ♗xa5 hands the initiative to Black after 9 ... ♕xa5+ 10 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 11 ♔xd2 f6! 12 f4 fe 13 fe ♘h6∓) 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 (in view of the closed nature of the position, it is not easy for White to take advantage of the king in the centre; while it should not be forgotten that at the moment Black does have an extra pawn) 11 ♘f3 ♗b6! (11 ... ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 ♕b6 13 0-0 ♘e7 14 ♘xd4±) 12 0-0 (the aggressive 12 c3 dc 13 ♕a4+ ♔c7 14 ♗xc3 *[14 ♖c1?! ♖c8 15 ♖xc3+ ♔b8+]* 14 ... ♖c8 15 ♕g4! ♘e7 16 ♕xg7 ♖g8 17 ♕xg8 ♖hxg8 fails to disturb the balance; Cabrilo-Dimitrov, Kavala 1990) 12 ... ♖c8!? 13 ♖c1 ♔c7 14 ♗g5 ♘e7 15 ♘xd4 ♔b8= Abdullah-Hug, Biel Open 1990.

(b) **6 b4!?** (for decades it was in this move that White's hopes of refuting 5 ... ♗a5 were vested) **6 ... cd** (a variation given by *ECO* has found no followers of late: 6 ... cb? 7 ♘b5 ♘c6 [7 ... *b3+? 8 c3*] 8 ab ♗xb4+ 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♗d3 a6 11 ♕g4 ♔f8 12 ♗a3±), and now the general debate follows three paths:

(b1) **7 ♘b5 ♗c7 8 f4** (complex play similarly results from 8 ♘f3 ♘c6 9 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 10 ♗f4 ♘ge7 11 ♗d3 ♘g6 12 ♗g3 ♘gxe5!? *[12 ... a5 13 h4! ab 14 ab ♖xa1 15 ♕xa1 0-0± J. Horvath-Lputian, Sochi 1985]* 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♗b5+ *[14 0-0 f6 15 ♖e1 0-0 16 ♖xe5!? fe 17 ♕h5 g6 18 ♕g5 ♕c3! 19 ♖f1 e4 Riemersma-Müller, Bad Wörishofen 1991]* 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 16 ♕xd4 f6 17 0-0 ♖hc8!? 18 ♖e1 ♕c3, and the onus is on White to prove that he has enough for the pawn) **8 ... ♘e7** (8 ... ♘h6 was just about coming into fashion when it was dealt a severe blow in the game Hellers-Knaak, Novi Sad 1990: 9 ♘f3 ♗d7 10 ♘fxd4!? *[or 10 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 11 ♗b2 a5 12 ♗d3 ab 13 ab ♖xa1 14 ♕xa1 0-0 15 ♗d3± Smirin-Lputian, Lvov Z 1990]* 10 ... a6 11 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 12 ♗d2!? *[12 ♗b2 ♘c6 13 ♘b3 ♘e7 14 ♗d3 ♗b5!?]* 12 ... ♘c6 13 ♘f3! ♘e7 14 a4, with the advantage. 8 ... ♗d7 usually amounts to a transposition, but the game Chandler-Vaganian, London 1986, is of independent significance: 9 ♘f3 *[9 ♕g4 g6 10 ♘f3 ♘h6 11 ♕g5 ♘f5=]* 9 ... ♗xb5?!

10 ♗xb5+ ♘c6 11 0–0 ♘e7 12 ♗d3 a6 13 ♔h1 h6 14 ♕e2! ♕d7 15 ♗b2 ♗b6 16 ♖ae1 ♖c8 17 g4!± and White's attack is practically irresistible) 9 ♘f3 ♗d7 (or 9 ... ♘bc6 10 ♗d3 ♗b8 [*10 ... a6 11 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 12 0–0 ♗d7 13 ♗b2 ♕b6 14 ♔h1 0–0–0 15 a4± Nunn–Hug, Zürich 1984*] 11 ♘bxd4 ♘xd4 12 ♘xd4 a6 13 ♗e3! ♗a7 14 ♕d2± Ghinda–Lechtinsky, Bratislava 1983) 10 ♘xc7+ (10 ♗b2 ♗xb5 11 ♗xb5+ ♘bc6 12 ♗xd4!? ♗b6 13 c3 a6 14 ♗d3 ♘xd4 15 cd ♘c6 16 ♗c2± Vavarin–Budnikov, Khabarovsk 1990. White also has some advantage after the conventional 10 ♘bxd4 ♘c6 11 c3 [*11·♗e3 ♘xd4 12 ♘xd4 ♗b6 13 c3 ♖c8 14 ♖c1 a6! 15 ♗d3 ♗xd4 16 cd ♗b5∓ V. Kovacević–Lputian, Geneva 1986*] 11 ... ♘xd4 12 cd ♘f5 [*12 ... 0–0 13 ♗e2 ♘c8 14 0–0 ♘b6 15 a4! a6 16 ♗d3± Dolmatov–Lputian, USSR 1983*] 13 ♕d2!? [*13 ♗e2*] 13 ... a5 14 ♗b2 ab 15 ab ♖xa1+ 16 ♗xa1 ♕a8 17 ♗c3 ♕a4 18 ♗d3 ♗b5 19 ♗c2 ♕a6 20 g4!± Makarichev–Bendersky, Simferopol 1990. White controls all the possible entry squares on the a-file, and his large spatial advantage guarantees him the better chances) 10 ... ♕xc7 11 ♗b2 ♘bc6 12 ♘f3 ♘f5 13 ♕e2 ♖c8 (13 ... a6 14 0–0 ♘e3 15 ♖fc1! ♘f5 16 ♕f2± Benjamin–Karlsson, Stockholm 1990) 14 0–0 0–0–0 15 ♖f2 a6 16 g4 ♘e3 17 ♘xd4± Lanc–Schmidt, Prague 1989. The above variations show

convincingly that the calm 7 ♘b5 promises White the better game.

(b2) 7 ♕g4 ♘e7 (7 ... ♔f8?! 8 ba dc 9 a4! f5 10 ♕g3 ♘c6 11 ♗a3± J. Polgar–Romero, Serrado 1990) 8 ♘b5 (8 ba dc transposes to 'b3') 8 ... ♗c7 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕xh7 a6 11 ♘xc7+ ♕xc7 12 ♘e2 ♕xe5 13 ♕d3 (Black has good counterplay after 13 ♗b2 ♕c7 [*13 ... ♕f6!? 14 f4 ♘bc6 15 ♕d3! ♘f5 16 0–0–0 ♕h6 17 ♖e1 ♗d7 18 ♕d2! ♖c8 19 ♘xd4 ♘cxd4 20 ♗xd4 ♖g4! with great complications in Hawelko–Schmidt, Poland 1987. It is not simple for White to deviate from this line, for example 14 ♕d3 e5 15 f4 ♗f5 16 ♕d2 ♕h4+ 17 g3 ♕h7 18 ♗g2 f6∓ Cabrilo–Vaganian, Manila IZ 1990*] 14 f4 ♘bc6 15 ♕d3 ♘f5 16 g3 [*16 c3 dc 17 ♗xc3 ♗d7 18 g3 ♕b6∓*] 16 ... e5! 17 fe ♘xe5 18 ♕b3 d3! 19 cd d4, and the white king, stuck in the centre, eventually fell prey to Black's extremely active pieces in Johannesson–Karlsson, Gausdal 1990) 13 ... ♘bc6 14 ♗b2 ♗d7!? (in Liberzon–Vaganian, European Team Ch, Haifa 1989, White obtained the better ending after 14 ... ♘f5 15 0–0–0 ♕f6 16 ♘xd4! ♘fxd4 17 ♗xd4 e5 18 ♗b2 ♗e6 19 ♕d2 0–0–0 20 f4!) 15 0–0–0 (Black has sufficient compensation for the pawn after 15 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 16 ♕xd4 ♕f5) 15 ... ♕f6! 16 ♘xd4 ♕xf2 17 ♘f3 ♘f5 18 ♕d2 ♕e3= Chandler–Vaganian, Manila IZ 1990.

(b3) 7 **ba** dc 8 ♕g4 ♘e7 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕xh7 ♘bc6 *(97)*

97
W
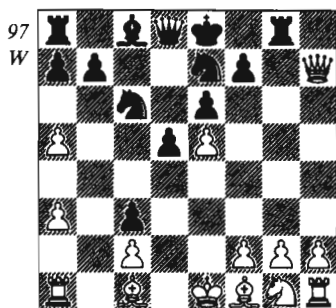
11 ②f3 (wild complications arise from 11 f4 ♕xa5 12 ♖b1 ♗d7!? [*12 ... ②d4!? 13 ♕d3 ②ef5 14 ②f3 ②xf3+ 15 ♕xf3 ♗d7 16 ♕xb7 ♗c6! 17 ♖b4 ♕c5 18 ♕f2 d4, with unclear play; Sax–Vaganian, Wijk aan Zee 1989*] 13 ♖xb7 [*13 ♕d3 0–0–0 14 g3 d4!*] 13 ... ②d4 14 ♕d3 ②ef5 15 ②f3 ♕c5! [*15 ... ②xf3+ 16 ♕xf3 ♖c8? 17 ♗d3 ♗c6 18 ♖xf7!! ♔xf7 19 ♕h5+ ♔e7 20 ♗xf5±± Timman– Vaganian, Montpellier C 1985*] 16 ②xd4 ②xd4 17 ♕h7! ♖f8 18 ♗d3, and Lputian assesses the position as '±') 11 ... ♕c7!? (it is important for Black to keep the e5-pawn in his sights. Taking the pawn on a5 would give White the vital tempo to work up an initiative, for example 11 ... ♕xa5 12 ♗d3! [*the position arising after 12 ②g5 ♖f8 13 f4 ♗d7 14 h4!? ②d4! 15 ♕d3 ♕a4 16 ♖a2 ♗b5, as in Van der Heijden–Timmer, Bussum 1986, is not to everyone's taste. And it is difficult to find a defence for White after 14 ♗e2?! 0–0–0! 15 ②xf7 ♖xf7! 16 ♕xf7 ②d4 17 ♗d3 ♕c5 18 ♔d1 ②ef5, with a fierce attack*] 12 ... ♗d7 13 0–0 0–0–0 [*13 ...*

②b4 14 ab ♕xa1 15 ♗h6 ♕a4 16 ②g5 is in White's favour*] 14 ♗g5 ♖h8 15 ♕g7, with a secure plus for White in Hazai–Raaste, Helsinki 1989) 12 ♗f4 (White can scarcely count on a plus after 12 ♗b5 ♗d7 13 0–0 0–0–0 [*13 ... ②xe5!? 14 ②xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 16 ♕d3!? ♖ac8 17 ♖b1 ♖c7 18 ♗e3 ②c6= Balashov–Lputian, Uzhgorod 1988*] 14 ♗xc6 [*14 ♗g5 ②xe5! 15 ②xe5 ♗xb5 16 ②xf7 ♗xf1 17 ②xd8 ♖xg5 18 ②xe6 ♖xg2+ 19 ♔h1 ♕xe5 20 ♖xf1 ♕xe6 21 ♔xg2 ♕g4+ ½–½; Fischer–Tal, Leipzig Ol 1960*] 14 ... ♗xc6 15 ♕xf7 ♖df8! 16 ♕xe6+ ♗d7 17 ♕xe7 ♖xg2+, Fleetwood–Crispin, corr 1987; by continuing 18 ♔h1! ♖xf3 19 ♗g5! ♖gxf2 20 ♖xf2 ♖xf2, White could have maintained the balance) 12 ... ♗d7 13 ♗d3 (Black has a good game after 13 a6 0–0–0! [*13 ... b6 14 ♗g3 0–0 15 ♗d3 ②g6 16 ♗xg6 fg 17 ♖d1± Psakhis–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Riga 1985*] 14 ab+ ♔b8 15 ♗b5 ②f5) 13 ... 0–0–0 14 ♗g3 ♕xa5 (the exchange sacrifice 14 ... ♖xg3? doesn't work: 15 hg ②xe5 16 ②xe5 ♕xe5+ 17 ♔f1 ♗e8 18 a6! b6 19 a4± McDonald–Karlsson, Gausdal 1990) 15 0–0 ♕c5 16 ♖fe1 ♖h8!? 17 ♕xf7 ♖df8 18 ♕g7 ②f5 Dolmatov–Lputian, Manila IZ 1990. It is not easy to evaluate such a complex position, but I think the truth lies somewhere in between equality and a small plus for White.

   (c) **6 dc** (the rationale of this move has much in common with

6 ♕g4) 6 ... ♗xc3+ 7 bc ♕c7!?
8 ♘f3 ♘d7 9 ♗d3 (in Short–
Vaganian, Barcelona World Cup
1989, Black achieved an excellent
game after 9 ♗b5 ♕xc5 10 a4 [*10
♖b1!?*] 10 ... a6 11 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7
12 0–0 ♕xc3 13 ♗d2?! [*13 ♗a3*]
13 ... ♕c4 14 ♖b1 ♕c7!∓) 9 ...
♘xc5 10 0–0 ♗d7 11 a4! ♘e7 (in
this position the pawn is not worth
two tempi: 11 ... ♘xa4?! 12 ♗a3
♘c5 13 ♘d4 b6 14 f4 ♘e7 15
♖f3± Chandler–Kalinin, Bath Z
1987) 12 ♗a3 h6 13 ♘d4 0–0 14
f4 ♖fe8 15 ♖f3 ♖ac8= Chandler–
Lputian, Hastings 1986/7.

6 ...   ♘e7
7   dc

Immense complications can
result from 7 ♕xg7 ♖g8 8 ♕xh7
cd 9 b4 ♗c7 (9 ... dc 10 ba ♘bc6
takes us back to diagram 97) 10
♘b5 ♗xe5 (10 ... a6 transposes
to 'b2' on White's last move) 11
♘f3 ♖h8 12 ♕d3 ♗g7 13 ♗f4
♘g6,   Sion   Castro–Arencibia,
León 1991.

7   ...   ♗xc3+
8   bc   ♕a5 (98)

Top-level games don't always
follow *ECO*'s recommendations,
but in this case perhaps they
should! In games where Black has
chosen 8 ... ♘d7, he has usually
obtained good play, for example:
9 ♘f3 (Black definitely has no
problems after 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10
♕xh7 ♘xe5 11 ♗e2 ♕a5 [*11 ...
♖xg2?? 12 ♕h8+*] 12 ♗d2 ♕xc5
13 ♘f3 ♘xf3+ 14 gf e5!, Reshev-
sky–Botvinnik, Moscow 1946) 9

... ♕c7!? (*ECO* suggests 9 ... ♘g6
10 h4 h5 11 ♕g3 ♘xc5, and
assesses the position as equal, but
in a game Spiriev–Müller White
seized the initiative with 12 ♘g5
♕c7 13 ♗e3 ♘d7 [*13 ... ♘e4!?*]
14 ♗d4 ♘dxe5 15 ♗b5+ ♔f8
16 0–0 f6 17 ♖ae1!) 10 ♕xg7 ♖g8
11 ♕xh7 (or 11 ♕h6 ♘xc5 12
♗b5+ ♗d7 13 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7!?
14 0–0 ♘e4 15 a4 ♘f5= Kuczyn-
ski–Dimitrov, Stara Zagora Z
1990) 11 ... ♘xe5 12 ♕h5 ♘xf3+
13 ♕xf3 ♗d7 14 ♗f4 ♕xc5, with
a promising position.

It is harder for Black to equalise
with 8 ... 0–0 9 ♘f3 ♘d7 (9 ...
♘g6 10 ♗d3 f5 11 ef ♕xf6 12
0–0 ♘d7 13 ♕h5!± Short–Thes-
ing, Bundesliga 1987) 10 ♗d3 f5
11 ef ♘xf6 12 ♕h4 ♘c6 (or 12 ...
♕c7?! 13 ♗d4 ♕xc5 14 ♗e5 ♘f5,
as in King–Lputian, Dortmund
1988, and now White should have
played 15 ♕b4!±) 13 c4! ♕a5+ 14
♗d2 ♕xc5 15 0–0 dc 16 ♗xc4±
Lau–Lputian, Altensteig 1989.

98
W
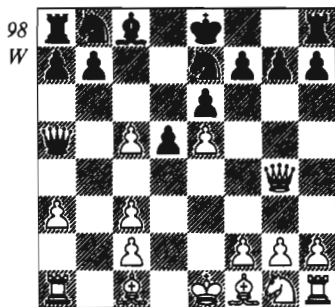
9   ♗d2   ♘g6
10   h4!

White cannot do without this move in the long run anyway. The less energetic 10 ♘f3 ♘d7 11 c4 ♕c7! (11 ... ♕a4 12 h4! ♕xc2 13 cd ♕b2! 14 ♖c1 ♘gxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♕xe5+ 16 ♗e2± Short–Vaganian, Rotterdam World Cup 1989) 12 cd 0–0! 13 d6 ♕xc5 14 ♕b4 ♘gxe5 allowed Black to achieve an excellent game in Tseshkovsky–Lputian, Podolsk 1990.

10	...	h5
11	♕g5	♘d7
12	c4	

Short purposefully opens the game in the centre.

12	...	♕a4
13	cd	♘dxe5!?
		(99)

An attempt to improve on Black's play in Short–Lputian, Manila IZ 1990, in which White obtained somewhat the better game after 13 ... ♕e4+ 14 ♘e2 ♕xd5 15 f4 ♘xc5 16 ♘c3 ♕d4 17 ♖b1.

99 W
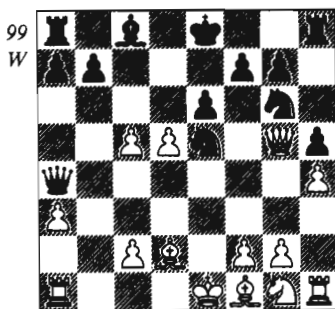
14   ♗e2

White prepares to bring his knight out to f3, and incidentally attacks the black h-pawn. It is also worth considering Ftacnik's suggestion 14 d6 ♕xc2 15 ♖h3±. A weaker line is 14 ♖h3?! ed 15 ♖e3 0–0 16 ♗e2 f6 17 ♕g3 ♘xh4, and Black's affairs are quite in order; Shabalov–Fant, Gausdal 1991.

14   ...   ♕e4?!

The position is very complicated and full of hidden possibilities, so that it is very hard to give a categorical appraisal of individual moves. Timman would probably have had more chance of a favourable result after 14 ... ed!? 15 ♘f3 (15 ♗xh5 ♖xh5! 16 ♕xh5 ♗g4 17 ♕g5 ♕xc2, with excellent compensation for the exchange — Ftacnik) 15 ... f6 16 ♕e3 0–0.

15   0–0–0!

It is not difficult to miss such a move! In the French Defence the white king very rarely goes to the queenside.

15   ...   0–0

An inaccuracy. After the correct 15 ... f6 16 ♕e3 ed, it would not yet have been possible to speak of more than a small plus for White. Timman has clearly underestimated the dangers to which his king may be exposed on the kingside.

16	♗c3	f6
17	♕d2	♕xg2
18	♘h3	ed
19	♗xh5!	

The white bishops are finally working at full capacity. All Black's pieces on the g-file are equally in danger.

19   ...   ᐃc4?
Black would have had little
comfort from 19 ... ♗xh3, for
instance 20 ♖dg1 ♕e4 21 ♗xg6!
ᐃxg6 22 ♖h3 d4!? (22 ... ᐃf4 23
♖e3 ♕c4 24 ♗d4± — Short) 23
♗xd4 ♖ad8 24 c3±.
White also has a clear advan-
tage after 19 ... ♗f5 20 ♗xg6!
♕xg6 (20 ... ᐃxg6 21 h5 ᐃe5 22
ᐃf4) 21 ᐃf4, but this was probably
Black's best chance.

20   ♕d4!   ᐃge5 *(100)*
As a reply to the natural 20
... ♗xh3, Short gives the pretty
variation 21 ♖dg1 ♕e4 22 ♗xg6
♗f5 (22 ... ♕xd4 23 ♗xd4 ♗e6
24 h5±±) 23 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 24 ♖g5!
♕e4 (24 ... ♕e6!) 25 ♖hg1! ♖f7
26 ♖xg7+, and mate in a few
moves.

21	ᐃf4	♕e4
22	♕xd5+	♕xd5
23	ᐃxd5	
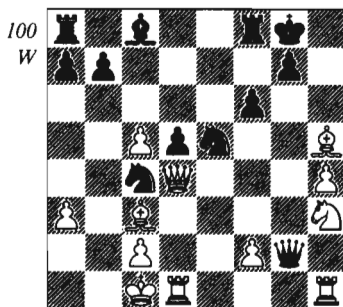
On top of his extra pawn White
has a decisive positional advan-
tage. No wonder the game is over
in a few moves.

23	...	♔h7
24	♖hg1	♗f5
25	ᐃe7!	♗e4
26	♖d4	♗f3
27	♗g6+	♔h8
28	h5	♖ad8
29	♖h4	
	1–0	

15 Winawer Variation: 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♝xc3+ 6 bc ♞e7 7 ♛g4/7 h4

Halifman–P. Nikolić
Moscow GMA 1990

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♞c3	♝b4
4	e5	c5
5	a3	♝xc3+
6	bc	*(101)*

101
B
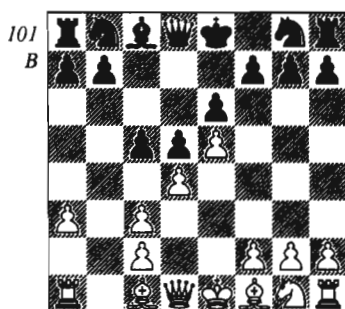
6 ... ♞e7

Alternatively:

(a) **6 ... ♞c6** 7 ♛g4 (*ECO* terminates its analysis here with a '±' sign) 7 ... g6 8 ♞f3 (8 a4, preventing the black queen from occupying this important square, is not bad either. For example, 8 ... f5 9 ♛d1 ♛a5 10 ♝d2 ♞ge7 11 h4! ♝d7 12 ♞f3± Vuković–Maksimović, Cetinje 1990) 8 ... ♛a5 9 ♝d2 ♛a4 10 ♖a2 c4 (10 ... b6!? deserves attention) 11 ♝e2 h6 12 h4! ♝d7 13 ♛f4 ♞ge7 14 ♞h2! with advantage to White; Kovalev–Raicević, Kecskemet 1989.

