GAMBIT

How to Play Dynamic Chess

Valeri Beim

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Best regards!!
Saludos!

Caissa Lovers

Index of Openings

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Contents

Symbols

+	check
++	double check
#	checkmate
!!	brilliant move
!	good move
!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
?	bad move
??	blunder
+–	White is winning
±	White is much better
±	White is slightly better
=	equal position
∓	Black is slightly better
∓	Black is much better
–+	Black is winning
Ch	championship
Cht	team championship
Wch	world championship
Wcht	world team championship
Ech	European championship
Echt	European team championship
ECC	European Clubs Cup
Ct	candidates event
IZ	interzonal event
Z	zonal event
OL	olympiad
jr	junior event
wom	women's event
rpd	rapidplay game
tt	team tournament
mem	memorial event
sim	game from simultaneous display
corr.	correspondence game
1-0	the game ends in a win for White
½-½	the game ends in a draw
0-1	the game ends in a win for Black
(*n*)	*n*th match game
(D)	see next diagram

Introduction

This book follows on from my previous work *Lessons in Chess Strategy*, in which the most important chapter, supplying the whole work with its central theme, was the one dealing with chess statics. Accordingly, in the present work it seems logical to concentrate on the other side of the coin: dynamics.

I will now repeat something I said in the previous book (I can't help it, for this is an essential point). The terms *statics* and *dynamics* express concepts that are extremely important in chess. They are frequently found in books, articles and annotations. There are definitions of these terms that are generally accepted. And yet I have not so far come across a lucid explanation of the substance that lies behind the definitions, of the way these concepts operate on the chessboard, of the dividing line between them (what it is, and where it must be drawn), and so forth.

Recently, in fact, these extremely important elements of chess have had some books devoted to them. Unfortunately, however, for an ordinary amateur – for someone we normally refer to as a club-player – these books are difficult to follow unaided, precisely because the complex concepts are not elucidated plainly and thoroughly. Such elucidation seems to me essential.

In general, I believe that neither authors nor trainers (and I belong to both those categories myself) should forget about the special importance of studying the simplest, most fundamental principles of the game, upon which, after all, everything else in chess is constructed. (I had already written these lines when I came across an utterance by Kasparov in his article on Petrosian: "Essentially, the basis for creative achievement in chess is supplied by truths which at first sight appear trivial." I was delighted to find such an authoritative confirmation of my view.)

To chess trainers, my message is this. Should your pupil lack a proper 'grasp' of some simple but important principle of the game, let's say centralization, then both you and he need to identify the problem by studying plenty of examples from his games. For someone who isn't a direct pupil of yours but merely a reader of your books, things are that much harder, for with no one to monitor his chess development, the defects in his play will accumulate.

That, by the way, is precisely the reason for rejecting one opinion which is very popular, indeed almost universal, among chess lovers in the West. According to them, a chess student can do without a trainer entirely (unlike in golf or tennis!), since there's always a computer that 'knows it all better than anyone', and you can buy a book too and on occasion have a look at it. But this view is mistaken. In the first place, a computer may be crammed full of information, but it can never tell *what* information – in what quantity, in what area, and so forth – is necessary for you *personally.* And secondly, neither a computer nor the best of books will be able to keep a constant watch on your progress as a chess-player, applying corrective measures as the need arises.

An authoritative and friendly view from someone at their side – this is the main thing that players expect from a good trainer, and it is one of the most indispensable conditions for their development. (This incidentally is a big topic and requires separate discussion.) From all that has been said, it isn't hard to see that for anyone working with chess novices or players trying to improve, the main requirement is a systematic approach and a grasp of the fact that we shouldn't on any account grudge the time spent on 'obvious things' – indeed we should make a detailed and extremely clear explanation of them!

To the students, the very same message can be given: don't try to 'skimp' on the time you devote to these matters. Time spent on the thoughtful study of 'commonplace truths' is always repaid in the form of time saved later and points scored in your games.

Now, a few words on the structure of this book and its content.

It will be entirely devoted to the place of dynamics in the game of chess. I aim to discuss the nature of dynamics, how they operate in the most varied situations, and, most importantly, how all this is to be utilized. To my 'regular' readers, I would point out that I have decided to depart somewhat from the usual structure. In particular, there will not be the 'exercises' which have become a regular feature of my books. On the other hand, the quantity of instructional material has been increased, and much of what might have been presented in the form of independent exercises will be found in the examples.

This is my fourth book, and the longer I work on searching for material, the more frequently I come across the problem of sub-standard annotations, whether in periodicals, books or databases. I have often found that these annotations miss the key moments of a game or fail to assess them correctly. I don't wish to point my finger at anyone in particular; indeed if anyone makes the same kind of reproach against my own writings, I am prepared to hear them out, provided of course that they show me exactly where the fault lies.

One other point seems to me of fundamental importance. As always when settling down to work on a new book, I am not content merely to retell things which are fairly common knowledge and which an intelligent and experienced reader can very well look for independently and find scattered in various other books and magazines.