(b) **6 ... ♛a5** 7 ♝d2 ♛a4 8 ♛b1!? (White played the opening superbly in Fischer–Hook, Siegen Ol 1970: 8 ♛g4 ♚f8 9 ♛d1! b6 10 h4 ♞e7 11 h5 h6 12 ♖h4! ♝a6 13 ♝xa6 ♛xa6 14 ♖f4±. Perhaps 8 ... ♚f8 is dubious; 8 ... g6 is stronger, or even 8 ... ♞e7!? 9 ♛xg7 ♖g8 10 ♛xh7 cd, with complications) 8 ... c4 (it would not suit Black to exchange queens on b3, allowing White to improve his pawn structure and achieve a good ending thanks to his spatial advantage and bishop pair. For example, 8 ... a6 9 ♞f3 ♞e7 10 ♛b3! ♛xb3 11 cb ♞bc6 12 ♝d3 ♝a5 13 ♝c2 c4 14 b4± Ljubojević–Kavalek, Montreal 1979) 9 ♞f3 ♞c6 10 g3

♘ge7 11 h4! ♗d7 12 h5 h6 13 ♗h3 0–0–0 14 0–0 ♖df8 15 ♖e1± W. Watson–Kosten, London 1990. Black is without counterplay, and after all the queen is not the best of blockaders.

(c) 6 ... ♕c7 7 ♕g4 (against 7 ♘f3 Black probably does well to transpose into the main lines with 7 ... ♘e7, since the attempt to avoid them gives White the better game. For example, 7 ... ♗d7 [7 ... b6 8 a4! ♗a6?! 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 ♕e2 ♘b8 11 a5 ba 12 ♗a3± Tal–Donner, Wijk aan Zee 1968] 8 dc!? [or 8 a4 ♗d7 9 ♗d3?! cd 10 cd ♘xd4 11 0–0 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3, with a strong initiative] 8 ... ♕xc5?! [8 ... ♘e7! — compare chapter 16] 9 ♗d3! ♗a4 [9 ... ♕xc3+ 10 ♗d2 ♕c7 11 ♗b4±] 10 0–0 ♘c6 11 ♖b1 0–0 12 ♕d2!± Nunn–Morovic, London 1985), and now Black can choose between two continuations (apart from 7 ... ♘e7, transposing to our next game, Psakhis–Stevanović):

(c1) 7 ... f6?! 8 ♘f3 (White similarly has the better game after 8 ♗b5+ ♔f8!? [8 ... ♘c6 9 ♘f3 ♕f7 10 ♗xc6+ bc 11 0–0 ♘e7 12 dc! ♘g6 13 ♖e1± Oll–Yermolinsky, Sverdlovsk 1987] 9 ♘f3 [9 a4 cd 10 ♘e2 fe 11 cd a6 12 ♕f3+! ♘f6 12 de ♕xe5, with unclear play; Hjartarson–P. Nikolić, Tilburg 1988] 9 ... a6 [9 ... c4 10 a4!? a6 11 ♗a3+ ♘e7 12 ♗d6 ♕d8 13 ef gf 14 ♕f4!±, or 9 ... ♕a5 10 ♖b1 ♕xc3+ 11 ♗d2 ♕xc2 12 0–0, with a huge lead in development]

10 ♗d3 cd 11 0–0! dc 12 a4 f5 13 ♗a3+ ♘e7 14 ♕h5 ♘c6 15 g4!± Kindermann–S. Mohr, Altensteig 1989. It is also worth considering 8 ♕g3!? ♕f7 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 dc! ♘ge7 11 ♗d3 ♘g6 12 ef ♕xf6 13 0–0± Shilov–Doroshkevich, Lugansk 1989) 8 ... c4 (Black also fails to equalise with 8 ... cd 9 cd [9 ♗b5+!?] 9 ... fe [9 ... ♕c3+? 10 ♔d1±] 10 ♕h5! ♔f8 11 ♗d2 ♘f6 12 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♘bd7 14 c4! dc 15 ♗xc4± Agapov–Epishin, USSR 1985) 9 ♗e2 ♕f7 10 ♕h4! ♘e7 11 ef gf 12 g4! with a clear advantage; Timoshchenko–Yermolinsky, Tashkent 1987.

(c2) 7 ... f5!? 8 ♕g3 (Black's task is simpler after 8 ♕h5+ ♕f7 [or 8 ... g6 9 ♕d1 ♘c6 10 ♘f3 ♗d7 11 dc h6!= Spassky–Portisch, Mexico 1980] 9 ♕d1 [9 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♘f3 cd! 11 ♘xd4!? ♗d7 12 f4 ♘e7 13 ♖b1 b6 14 c4 ♖c8!= Kindermann–Yusupov, Munich 1990] 9 ... b6!? 10 a4!? [10 ♘f3 ♗a6 11 dc ♗xf1 12 ♖xf1 bc 13 c4 ♘e7=] 10 ... ♗a6 11 ♗b5+ ♗xb5 12 ab ♘e7 13 h4 0–0 14 ♘h3 h6 15 h5 ♘d7, with quite a good game; (Cs.Horvath–Uhlmann, Dresden 1988. The pawn on b5 may well become weak, and White's position is not improved by having his king in the centre) 8 ... cd (the complications favour White after 8 ... ♘e7 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕xh7 cd 11 ♔d1! [11 ♘e2 ♘bc6 12 f4 ♗d7 13 ♕d3 dc 14 ♕xc3 0–0–0 15 g3 ♖e8!= Byrne–Botvinnik, Monte Carlo

1968] 11 ... ♗d7 *[11 ... ♘bc6?! 12 ♘f3 ♘xe5 13 ♗g5! ♘5g6 16 ♗f6!±]* 12 ♕h5+ ♔d8 *[12 ... ♘g6 13 ♘e2 d3 14 cd ♗a4+ 15 ♔e1± Tal–Botvinnik, 1st match game, World Ch 1960]* 13 ♘e2 ♗a4 14 ♘f4± Ivkov–Portisch, Bled 1961) 9 cd ♘e7 10 ♗d2 0–0 11 ♗d3 b6 (it is natural that Black wants to offer an exchange of light-squared bishops, to give himself the possibility of active play on the c-file. A weaker choice is 11 ... ♘bc6? 12 ♘e2 ♔h8 13 h4 ♘a5 14 h5 ♘c4 15 ♗b4± Juarez–Suarez, Buenos Aires 1991) 12 ♘e2 ♗a6 13 ♘f4 (it is worth considering 13 ♗b4!?, leaving the knight on e2 to defend the d-pawn for the time being. There can follow 13 ... ♗xd3 14 cd ♘bc6 15 ♗d6 ♕d7 16 0–0 ♖fc8 17 h4! ♘g5 18 h5± Diez del Corral–Portisch, Buenos Aires Ol 1978) 13 ... ♕d7 14 ♘h5!? (Black has a solid position after 14 ♗b4 ♖f7 *[14 ... ♗xd3? 15 ♘h5!]* 15 h4 ♗xd3 16 ♕xd3 ♘bc6 17 ♖h3 ♖c8, Hort–Petrosian, Kapfenberg 1970) 14 ... ♘g6 15 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 16 h4! ♖ac8 17 ♘f6+ gf 18 h5, with an attack; Minasian–Borovikov, Podolsk 1990.

7   ♕g4 *(102)*

This move has acquired unprecedented popularity in the last few years, bringing White a good many impressive victories and giving Black a headache in his search for a more or less adequate defence.
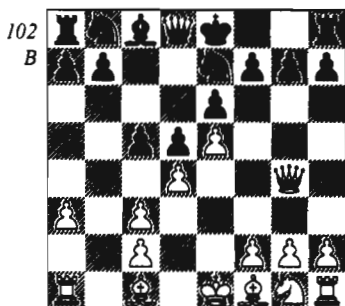
However, in addition to this and the other two 'main' continuations (7 ♘f3 and 7 a4, which will be examined in the next chapter), many grandmasters have been devoting their attention to an interesting and fairly new move, 7 **h4**. This move is based on a sound positional idea: not being certain which to develop first, his queen to g4 or his knight to f3, White postpones this decision while gaining some space on the kingside. Black has the choice, put simply, between two systems of defence: he can bring his queen to a5 in search of active counterplay, or quietly develop his pieces with his queen on c7. Let us examine both:

(a) **7 ... ♕a5** (or 7 ... ♗d7 8 h5 h6 9 ♕g4 ♕a5 10 ♗d2 ♘bc6 11 ♕xg7 0–0–0 12 ♖h3 ♕a4, with wild complications; McDonald–Rahman, British Ch, Eastbourne 1991) 8 ♗d2 ♘bc6 (8 ... cd 9 cd ♕a4 10 h5! *[10 ♗b4 ♘bc6 11 c3 ♕xd1+ 12 ♔xd1 ♗d7 13 h5 h6= Gavrikov–I. Farago, Budapest 1988; or 10 ♕g4 h5! 11 ♕xg7 ♖g8 12 ♕f6 ♕xd4∓ — Kuczynski]* 10

... ♕xd4?! [*10 ... ♘bc6!?*] 11 ♘f3 ♕e4+ 12 ♗e2 ♘f5 13 ♔f1! b6 14 ♗b5 ♗d7 15 ♗d3 was played in Kuczynski–W. Schmidt, Polanica Zdroj 1989. White's initiative more than compensates for the minimal material deficit) 9 h5 cd (Black is less successful with 9 ... h6 10 ♕g4! [*10 ♘f3 ♗d7 11 ♖h4 c4! 12 ♖g4 ♖g8 13 ♘h4 0–0–0 14 ♕f3 ♕a4 15 ♔d1 ♘f5= Rantanen–Vaganian, Tallinn 1979; White has a minimal edge after 11 ♖b1!? ♕c7 12 ♗f4 c4 13 ♕d2 0–0–0 14 ♗e2 ♖dg8 15 g4± Makarichev–Lputian, USSR 1980*] 10 ... cd 11 ♕xg7! ♖g8 12 ♕f6 dc 13 ♗xh6±. White also has the better chances after 9 ... ♕a4 10 ♕b1!? ♗d7 [*10 ... h6!?*] 11 h6 gh 12 ♘f3 0–0–0 13 ♖xh6±) 10 cd ♕a4 11 ♗c3 (11 c3 ♕xd1+ =) 11 ... b6! 12 h6 (it is interesting that three years later, Short refrained from this move in favour of 12 ♘f3, but gained no advantage: 12 ... ♗a6 13 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 14 a4! ♖c8 15 ♖h3 0–0 16 h6 g6 17 ♕e2 ♕xe2+ 18 ♔xe2 f6!= Short–Ivanchuk, Tilburg 1990) 12 ... gh 13 ♕d3!? (stronger than 13 ♘f3 ♗a6 14 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 15 ♕e2 ♕xe2+ 16 ♔xe2 ♖c8 17 ♔d3 ♖g8∓ Pritchett–Rogers, British Ch, Blackpool 1988) 13 ... a5 14 ♕d2 ♘f5 (14 ... ♗a6 15 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 16 f3! ♖g8 17 g4± — Short) 15 ♖b1 ♖cxd4 16 ♔d1, Short–Korchnoi, Brussels 1987. In Short's opinion, White has slightly the better chances.

(b) 7 ... ♕c7 8 h5 h6 9 ♘f3 b6 (Black may also try posting his bishop on a4: 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♗d3 [*10 ♗e2 ♗a4 11 dc ♘d7 12 ♖h4!? ♗c6 13 ♗f4 ♘xc5 14 ♖g4 ♘e4!= Short–Nogueiras, Novi Sad Ol 1990*] 10 ... ♗a4 [*10 ... ♘bc6 11 0–0 c4 12 ♗e2 f6 13 ♗f4 0–0–0 14 ef ♕xf4 15 fe ♖de8! 16 g3± Makarichev–Grünberg, Sochi 1983*] 11 0–0 ♘d7 12 ♖e1 ♖c8 13 ♖a2 a6!? 14 ♖b2!? [*14 ♗d2 ♗b5!?*] 14 ... ♗b5 15 ♗xb5 ab 16 ♕e2! b6 17 ♕xb5± Ehlvest–Nogueiras, Rotterdam World Cup 1989) 10 a4!? (10 ♗b5+ ♗d7 11 ♗d3 ♗a4 12 0–0 c4 13 ♗e2 ♘bc6 14 g3! 0–0 15 ♘h4 ♖dg8 16 ♗g4± Ehlvest–Yusupov, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988; or 10 ♗d3 ♗a6 11 0–0 ♗xd3 12 cd c4!=) 10 ... ♗a6 11 ♗b5+ ♗xb5 12 ab ♘d7 13 ♕d3 0–0 14 ♗d2± Ljubojević–Short, Rotterdam World Cup 1989.

7 ... 0–0

Alternatives are:

(a) **7 ... ♘f5** (a rare move, and not a very effective one. White takes the initiative with no particular problems) 8 ♗d3 (8 ♘f3 eases Black's task: 8 ... h5! [*8 ... ♕c7?! 9 ♗d3 h5 10 ♕g5! ♔f8 11 dc ♘c6 12 0–0 ♘ce7 13 ♗e3± Korchnoi–Fichtl, Oberhausen 1961*] 9 ♕f4 c4 10 ♗e2 ♘c6=) 8 ... h5 9 ♕f4! (9 ♕h3 is not as convincing: 9 ... cd 10 ♘f3 ♕c7 [*10 ... ♘c6 11 g4 ♘fe7 12 cd ♕a5+ occurred in Mitkov–Rozentalis, FL-op 1991; at this point the*

simple 13 ♗d2 ♕b6 14 c3 would have promised White the better game] 11 ♖b1 dc 12 g4 ♘e7 13 gh ♘bc6, with chances for both sides in Tal–Korchnoi, USSR Ch, Riga 1958) 9 ... ♘c6 (Black has a difficult ending after 9 ... ♕h4 10 ♘e2! ♕xf4 11 ♘xf4 ♘e7 12 ♗e2! h4 13 ♘h5 ♔f8 14 ♗g5± Tal–Petrosian, USSR Ch, Moscow 1983) 10 ♘f3 (or 10 ♘e2 ♘ce7 11 ♘g3 ♘g6 12 ♕d2 ♗d7 13 ♖b1 ♖b8 14 0–0 c4 15 ♗e2 ♘xg3 16 fg!± Stein–Petrosian, USSR Ch, Moscow 1961) 10 ... ♕c7 11 0–0 ♘ce7 12 a4 c4 13 ♗e2 ♗d7 14 a5± Kruppa–Rozentalis, Podolsk 1989.

(b) **7 ... ♔f8!?** *(103)*

103
W
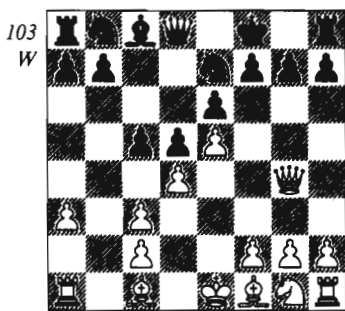
A continuation of which Eingorn is an ardent devotee. He has discovered several good ideas for Black and demonstrated the soundness of the black position. So far it remains an open question how White is to achieve an advantage. Essentially, his attempts have proceeded in four different directions:

(b1) **8 ♕d1** (echoing the ideas of the Fischer–Hook game) 8 ... b6 (8 ... ♕a5 9 ♗d2 cd 10 cd ♕a4 11 ♘f3 b6 12 ♗d3 ♗a6 is also interesting; Ziatdinov–Levitt, Dublin 1991) 9 ♘f3 h6 10 a4 ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 12 0–0 ♘b8 13 dc bc 14 c4 g6 15 cd ♕xd5, with a fully satisfactory position; Kindermann–Eingorn, Debrecen 1989.

(b2) **8 h4** b6 (not wishing to get involved in the complications that are unavoidable after 8 ... ♕a5 9 ♗d2 ♕a4 10 h5!? [*10 ♔d1 cd 11 cd ♘bc6=*] 10 ... ♕xc2 11 h6 gh 12 ♕h3 ♔e8 13 ♕xh6 ♘bc6, Hübner–P. Nikolić, Munich 1990; incidentally, in this complex and obscure position the players agreed a draw) 9 ♖h3 ♗a6 10 ♗d3 ♗xd3 11 cd ♘bc6 12 ♘e2 ♕c7 13 a4 cd 14 cd ♘f5= Fogarasi–Naumkin, Budapest 1991.

(b3) **8 ♘f3** ♕a5 (here too, 8 ... b6!? deserves attention) 9 ♗d2 ♕a4 10 ♖a2 b6 11 ♕f4 (11 ♗d3 ♗a6 12 0–0 ♗xd3 13 cd c4! 14 ♘g5 h6 15 ♕h5 g6= Balashov–Eingorn, Minsk 1983) 11 ... h6 12 h4 (12 dc ♕xf4 13 ♗xf4 bc 14 ♗e3 ♘d7 15 ♖b2 c4!= Ernst–Eingorn, Tallinn 1989) 12 ... ♘d7 13 h5 ♗a6 14 ♗xa6 ♕xa6 15 ♖h3 ♕b5=. A. Sokolov–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Moscow 1988.

(b4) **8 a4** (the most fashionable move) 8 ... b6 (alternatively 8 ... ♕c7 9 ♘f3 cd 10 ♕xd4 ♘bc6 11 ♕c5 [*11 ♕e3!? ♘f5 12 ♕f4 g5? 13 ♕xg5 ♘xe5 14 ♕f6! ♘xf3+ 15 gf± Oll–Eingorn, Debrecen 1989*]

11 ... ♗d7 12 ♗b5 a6 13 ♗d3 ♖c8 14 ♗a3 ♕a5 15 0–0, with a slight endgame advantage; Ivan-chuk–P. Nikolić, Reykjavik World Cup 1991) 9 ♘f3 (9 ♗b5!?) 9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗d3 ♗xd3 11 cd ♘d7 12 ♗a3 ♔g8! 13 0–0 h6 14 a5 ♔h7= Smirin–Eingorn, USSR Ch 1990.

8 ♗d3!

It is this move that has brought White his recent successes. This doesn't mean that it was never used earlier, but the important thing is not the move itself but the ideas behind it.

Black has had considerably better results against the old move 8 ♘f3. We can pick out four basic methods of defence that he has used (though I am not sure that 'defence' is the right word, so active are some of Black's plans):

(a) **8 ... ♕a5** 9 ♗d2 ♕a4 (or 9 ... c4 10 h4 f5! [*10 ... ♘bc6 11 h5 f6 12 h6 g6 13 ef ♖xf6 14 ♕h4 ♖f7 15 ♗e2 ♗d7 16 ♘g5± Ehl-vest–Bareyev, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987*] 11 ef! [*11 ♕g5?! is weaker: 11 ... ♘bc6 12 h5 ♕a4! 13 ♔d1 b5 14 ♖h3 a5, with an advantage to Black, Oll–Dokhoian, Sverdlovsk 1987*] 11 ... ♖xf6 12 h5 h6 13 ♗e2 ♘bc6 14 ♕g3 ♘f5 15 ♕h2 ♗d7 16 0–0± Oll–Piskov, Nor-ilsk 1987) 10 ♗d3 (10 ♖a2!?) 10 ... c4 (in Psakhis–Chernin, Moscow 1987, Black played the ineffective 10 ... ♘f5?! 11 ♕h3! c4 12 g4! cd 13 gf ef 14 ♖g1 ♕c6 15 ♕h6!±) 11 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 12 ♕h4+ ♔g8

13 ♕xe7 ♘c6 14 ♕g5 (14 ♕h4 promises White less: 14 ... ♕xc2 15 0–0 ♗d7 16 ♖ae1 f6! and Black is close to achieving equality) 14 ... ♕xc2 15 h4! (White's only chance of advantage is to try organising an attack against the king, exploiting the greater activ-ity of his bishop. There is no danger to Black in 15 0–0 ♗d7 16 ♖ac1 ♕f5! 17 ♕xf5 ef=) 15 ... f6! (the difficulties facing Black are well illustrated by the game Balashov–I. Farago, Dortmund 1987: 15 ... ♕e4+ 16 ♔f1 ♕f5? [*16 ... f6!*] 17 ♕xf5 ef 18 h5 ♘a5 19 h6!±) 16 ef ♖xf6 17 h5 ♗d7, with a minimal edge for White; Lputian–Psakhis, Harkov 1985.

(b) **8 ... f5!?** 9 ef ♖xf6 10 ♗g5 and now:

(b1) **10 ... ♘d7!?** (a remarkable idea suggested by Hug, and applied probably for the first time in Blatny–Klinger, Baguio City 1987) 11 ♗d3 (White hardly gains anything to speak of with 11 dc ♖f7 12 ♗b5?! [*12 ♕h4?! h6 13 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 14 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 15 ♗d3 e5= Balashov–Huzman, Sverdlovsk 1989*] 12 ... ♘xc5 [*12 ... ♕c7?! 13 ♗xd7! ♗xd7 14 ♕g3!±*] 13 0–0 a6 14 ♗d3 [*14 ♕d4 ♕d6 15 ♗e3 b6!=*] 14 ... ♘xd3 15 cd ♕c7 16 ♖fe1 ♘g6, Rogers–Depasquale, Australian Ch, Melbourne 1987; White can lay claim to no more than a mini-mal edge. Black also has a good game after 11 ♗b5 e5!? [*11 ... ♖f5!?; 11 ... ♕a5?! 12 ♗xd7*]

♕xc3+ 13 ♔e2 ♖g6 14 ♗xc8
♕xc2+ 15 ♔f1! ♖c8 16
♕f4!± — Rogers] 12 dc!? [12
♗xd7 ♗xd7 13 ♕g3 ♕a5; 12 de?
♘xe5∓] 12 ... ♖g6! 13 ♕h4 ♘f6,
Rogers–Arencibia, Calcutta 1988.
Similarly, Black has no particular
problems after 11 ♗e2 ♖f5! 12
♗d3 ♘f6 13 ♕g3 [13 ♕h4 h6! 14
♗e3 ♖h5! 15 ♕g3 ♘e4∓] 13 ...
♘e4! 14 ♕xh4 ♘xg5 15 ♘xg5 h6=
Jakubiec–Konca, Kudova Zdroj
1988. And finally, the position is
clearly in Black's favour after the
crude 11 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 12 ♕f4 ♕a5
13 ♕e3 ♘f5) 11 ... c4 (11 ... e5?!
12 de ♘xe5 13 ♗xh7+! ♔f8
[13 ... ♔xh7 14 ♕h5+ ♖h6 15
♗xh6±] 14 ♕h4±) 12 ♗e2!? (12
♘e5 ♘xe5 13 de ♖f7 14 ♗xe7
♕xe7 15 ♗e2 ♗d7 leads to equal-
ity; Gdanski–Klinger, Baguio City
1987) 12 ... ♖f5 occurred in Smi-
rin–Ulibin, Borzhomi 1988; and
now 13 ♘h4!, suggested by Ulibin,
would have given White some-
what the better game.

(b2) **10 ... ♕a5?!** (an interesting
move introduced by Cuban play-
ers, which unfortunately has not
stood the test of time; thus, the
exclamation mark denotes the
boldness of the move, but the
question mark gives its true qual-
ity) **11 ♗xf6 ♕xc3+** *(104)*
And now:

(b21) **12 ♔d1?!** (as far as can be
ascertained, this leads only to a
draw) 12 ... ♕xa1+ 13 ♔d2 ♘g6
14 ♗d3!? (in the Morphy style!
The alternative is 14 h4 c4 [14 ...
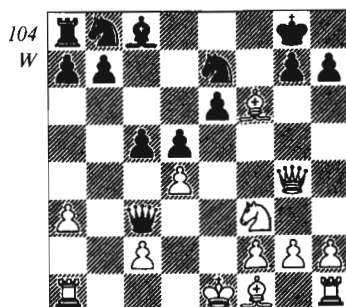
♗d7!? — Arencibia] 15 h5 c3+
16 ♔e2 ♗d7 17 ♘e5 [17 hg?
♗b5+ 18 ♔e3 ♕c1+ 19 ♘d2
♕xd2+ 20 ♔f3 ♕d1+ 21 ♔g3
♕xg4+ 22 ♔xg4 hg∓] 17 ...
♗b5+ 18 ♘d3 ♘d7 19 hg! [19
♕xe6+ ♔h8 20 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7
21 hg ♗xd3+ 22 ♔f3 ♖f8+ 23
♔g3 ♗xg6∓ Sieiro–Arencibia,
Cuban Ch 1986] 19 ... ♘xf6, lead-
ing to extremely wild complica-
tions which, according to Aren-
cibia's analysis, culminate in a
level endgame) 14 ... ♕xh1 15
♗xg6 (it looks as if all moves in
this variation lead to a drawn
result: 15 ♗xg7!? ♔xg7 16 ♗xg6
hg 17 ♘e5 ♔f8 18 ♕xg6 ♔e7 19
dc ♔d8! 20 ♕f6 ♔c7 21 ♕e7+
♗d7= Chandler–P. Nikolić,
Leningrad 1987) 15 ... gf 16 ♕h4
(16 ♗e8+!? ♔f8 17 ♕h5 ♔e7
18 ♕f7+ ♔d8 19 ♗a4 ♕xg2
20 ♕f6+ ♔c7 21 ♕f4 ♔d8 22
♕f8+ = Kupreichik–Kosten,
Minsk 1986) 16 ... hg 17 ♕xf6
♔h7 (17 ... ♕a1!?) 18 ♘g5+ ♕xg5
19 ♕xg5 ♔f7 20 ♕f4+ ♔g7!=
Balashov–Bareyev, Voronezh
1987.

(b22) **12 ♔e2!** ♘g6 13 ♖c1 gf
14 h4 ♘c6 15 h5 e5 16 ♛g3 e4 17
gh ef+ 18 ♔d1 (18 gf! ♘xd4+)
18 ... ♝f5! (18 ... ♛xd4+ 19 ♝d3
♝f5 20 ♖h4! ♛e5 21 gh+ ♔h8 22
♛xe5 ♘xe5 23 ♝xf5+ + Hellers–
Arencibia, Gausdal 1986) 19 ♖xh7
♛xd4+ (19 ... ♝xc2+!? 20 ♖xc2
♖xd4+ 21 ♔c1 ♛a1+ 22 ♔d2
♛d4+ 23 ♝d3 ♘e5 24 ♖c3! fg!?
25 ♔c2! g1(♛) 26 ♛xg1 ♛a4+ 27
♔b2 d4 28 ♖b3 c4 29 ♖h8+!
and White's attack arrives first —
analysis by Borik and Cierpinski)
20 ♝d3 ♘e5 21 ♖h4! ♝g4 22 gf!
♝f3! (22 ... ♘xd3? 23 ♖h8+! 1–0
Lau–Hertneck, Bundesliga 1987)
23 ♔e1! (indicated by Hertneck.
In Psakhis–Bareyev, Sochi 1987,
White obtained a good ending
with 23 ♔d2 ♘c4+?! 24 ♔e1
♛e5+ 25 ♛xe5 ♘xe5 26 ♔f1
f5 27 ♝xf5 ♖f8 28 ♖f4!+, but
Black's play can be improved with
23 ... ♝g4! 24 ♖h8+ ♔xh8 25
♛h4+ ♔g7 26 ♛h7+ ♔f8 27
g7+ ♔e7 28 g8(♛)+ ♔d6 29
♛xa8 ♘f3+ 30 ♔e2 ♘h2+ 31 f3
♛e5+! 32 ♔f2 ♛d4+, and Black
gives perpetual check — analysis
by Hertneck) 23 ... ♘xd3+ 24 cd
♖e8+ 25 ♔f1 ♛xd3+ 26 ♔g1
♖e5 27 ♔h2+ (Hertneck).

(c) **8 ... ♘bc6 9 ♝d3 f5 10 ef**
(10 ♛g3, which gives a more closed
type of game, has almost dis-
appeared from active tournament
practice. There can follow 10 ...
♛a5 [*10 ... c4 11 ♝e2 ♝d7 12
h4±*] 11 ♝d2 b6!? [*11 ... ♛a4?!
12 dc!; or 11 ... c4 12 ♝e2 ♛a4*

*13 ♖a2 b5 14 0–0 ♝d7 15 h4
♔h8 16 h5 with a slight advantage,
Liberzon–Vaganian, Aktyubinsk
1970*] 12 0–0 ♛a4 13 h3!? c4 14
♝e2 ♛xc2 [*14 ... f4!?*] 15 ♝d1
♛d3 16 ♖c1 f4 17 ♝xf4 ♛g6=
Hort–Jurek, Czechoslovakia
1984) **10 ... ♖xf6 11 ♝g5** (more
precise than 11 ♛h4?! h6! 12 0–0
c4 13 ♝e2 ♛a5 14 ♝d2 ♝d7 15
♖fb1 ♛c7∓ Mecking–Korchnoi,
Wijk aan Zee 1978; White's dark-
squared bishop remained an on-
looker for the rest of the game) **11
... ♖f7** (11 ... e5!?, a move played
by Portisch as long ago as 1958
and resurrected by Dokhoian
thirty years later, is probably
stronger. I believe it was this possi-
bility that made White pay more
attention to 8 ♝d3. After 11 ...
e5, there can follow: 12 ♛g3 [*a
roughly equal game results from 12
♛h4 e4 13 ♝xf6 gf 14 ♛xf6 ed
15 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 16 ♛xd4 ♝f5!,
Psakhis–Dokhoian, Klaipeda
1988; things went even worse for
White in Hübner–Kindermann,
Munich 1990: 12 ♝xh7+?! ♔xh7
13 ♛h5+ ♔g8 14 ♝xf6 gf 15 de
♛f8! 16 0–0–0?! fe∓*] 12 ... ♖xf3!
[*the point of Black's play*] 13 gf c4
14 ♝e2 [*14 ♝xe7?! ♛xe7 15
♝e2 ed 16 ♔f1 ♝f5∓ Abra-
mović–Dokhoian, Belgrade GMA
1988*] 14 ... ed 15 ♝f6!? ♛f8 16
♝xd4 ♘f5, and Black's chances
are no worse; Malyutin–Piskov,
USSR 1989. So the ball is in
White's court!) **12 ♝xe7** (12 ♛h4
is also of interest; 12 ... h6 13

♗xe7 [*13 ♗d2 c4 14 ♗e2 ♕c7!
15 0–0 e5=*] 13 ... ♕xe7!? [*for 13
... ♖xe7, see variation 'c1' below*]
14 ♕xe7 [*Black is set no problems
by 14 ♕g3 c4 15 ♗e2!? ♗d7 16
0–0 ♗e8 17 ♘e5 ♘xe5 18 ♕xe5
♕f6= Sveshnikov–Gulko, USSR
Ch, 1977*] 14 ... ♖xe7 15 dc!? [*15
♔d2 ♗d7 16 ♖ab1 ♗e8=*] 15
... e5 [*15 ... ♗d7 16 0–0 ♖c8 17
♖fe1±*] 16 ♗b5!? [*16 ♘d2 e4 17
♗b5 ♘e5 18 ♘b3 ♗g4! 19 h3
♗h5 20 ♗e2 ♘d3+! = Meshkov–
Dokhoian, USSR 1988*] 16 ...
♗g4 17 ♘d2 ♖c8 18 ♘b3 ♘b8!=
Abramović–Indjić, Stara Pazova
1988. At move 12, if instead 12
♕h3!? then 12 ... h6 13 ♗g6 ♖f8
14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 de ♕c7 16 ♗xe7
♕xe7 17 ♕e3 ♗d7 18 0–0 ♕g5!=
Levy–I. Farago, Cienfuegos 1973.
An interesting alternative, but one
which is not dangerous to Black
if he plays accurately, is 12 ♕h5,
for example: 12 ... g6 [*12 ... h6?
13 ♗h7+ ♔xh7 14 ♕xf7 hg 15
♘xg5+ ♔h6 16 ♘xe6 — Tim-
man*] 13 ♕h4 c4 14 ♗e2 ♕a5 15
♗d2 ♘f5 [*15 ... ♗d7!? is not bad
either: 16 g4 ♖af8 17 ♘g5 ♖g7
18 ♖g1 e5! Strand–Hyldkrog, corr
1986*] 16 ♕g5 ♗d7 17 g4 [*17 ♘e5
♘xe5 18 de d4!?*] 17 ... ♘d6 18
h4 ♘e4 19 ♕e3 e5!? [*19 ... ♖af8?!
20 h5 gh 21 ♖xh5 ♖g7 22 ♘g5!±
Ljubojević–Korchnoi, Linares
1985*] 20 ♘xe5 [*20 de ♘xd2 21
♔xd2 ♗g4!, or h5!? ♘xd2 21
♕xd2 ed 22 hg hg 23 ♘d4 ♖f4!*]
20 ... ♘e5 21 de ♖xf2, with great
complications;   Vasilescu–Ani-

toaie, Romanian Ch 1989) 12 ...
♖xe7 13 ♕h4 *(105)*

*105
B*
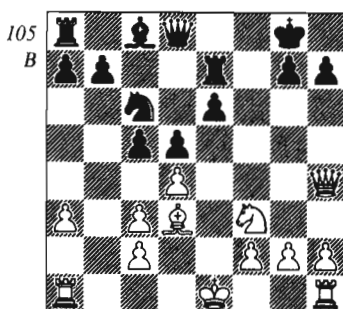
At this point Black has two possi-
bilities:

(c1) **13 ... h6** (the traditional
move) 14 0–0 c4 15 ♗g6 ♗d7
(or 15 ... ♕d6 16 ♘e5 [*16 ♖fe1
♗d7 17 ♘e5 ♖f8 18 ♕g4 ♗e8
19 ♗xe8 ♖exe8= Riemersma–
Bareyev, Naestved 1988*] 16 ...
♗d7!? [*16 ... ♘xe5 17 de ♕d8 18
f4±*] 17 f4 ♖f8, as in Atlas–
Bareyev, USSR 1988; now 18 ♖f3!
would have given White the
advantage) 16 ♖fe1 (16 ♖ae1
leaves the pawn on a3 unguarded
and eases Black's defensive task:
16 ... ♗e8 17 ♗xe8 [*17 ♕g4
♗xg6 18 ♕xg6 ♕d6 19 ♘h4
♖f8=*] 17 ... ♖xe8 18 ♕g4 ♕d6
19 ♖e3 ♕xa3 20 ♖xe6, Yudasin–
Zlotnik, USSR 1987; and now 20
... ♖xe6! 21 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 would
have led to equality) 16 ... ♗e8
17 ♗xe8 ♕xe8!? (17 ... ♖xe8 18
♕h3 ♕d6! 19 ♖e2 ♖e7 20 ♘h4
♖ae8 21 f4± Pribyl–Lputian,
Erevan 1982) 18 ♘e5 ♘xe5 19
♖xe5 ♖f7! (19 ... ♕d7? 20 ♖ae1

♖ae8 21 f4±) 20 ♕g4 ♕a4 21 ♕xe6 ♕xc2 22 ♕xd5 ♕xf2+ = Hjartarson–Yusupov, Linares 1988.

(c2) **13 ... g6!?** 14 0–0 c4 15 ♗e2 ♗d7 16 ♖fe1 ♕a5!? (White has the better game after 16 ... ♔g7 17 ♗f1 ♖f7?! 18 ♘g5 h5 19 g3! ♖f5 20 f4± Mestel–Korchnoi, London 1984. Black has a passive but solid position after 16 ... ♕f8 17 ♗d1!? [*17 ♗f1 ♖ae8 18 ♖e2 ♔g7!=*] 17 ... ♖ae8 18 ♘e5 ♘xe5 19 ♖xe5, Tal–Short, Subotica IZ 1987) 17 ♘e5 ♖ae8 18 ♘xd7 (18 ♘g4 ♕xc3 19 ♕f6 ♖g7 20 ♘h6+ ♔h8=   Korchnoi–Bronstein, Moscow 1958) 18 ... ♖xd7 19 ♕h3 ♖de7 20 ♗g4 ♘d8 21 f4 ♕a4 was played in Halifman–Huzman, Sverdlovsk 1987. White still has the initiative, but Black's position is without weaknesses (the pawn on e6 is safely guarded), and he has every reason to count on defending successfully.

8   ...   ♘bc6

Alternatives are:

(a) **8 ... c4?!** 9 ♗h6 ♘g6 10 ♗xg6 fg 11 ♗e3 ♕e8 (White intends to batter his opponent's kingside defences with a quick advance of the h-pawn, so Black should keep his queen somewhere near. White is better after 11 ... ♕a5 12 ♔d2 ♘c6 13 h4 ♖f5 14 h5 gh 15 ♖xh5 ♖xh5 16 ♕h5 ♗d7 17 ♘f3 ♗e8 18 ♕h3 ♘d8 19 ♘g5!± Schlosser–Havlicek, Vienna 1990) 12 h4 ♘c6 (12 ... ♕f7 13 h5 ♕f5 14 ♕e2 gh 15

♖xh5 ♕g6 16 g4 ♗d7 17 ♘h3± Sznapik–Schmidt, Slupsk 1989) 13 h5 gh 14 ♖xh5 ♘e7 15 ♘f3 ♖f5 16 ♗g5! (White too has to be careful: 16 ♖h2? ♕g6 17 ♕h4 ♘c6 18 0–0–0?! ♗d7 19 ♖dh1 h6 20 ♖h3? ♖xf3! 21 ♖xf3 ♘b4!! 0–1 Mortensen–Karlsson, Esbjerg 1989) 16 ... ♘g6 17 0–0–0 h6 18 ♖dh1, with a strong attack; van der Wiel–Hübner, Wijk aan Zee 1988.

(b) **8 ... ♘d7?!** (Black aims to play 9 ... f5, and if 10 ef then 10 ... ♘xf6, but ...) 9 ♘f3 (a weaker line is 9 a4 f5 10 ♕g3 ♕c7 11 ♗d2 ♘b6! 12 ♘h3 ♘c4 13 ♗xc4 dc 14 ♘f4 ♖d8= Short–Hübner, Barcelona World Cup 1990) 9 ... f5 10 ♕h3! (chess is not draughts, and White is not compelled to take on f6. The knight on d7 is badly placed, there is no pressure against d4, and with a secure centre White is able to bring powerful forces into the attack) 10 ... ♘b6 (White develops his initiative even faster after 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♗d2 ♘b6 [*11 ... c4? 12 ♗e2 ♘b6 13 0–0 ♕a4 14 ♖a2 ♕e8 15 ♔h1 h6 16 ♖g1! ♕g6 17 g4± Kindermann–L. Hansen, Munich 1989*] 12 g4! ♘c4 13 ♖g1 cd [*13 ... ♘xd2!?*] 14 gf ♘xf5 15 ♗h6!! ♖f7 16 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 17 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 18 ♔e2, with a decisive attack in Minasian–Oll, Lvov Z 1990) 11 a4 (White also has good chances of success with a direct attack: 11 ♖g1!? ♕c7 [*11 ... ♘c4!?; 11 ... c4?! 12 ♗e2 ♘a4 13 g4 f4 14*

♘g5! h6 15 ♘f3 ♕e8 16 g5± *Fogarasi–F. Portisch, Zalakaros 1991*] 12 ♗d2 ♘c4 13 g4 ♘xd2 14 ♔xd2 ♔h8 15 gf ♘xf5 16 ♖g5!± *J. Polgar–Sinkovics, Hungary 1990*) 11 ... c4 12 ♗e2 a5 (12 ... ♗d7 13 a5 ♘a4 14 ♖xa4 ♗xa4 15 ♘g5±) 13 ♖g1 ♕e8 14 g4 ♘xa4 (14 ... ♗d7 15 gf ♖xf5 16 ♘h4±) 15 gf ♘xf5 16 ♘g5 h6 17 ♗h5!± *Sax–Dolmatov, Clermont–Ferrand 1989*.

(c) **8 ... f5!? 9 ef ♖xf6** *(106)*
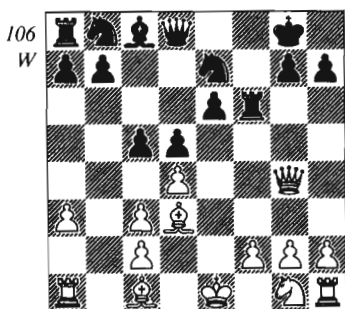
(c1) **10 ♕h5 h6!** (it is likewise difficult for White to justify his claim to an advantage after 10 ... g6 11 ♕d1 [*11 ♕g5 ♕f8 12 ♗e3 ♘f5=*] 11 ... ♕a5 12 ♗d2 ♘bc6 13 ♘f3 ♗d7 [*13 ... c4?! 14 ♗e2 ♘f5! 15 0–0 ♘d6 16 ♕e1! ♘e4 17 ♘g5!± Ruban–Uhlmann, Budapest Open 1989*] 14 0–0 ♖af8 15 c4 ♕a4! 16 dc ♖xf3! 17 gf ♘d4= *Psakhis–Drasko, Tallinn 1989*) 11 g4!? (or 11 ♘f3 ♘bc6 12 0–0 ♗d7 13 ♖e1 c4 14 ♗e2 ♗e8 15 ♕h3 ♕a5= *Lau–Vladimirov, Moscow GMA 1989*) 11 ... ♘bc6! (very interesting complications can also arise from 11 ... c4 12 g5 [*12 ♗e2!?*] 12 ... g6! 13 ♕d1 [*13 ♕xh6 ♖f7 14 ♗xg6? ♖g7*] 13 ... ♖f7 14 ♗xg6!? ♘xg6 15 ♕h5 ♘f8!? [*15 ... ♘h8 16 ♘h3 e5 17 ♖g1! ♗xh3?! 18 gh+ ♔f8 19 h7!±± Bronstein–I. Farago, Tastrup 1990*] 16 ♘h3 e5 17 gh ♕f6 18 ♕g1+ ♔h8 19 de ♕f5, Spierev–Kishnev, Budapest 1991; the impression is that Black has repulsed the initial onslaught) 12 g5 g6! 13 ♕h4 (13 ♕xh6 ♖f7 14 ♕h4? [*14 ♗xg6 ♖g7 15 ♗d3 e5! 16 de ♘xe5 17 ♕h4 ♘f5!*] 14 ... c4 15 ♗e2 ♘f5 16 ♕f4 ♘fxd4∓ Isoyev–V. Ivanov, Azov 1991) 13 ... ♘f5 14 ♕h3 (14 ♗xf5?! ♖xf5 15 ♕h6 ♘e7 16 dc!? ♖f7 17 ♕h4 e5, with a very promising game for Black) 14 ... ♖f8 15 gh e5 16 ♕g2 ♕e8 was played in Aseyev–Vladimirov, Leningrad 1989. Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn.

(c2) **10 ♗g5 ♖f7** (Black also has two other interesting possibilities which have yet to undergo serious practical tests: 10 ... e5!? 11 ♕h4 e4 12 ♗xf6 gf 13 ♗e2 ♘f5 14 ♕f4 cd 15 cd ♘xd4, with quite a good game in Emunds–Piskov, Münster 1991; or 10 ... ♘d7 11 ♕h4! h6 12 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 13 dc [*13 ♕g3!? ♕a5 14 ♘e2 cd 15 0–0 dc 16 ♘xc3±*] 13 ... e5 14 f3 e4! 15 fe de [*15 ... ♕a5 16 ♘e2 de 17 ♗xe4 g5 18 ♕g3±*] 16 ♗xe4!? g5 17 ♕xh6 ♘xe4 18 ♘f3 ♗f5, with unclear play in Kishnev–Piskov, West Berlin 1990) and now:

(c21) **11 ♕h4** h6 12 ♕xe7 (if you happen to have three or four months to spare, you may find it interesting to spend them in analysing a game Vogt–Hertneck, East Germany–West Germany 1988, which continued 12 ♘f3!? hg!? 13 ♕h7+ ♔f8 14 ♘e5 ♖f5! 15 ♗xf5 ef, and now, according to Vogt's analysis, White should force a draw with 16 ♕h8+ ♘g8 17 ♘g6+ ♔f7 18 ♘e5+ ♔f8=) 12 ... ♖xe7 (12 ... ♕xe7 13 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 14 0–0–0 ♘c6 15 dc! b6 16 ♗b5± Kruppa–Savchenko, Kherson 1989) 13 ♕g3!? ♕a5! (13 ... cd 14 cd ♗d7 15 ♕g6! ♕a5+ 16 ♔d1! ♗b5 17 ♕h7+ ♔f7 18 ♗g6+ ♔f6 19 ♗h5! with an attack; Arnason–McDonald, Oakham 1988) 14 ♘e2 c4 15 ♗g6 ♘c6 16 f4 ♗d7 17 0–0 ♗e8= Gdanski–I. Farago, Haifa 1989.

(c22) **11 ♕h5** g6 (11 ... h6 is playable but rather risky: 12 ♗g6! ♖f8 13 ♘f3 ♘bc6 14 0–0 [*14 ♗xh6 leads only to a draw: 14 ... gh 15 ♕xh6 ♘xg6 16 ♕xg6+ ♔h8=*] 14 ... ♕c7 [*14 ... ♗d7!?*] 15 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 16 ♖ae1 ♕f6± J. Polgar–Uhlmann, Amsterdam OHRA II 1990) 12 ♕d1 (12 ♕h4 ♕c7 13 ♕g3! ♕a5 14 ♗d2 c4 15 ♗e2 ♘f5 16 ♕g6 occurred in Psakhis–Ehlvest, Erevan 1988; and now 16 ... ♘c6!?) 12 ... ♘bc6 (12 ... ♕a5 13 ♗d2 ♘bc6 14 ♘f3 c4!? [*14 ... ♗d7?! 15 h4! e5 16 c4 ♕a4 17 ♘g5 dc 18 ♗e4± Epishin–Ulibin, Minsk 1990*] 15 ♗e2 ♘f5 16 0–0 ♘d6= Luther–Uhlmann,

Graz 1991) 13 ♘f3 ♕c7 14 0–0 c4 15 ♗e2 ♗d7 16 ♕d2 ♖e8 17 ♖fe1 ♘c8= Halifman–Brenninkmeijer, Groningen 1990.

9 ♕h5!

This move of Short's caused panic among players of the Black side, and it was some time before they found out how to avoid losing round about move twenty.

9 ... ♘f5!?

As White has preserved his dark-squared bishop, the move 9 ... g6 is hardly to be taken seriously. Therefore Black only has a choice of three moves against mate in one: 9 ... ♘g6!?, 9 ... h6?, and the move actually played.

(a) **9 ... h6?** (Black defends against immediate mate, but still loses fairly quickly) 10 ♗xh6! (in Short–Uhlmann, Thessaloniki Ol 1988, the first game which featured 9 ♕h5, Nigel refrained from the sacrifice, and the game ended in a draw after a sharp fight: 10 g4? c4 11 ♗e2 ♕a5 12 ♗d2 f6! 13 ef ♖xf6 14 ♘f3 ♗d7 15 g5 ♖f5=) 10 ... gh 11 ♕xh6 ♘f5 12 ♗xf5 ef 13 0–0–0! (the truth is arrived at by a difficult path! The bishop sacrifice was first played by Oll, in a game against Dokhoian at Klaipeda in 1988; evidently shocked at his own boldness, White forced a draw by 13 ♘h3?! f6? 14 ♕g6+ ♔h8 15 ♕h6+, with perpetual check. To be fair, Oll was the first to realise his own mistake, and a couple of months later, at Tbilisi in 1989, he scored

a brilliant win against Ulibin: 15 0-0-0! [*I am omitting from the game score the many repetitions of moves*] 15 ... fe [*or 15 ... c4 16 ♖he1 fe 17 de f4 18 ♕h6+ ♔g8 19 ♘f4 ♕e7 20 ♖e3±± Vogt–Uhlmann, Berlin 1989*] 16 ♖d3 f4 17 ♕h6+ ♔g8 18 ♖g3+!! fg 19 ♕g6+ ♔h8 20 hg!, and the rook on h1 entered the attack with decisive effect. Ulibin was forced to play 20 ... ♕h4, but of course this did not save the game. However, after 13 ♘h3 Black can still try to organise resistance with 13 ... ♕e7! 14 ♘f4 cd 15 cd ♘xd4 16 0-0 f6!. He is denied this possibility by 13 0-0-0) 13 ... f4 (13 ... f6 14 ♕g6+ ♔h8 15 ♖d3 f4 16 ♖g3!±±) 14 ♘h3 ♗f5 (14 ... ♘e7 15 ♘g5 ♗f5 occurred in Maus–Hübner, Lugano 1989; and now 16 ♖d3!±± — Psakhis) 15 ♘f4 f6 16 ♘g6, with an irresistible attack; Kindermann–Psakhis, Dortmund 1989.

(b) **9 ... ♘g6!?** (Naumkin's move, which is only just beginning to be properly investigated) 10 ♘f3 (threatening 11 ♘g5 h6 12 ♘xf7) 10 ... ♕c7!? (White has some advantage after 10 ... ♘ce7 11 dc! [*11 ♘g5?! h6 12 ♘f3 c4! 13 ♗xg6 fg 14 ♕g4 ♗d7= Zso. Polgar–Lputian, Rimavaska Sobota 1991*] 11 ... ♕c7 12 0-0 ♘f5 13 ♖e1 ♕xc5 14 ♗d2 ♕c7 15 ♖ab1± Vasyukov–Naumkin, Voskresensk 1990) 11 0-0 (11 ♘g5 h6 12 ♘xf7 ♕xf7 13 ♕xg6 ♕xg6! 14 ♗xg6 cd=) 11 ... c4 12 ♗e2

(12 ♘g5 h6 13 ♘xf7 cd 14 ♘xh6+ gh 15 ♕xg6+ ♕g7) 12 ... f6! 13 ef ♖xf6 14 g3 ♗d7= J. Polgar–Hertneck, Germany 1991.

10   ♘f3

10 g4 ♕h4 11 ♕xh4 ♘xh4 12 ♗g5 ♘g6 13 ♘f3 c4 is not particularly dangerous for Black.

10   ...   f6

10 ... c4 11 g4! cd 12 gf f6 leads to variations we shall examine later.

11   g4!

Black easily equalises after 11 ef ♕xf6 12 ♗g5 ♕f7 13 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 14 dc e5, Kindermann–Hübner, Munich 1988.

11   ...   c4
12   gf!

The most resolute move, and the strongest! Approximate equality results from 12 ef ♕xf6 13 ♗g5 ♕f7 14 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 15 ♗e2 ♘d6, as in a game Gdanski–S. Ivanov, Poland 1990. It is also hard for White to find a way to gain advantage after 12 ♗e2 ♘fe7 13 ef ♖xf6 14 ♘g5 h6 15 ♘f3 (15 ♘h3 ♕a5 16 ♗d2 ♗d7 17 f4 ♗e8 18 ♕h4 ♗g6= Minasian–Komarov, Kherson 1991) 15 ... ♕f8! (Lputian's move; a weaker line is 15 ... ♕a5 16 ♗d2 ♗d7 17 g5! ♗e8 18 ♕g4, and White retained the initiative in Tseshkovsky–P. Nikolić, Wijk aan Zee 1989) 16 g5 g6! 17 ♕h3 (17 ♕g4 h5∓) 17 ... e5 18 ♕g2 ♖e6, with a promising position for Black in Blatny–Vladimirov, Alma-Ata 1989.

12   ...   cd

13 ♖g1 ef

White wins beautifully after 13
... ♘e7 14 ef (in Gdanski–Matlak,
Polish Ch 1991, Black succeeded
in repulsing the attack after 14
♗h6 ♘xf5 15 0–0–0 ♕e7 16 ♖xd3
♗d7 17 ♘h4 ♗e8) 14 ... ♖xf6
15 ♖xg7+!! ♔xg7 16 ♕g5+ ♘g6
17 fg hg (17 ... ♕e7 18 ♕h6+
♔g8 19 ♗g5±±) 18 ♗f4! ♗d7
(18 ... ♕a5 19 ♗e5 ♕xc3+ 20
♔f1 ♕xa1+ 21 ♔g2 ♔f7 22
♕xf6+ ♔e8 23 ♗d6±±) 19 ♗e5
dc 20 h4! with a decisive attack;
Kruppa–Komarov, Kherson
1991.

14 ♗h6 ♖f7
15 ♔d2! *(107)*
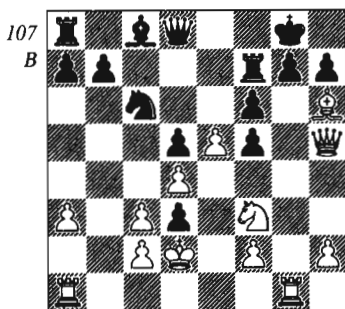
White's last piece is switched to
the attack.

15 ... ♗e6

White wins just as simply
against 15 ... ♕e7 (15 ... ♕f8
16 ef±±) 16 ♗xg7! ♖xg7 17
♖xg7+ ♔xg7 (17 ... ♕xg7 18
♕e8+) 18 ♖g1+ ♔h8 19
♘h4±±.

16 ♗xg7! ♖xg7
17 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7

18 ♖g1+
1–0

Black resigned in view of 18 ...
♔f8 (or 18 ... ♔h8 19 ♘h4±±)
19 ♕xh7 ♘e7 (19 ... ♗f7 20 ♖g7
♕e8 21 ♘h4!±±) 20 ef ♘g8 21
♖xg8+ ♗xg8 22 ♕g7+.

Psakhis–Stevanović
Bela Crkva 1987

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5
c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bc ♘e7 7 ♕g4
7 ... ♕c7 *(108)***

A bold and uncompromising
move. Sacrificing two pawns and
leaving his entire kingside to be
devastated, Black prepares to reap
a fairly good harvest himself on
the other wing, and commences a
tough struggle in which there is
no room for timidity or diffidence.

7 ... cd is closely related to the
text move in its rationale, but
perhaps gives White a greater
number of tempting possibilities.
Let us look at the variations that
have independent significance: 8
♕xg7 (it is harder to gain an
advantage with 8 cd ♕c7 [*8 ...
♘f5?! 9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 ♗d3 h5 11
♕f4±*] 9 ♔d1 [*9 ♖a2?! ♘f5 10
♘f3 ♘c6 11 ♗d2 ♕b6! 12 ♖a1
♕b2 13 ♖c1 ♘cxd4∓ Hjartarson–
P. Nikolić, Reykjavik World Cup
1991*] 9 ... 0–0 [*9 ... ♘f5 10 ♘f3
♘c6 11 ♗d3 ♘ce7 12 ♗d2 ♗d7
13 a4!± Spassky–Lutikov,
Moscow 1960*] 10 ♘f3 f6 11 ♗d3
♘f5 12 ♕h3 ♘c6 13 g4 fe 14 de
♘xe5! with great complications

in Spassky–Korchnoi, 12th match game, Belgrade 1977. Geller's idea 8 ♗d3!? requires further practical tests; there can follow 8 ... ♕a5 [*for 8 ... ♕c6, see 7 ... ♕c7 8 ♗d3 cd*] 9 ♘e2 ♘g6 [*9 ... 0–0!? 10 ♗g5 ♘bc6 11 f4 dc 12 ♘g3 ♘g6 13 ♘h5 ♕c5 14 h4 ♕d4, with unclear play; Johnsen–Ostenstad, Gausdal 1991*] 10 0–0 [*10 h4?! ♘c6 11 h5 ♘cxe5 12 ♕xd4 ♘xd3+ 13 cd e5 14 ♕e3 d4∓ Tal–Bronstein, USSR Ch, Kiev 1964*] 10 ... dc 11 h4 ♘c6 12 f4 h5 13 ♕g3 ♘ce7, with chances for both sides — *ECO*) 8 ... ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 ♕a5 (or 9 ... ♘bc6 10 ♘f3 ♕c7 11 ♗f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dc 13 ♕xc3 0–0–0 14 ♗d3± W. Watson–Mortazavi, Haringey 1989; 9 ... ♕c7!? transposes back into the main game Psakhis–Stevanović) 10 ♖b1!? (10 ♘e2 dc 11 ♘g3 ♘d7 12 ♘h5 d4!? 13 f4 was played in Timman–Korchnoi, Leeuwarden 1976; and now 13 ... ♕d5!) 10 ... ♘bc6 (10 ... ♕xc3+ 11 ♗d2 ♕c7 12 f4 ♘bc6 13 ♘f3 ♗d7 14 ♘g5!±) 11 ♘f3 ♗d7 (11 ... ♕xc3+ 12 ♗d2 ♕xa3 is probably stronger) 12 ♖xb7 ♕xc3+ 13 ♔d1 ♘a5 14 ♖b4! ♖c8 15 ♘g5± Short–Timman, Amsterdam 1988.

8 ♕xg7

Recently **8 ♗d3** has attained a certain popularity; it leads to a somewhat quieter game, and in particular gives White distinctly better chances of creating a safe refuge for his king. In reply, Black can choose between:
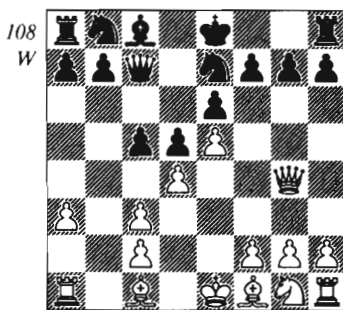
(a) **8 ... c4!?** 9 ♗e2 ♘f5 (White has a slight advantage after 9 ... 0–0 10 ♘f3 ♘bc6 11 0–0 f6 12 ef ♖xf6 13 ♕g3! ♕a5 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 de; Rogers–Apicella, Biel Open 1990) 10 ♘f3 ♘c6 11 ♕h3 (White's desire to drive the knight away from its excellent post on f5 is perfectly understandable, but this is not of course the only plan. Amador Rodriguez suggests two other ideas: 11 ♘h4 ♘ce7 12 ♗g5!, and 11 h4 followed by 12 h5 and 13 ♘h4. A game Sax–Short ended quickly with 11 ♕h5 h6 12 0–0 ♗d7 13 g4, and the players agreed a draw in view of the continuation 13 ... ♘fe7 14 ♘g5 ♖f8 15 ♘h7 ♖h8 16 ♘g5) 11 ... ♗d7 12 0–0 (12 g4!?) 12 ... 0–0–0 13 a4 f6! with a fully satisfactory position for Black; Kosanović–Paulić, Belgrade Open 1989.

(b) **8 ... cd** 9 ♘e2 dc (in J. Polgar–Knaak, Cologne TV 1990, Black failed to equalise with 9 ... ♕xe5 10 ♗f4 ♕f6 11 ♗g5 ♕e5 12 cd h5 [*12 ... ♕c7 13 ♗f4±*] 13 ♕h4 ♕c7 14 ♗f4 ♕a5+ 15

&d2 ♕d8 16 g4!?±) 10 ♕xg7 ♖g8
11 ♕xh7 ♘bc6 (11 ... ♘d7 is
ineffective: 12 &f4! ♘f8 13 ♕h5
♘fg6 14 &g3 &d7 15 0–0± Per-
enyi–Portisch, Budapest 1986.
White also does well out of 11 ...
♕xe5 12 &f4 ♕f6 13 h4! [*13
&xb8? ♖xb8 14 &b5+ &d7 15
&xd7+ &xd7+*] 13 ... ♘bc6 [*13
... ♘d7 14 &g5 ♕h8 15 ♕xh8 ♖xh8
16 ♘xc3 a6 17 0–0–0!± Am. Rod-
riguez–Matamoros, Bayamo 1989*]
14 &g5 ♕e5 15 ♕h6 &d7 16
♕f6! ♖c8 17 f4, Geller–Sokolsky,
USSR Ch, Moscow 1950. After
the queen exchange, White's h-
pawn decided the game in his
favour within a few moves) 12
&f4 &d7 13 0–0 0–0–0 14 &g3!
(14 ♕h5 hands the initiative to
Black after 14 ... d4 15 &g3
&e8!. There is likewise no danger
to Black in 14 ♕xf7 ♖df8 15 ♕h5
[*15 ♕h7 ♖h8 16 ♕g7 ♖fg8 17
♕f6 ♖f8=*] ·15 ... ♖h8 16 ♕g4
♖hg8 17 ♕h3 ♖h8 18 ♕e3?! d4!
19 ♕e4 &e8, Vitolins–Lputian,
Beltsy 1989) 14 ... ♘xe5 (or 14 ...
d4 15 ♕h4!? &e8 16 ♖fe1 ♘g6
17 &xg6 [*17 ♕h7!?*] 17 ... fg 18
♖ad1± W. Watson–C. Franklin,
British Ch, Plymouth 1989) 15
♖fe1 ♘7c6 (15 ... ♘f5 16 &xf5 ef
17 ♕h4±) 16 ♘xc3 (not falling
into the fairly transparent trap
16 ♘d4? ♘xd4 17 &xe5 ♘f3+)
16 ... ♘d4 17 ♘e2! occurred in
Am. Rodriguez–Paneque, Havana
1990. The position is complicated,
but White's chances still appear
preferable.

(c) White is better after **8 ... h5?!**
9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕h6 cd 11 ♘e2
dc (11 ... ♘bc6?! 12 cd! &d7 13
&e3±) 12 &f4 ♘bc6 13 0–0
&d7 14 ♘xc3 a6 15 ♖ab1±
Bellin–Levitt, British Ch, Swansea
1987.

(d) **8 ... ♘bc6?!** is equally un-
satisfactory for Black: 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8
10 ♕f6!? cd 11 ♘f3 dc 12 0–0 d4
13 &xh7 ♘d5 14 ♕h6± Hazai–
Norri, Helsinki 1989.

To return to White's 8th move,
8 &d1?! is rather in Black's favour
after 8 ... 0–0 9 ♘f3 f5 10 ef ♖xf6
11 &d3 e5 12 ♕g3 c4 13 &e2
♘bc6! Enders–Uhlmann, East
Germany 1985.

8	**...**	**♖g8**
9	**♕xh7**	**cd**
10	**♘e2**	*(109)*

10 &d1, suggested by Euwe
and frequently seen in tourna-
ments in the sixties and seventies,
is now played much more rarely.
There can follow: 10 ... ♘bc6 (10
... dc 11 ♘f3 ♘bc6 transposes) 11
♘f3 dc (immense complications
arise from 11 ... ♘xe5!? 12 &f4
♕xc3 13 ♘xe5 ♕xa1+ 14 &c1
d3!? [*or 14 ... ♖f8 15 &d3 &d7
16 ♖he1 ♘c6 17 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 18
&g6! 0–0–0 19 ♕xf7 e5, with
obscure consequences; Fuchs–
Uhlmann, Zinnowitz 1966*] 15
♕xf7+ &d8 16 ♕f6! [*16 ♘xd3
&d7 17 h4 ♖c8=*] 16 ... dc+
17 &d2 ♕d4+ 18 &d3 ♕c5!?
[*stronger than 18 ... &e8 19 &e2
&d7 20 &e3 ♕b2 21 ♖c1 ♖c8
22 ♘xd7 d4, Bronstein–Uhlmann,*

Zagreb 1965; White could now have gained a decisive advantage with 23 ♘b8!! ♖xb8 24 ♖xc2] 19 ♔e2 ♗d7 20 ♗e3 d4! 21 ♗xd1 c1(♕) 22 ♖xc1 ♕xc1 23 ♘f7+ ♔e8 24 ♘d6+ ♔d8= B. Stein–Belyavsky, London 1985) 12 ♗f4 (Black also has abundant defensive resources against 12 ♘g5, thus: 12 ... ♘xe5 *[12 ... ♕xe5!? 13 ♕xf7+ ♔d7=]* 13 f4 *[13 ♗f4 ♕b6! 14 ♗xe5 ♖xg5 15 h4 ♖g8 16 ♔e1 ♗d7 17 ♖h3 ♖g4∓ Matulović–Uhlmann, Budapest 1967]* 13 ... f6 *[Black similarly has an excellent game after 13 ... ♖xg5!? 14 fg ♘5g6 15 h4 e5! 16 h5 ♘f8 17 ♕g7 ♗g4+ 18 ♔e1 0–0–0 19 ♕xf7 ♗f5! with a powerful initiative; B. Stein–I. Farago, Lugano 1985]* 14 fe fg 15 ♕h5+ ♔d8 16 ♗xg5 ♕c5 17 ♕h4 *[17 ♗d3?! ♔c7 18 ♕h4 ♘c6∓]* 17 ... ♗d7 18 ♗d3 ♗c6!? 19 ♖f1 ♔d7, with chances for both sides; B. Stein–Bukal, Balatonbereny 1985) 12 ... ♕b6!? (also after 12 ... ♗d7 13 ♘g5 ♖f8! 14 ♗d3 ♕b6 15 ♗e3 d4, there is no particular cause for worry; Thipsay–Agdestein, Thessaloniki Ol 1984) 13 ♗e3 (13 ♔e1 ♗d7 14 ♘g5 ♘xe5! 15 ♗xe5 ♖xg5∓) 13 ... ♕b2 14 ♖c1 ♗d7= Steil–I. Farago, Budapest 1986.

10   ...   ♘bc6

10 ... dc usually transposes, but let us look at some variations with independent significance: 11 f4 (the great Tal once played 11 ♗f4!?, and quickly obtained the
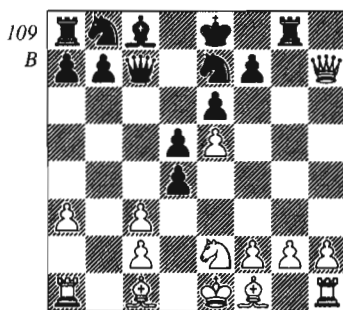
advantage: 11 ... ♘bc6 12 ♕d3 ♖g4?! 13 ♕f3 ♖h4 14 g3 ♖h8 15 ♕xc3 ♘g6 16 ♘d4 ♘xf4 17 ♘b5!±) 11 ... b6 (or 11 ... ♗d7 12 ♕d3 ♘f5 13 ♖g1!? ♘c6 14 g4 ♕b6 15 ♖g2! ♘h4 16 ♖g3± Kupreichik–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Minsk 1987) 12 ♘g3!? (12 ♘d4 a6!? 13 ♕d3 ♗b7 14 a4 ♘bc6=) 12 ... ♕c5 13 ♖b1 ♘d7 14 ♘h5 ♖f8 15 ♖b5 ♕d4 16 ♖b4 ♕c5 17 ♕d3= Oll–Romero Holmes, Terrassa 1990.

11   f4   ♗d7

Exploiting the fact that 12 cd? is bad for White on account of 12 ... ♘xd4, Black completes the development of his pieces. It is also worth considering 11 ... dc. There can follow: 12 ♕d3 (12 h4 ♗d7 13 ♖h3 0–0–0 14 ♖xc3?! ♘f5 15 ♕h5 d4 16 ♖cd3 ♘ce7, and Black seized the initiative in Ljubojević–Belyavsky, Thessaloniki Ol 1984) 12 ... d4 (there are two interesting ideas deriving from Hertneck: 12 ... ♘f5 13 ♖g1?! *[13 ♕xc3 b6 14 ♖xg1!? — Psakhis]* 13 ... ♕e7! 14 h3 ♗d7 15 ♖b1 b6 16 g4 ♕h4+, with a double-edged

game, Psakhis–Hertneck, West Berlin 1988; and 12 ... b6!? 13 ♘xc3 ♘f5 14 ♗b2! [*14 ♗d2 ♘cd4!?; or 14 g4 ♖xg4 15 ♕h3 ♘xe5! 16 fe ♕xe5+, with compensation for the sacrificed material*] 14 ... ♕e7 15 0–0–0, as in van der Wiel–Hertneck, Groningen 1987; at this point 15 ... ♕h4+ would have led to unclear play) 13 ♘xd4 (in Oll–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Odessa, White obtained no advantage with 13 ♘g3 ♗d7 14 ♘e4 0–0–0 15 ♖b1 ♘xe5! 16 fe ♕xe5 17 ♕e2 ♗c6 18 ♘g3 ♕d5. For 13 ♖b1!? ♗d7, see below, note 'd3' to White's 13th move) 13 ... ♘xd4 14 ♕xd4 ♗d7 15 ♖g1 (15 a4?! ♘f5 16 ♕f2 ♕c6! 17 ♖g1 ♕e4+ 18 ♕e2 ♕b4, with an excellent game; I. Sokolov–Hulak, Portoroz 1987) 15 ... ♘f5 (15 ... ♗c6?! 16 ♕xc3 0–0 17 ♗d2! ♘d5 18 ♕c5± J. Horvath–Tischbierek, Budapest 1987) 16 ♕f2 ♕c6 17 ♗d3 (17 g4? ♕e4+ 18 ♕e2 ♗c6∓) 17 ... ♕d5 18 ♖b1 ♗c6 19 ♖b3 0–0–0 20 ♖xc3 ♔b8 21 g4± Ernst–Einarsson, Reykjavik Open 1990.

12 ♕d3   dc *(110)*
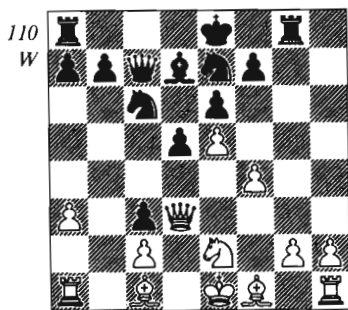
Thus we have reached a position which is crucial for the assessment of the entire variation with 7 ... ♕c7. Evaluating this position is not at all simple; both sides have something in their favour. White has used up a lot of time with his queen moves, and is way behind in development. On the other hand, his passed pawn on the h-file is very strong; nor should we forget his bishop pair, which in the right hands can give the player of the black pieces a great deal of trouble.

13 ♘xc3

Chess fashion is capricious. At the moment, the controversy focuses on this very move; a few years ago, it was 13 ♕xc3 that received the most attention; and no one knows what move will be the favourite in 1993. Let us examine the other continuations that are worthy of note:

(a) **13 h4** (even the most inveterate optimist can scarcely be hoping to queen this pawn within a few moves, but advancing it to h7 is perfectly feasible, and once it is there it will do much to hamper Black's activity. The plan is interesting, but unfortunately takes up too much time) 13 ... ♘f5 14 h5 0–0–0 15 h6 ♖g6! 16 h7 ♖h8 17 ♖b1!? (or 17 ♖h3 d4! 18 ♖b1 ♗e8 19 ♕f3 ♕d8 20 g4 ♘h4 21 ♕h1   ♖xg4∓   Bronstein–Uhlmann, Tallinn 1977) 17 ... f6 18 ef ♗e8 19 ♕xc3 ♖xh7, with about equal chances; Vasyukov–

Doroshkevich, Moscow 1967.

(b) **13 ♘g3** 0-0-0 14 ♗e2 ♘f5 15 ♘xf5 ef 16 0-0 (White needs to castle without delay; 16 ♗f3 ♕b6! 17 ♕xc3 ♔b8 18 ♕b3 ♕xb3 19 cb ♘d4 20 ♔f2 ♘xb3∓ Ree–Darga, Amsterdam 1969) 16 … d4 17 ♗f3 ♗e6 18 ♖b1 ♗a2 (18 … ♕a5!?) 19 ♖a1 ♗e6 20 ♖e1 ♕b6= Sveshnikov–Webb, Hastings 1977/8.

(c) **13 ♗e3** ♘f5 (unclear play results from 13 … d4!? 14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♘d5 16 g3 ♕a5 17 ♗e2 ♘b4 18 ♕h7! Sievers–Schmidt, Hamburg 1988. It is also worth considering 13 … ♘a5, for example 14 ♘d4 a6 15 g3 ♖c8 16 ♗e2 ♘c4!? 17 ♕xc3 ♕b6= Am. Rodriguez–Juarez Flores, Cali Z 1990) 14 ♘d4 ♘fxd4 15 ♗xd4 0-0-0 16 0-0-0 ♘xd4 17 ♕xd4 ♕a5∓ (*ECO*).

(d) **13 ♖b1** (the black king has nowhere to go for shelter except the queenside, so White makes advance preparation for when his opponent castles long). Black now has the choice between:

(d1) **13 …** ♘f5 (White gains a big advantage from 13 … ♖c8 14 ♘g3! ♘a5 15 ♘h5 ♖h8 16 ♘f6+ ♔f8 17 ♕d4± Kovalev–Delanoy, Kecskemet 1989) 14 h3! (14 g4?! ♖xg4 15 ♗h3 ♖g6 16 ♗xf5 ef 17 ♘xc3 ♘e7 18 a4 ♕c4!∓ Lanc–Uhlmann, Bucharest 1979; for 14 ♕xc3!?, see variation 'e') 14 … d4 (14 … 0-0-0 15 g4 ♘h4 16 ♘xc3 ♘a5 17 ♔f2! d4 18 ♘e4 ♗a4 19 ♖b2± Blatny–Kokkila, Gron-

ingen 1986) 15 g4 ♘h4 16 ♕h7! ♘f3+ 17 ♔f2 0-0-0 18 ♔xf3 ♘xe5+ 19 fe ♗c6+ 20 ♔f2 ♗xh1 21 ♖b4!± J. Horvath–Uhlmann, Szirak 1985.

(d2) **13 … 0-0-0** 14 ♘xc3 (for 14 ♕xc3, see variation 'e' below; if 14 ♗e3, then 14 … ♘f5 15 ♗f2 d4! 16 h3 f6!) 14 … ♘a5 (14 … ♘f5 15 ♘b5 ♕a5+ 16 ♗d2 ♕a4 17 ♕b3! ♕xb3 18 cb d4 19 a4± Minasian–Tabatadze, 1987) 15 g3 (15 ♘b5?! ♗xb5 16 ♖xb5 ♔b8 17 g3 ♖c8 18 ♔d1 ♘f5∓ Koch–Gdanski, Tunja 1989) 15 … ♔b8 16 ♘e2! ♘f5 (16 … ♖c8 17 ♘d4 ♗a4 18 ♗d2 ♘c4 19 ♖b4!? ♘xd2 [*19 … ♕d7!?*] 20 ♕xd2± Kovalev–Djurhuus, Gausdal 1990) 17 ♗h3± Smirin–Vaiser, USSR 1988.

(d3) **13 … d4!?** 14 ♖g1!? (14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15 ♕xd4 ♘f5 16 ♕f2 ♗c6!? [*Black also has quite a good game after 16 … ♕c6 17 ♖b4 ♕d5 18 ♖g1 ♗c6 19 ♗d3 ♖d8; Matanović–Rolland, Le Havre 1966*] 17 ♖g1 ♖d8! 18 ♗d3! [*18 ♕c5!?=*] 18 … ♖xd3! 19 cd ♕d8!∓ Palkovi–F. Portisch, Eger Open 1987) 14 … 0-0-0 (or 14 … ♘f5 15 g4 ♘h4 16 ♕h7! ♘f3+ 17 ♔f2±) 15 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 (White's chances are clearly better after 15 … ♘a5 16 ♗e3 ♘d5 [*16 … ♗a4 17 ♖b4!±*] 17 ♘f5! ef 18 ♕xd5 ♗a4 19 ♕c5!± Oll–Rozentalis, Vilnius 1988) 16 ♕xd4 ♗b5! (a bold idea, which is justified! Black cannot be at all satisfied with 16 … ♗c6 17 ♕xa7 ♘f5 18 ♗d3)

17 ♕xa7 ♗xf1 18 ♔xf1 ♕c6! 19 ♗e3 ♘f5 20 ♔f2 ♕e4! 21 ♕c5+ ♔b8= Aseyev–Eingorn, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989. Brilliant defence!

(e) **13 ♕xc3 ♘f5** (in the few games in which Black tried to do without this move, White obtained the advantage without much difficulty. For example, 13 ... ♖c8 14 ♖b1 ♘a5?! [*14 ... ♘f5 transposes into variation 'e1'*] 15 ♕xc7 ♖xc7 16 ♘d4 ♘f5 17 ♘xf5 ef 18 ♗d2± Mestel–Barbulesco, Lucerne 1985. Or 13 ... 0–0–0 14 ♖b1 [*it is worth considering 14 ♘g3!? ♖h8 15 ♗d2! ♖dg8 16 0–0–0 ♔b8 17 ♗d3± Spassky–Nogueiras, Montpellier C 1985*] 14 ... d4 15 ♕d3 [*15 ♕c5?! b6 16 ♕c4 ♔b8 17 ♗d2 ♗c8 18 ♘g3 ♗b7 19 ♗d3 ♘d5!∓ Spraggett–Belyavsky, Wijk aan Zee 1985*] 15 ... ♔b8 [*15 ... ♘d5 16 g3 f6 17 ef ♘xf6 18 ♗g2 e5 19 fe ♘xe5 20 ♕b3± Balashov–Agdestein, Dortmund 1987; for 15 ... ♘f5!? 16 ♖g1!, see variation 'e2'*] 16 ♗d2 ♗c8 17 ♘g3! f6 18 ef ♘d5 19 ♗e2± Tischbierek–Levitt, Budapest Open 1987) **14 ♖b1!** *(111)* (Black has an easy game after 14 ♗d2 ♕b6! 15 ♖c1!? [*15 a4 ♖c8*] 15 ... ♖c8 16 ♕c3 ♕c7! 17 ♕d3 [*17 g3? ♘cd4∓*] 17 ... a6! 18 ♖g1?! ♘ce7 19 g4 ♗b5 20 ♕h3 ♕b6!∓ Hartmann–Uhlmann, Budapest 1986.)

From the diagram, Black has:

(e1) **14 ... ♖c8** 15 ♗d2! a6 (hoping to organise counterplay on the light squares with 16 ...
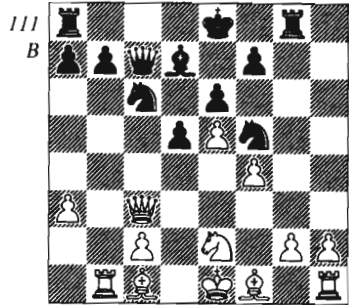
♘a7 and 17 ... ♗b5. Black has difficult problems to face after 15 ... ♕d8 16 ♕d3! [*16 ♖xb7?! ♘cd4*] 16 ... ♘a5 17 g3 ♘c4 [*17 ... ♗a4?! 18 ♘c3 ♗c6 19 ♗h3 ♘c4 20 ♗xf5 ef 21 ♘b5± Yudasin–Gastgofer, USSR 1989*] 18 ♘d4, with a clear plus — Yudasin. White also does well from 15 ... b6 16 g3! [*16 ♘g3!?±; Short–Timman, Belfort World Cup 1988, went 16 ♖g1?! ♕d8! 17 ♕h3 ♕e7 18 ♖b2 ♕c5 19 g4 ♘fd4, with obscure complications*] 16 ... ♕b7 17 ♕d3 ♘ce7 18 ♖g1 ♖c4! 19 g4 ♘h4 20 ♖g3± Karpov–I. Farago, Wijk aan Zee 1988) 16 ♖g1! (after the less precise 16 g3, Black achieved equality in Tal–I. Farago, Wijk aan Zee 1988: 16 ... b5 17 ♗h3 ♕b6! 18 ♕d3 [*18 ♗xf5 d4! 19 ♕d3 ef*] 18 ... ♘ce7! 19 g4 ♘h4, with quite good counterchances) 16 ... b5 (or 16 ... ♕d8 17 ♕h3 ♘cd4 18 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 19 ♗d3, and if Black takes the pawn he loses at once: 19 ... ♘xc2+? 20 ♗xc2 ♖xc2 21 ♕h7! ♖g6 22 ♕h8+ ♔e7 23 ♗b4+ — Short) 17 g4 ♘h4? (Black's pos-

ition was already difficult, but after this move it is hopeless. 17 ... ♛b6!? was stronger: 18 gf ♜xg1 19 ♝e3! ♜xf1+ 20 ♔xf1 d4 21 ♝xd4 ♞xd4 22 ♛xd4 ♛b7 23 ♔f2!± — Short) 18 ♜g3!±± Short–Kosten, Hastings 1988/9.

(e2) **14 ... 0–0–0** (14 ... d4 15 ♛d3 0–0–0 16 ♜g1! transposes) **15 ♜g1!?** (once White drives the knight away from f5, his advantage will be obvious; this move pursues that aim. Black has an excellent game after 15 ♝d2 d4 16 ♛d3 [*or 16 ♛c4 f6! 17 ef ♞d6 18 ♛b3 ♞e4! 19 ♝b4 ♞xf6, when White has to think about seeking equality; van der Kleij–Böhm, corr 1990*] 16 ... ♞ce7 [*16 ... f6!? 17 ef e5, with complications not unfavourable to Black*] 17 ♜g1 ♝a4 18 c4 ♔b8! 19 ♜b2 [*19 ♜b4 ♝c6 20 g4 ♞h4*] 19 ... ♞e3! and it is very difficult for White to resist the attack; Lobron–Gunawan, Thessaloniki Ol 1984. Black similarly has no problems after 15 ♞g3 d4 16 ♛d3 ♞ce7!) **15 ... d4** (undermining the centre with 15 ... f6?! is premature: 16 g4! ♞h6 17 ef ♜xg4 18 ♝e3 [*this leads to the better ending; if White is looking for more, he can choose the alternative 18 ♜xg4!? ♞xg4 19 f7 ♛d6 20 ♛g7 e5 21 ♝h3, with advantage; Hellers–Ostenstad, Oslo 1991*] 18 ... ♜xg1 19 ♝xg1 ♞f5 20 ♜d1± Mecking–Uhlmann, Manila IZ 1976) **16 ♛d3**, with the following interesting possibilities:

(e21) **16 ... f6** 17 g4 ♞h4!? (after the passive 17 ... ♞h6, Black loses without a fight: 18 ef ♜xg4 19 ♜xg4 ♞xg4 20 f7! e5 21 ♝g2±± Balashov–Kosten, Minsk 1986) 18 ef e5 19 h3!? (in B. Nikolić–Plchut, corr 1989, White came under an irresistible attack after 19 f5? e4! 20 ♛xe4 ♜ge8 21 ♛d3 ♞e5 22 ♛b3 d3!∓∓) 19 ... e4 20 ♛xe4 d3 21 cd ♜ge8 22 ♛c4! ♝e6 23 ♛c3, and White gradually succeeded in repulsing the attack and winning the game; Cladouras–Djurhuus, Gausdal 1991. But Black's play can probably be strengthened.

(e22) **16 ... ♝e8!?** 17 g4 ♞h4 18 ♜g3 (18 g5 ♜h8 19 ♞g3 ♞g6 20 ♜g2 ♞cxe5! 21 fe ♞xe5 22 ♛e2 d3! with a strong attack) 18 ... f6! 19 ef e5 (an interesting alternative is 19 ... ♝g6 20 ♛c4 ♝f7 21 g5 ♞f5 22 ♝g2! e5 23 ♛a4 Gdanski–Pupo, Santiago 1990) 20 g5 ♝f7 21 ♝h3+ ♔b8 occurred in Sznapik–Nogueiras, Thessaloniki Ol 1988. After 22 f5 ♝d5 23 g6 e4, a wild position, difficult to evaluate, would have arisen.

(e23) **16 ... ♞a5!?** 17 g4 (17 ♜b4!?) 17 ... ♝a4! 18 gf (Black has a winning attack after 18 c3? ♝c2!! 19 ♛xc2 d3 20 ♛a2 ♛c5! 21 ♜g2 ♞e3 22 ♝xe3 ♛xe3; Hjartarson–Nogueiras, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 18 ... ♝xc2 19 ♛b5 ♜xg1 20 ♞xg1 ♝xb1 21 ♛xb1 ♞b3, with complex play (Nogueiras).

13   ...   a6

For decades it was thought that

Black had no other choice here, but recently some doubt was cast on this opinion, and it was established that White has no easy task gaining an advantage against 13 ... ♘f5!? (incidentally 13 ... ♘a5 is possible too, for instance 14 ♘b5 ♗xb5 15 ♕xb5+ ♘ac6 [*15 ... ♘ec6 16 ♗e3 0–0–0 17 ♔f2 d4 18 ♗d2 ♖d5 19 ♕d3 ♖c5 20 ♕h7! ♖d8 21 ♗d3± Ernst–Knott, London 1990*] 16 g3 0–0–0 17 ♕c5! ♔b8 18 ♗d3± Smagin–Naumkin, Palma de Mallorca GMA 1989) 14 ♘b5 (14 ♖b1 ♘cd4 15 ♗d2 a6 16 ♖b4 ♘c6=, or 14 g4?! ♖xg4 15 ♗h3 ♘xe5! 16 fe ♕xe5+ 17 ♘e2 ♖h4! with initiative to Black, Gdanski–Winsnes, Göteborg 1989) 14 ... ♕d8 15 ♗b2 (15 a4 a6 16 ♘d6 ♘xd6 17 ed ♕b6! is in Black's favour) 15 ... ♘a5 16 0–0–0 ♘c4, and Black can be satisfied with the results of the opening; van der Plassche–Böhm, corr 1990.

14 ♖b1

Players of the Black side were given quite a few problems by Spassky's move 14 ♘e2!?, but gradually they succeeded in finding the correct path: 14 ... ♖c8 (White has the better prospects after 14 ... 0–0–0?! 15 ♗d2 ♘f5 16 h3! ♘ce7 17 g4 ♗b5 18 ♕c3; Chandler–Knott, London 1988. A line that deserves more attention is 14 ... ♘f5 15 ♖b1 [*or 15 h3 ♘a5! 16 g4 ♗b5 17 ♕c3 ♕xc3 18 ♘xc3 ♗xf1 19 ♖xf1 ♘d4= Timman–Short, Rotterdam World*

Cup 1989] 15 ... ♘a7!? [*15 ... ♘ce7?! 16 ♕c3! ♗c6 17 ♖g1 0–0–0 18 ♘d4 ♘xd4 19 ♕xd4 ♘f5 20 ♕b6!± Karpov–Nogueiras, Brussels World Cup 1988; 15 ... ♘a5!?*] 16 ♕c3!? ♗c6 17 ♘d4 ♘xd4 18 ♕xd4 ♘b5 19 ♕c5 d4 20 ♖b3 ♕d8! with a promising game; Ehlvest–P. Nikolić, Reykjavik World Cup 1991) 15 ♖b1 (if 15 ♗d2 ♘f5 16 h3?, as in Short–Nogueiras, Barcelona World Cup 1989, then 16 ... ♘xe5! 17 fe ♕xe5 gives Black an overwhelming attack) 15 ... ♘a7! (an important improvement on Chandler–Timman, Linares 1988, in which White gained a decisive advantage after 15 ... ♘f5 16 h3! ♘ce7 17 g4 ♘h4 18 ♘d4) 16 ♕b3 ♗b5 17 ♘d4 ♗xf1 18 ♔xf1 ♘ac6, with about equal chances; Arnason–Timman, EU-Cup 1989.

14 ...   ♖c8

Not a bad alternative is 14 ... ♘a5. There can follow: 15 h4 ♘f5 16 ♖h3 0–0–0 17 h5 (better than 17 ♗d2 ♘c4 18 ♖b3 ♕c5 19 ♘e2 ♗b5, and Black has already seized the initiative) 17 ... ♘c4 (17 ... ♖g4! 18 ♕f3! ♖dg8 19 h6 ♖4g6 20 h7 ♖h8 21 g4± Hasin–De Carbonel, corr 1977) 18 ♖b4! (18 ♘d1? ♗b5 19 ♕c3 d4!∓) 18 ... ♗c6 19 ♘e2 ♗b5 20 a4 ♕c5! (much stronger than 20 ... ♘xe5 21 ♕c3! ♗xe2 22 fe ♗xf1 23 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 24 ♔xf1 d4 25 h6, and White's endgame advantage is obvious; Hort–Uhlmann, Hastings 1971/2) 21 ♗a3 ♗c6 22

♕c3 ♕a7, with a roughly equal game; Hort–Nogueiras, Biel 1988.

On the other hand if you are thinking of playing 14 ... ♘f5, you should carefully study the game Oechslein–Hechler, corr 1971, in which White obtained the better game with 15 g4!? (15 g3 ♖c8 16 ♗d2 ♘a5 17 ♗h3±) 15 ... ♖xg4 16 ♗h3 ♘xe5!? 17 fe ♕xe5+ 18 ♘e2 ♖e4 19 ♗xf5 ef!? 20 ♔d1! ♖c8 21 ♗d2 d4 22 ♘g3±.

14 ... 0–0–0?? loses at once to 15 ♕xa6!

15   h4!

We have seen several times already that the advance of the h-pawn is an essential part of White's strategy, and delay is fatal. In Hort–Agdestein, Oslo 1984, White postponed the advance by one move and handed the initiative to Black: 15 ♗d2?! ♘a5! 16 h4 ♘c4 17 ♖h3 ♘xa3 18 ♖b3 ♘c4 19 h5 b5∓.

15   ...   ♘a7

Not, perhaps, the best decision. It is harder for White to demonstrate an advantage against 15 ... ♘f5 16 ♖h3 ♘ce7!? (or 16... ♘cd4 17 ♗d2 ♘b5 18 ♘e2! ♕xc2 19 a4±) 17 ♗d2! (17 h5?! allowed Black to blockade the kingside totally and obtain a highly promising position with 17 ... ♘h6! 18 a4 ♘ef5 19 ♗d2 [*19 ♗a3 ♗c6 20 ♗c5 f6!∓*] 19 ... ♖g7 20 a5 ♔f8= Velimirović–Levitt, Pinerolo Open 1987) 17 ... ♘h6 18 ♖g3! ♖xg3 20 ♕xg3 ♘ef5 21 ♕h3 (from this square the queen will

give excellent support to the g-pawn) 21 ... d4 22 ♘d1 (22 ♘e2 ♕d8! 23 g4 ♘e3!∓) 22 ... ♕d8! 23 g4 (the consequences of 23 ♘f2 ♘e3! 24 ♗xe3 de 25 ♕xe3 ♘f5 are unclear; Psakhis–Uhlmann, Tallinn 1987) 23 ... ♘h4! (in Korchnoi–Nogueiras, Brussels World Cup 1988, Black lost quickly with 23 ... ♕h4+? 24 ♘f2! ♕xh3 25 ♗xh3 ♘h4 26 f5±±) 24 ♖b3 ♗a4, with great complications.

16   ♗d2   ♘b5
17   ♘e2! *(112)*
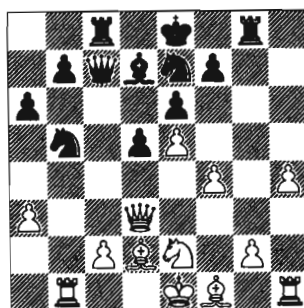
The results of the opening are undoubtedly favourable to White. He has kept his extra pawn, and such a dangerous one at that. All the same, Black's counterchances based on the somewhat insecure position of the white king should not be ignored.

17   ...   d4!

White clearly does well from 17 ... ♕xc2 18 ♕xc2 ♖xc2 19 a4, followed by capturing on b7.

18   h5   ♘f5
19   ♖h3   ♗c6!

The pawn is still poisoned: 19

... ♕xc2? 20 ♕xc2 ♖xc2 21 a4
♘c3 22 ♗xc3 dc 23 ♖xb7±.

| 20 | h6 | ♗d5 |
| 21 | ♘g3! | ♘e3! |

21 ... ♗c4 22 ♕xc4 ♕xc4 23
♗xc4 ♖xc4 24 ♘xf5+ ef 25 h7
♖h8 26 ♖bb3! would give Black
a difficult game.

| 22 | ♘h5 | ♖h8 |

22 ... ♗c4 would win the queen
but lose the game: 23 ♘f6+ ♔d8
24 ♘xg8! ♗xd3 25 ♗xd3, and
there is no stopping the white
pawn.

| 23 | ♘f6+ | ♔e7 |
| 24 | ♘xd5+ | |

This keeps the advantage, but a
simpler line was probably 24
♗xe3 de 25 ♘xd5+ ed 26 ♕xe3
♕xc2 27 ♗d3 ♕c3+ 28 ♕d2,
and White practically has a won
position.

24	...	♘xd5
25	a4	♘bc3
26	♖b3	♘xa4
27	♕xd4	b5
28	f5?!	

Too optimistic! The simple 28
c3 would have cut out the
opponent's counterplay, and
White would have had to take
no more than elementary care in
order to win the game.

28	...	♕xc2
29	fe	fe
30	♖hg3	♖hg8!
31	♖xg8	♖xg8
32	♖f3	♘c5 *(113)*

How much the position has
changed is plain to see. The black
queen is in the immediate vicinity

113
W
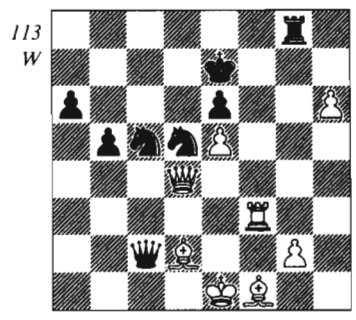
of the white king, and a pair of
active knights are poised for raids
in the enemy's rear. Fortunately
(for me, of course), 28 f5!? has
spoilt much but not everything.

| 44 | g4! | |

It unexpectedly turns out that
in spite of his apparent activity,
Black is unable to create serious
threats.

| 33 | ... | ♘e4 |

Neither 33 ... b4 34 ♗c4! nor
33 ... ♘b3 34 ♕d3 would relieve
Black of his problems.

| 34 | ♕d3! | ♕xd3 |
| 35 | ♗xd3 | ♘xd2 |

Black loses by force after 35 ...
♖xg4 36 h7 ♖h4 (36 ... ♖g1+ 37
♗f1 ♖h1 38 ♖h3±±) 37 ♗xe4
♖xe4+ 38 ♔d1 ♖h4 39
♗g5+ ±±.

36	♔xd2	♖xg4
37	h7	♖h4
38	♖g3±±	♖h2+
39	♔e1	♘f4
40	♗e4!	b4
41	♖g7+	♔f8
42	♖g8+	♔e7
43	h8(♕)	

1-0

It is fitting that the final move is made by the pawn which has exerted such a great influence on the course of the game.

16 Winawer Variation: 7 ♘f3/7 a4

Dolmatov–Henley
New York Open 1991

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	e5	c5
5	a3	♗xc3+
6	bc	♘e7
7	♘f3	*(114)*

114
B
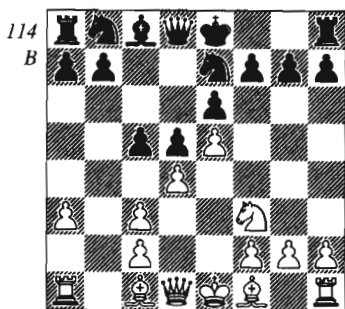
The attempt to breach Black's defences by direct methods (7 ♕g4 or 7 h4) is by no means always successful. Just as frequently, White adopts the positional methods (7 ♘f3 and 7 a4) which will be examined in the present chapter.

| 7 | ... | ♘bc6 |

The following are also seen:

(a) **7 ... ♕c7** (a solid and reliable system, employed with success by Yusupov and Nikolić) **8 a4** (Black solves his problems more simply after 8 ♗d3 b6 9 a4 [*or 9 0–0 ♗a6 10 ♖e1 ♗xd3 11 cd ♘d7 12 ♗g5 ♖c8 13 c4 dc 14 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 15 dc cd 16 ♕xd4 h6, and in spite of having his king in the centre, Black can be satisfied with the outcome of the opening; Rogers–Whiteley, London 1987*] 9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 [*White has no advantage after 10 ♗b5+ ♗xb5 11 ab ♘d7 12 0–0 0–0 13 ♕d3 ♖fc8; Ehlvest–Chernin, USSR Ch 1984. This is not surprising, since White is a tempo down on the variation 7 ♘f3 b6 8 ♗b5+ ♗d7 9 a4, in which it is not easy for him to obtain the better game in any case*] 10 ... ♘xa6 11 ♕e2 [*11 a5 0–0 12 ♕d3 ♕b7 13 ♘g5 ♘g6=*] 11 ... ♘b8 12 0–0 0–0 13 dc bc= Kudryashov–V. Ivanov, Azov 1991) **8 ... b6 9 ♗b5+ ♗d7**, and now:

(a1) **10 0–0 ♗xb5 11 ab 0–0**

(11 ... a5!?, trying to get rid of Black's only weakness, deserves attention. There can follow 12 ᗡg5 [*great complications result from 12 c4!? ᗡd7 13 cd ᗡxd5 14 c4 ᗡb4 15 d5 ed 16 cd 0–0, Kovalev–Temirbayev, Azov 1991*] 12 ... h6 13 ᗡh3 ᗡd7 14 ᗡf4 0–0!? [*14 ... cd?! 15 cd ♛c4 16 ♝a3 ᗡf5 17 c3± Stein–Byrne, Sousse IZ 1967*] 15 ᗡh5 ♚h8 16 ♛g4 ♛g8 17 ♛h3 ᗡf8, with good chances of a successful defence although White of course keeps the initiative; Ivkov–Byrne, Sousse IZ 1967. White has the better chances after 11 ... ᗡd7 12 ♛d3 [*12 ♛e2 0–0?! 13 ♝g5! ♛fe8 14 ♛a2 h6 15 ♝d2 ♛ab8 16 ♛fa1 ♛b7 17 ᗡe1! ᗡc8 18 ♛g4± Mokry–Prandstetter, Prague 1986; 12 ... h6!±*] 12 ... h6 13 ♛a4! [*13 ♝a3 0–0 14 c4 dc 15 ♛xc4 ♛fc8=*] 13 ... 0–0 14 ♝d2 ♛fc8 15 ♛c1 ᗡf8 16 ♛a6± Karpov–Mednis, Vienna 1986) 12 h4 (or 12 ♛d3 h6 13 ♝d2 [*13 dc bc 14 c4 ᗡd7 15 cd ed occurred in Tseshkovsky–Vladimirov, USSR 1984*] 13 ... ♛c8 14 ♛a2 cd 15 cd ♛c4= Davïes–Casper, Moscow 1987) 12 ... h6! 13 ♝f4 was played in Hjartarson–P. Nikolić, Barcelona World Cup 1989; by continuing 13 ... ♛c8 14 ♛a2 cd 15 cd ♛c4, Black could have obtained equal chances.

(a2) **10 ♝d3** (a more promising move) 10 ... ᗡbc6 11 0–0 h6 (castling is not yet possible: 11 ... 0–0? 12 ♝xh7+ ±±. White also benefits from the release of the central tension: 11 ... c4 12 ♝e2 f6 13 ♝a3! fe 14 de ᗡxe5 15 ♛e1 ᗡ7c6 16 ᗡxe5 ᗡxe5 17 f4 ᗡc6 18 ♝g4± Fischer–Darga, Berlin 1960) 12 ♛e1 (Black has good chances of equalising after 12 ♝a3 ᗡa5 13 ᗡd2 [*13 ♛e1 c4!? 14 ♝f1 ♝c6 15 g3 0–0–0 16 ᗡh4 ♚b7 17 f4 g6± Kristiansen–Chernin, Stary Smokovec 1984*] 13 ... 0–0 14 dc!? bc [*or 14 ... ♛xe5 15 cb ♛fe8 16 c4 ab 17 ♛e1 ♛f6 18 cd ed 19 ♛b1= De Firmian–P. Nikolić, Manila IZ 1990*] 15 ᗡb3 ᗡxb3 16 cb a5 [*16 ... ♛ab8!?*] 17 ♛h5 f5 18 f4 ♝c8!= Kindermann–S. Mohr, Dortmund 1989) 12 ... 0–0 (White has a slight endgame advantage after 12 ... ᗡa5 13 ♛d2 ♛c8 14 h4 0–0 15 ♛f4 f5 16 ef ♛xf6 17 ♛xc7 ♛xc7 18 dc! bc 19 ᗡe5; Karpov–Markland, Hastings 1972/3) 13 ♝f4 (after the bishop sacrifice 13 ♝xh6?, Black repels the attack with accurate play: 13 ... gh 14 ♛d2 ♚g7 15 ♛f4 ᗡg8! 16 ♛e3 ᗡce7 17 ᗡh4 ᗡg6 18 ♛g3 ♝e8∓ Sutton–Moles, Skopje 1972. Black succeeds in maintaining the balance after 13 ♛d2 f5!? 14 ♝a3 [*14 ef ♛xf6 15 dc bc 16 ♛e3 c4=*] 14 ... ᗡa5 15 dc bc 16 ♛e3 ♛ac8 17 ♛eb1 ᗡc4!?= Cabrilo–Drasko, Yugoslav Ch 1989. Finally, an unclear game results from 13 ♝a3 ᗡa5 14 dc bc 15 ᗡd2 ♝xa4!? 16 ♛g4!? [*16 ♝xc5 ♛xc5 17 ♛xa4 ♛xc3 18 ♛e3 ♚h8!= Nunn–Yusupov, Linares 1988*] 16 ... ♝d7 17 ᗡf3 ᗡb7 18 c4!? [*18

♗c1 f5 19 ef ♖xf6 20 c4 ♘c6=]
18 ... dc 19 ♗xc4 ♘a5,
Sanakoyev–Stern, corr 1990.
White has enough compensation
for the pawn, but whether he can
claim to have more is uncertain)
13 ... ♘g6 (13 ... f5 is less convinc-
ing: 14 ef ♕xf4 15 fe ♘xe7 16
♗b5! ♕c7 17 ♕e2 ♗c8 18 ♕e5±
Timman–Ljubojević, Amsterdam
1991) 14 ♗g3 cd 15 ♘xd4 ♘a5
16 ♖e3 (16 h4 ♕xc3 17 ♘e2
♕c7!∓) 16 ... ♘c4 17 ♗xc4
♕xc4= Nunn–P. Nikolić, Amster-
dam 1988.

(b) 7 ... b6 (115)
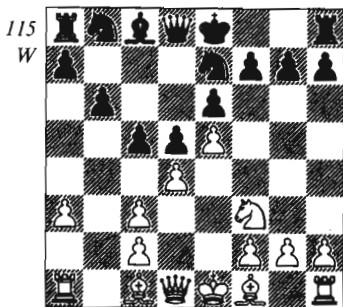
and now:

(b1) 8 ♘g5?! (two other continu-
ations to be occasionally seen are
8 h4 ♗a6 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 h5
h6 11 ♕d3 ♘b8 12 dc bc 13 c4
♘bc6= Benjamin–Gulko, St John
Open 1988; and 8 ♖b1 ♕c7 9
♗b5+ ♗d7 10 ♗d3 ♗a4 11 h4
h6 12 h5 ♘d7 13 g3 a6! with
approximate equality, Ljubo-
jević–Vaganian, Rotterdam World
Cup 1989) 8 ... h6 9 ♕h5 g6 (9 ...
0–0 10 ♘f3 f5! has yet to be seen

in practice) 10 ♕h3 ♕c7!? (Black
also has quite a good game after 10
... ♔f8 11 ♗d3 ♔g7 12 ♘f3 ♗a6
13 dc ♗xd3! [13 ... ♕c7 14 0–0
♕xc5 15 ♗d2±] 14 cd bc 15 0–0
♘d7 16 ♖b1 ♖b8= Nunn–P.
Nikolić, Skelleftea World Cup
1989) 11 ♗d2 (11 a4 ♔f8! 12
♔d1 ♗a6 13 ·♗xa6 ♘xa6∓) 11
... cd 12 cd ♕xc2! 13 ♖c1 ♕b2
14 ♗d3 ♕xd4 15 0–0 ♘bc6∓∓
Nunn–Hertneck, Munich 1991.

(b2) 8 a4 ♗a6 (Hertneck twice
employed the waiting move 8 ...
h6, and was twice successful with
it! Play may proceed: 9 ♗b5+
[or 9 a5 ♗b7 10 ♗b5+ ♘d7 11
0–0 0–0 12 ♗a3 ♖c8 13 ab ab
14 ♖e1 ♗c6= Anand–Hertneck,
Munich 1991] 9 ... ♗d7 10 ♗e2
♘bc6 11 0–0 ♖c8 12 ♗a3 ♘a5
13 ♗a6 ♖c7=) 9 ♗b5+ (it is
harder to fight for the advantage
with 9 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 10 0–0 ♘b8
[10 ... h6!? 11 ♕e2 ♘b8 12 c4 dc
13 ♕xc4 ♘d7 14 ♗a3 0–0 Marić–
Schüssler, Lugano 1988] 11 dc [11
♘g5!? is worth studying: 11 ... h6
12 ♕h5 g6 13 ♕h3 cd 14 cd ♘bc6
15 ♘f3± Karpov–Short, London
1982] 11 ... bc 12 c4 0–0 13 cd
♘xd5!? [13 ... ♕xd5 14 ♕e2 ♘d7
15 ♖d1±] 14 c4 ♘e7! 15 ♕e4
♘d7= A. Sokolov–Yusupov, 3rd
match game, Riga 1986) 9 ...
♗xb5 10 ab h6 (players with
strong nerves may go in for the
'impudent' 10 ... ♕d7 11 ♕e2 c4
12 ♗a3!? [12 ♖b1 a6 13 ba ♖xa6
14 h4 ♕a7!= Mokry–Skembris,
Haifa 1989] 12 ... ♕xb5 13 ♘g5

♕d7 [*13 ... h6 14 ♕h5 g6 15 ♕f3!
♘f5 16 ♘xf7! ♔xf7 17 g4, with
a strong attack*] 14 ♕h5 ♘c6 15
0–0 ♘c6 16 f4 0–0–0, with unclear
play; Gulko–Eingorn, USSR
1983. White has a slight advantage
after 10 ... a5 11 dc bc 12 c4 ♘d7
[*12 ... 0–0? 13 ♗g5! f6 14 ef gf 15
♗h6 ♖f7 16 ♘h4± Tseshkovsky–
Grünberg, Halle 1984*] 13 cd ed
14 0–0 0–0, as in Chandler–P.
Nikolić, Hastings 1989, and now
15 ♖a3!±) 11 0–0 0–0 12 ♕e2
♘d7 13 ♗a3 a6 14 ba ♕c8 15 c4
♕xa6= Apicella–Hertneck, Uzes
1990.

(b3) **8 ♗b5+ ♗d7 9 ♗d3 ♗a4**
(by closing the centre with 9 ...
c4, Black condemns himself to
passively defending a solid but
scarcely promising position. For
example, 10 ♗f1! ♗a4 11 g3
♘bc6 12 h4 [*stronger than 12 ♗g2
♕d7 13 ♘g5?! f6 14 ♘f3 f5=
Kavalek–Kogan, USA Ch 1981*]
12 ... h6 13 h5 ♔d7! [*a popular
manoeuvre; Black makes way for
his queen to reach the kingside*] 14
♗h3 ♕g8 15 0–0 ♕h7 16 ♖a2
a5 17 ♘h4± Dolmatov–Hertneck,
Lugano 1986) 10 h4 (preparing the
ground for active operations on
the kingside. Black's defence is
easier after 10 0–0 ♕c7 [*10 ...
♘bc6 11 ♖e1 ♕d7*] 11 ♖e1 [*11
♘g5 h6 12 ♘h3 ♘d7 13 ♘f4
0–0–0=*] 11 ... h6 12 ♖a2 ♘d7
13 ♘h4 0–0–0 14 g3 ♔b8= Ehlv-
est–P. Nikolić, Belgrade 1989) 10
... h6 11 h5 ♘bc6 (11 ... ♘d7 is
interesting, for example 12 0–0

♕c7 13 ♖e1 0–0–0 14 ♘h4 ♔b7
15 ♖a2 ♕c6 16 ♕g4 ♖dg8, with
quite a good position; Dolmatov–
P. Nikolić, Moscow GMA 1990)
12 g3!? (or 12 ♖h4 c4 13 ♗e2
♔d7! 14 ♗e3 ♕g8 15 ♕d2 ♕h7
16 ♖c1 ♔c7, and Black's position
will not easily be breached; A.
Sokolov–Yusupov, 3rd match
game, Riga 1986) 12 ... ♖c8!? 13
♗e3 ♘a5 14 0–0 ♕d7 15 ♘h4
♗b5, with good chances of equal-
ising; Dolmatov–Dokhoian,
Irkutsk 1986.

(c) **7 ... ♗d7** *(116)*
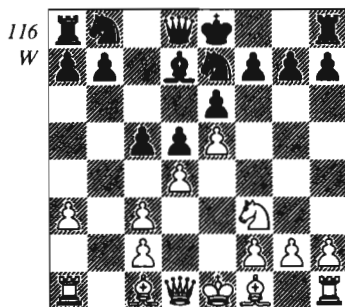
and now:

(c1) **8 ♗d3** (Black has no prob-
lems after 8 ♗e2 ♗a4 9 0–0 ♕c7!
10 dc [*10 ♗d3 c4 11 ♗e2 h6 12
♘h4 ♘g6=*] 10 ... ♘d7 11 ♗e3
♘f5 12 ♗d4 ♘xc5 13 ♗xc5
♕xc5= Pritchett–Hübner, Bun-
desliga 1985. 8 a4 ♕a5 9 ♗d2
♘bc6 transposes into our next
main game, Byrne–Vaganian) 8 ...
♗a4 (more precise than 8 ... c4 9
♗f1! ♗a4 10 g3 ♕a5 11 ♗d2
♘d7 12 ♗h3 ♘b6 13 0–0 ♗d7
14 ♘h4± Byrne–Smyslov, Biel IZ

1976) 9 ♘g5 (or 9 0–0 ♕c7 10 ♖e1 h6 11 ♘h4 g5! 12 ♘f3 c4 13 ♗f1 ♘g6, with an excellent game — Minić and Sindik) 9 ... h6 10 ♕h5 g6 11 ♕h4 ♘f5 (11 ... c4 12 ♘xf7!? ♔xf7 13 ♕f6+ ♔g8 14 ♕xe6+ =) 12 ♗xf5 gf 13 ♕h5 ♕e7, and Black's chances are not at all worse; Ghinda–Uhlmann, 1983.

(c2) **8 ♖b1** ♕c7 9 ♗e2 (9 dc ♘g6 10 ♗e2 ♗c6 11 ♘d4 ♕xe5 12 0–0 ♕f6= Micić–Ulibin, Chelyabinsk 1989; or 9 ♗d3 ♗a4 10 0–0 c4 11 ♗e2 ♘bc6) 9 ... ♘bc6 10 0–0 f6 11 ♗f4! f5 12 dc ♘g6 13 ♗e3 0–0 14 c4± Tsesh-kovsky–Dolmatov,   Tashkent 1980.

(c3) **8 dc!?** (a move introduced into practice a long time ago by Boleslavsky; it attained consider-able popularity after the Spassky–Korchnoi match, Belgrade 1977) and now:

(c31) **8 ... ♗a4** 9 ♖b1 ♕c7 (White benefits from 9 ... ♘d7 10 ♗e3!? *[10 ♖xb7 ♘xc5 11 ♖b4 ♕a5 12 ♗d2! 0–0 13 c4 ♕c7 14 cd ed 15 ♗b5!± Chandler–Agdestein, Naestved 1985]* 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♖xb7 ♕xc3+?! *[11 ... ♘xc5 12 ♖b4±]* 12 ♗d2 ♕xc5 13 ♗d3 a5 14 0–0 ♕c8 15 ♕b1 ♘c5 16 ♗b5+; Gavrikov–van der Wiel, London 1985) 10 ♗d3 ♘d7 (White has a strong initiative after 10 ... ♘ec6 11 0–0 ♘d7 12 ♗e3! ♘dxe5?! *[12 ... 0–0–0]* 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♗f4! f6 15 ♗xe5 fe 16 ♕h5+ ± Belyavsky–Foisor,

Bucharest 1980) 11 ♖b4 (or 11 0–0 ♘xc5 12 ♖b4 a6!? 13 ♕e2! ♗b5!? 14 ♗xb5+ ab 15 ♘d4 0–0 16 ♘xb5± Ehlvest–Timman, Rotterdam World Cup 1989) 11 ... ♗c6 12 0–0 ♘xc5 13 ♖g4! ♘g6 14 ♘d4± Spassky–Korch-noi, 10th match game, Belgrade 1977.

(c32) **8 ... ♕c7** 9 ♗d3 ♘bc6!? (9 ... ♗a4 10 ♖b1! transposes into variation 'c3'; an alternative is 9 ... ♗a6 10 ♗xa6 ba 11 0–0 ♕xc5 12 a4±) 10 ♗f4 (10 0–0 ♘xe5 11 ♗f4 ♘xf3+ 12 ♕xf3 e5∓) 10 ... ♘g6 11 ♗g3 ♕a5!? 12 ♕d2 ♕xc5 13 h4 d4! (13 ... f6?! is weaker: 14 ef gf 15 h5 ♘ge5 16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 17 0–0 0–0–0 18 ♖fe1± Hübner–Wockenfuss, Bundesliga 1985) 14 ♗xg6 hg 15 cd ♕c4 16 ♖b1 b6, with approxi-mate equality in Nunn–Korchnoi, Brussels OHRA 1986.

(c33) **8 ... ♕a5?!** 9 ♗d3 ♘a6 (or 9 ... ♘bc6 10 0–0 ♕xc3 11 ♖b1 0–0–0 12 ♖b3 ♕a5 13 ♗d2 ♕c7 14 ♕e2± Kaminski–Rozen-talis, Odessa 1989) 10 0–0 ♘xc5 11 ♖b1 h6 12 ♖b4! 0–0–0 13 ♘d4 ♔b8 14 ♕g4± Petrushin–Dolmatov, Vologdonsk 1983.

(c34) **8 ... ♘g6** 9 ♗d3 ♘c6 (or 9 ... ♗c6 10 0–0 ♘d7 11 ♗xg6 hg 12 ♕d4±) 10 0–0 (or 10 ♗xg6 hg 11 ♗e3 ♖h5 12 ♗d4 ♕e7 13 h4 0–0–0 14 g4 ♖h7 15 ♕d2 ♘a5, and White can scarcely count on exploiting his extra pawn; King–Kindermann, Haifa 1989. Alterna-tively 10 ♖b1 ♘cxe5! *[10 ... ♕c7?*

11 0–0 ♘cxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♗f4 0–0–0 14 ♕e2 f6 15 ♗a6! ♗c6 16 ♖xb7! ♗xb7 17 ♖b1! ♖d7 18 ♖xb7 ♕xb7 19 c6! 1–0, Balashov–Chen De, Hannover 1983] 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 ♗f4 *[12 ♖xb7 ♕c8!=]* 12 ... ♕f6 13 ♗g3 ♗c6 14 0–0 ♘xd3 15 ♕xd3 0–0= Abramović–I. Farago, Polanica Zdroj 1983) 10 ... ♘cxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 ♗f4 ♕f6 13 ♕d2 ♘xd3 14 cd d4!? 15 cd ♕xd4 16 ♗d3 f6= Chandler–Belyavsky, London 1985.

(d) 7 ... ♕a5 8 ♕d2 (8 ♗d2 ♘bc6 9 ♗e2 transposes back into Dolmatov–Henley; Black also has 8 ... ♕c7!? 9 h4 b6 10 h5 h6 11 ♘h4 ♗a6 12 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 13 ♖h3 ♖c8= Mortensen–Sorensen, Herning 1991; for 8 ... ♗d7 9 a4 ♘bc6, see the next game, Byrne–Vaganian) 8 ... b6!? (for 8 ... ♘bc6 9 a4, see Byrne–Vaganian, note to White's 9th move; an alternative is 8 ... ♗d7 9 ♖b1 *[9 a4!?]* 9 ... ♗c6 10 ♗d3 ♘d7 11 0–0 c4 12 ♗e2 h6 13 h4± Short–Timman, Wijk aan Zee 1987) 9 c4 (9 dc bc 10 c4 ♕c7! 11 ♕g5?! *[11 cd ed 12 ♕c3=]* 11 ... 0–0 12 ♕h5 ♘g6 13 ♗d3 ♗b7!∓ Kristiansen–Bareyev, Voronezh 1987) 9 ... ♕xd2+ (9 ... ♕a4!?) 10 ♗xd2 ♗a6 11 cd ♗xf1 12 ♖xf1 ed 13 dc bc 14 0–0–0 (or 14 ♖b1 ♘d7 15 ♖b7 0–0–0! 16 ♖xa7 ♘c6 17 ♖a8+ ♔b7 18 ♖xd8 ♖xd8, with sufficient compensation for the pawn — Nogueiras) 14 ... ♘bc6 15 ♖fe1 0–0= Short–Nogueiras,

Wijk aan Zee 1987.

8 ♗e2

8 a4 transposes into the next game.

The alternative 8 ♗d3 is played comparatively rarely. There can follow: 8 ... ♕a5 9 ♗d2 (after 9 0–0, Black can force a draw if he wishes, by 9 ... c4 *[9 ... ♕xc3?? 10 ♗d2 ♕b2 11 ♖b1 ♕xa3 12 ♖b3! ♕a2 13 ♕c1 c4 14 ♖a3, and the queen is trapped]* 10 ♗e2 ♕xc3 *[10 ... ♗d7 11 a4 ♘c8!? 12 ♕d2 ♘b6 13 ♕f4 ♕xc3 14 ♖a3 ♕xc2 led to great complications in Velimirović–Korchnoi, Sarajevo 1984]* 11 ♗d2 ♕b2 12 ♖b1 ♕xa3 13 ♖a1 ♕b2=; if instead 9 ♕d2, then 9 ... c4 10 ♗e2 ♕a4!?=) 9 ... c4 10 ♗f1 f6 (or 10 ... ♘bc6 11 g3 f6 12 ef gf 13 ♗g2 0–0–0 14 0–0 ♘f5= Romanishin–Dolmatov, USSR Ch, Vilnius 1980) 11 ef gf 12 ♘h4 0–0!? 13 g3 ♖f7 14 ♗g2 ♗d7 15 0–0 ♘g6= Byrne–Korchnoi, London 1979.

| **8** | **...** | **♕a5** |
| **9** | **♗d2** | **cd!?** *(117)* |

A relatively new idea which was seen for the first time in the game Hazai–Nogueiras, Szirak 1986, probably as a consequence of the difficulties Black faces in other variations. For example:

(a) 9 ... c4 (as we have seen several times already, closing the centre frees White's hands for activity on the kingside) 10 ♘g5! (Black has an excellent game after 10 0–0 ♗d7 11 ♖e1?! *[11 ♘g5! transposes to the 10 ♘g5 line]* 11

... 0-0-0 12 ♘f1 f6 13 g3 ♘g6 Spassky–Dückstein, Zürich 1984) 10 ... h6 (10 ... f6? 11 ♗h5+ ♘g6 12 ♘xh7±±) 11 ♘h3 ♘g6 12 0-0 ♗d7 13 ♗h5! (13 f4! ♘ce7! 14 ♘f2 0-0-0=) 13 ... ♘ce7 14 a4 0-0-0 15 ♕e1! ♔b8 16 ♗c1! ♖c8 17 ♗a3± Planinc–Timman, Amsterdam 1974; Black is deprived of counterplay and has to await his fate passively.

(b) **9 ... ♕a4** 10 dc (it is also worth considering 10 ♖b1, which brought White quick success in Stein–Perez, Amsterdam IZ 1964: 10 ... cd?! 11 ♗b5 ♕a3 12 cd 0-0 13 ♖b3 ♕a2 14 ♕c1±±) 10 ... ♘g6 11 ♗e3 (11 c4 dc 12 h4 h6 13 h5 ♘ge7 14 ♖h4 b5! 15 cb ♗a6= Klovan–Bronstein, Minsk 1983) 11 ... ♕gxe5 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 ♕d4 ♕xd4 14 cd ♘c6 15 ♖b1, Mrdja–Korchnoi, Lugano 1984.

(c) **9 ... ♗d7** 10 0-0 ♕c7!? (10 ... cd? 11 cd ♕a4? comes one move too late, and is weak; Hellers–Hébert, Novi Sad OI 1990, continued 12 ♖b1! b6 13 ♗b5 ♕xa3 14 ♖b3 ♕a2 15 ♕c1!±±. Black also loses with 10 ... f6? 11 c4 ♕c7 12 cd ♘xd5 13 c4 ♘de7 14 ef gf 15 ♗c3 0-0-0 16 d5! ed 17 cd ♗e6 18 ♗xf6 ♖hg8 19 dc! ♖xd1 20 cb+ ♔b8 21 ♖fxd1+ ±± Makarichev–Lputian, Frunze 1979) 11 ♖e1 h6!? (White has the more promising position after 11 ... f6 12 ♗f4 ♘g6 13 ♗g3 f5!? [*13 ... fe? 14 ♗d3±*] 14 h4 c4 15 h5, Maksimović–Raicević, Vrnjacka Banja 1988. In Dolma-

tov–Drasko, Tallinn 1985, White gained the advantage after 11 ... b6 12 g3! ♘a5 [*12 ... f6? 13 ef gf 14 ♗f4±*] 13 ♗d3 ♘c4 14 ♗c1 h6 15 h4±) 12 ♗f1 h6 13 g3 (or 13 a4 0-0 14 ♗c1 f5! 15 ♗a3 ♖f7 16 h4 ♘c8= Byrne–Vaganian, Baden 1980) 13 ... 0-0-0 14 ♗h3 ♔b8 15 a4 ♕a5 16 ♕c1 ♔a8 17 ♕a3 ♖de8 18 ♖eb1± De Firmian–Chernin, Tunis IZ 1985.

117
W
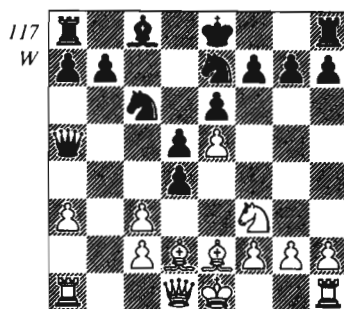
| 10 | cd | ♕a4 |
| 11 | ♖b1!? | |

This boldness is to a large extent obligatory. Practice has shown that Black easily equalises if White is unwilling to sacrifice anything. For example, 11 ♗e3 (or 11 ♗c3 b6! 12 ♕d3 a5 13 ♕d2!? [*13 0-0?! ♗a6 14 ♕d2 ♗xe2 15 ♕xe2 ♕c4! 16 ♕d2 0-0 17 ♖fb1 b5∓ Hazai–Nogueiras, Szirak 1986*] 13 ... ♗a6 14 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 15 0-0 0-0 16 ♖fe1 ♖aa8= De Firmian–Garcia Martinez, Dubai OI 1986. Black similarly has no problems after 11 c3 ♕xd1+ 12 ♔xd1 ♘a5 13 ♔c2 ♗d7=) 11 ... b6 12 ♕d3 ♘b4 (the chances

are also approximately equal after 12 ... ♘a5 or 12 ... a5) 13 ♕b5+ ♕xb5 14 ♗xb5+ ♘bc6 15 ♗d2 ♗d7 16 ♗a6 f6= Short–Korchnoi, Brussels 1986.

The pawn sacrifice has also been seen in a different form: 11 ♗d3!? (Ehlvest). There can follow: 11 ... b6! (White's initiative is more dangerous after 11 ... ♘xd4?! 12 0–0! ♘xf3+ [*12 ... ♘ec6!? 13 ♖e1*] 13 ♕xf3 ♗d7 14 ♖ab1! b6 15 ♖fe1 ♘g6 16 ♗b4± Mainka–Berkmortel, Bad Wörishofen Open 1989) 12 ♕e2 (12 0–0 ♗a6 13 ♗b4 ♗xd3 14 ♕xd3 h6=) 12 ... ♘xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 14 0–0 ♘c6 15 ♖ae1 ♗d7 (15 ... ♕h4!?; Ehlvest–Hübner, Belfort World Cup 1988, went 15 ... 0–0 16 ♔h1 f5 17 ef ♕xf6 18 c4 ♗d7 19 ♕h5 g6 20 ♕h3±) 16 ♕h5! 0–0–0 17 ♕xf7 ♖df8 18 ♕h5 ♗e8! 19 ♕h3 ♗d7 20 ♗e3 ♕a4, with equality; Ehlvest–Dokhoian, Erevan 1988.

| 11 | ... | ♘xd4 |
| 12 | ♗d3 | ♘dc6!?*(118)* |

Two powerful bishops, the open b-file and a lead in development constitute fully adequate compensation for the pawn, and Black has to exercise particular caution. In Timman–Hübner, Tilburg 1988, Black was unable to resist his opponent's onslaught after 12 ... ♘ec6?! 13 ♗b4! ♘f5 (he would have to pay a high price for the greedy 13 ... ♘xf3+ 14 ♕xf3 ♘xe5 15 ♕g3 ♘xd3+ 16 cd, when the black king cannot escape retribution) 14 ♕c1! b6 15 c4 ♘xb4

(15 ... dc 16 ♕xc4 ♗b7 17 ♗xf5 ef 18 e6 cannot be to Black's liking) 16 ♖xb4 ♕c6 17 0–0 0–0 18 ♕f4±.

118
W
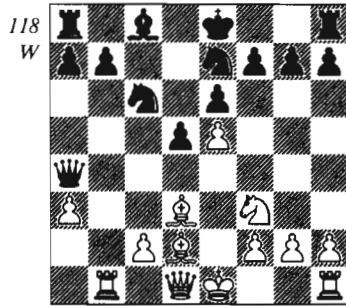
13   0–0

Black has at least an equal game after 13 ♕c1 b6! (stronger than 13 ... ♕g4 14 0–0 f5 15 ♗b4! ♘g6 16 h3 ♕h5 17 c4 d4 18 ♗d6, with advantage; De Firmian–Rogers, Moscow GMA 1989) 14 ♗b5 (14 0–0 ♗a6∓; 14 h4!?) 14 ... ♕e4+ 15 ♔f1 a5! 16 ♔g1 ♗a6 17 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 18 ♖xb6 ♘xe5 19 ♘xe5 ♕xe5, and White hardly has sufficient compensation for the pawn; Ehlvest–Hübner, Skelleftea World Cup 1989.

The correct method was discovered by Dolmatov a few months later: 13 ♖b3! ♘f5 (Dolmatov gives the following short variations which demonstrate the importance of having the rook on b3: 13 ... ♕g4 14 h3!; 13 ... 0–0? 14 ♗xh7+!; 13 ... b6? 14 ♗b5 ♕e4+ 15 ♖e3!±±) 14 0–0 ♘fd4?! (14 ... a6!?, defending against a possible ♗b5, deserves attention) 15 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 16 ♖e1 ♕h4 17

♗b5 ♗d7 18 ♖g3± Dolmatov–
Oll, USSR Ch, Odessa 1989.

13	...	♕xa3
14	♖b3	♕c5
15	♗c1!?	

In Nunn–Rogers, Groningen
1988, Black defended successfully
after 15 ♖b5 ♕a3 16 ♕b1 (16
♖b3=) 16 ... a6 17 ♖b3?! (17
♖b6!?) 17 ... ♕c5 18 ♖c3 (18 ♗e3
d4 19 ♘xd4? ♘xd4 20 c3 ♘b3!++)
18 ... ♕a7 19 ♗e3 ♕b8. After
some adventures, Black won the
game.

15	...	♘a5
16	♗a3	♕c7

Henley could have saved him-
self a great deal of trouble if at
this point he had made up his
mind to sacrifice his queen for
rook and bishop: 16 ... ♘xb3!? 17
♗xc5 ♘xc5, and Black's chances
are probably no worse.

17	♗d6	♕d8
18	♖b4!	f5!

Quite rightly, Black has no wish
to see the white rook on the king-
side.

19	c4!?	♘ac6 *(119)*

I cannot say that Black's last
move is a mistake, but I prefer 19
... ♘ec6 20 ♖a4 ♘xc4 21 ♗xc4
dc 22 ♖xc4 ♔f7 23 ♘d4 ♗d7!
with a very solid position.

20	♖b2	0–0
21	cd	ed
22	♗b1!	

Black's two extra passed pawns
will be invaluable in an endgame;
his one problem is how to survive
until that stage. The white pieces
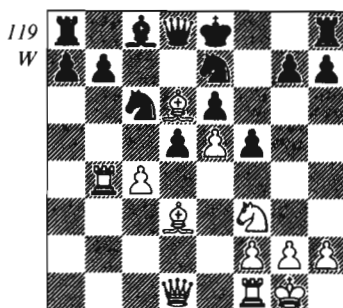
are very active, and Dolmatov is
manoeuvring them skilfully.
Bringing the bishop to a2 signifi-
cantly enhances White's attacking
possibilities.

22	...	b6

The verdict on the position
would not be radically altered by
22 ... h6 23 ♗a2 ♖e8 24 h4! (24
♗xd5 ♘xd5 25 ♕xd5 ♗e6∓) 24
... ♔h7 25 h5 b6 26 ♘h4 ♗e6
27 ♗b1, a variation given by
Dolmatov; just as before, Black
has two extra pawns and White
has the initiative.

23	♗a2	♗e6
24	♘g5	♕d7
25	♖d2	♔h8
26	♘xe6	

This cannot wait any longer;
the bishop might withdraw to g8.

26	...	♕xe6
27	♗xd5!	♘xd5
28	♗xf8	♘c3
29	♖d6!	

Dolmatov has always been
noted for his excellent calculation
of variations.

29	...	♕xe5

Or 29 ... ♕c4? 30 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 31 ♖d7+ ♔g8 32 ♕h5 ♘e2+ 33 ♔h1 ♘g3+ 34 hg ♕xf1+ 35 ♔h2, and White gives mate in a few moves.

| 30 | ♕f3 | ♖xf8? |

Wearied by a difficult defence, Henley commits an error. White would still have needed considerable effort to win the ending after 30 ... ♘e2+ 31 ♔h1 ♘ed4 32 ♕e3 ♖xf8 33 ♕xe5 ♘xe5 34 ♖xd4 h6.

31	♕xc6	♘e4
32	♖e6!	♕c5
33	♖e8	♕a3
34	♕c8	

1–0

Black resigned in view of the continuation 34 ... ♔g8 35 ♕e6+ ♔h8 36 ♕f7.

R. Byrne–Vaganian
Moscow 1975

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bc ♘e7

| 7 | a4 |

White's last move unmistakably shows a wish to fight for the initiative on the queenside too, and prepares to develop the bishop on the important a3–f8 diagonal.

| 7 | ... | ♘bc6 |

Black has to bring his knight out to c6 sooner or later, so as to put pressure on d4 and prepare ... f7–f6. Refraining from this move brings advantage only to White, for instance 7 ... ♕a5 8 ♗d2 (8 ♕d2 b6!?) 8 ... c4?! (8 ... ♘bc6!

will transpose back to the main game) 9 ♕g4! (9 ♘e2!?, followed by bringing the knight to h5, also gives White the better chances) 9 ... ♘f5 10 ♘e2 ♘c6 11 ♘g3 ♘ce7 12 ♘h5± Smyslov–Botvinnik, Moscow 1946.

| 8 | ♘f3 | ♕a5 |

The plan of renouncing the active ... ♕a5 in favour of the restrained ... ♕c7 is seen much more rarely. For example: 8 ... ♗d7 (on the immediate 8 ... ♕c7, White has the choice between 9 ♕d2!? *[9 ♗e2 cd! 10 cd ♘b4 11 0–0 ♕xc2 12 ♕e1 ♘ec6!]*, and 9 ♗a3 b6! 10 ♗d3 h6 11 0–0 c4 12 ♗e2 ♗b7 13 ♖e1 0–0–0 when Black has good chances of equalising; Mecking–Bronstein, Petropolis IZ 1973) 9 ♗e2 (in Tseshkovsky–Gulko, USSR Ch, Moscow 1976, White gained no advantage with 9 ♗b5 ♕c7 10 0–0 b6 11 ♗a3 ♘a5! 12 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 13 dc ♘c4!. Nor has Black any problems after 9 ♗d3 c4!? *[9 ... ♕c7 10 0–0 c4 11 ♗e2 f6 12 ♖e1 occurred in Fischer–Larsen, 1st match game, Denver 1971; and now 12 ... 0–0–0!? 13 ♗a3 ♘f5=]* 10 ♗f1 0–0 11 g3 f6! 12 ef ♖xf6 13 ♗g2 h6 14 0–0 ♗e8∓ Prasad–Vladimirov, Gausdal 1991) 9 ... ♕c7 10 0–0 f6 (or 10 ... ♘a5?! 11 ♖e1 cd 12 cd ♘c4 13 ♗d3 h6 14 ♘d2! ♘xd2 15 ♗xd2 ♘c6 16 ♕g4± Fischer–Schweber, Buenos Aires 1970. However, 10 ... b6 deserves attention) 11 ef gf 12 c4 0–0–0 (perhaps a more promising

line is 12 ... dc!? 13 dc 0–0–0 14
ᗺd2 ᗺe5 15 ᗺxc4 ᗺxc4 16 ♗xc4
♖hg8! with a very complex pos-
ition; Dolmatov–Vaiser, Volog-
donsk 1983) 13 ♗a3! ᗺf5 (13 ...
cd?! 14 ᗺxd4 a6 15 ♖b1±) 14
♗xc5 dc 15 ♗xc4, with a slight
edge for White; Gufeld–Bagirov,
USSR Ch, Leningrad 1960.

9 ♗d2

In recent years there has been a
sharp decline in the popularity of
Smyslov's favourite move, 9 ♕d2.
White does not object to a queen
exchange, hoping to exploit the
power of his bishop pair in the
ending. But with accurate play,
Black can be quite confident of
equalising. There can follow 9 ...
♗d7 *(120)* (White benefits from
9 ... cd?! 10 cd ♕xd2+ 11 ♗xd2
ᗺf5 12 ♗c3 ♗d7 13 ♗d3 ♖c8
14 ♔d2 ♖c7 15 h4!± Cabrilo–
Juares, Manila IZ 1990; or 9 ... f6
10 ef [*10 ♗a3?! fe 11 de ♕xa4 12
♗e2 b6 13 c4 ᗺd8! 14 0–0 ♕d7∓
Kuijpers–Korchnoi, Wijk aan Zee
1971*] 10 ... gf 11 ♗b5! ♗d7 12
♗a3 cd 13 ᗺxd4! ᗺxd4 14 ♕xd4
♗xb5 15 ♕xf6± Cabrilo–Bonin,
New York Open 1990.)

120
W
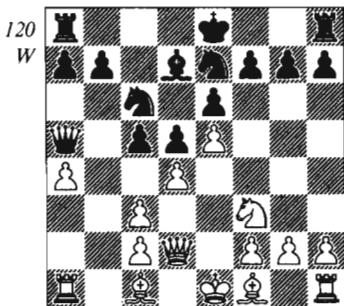
From the diagram, White can
choose between:

(a) **10 ♗a3** (10 ♗b5?! ᗺxe5!
11 ᗺxe5 ♗xb5∓) 10 ... cd 11 cd
♕xd2+ 12 ♔xd2 ᗺf5 (or 12 ...
♖c8 13 ♗d3 ᗺa5 14 ♖hb1 f6 15
♔e2 ♔f7= Anand–Levitt, Lon-
don 1987) 13 c3 (White likewise
has no trace of an advantage after
13 ♗b2 ᗺa5 14 ♗c3 ᗺc4+ 15
♗xc4 dc 16 ♗b4 [*16 d5 ed 17
ᗺd4 h5=*] 16 ... ♗c6 17 ᗺc3
♗d5= Hazai–Psakhis, Sochi
1982) 13 ... ᗺa5 14 ♖a2 f6!? was
played in Brunner–Kindermann,
Berne Z 1990; and now, instead of
15 ♗b5?! ♗xb5 16 ab ᗺc4+ ∓,
White should have continued 15
♗d3 ᗺc4+ 16 ♗xc4 dc 17 a5,
with a level game.

(b) **10 ♗d3** f6 (Black similarly
has no particular problems after
10 ... c4 11 ♗e2 f6 [*11 ... 0–0
12 0–0 f6 13 ♗a3 ♖ae8 14 ♗d6!
♖f7 occurred in Gligorić–Short,
Belgrade 1987; and now 15 ᗺh4!
ᗺg6 16 ᗺxg6 hg 17 f4±*] 12 ♗a3
ᗺg6 13 0–0 0–0–0 14 ♗d6 ᗺce7
[*14 ... ♖de8!? 15 ♖fe1 h5*] 15
ᗺh4 ♖de8 16 ᗺxg6 hg= Fischer–
Uhlmann, Buenos Aires 1960) 11
0–0 (11 ef gf 12 dc [*12 0–0 c4! 13
♗e2 0–0–0 14 ♗a3 ᗺf5∓*] 12
... e5 13 c4! dc 14 ♗xc4 0–0–0 is
not unfavourable to Black; Stein–
Doroshkevich, USSR Ch, Riga
1970) 11 ... fe 12 ᗺxe5 (or 12 de
0–0 13 ♖e1 h6 14 ♗a3 ♗e8!
15 ♕e3 b6= Smyslov–Uhlmann,
Havana 1964) 12 ... ᗺxe5 13 de
0–0 14 c4 (14 f4 b5!) 14 ... ♕xd2

(the chances are also approximately equal after 14 ... ♕c7 15 ♖e1 ♗c6 16 ♕e2 dc 17 ♗xc4 ♗d5; Tringov–Korchnoi, Skopje Ol 1972) 15 ♗xd2 ♗c6 16 a5 ♖ad8= Fischer–Uhlmann, Stockholm 1962.

(c) **10 ♗e2** f6 (White has a slight endgame advantage after 10 ... ♖c8 11 ♗a3 cd 12 cd ♕xd2+ 13 ♔xd2 ♘f5 14 c3 ♘a5 15 ♖hb1! h5 [*15 ... ♗xa4 16 g4! ♘h6 17 ♗d6! ♘b3+ 18 ♖xb3 ♗xb3 19 ♖xa7± — Am. Rodriguez*] 16 ♗b4 ♘c4+ [*or 16 ... ♘c6 17 a5 ♘xb4 18 ♖xb4 ♖c7 19 ♖ab1±* Am. Rodriguez–Eingorn, Havana 1986] 17 ♔e1 [*17 ♗xc4 dc 18 ♘g5 ♗c6 19 f3±*] 17 ... f6 18 ♘d2; G. Hernandez–Vilela, Santa Clara 1991) 11 ef (11 ♗a3 fe!? 12 ♗xc5 e4) 11 ... gf 12 dc (White, who has two bishops, is naturally intent on opening the game up. After 12 ♗a3 cd 13 ♘xd4 [*13 cd ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♘a5=*] 13 ... ♘xd4 14 ♕xd4 e5 15 ♕d2 ♘g6, Black's position is no worse) 12 ... 0–0–0 13 0–0 (or 13 c4 dc 14 ♕xa5 ♘xa5 15 ♗d2 ♘ec6 16 ♖b1 a6= Am. Rodriguez–Schmidt, Thessaloniki Ol 1988) 13 ... e5 14 ♕h6 (*ECO* gives 14 c4 d4 15 ♕h6 ♘g6 16 ♘d2 f5!=) 14 ... ♖df8 (14 ... ♘g6!?) 15 c4 occurred in Timman–Nogueiras, Brussels World Cup 1988. After 15 ... ♘f5!?, Black has a promising position.

9	...	**♗d7**
10	**♗b5!?**	*(121)*

In our day, White's hopes of advantage rest solely on this move. The alternative 10 ♗e2, which ᵗᵒ enjoyed unfailing popularity for decades, has become a rarity in modern tournaments, since it turns out that Black can equalise without any great problems. For example, 10 ... f6! (here again, the ᵗᵒ premature release of tension in the centre is of benefit to White: 10 ... c4?! 11 ♘g5! [*11 h4! f6! 12 h5 fe 13 h6 gh 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 de 0–0–0∓ Fischer–Padevsky, Varna Ol 1962*] 11 ... h6 [*11 ... 0–0 12 0–0 f6 13 ef ♖xf6 14 ♗g4 h6 15 ♘f3± Timman–Uhlmann, Skopje 1976*] 12 ♘h3 0–0–0 [*12 ... ♘c8 13 ♘f4 ♘b6 14 ♘h5±; or 12 ... ♘g6 13 ♗h5! ♘ce7 14 0–0 0–0–0 15 ♕e1!±*] 13 ♘f4 ♔b8 [*13 ... f6 14 ef gf 15 ♗g4 e5 16 ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 17 ♘h5±*] 14 0–0 ♘c8 15 ♘h5 ♖hg8 16 ♗g4!, and Black is condemned to total passivity, Kavalek–Uhlmann, Manila IZ 1976) 11 c4 (White also achieves ʰⁱ little with 11 0–0 c4 [*11 ... fe!? ᵍⁱᵥ 12 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 13 de 0–0=*] 12 ♖e1 [*12 ef gf 13 ♘h4 0–0–0 14 ♗h5 ♘g6! 15 ♗xg6 hg 16 ♘xg6 ♖h7! 17 ♕f3 ♖f7 18 ♗f4 ♖g8, and the chances may be assessed as roughly equal; Klovan–Vaganian, USSR 1973*] 12 ... fe [*12 ... f5!?*] 13 de 0–0 14 ♗f1 ♖f5= Pein–Plaskett, British Ch, Swansea 1987. Black likewise defends successfully against 11 ♖b1 ♕c7 12 ♗f4 ♘g6 13 ♗g3 fe 14 0–0 cd 15 cd 0–0 16 ♗b5 ♘f4! [*or 16 ...*

Rc8 17 Bxc6 Qxc6 18 Nxe5
Nxe5 19 Bxe5 Qxa4 20 Bxe5
Rf7, with a good game] 17 Bxc6
Bxc6 18 Nxe5 Bxa4 19 Rb4
Qxc2 20 Rxa4 Ne2+ 21 Kh1
Qxd1 22 Rxd1 Nc3∓ Bickel–
Hund, corr 1979. And finally, 11
ef gf 12 0–0 0–0–0 13 Re1?! [*13
c4 is likely to transpose into the 11
c4 line*] 13 ... c4! 14 Qc1 Rhg8 15
Bf1 Ng6 rather favours Black;
Tringov–Timman, Plovdiv 1983)
11 ... Qc7 12 ef gf 13 cd Nxd5 14
c3 (White already has to be careful.
The seemingly active 14 c4 hands
the initiative to his opponent: 14
... Nde7 15 dc [*15 Bc3 0–0–0 16
d5 cd 17 cd Be6 18 de Rxd1+ 19
Rxd1 Qf4 20 0–0 Rg8∓
Ekstrom–Belyavsky, Stockholm
1986*] 15 ... 0–0–0 16 Bc3 [*16
0–0 e5 17 Be3 Rhg8, with an
attack*] 16 ... e5 17 Qd6 Nf5!
18 Qxc7+ Kxc7 19 0–0 Nfd4∓
Timman– Korchnoi, Leeuwarden
1976) 14 ... 0–0–0 15 0–0 Rhg8
16 Re1 e5 (16 ... Nf4!? 17 Bxf4
Qxf4 18 g3 e5!) 17 c4 Bh3 18
Bf1, and Black has the pleasant
choice between 18 ... Nf4 19 Bxf4
ef 20 d5 Bg4 21 Be2 Bh3 22
Bf1 Bg4 ½–½ Davies–Djurhuus,
Copenhagen Open 1988; and 18
... Nb6 19 d5 Nxc4! 20 dc Qxc6
21 g3 Bxf1 22 Rxf1 e4 with
a good game, Spassky–Korchnoi,
4th match game, Belgrade 1977.

10   ...   Qc7!?

Black withdraws his queen from
its position opposite White's dark-
squared bishop, and prepares to
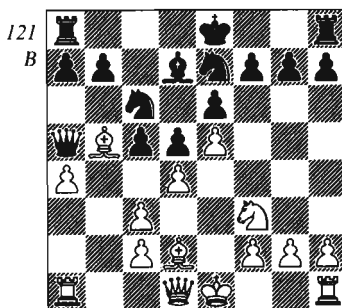
arrange his pieces on the pattern
we have seen before: ... 0–0, ... h6,
... b6 and ... Na5. The following
continuations are also encoun-
tered in practice:

(a) **10 ... f6** 11 0–0 (approximate
equality results from 11 ef gf 12 dc
a6 13 c4 Qc7 14 cd Nxd5 15 Bc4
[*15 Bd3!?*] 15 ... Nce7 16 Bxd5
Nxd5 17 c4 Nf4= Hjorth–Garcia
Gonzales, Dubai Ol 1986. Another
possibility is 11 Qe2 0–0–0!?
[*White has an obvious advantage
after 11 ... fe?! 12 Nxe5! Nxe5 13
Qxe5 Bxb5 14 c4 Qd8 15 cb cd
16 0–0 0–0 17 Qxe6+ ± Nunn–
Brenninkmeijer, Groningen 1988*]
12 0–0 c4 13 Rfb1 Rde8 14 Bxc6
Nxc6 15 Qe3 Ne7! 16 Bc1 Nf5,
and White can hardly be said to
have achieved much; G. Hernan-
dez–Ulibin, Santa Clara 1991) 11
... fe 12 c4 (White's compensation
for the pawn can hardly be con-
sidered sufficient after 12 de?! Qc7!
13 Ng5 Qxe5 14 Re1 Qf6 15
Qh5+ g6 16 Qe2 a6! [*16 ... e5?!
17 c4! 0–0 18 cd, Chandler–Levitt,
London 1990*] 17 Bxc6 Nxc6, and
White must either continue the

game a pawn down or go into an unfavourable ending with 18 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 19 ♕xe6+ ♕xe6 20 ♖xe6+ ♔d7) 17 ... ♕c7 13 cd ♘xd5!? (White also has no more than a minimal edge after 13 ... ed 14 ♘xe5!? ♘xe5 15 ♗f4 ♘7g6! 16 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 17 ♖e1 0–0 18 ♖xe5 ♗c6! Nunn–Agdestein, Dortmund 1987) 14 dc (14 c4 ♘de7 15 de h6!?) 14 ... 0–0 15 ♖e1 ♖ad8 16 ♗g5 ♖c8 17 ♗c4 ♖ce8!? 18 ♗xd5 ed 19 ♕xd5+ ♗e6 20 ♕d6 ♕f7, Tischbierek–Kindermann, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

(b) **10 ... a6** (of course Black is slightly weakening his queenside, but can White take advantage of this?) 11 ♗e2 f6 12 c4 ♕c7 13 cd ♘xd5 14 c4 ♘de7 15 ef gf 16 dc 0–0–0 17 ♗c3 e5 18 ♕d6 ♘f5, with a good position for Black in Tischbierek–Poldauf, German Cup 1991.

(c) **10 ... 0–0–0** 11 0–0 c4 12 ♗c1!? (transferring the bishop to a3 is an essential factor in White's strategy, and he carries it out without losing time defending the c3-pawn. In a game Kotronias–Zysk, Budapest, Black achieved equality after 12 ♕e1 f6 13 ♗c1 ♖de8 14 ♗a3 ♕c7 15 ♗d6 ♕d8 16 a5 ♘f5 17 ♗c5 ♔b8) 12 ... f6 (accepting the pawn sacrifice is extremely dangerous: 12 ... ♕xc3 13 ♗d2 ♕b2 14 ♖b1 ♕a3 [*14 ... ♕a2 15 ♕c1*], and now it is difficult to neutralise White's initiative after either 15 ♕e1 or 15 ♖e1!? ♘f5 16 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 17

♗a4 ♕a4 18 ♕d2 — Nunn. Black also has 12 ... h6 13 ♗a3 [*13 ♕d2 f5 14 ♗a3 g5 15 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 16 h4!? ♖dg8 17 hg ♕d8! 18 gh ♖g4 with unclear play, Tischbierek–Gdanski, Warsaw 1990; it was worth considering 14 ef!?*] 13 ... f5 [*13 ... ♕xc3 14 a5!±*] 14 ef gf 15 ♖e1 ♖de8 16 ♘h4!± Nunn–Kindermann, Munich 1991) 13 ♗a3 (or 13 ♖e1 fe 14 de ♘f5 15 ♗g5 ♖df8 16 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 17 ♘d4 h6 18 ♗e3 ♘xd4 19 ♗xd4 g5= Djurhuus–Ulibin, Tunja 1989. In a well-known game Chandler–Ivanchuk, White acquired a plus with 13 ♕e1 ♖he8 14 ♗c1 ♔b8 15 ♗xc6! ♘xc6 16 ♕e3 ♔a8 17 ♖fb1±; a probable improvement is 13 ... ♖de8!? 14 ♗a3 ♘f5, with quite good chances of equalising) 13 ... ♖he8 (13 ... ♖de8!?) 13 ♖e1 ♘f5 15 ♕d2 h5! 16 h3 h4 17 ♗c5 ♕c7 18 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 19 ♕d2 ♔b8 20 ♖eb1 ♖h8, and Black's massed defences are practically invulnerable. In Chandler–Timman, Reykjavik World Cup 1991, a draw was agreed a few moves later.

(d) **10 ... c4 11 0–0**, and now:

(d1) **11 ... ♘b8** 12 ♕b1! ♕c7 occurred in Rogers–P. Nikolić, Bor 1986. With 13 ♗c1! White could have gained a clear plus.

(d2) **11 ... a6** 12 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 13 ♘g5!? h6 14 ♕h5 g6 15 ♕h3 ♗xa4 16 ♖fb1 b5 17 ♖a2, with more than enough compensation for the pawn; Nunn–Hübner, Bundesliga 1987.

(d3) **11 ... 0–0** 12 ♖e1 (or 12 h4 f6 13 ♖e1 f5 14 ᐁg5 h6 15 ᐁh3 ♔h7 16 g3 ♕d8 17 ♗c1 ♕e8 18 h5± King–Levitt, London 1990) 12 ... ᐁb8 13 ♕b1 ♗c8!? 14 ♗g5! ᐁg6 15 h4 h6 16 h5 hg 17 hg ♕d8! 18 gf+ ♖xf7 19 a5, with a small plus for White; Kosten–Knaak, Kecskemet 1987.

(d4) **11 ... h6!?** (Black forestalls the knight sortie to g5, and hopes to create counterplay on the kingside) 12 ♕e1 (in Niemien–Ostenstad, Gausdal 1991, Black obtained a good game after 12 ♗c1 g5!? 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♕d2 ᐁf5) 12 ... 0–0–0 (12 ... a6!? 13 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♗c1 ♗xa4 15 ♗a3 b5?!± Prasad–Ravi, India 1989; 15 ... ♕b5!? was worth considering) 13 ♗c1 g5!? 14 ♗a3 ᐁg6 15 ♕e3 ♖dg8, with chances for both sides; Cabrilo–Ostenstad, Novi Sad Ol 1990.

(d5) **11 ... f6** 12 ♖e1 0–0–0 (12 ... f5!?) 13 ♗f4?! (for 13 ♗c1!?, see variation 'c') 13 ... ᐁg6 14 ♗g3 f5 15 ♕d2 f4!? 16 ♗xf4 ᐁxf4 17 ♕xf4 ♕xc3= King–Djurhuus, Stavanger 1989.

11   0–0   0–0

In Nunn–I. Farago, Dortmund 1987, Black emerged from the opening with a passive position after 11 ... ᐁa5 12 ♗d3 c4 (12 ... ᐁc4 13 ♗c1±) 13 ♗e2 0–0–0 14 ♗c1 ♔b8 15 ♕d2! h6 16 ♕f4 ♗e8 17 ♕g4 ♖g8 19 ᐁh4!

12   ♖e1   h6

Black also has a perfectly satisfactory game after 12 ... b6 13 ♗d3 h6 (13 ... f6?! 14 ef gf 15 ᐁh4!±) 14 ♕c1! c4 (White was threatening to sacrifice on h6) 15 ♗f1 (or 15 ♗e2 f6 16 ♗f4 ᐁg6 17 ♗g3 fe 18 de ᐁge7!= Byrne–Korchnoi, Nice Ol 1974) 15 ... f6 16 g3, Rogers–Nogueiras, Szirak 1986; after, for example, 16 ... fe 17 ᐁxe5 ᐁxe5 18 ♖xe5 ᐁc6 19 ♖e3 e5!? (Nogueiras), the chances are equal.

13   ♗f4?!

The bishop heads in the wrong direction. The standard move 13 ♗c1 is stronger, even though after 13 ... ᐁa5 14 ♗a3 b6 15 dc bc 16 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 17 ♗xc5 ♖fc8 Black has adequate compensation for the pawn.

13   ...   ᐁg6
14   ♗g3

An unwillingness to admit one's mistakes is shared, unfortunately, by nearly all chessplayers. Again it was worth considering 14 ♗c1!?

14   ...   ᐁce7!
15   ♗d3   c4
16   ♗xg6

Black also has an excellent game after 16 ♗f1 ♕a5!, when the absence of White's dark-squared bishop from the queenside makes itself felt.

16   ...   fg! *(122)*

From this moment on, we may state with assurance that Black holds the initiative.

17   h4

This decision is forced. If he allowed Vaganian to play 17 ... g5, it would be hard to stop the

122
W

23	♘g5+	hg
24	♗xg3	♕d8! *(123)*

123
W
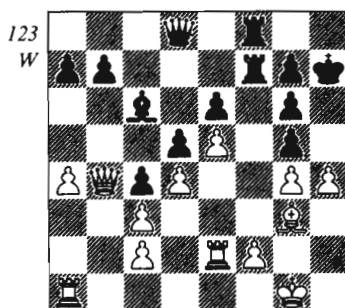
black bishop from reaching h5.

17	...	♖f7
18	♕b1	♔h7
19	♕b4	♘f5
20	♗h2	♖af8
21	♖e2	♗c6

White's position is not easy. He has to worry about the weak pawns on a4 and h4; Black is threatening 22 ... ♕d8. Byrne loses his nerve.

| 22 | g4?! | ♘g3! |

White would have a simpler task after 22 ... ♘e7 23 ♘e1.

The queen's entry into the game decides the issue in a few moves.

25	h5	gh
26	gh	♖f3
27	♔g2	♕e8
28	♖h1	♕f7
29	♔h2	♕f5
30	♕e7	♖f7
31	♕d8	♗xa4

0–1

Index of Variations

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♗d7
6 a3 *38*
6 ♗d3 *38*
6 dc *38*
6 ♗e2 ♘ge7 (6 ... f6 *39*)
   7 h4 *40*
   7 0–0 *40*
   7 ♘a3
      7 ... cd *41*
      7 ... ♘g6 8 h4 *42*

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘c6 (3 ... ♘e7 *45*; 3 ... f5 *45*; 3 ...
♗e7 *45*; 3 ... b6 *46*; 3 ... a6 *46*) **4 c3**
4 ... ♘f6 *46*
4 ... f5 *47*
4 ... de *47*
4 ... ♘ge7 *47*
4 ... e5
   5 de *48*
   5 ed ♕xd5 6 ♘gf3 ed (6 ... ♗g4 *48*) 7 ♗c4
      7 ... ♕d8 *48*
      7 ... ♕c5 *48*
      7 ... ♕h5 *49*
      7 ... ♕f5 8 ♘xd4 *49*

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘c6 4 ♘gf3 ♘f6 (4 ... g6 *51*; 4 ... ♘h6 *51*)
5 e5 ♘d7 (5 ... ♘e4 *51*)
6 c3 *52*
6 b3 *52*
6 g3 *52*
6 ♗d3 *52*
6 ♗b5 *53*
6 ♗e2
   6 ... f6 *53*
   6 ... ♗e7 *55*
6 ♘b3
   6 ... f6 *55*
   6 ... ♗e7 *56*
   6 ... a5 7 a4 *56*

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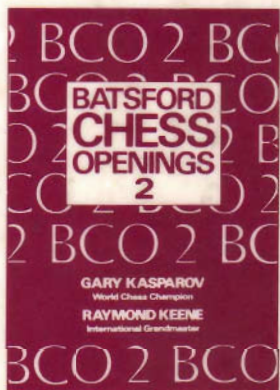Raymond Keene and
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