Works composed on such lines, assembling material from various sources and drawing it all together, do have their use, which is sometimes very considerable. They can help the reader to attain a more complete grasp of one aspect of chess or another. However, when an author feels it is in his power to add something to what is generally known (he may simply be giving new information, but is often providing an original slant on some familiar aspects of the game), this can give an extra stimulus to his work and make it attractive to the readers. Up to now I have managed to present something 'novel' in each of my books. I intend to do so again this time. I realize of course that not all my disclosures are of equal significance, and that perhaps not all of them will withstand the passage of time. But I think that if some ideas come into your head now and again, they shouldn't be left on the back-burner but published in the expectation of constructive criticism.

The true value of these 'novelties' should emerge when other people – my readers – see them, ponder them and assess them. I am therefore very interested in receiving feedback. That is, I not only address myself to my readers but would also like to hear your opinions on this book as well as on all my previous (and perhaps future) ones. My e-mail address is: valeribeim@gmx.net

Valeri Beim
Vienna, 2004

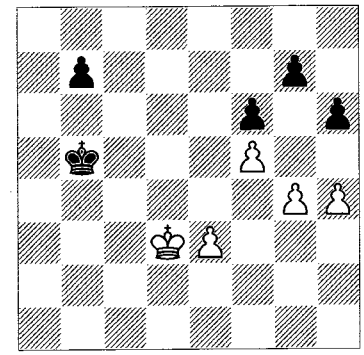
1 Dynamics

As I have said, and as the title indicates, there is such a thing as a dynamic component of chess, and the problems it raises are the subject of this book. To start with, therefore, let us look into what the very concept of 'dynamics' involves when applied to chess. How is it to be defined?

In the most general terms, the answer is that while statics concerns itself with things in a state of rest, dynamics concentrates on things in motion. However, a question still remains about the essence of *dynamics in chess* – and also of *chess statics*, since the two concepts are inseparable, like the two sides of a coin. Above all, why does the author raise these matters in a book intended for non-professionals? My view is that the terms and the concepts underlying them are exceptionally important; indeed I maintain that statics and dynamics are the very factors on which the whole edifice of chess is founded. Incidentally, I consider the word *factors* to be the correct one here; it is not so much a case of 'principles', or of 'phenomena' (like phenomena of nature). The static factors in chess are the elements of a position which don't change for a relatively long time, or change insignificantly and gradually; whereas dynamic factors are those elements which are in a rapid process of change.

Static elements (as was shown in *Lessons in Chess Strategy*) include the distribution of material, the presence on the board of a particular contingent of pieces – and, most importantly, the arrangement of the pawns, with everything that flows from it in terms of strong and weak squares, pawn weaknesses and so forth. *Dynamics should above all be understood as the capacity of pieces and pawns to move around the board.* That is the definition in its most general form; throughout the course of this book we shall be concerned to develop it. We will try to do so in as thorough and vivid a way as possible.

These definitions of dynamics and statics will be better grasped if we set out by *examining them in comparison with each other.* For greater clarity, let us begin with some simple pawn endings, where there are no 'extraneous' features to obscure the picture.



Averbakh – Bebchuk
Moscow 1964

In such situations, annotators are liable to write: "Black's positional assets are obvious." Black does indeed have assets, but the qualification *positional* is inappropriate here; we shall presently see why. What Black definitely does have is a *static* advantage, manifest in his outside passed b-pawn and the backwardness of the white pawn on the e-file. If it were his move, he would win easily with 50...♔c5, but it is White to play, and this alters the situation completely. White wins by force, as in fact happened in the game:

50 e4 ♔c6 51 e5! fxe5

He can't allow White to obtain a protected passed pawn. After 51...♔d5 52 e6 ♔d6 53 ♔c4 ♔c6 54 ♔b4 b6 55 ♔c4, etc., White wins.

52 g5 hxg5

Black also loses with 52...♔d6 53 f6 ♔e6 54 fxg7 ♔f7 55 gxh6 b5, and now follows a manoeuvre that it's useful to know about: 56 ♔e4! b4 57 ♔d3!.

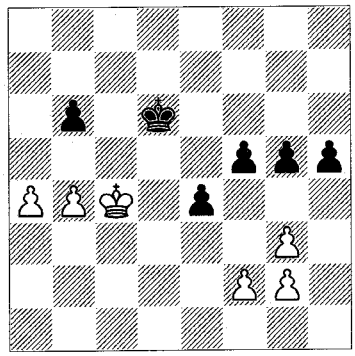
53 f6! 1-0

The white pawns have broken through.

White won by exploiting a *breakthrough.* The very word evokes resolute and forthright

motion. It means that in the initial position, White had trumps of the dynamic type. Black had advantages of a static nature, that is, the sort which would have counted if White's breakthrough had not been available – or if (as we said) it had been Black's move, and his king had therefore had time to stem the onrush of the white pawns. (All these hypotheses recall the saying, "If it hadn't been for the wolves, our goat would have reached Mecca.") In reality none of this was the case, and *the dynamic advantages of the white position proved more weighty than the static advantages of the black one.* (Or *dynamics defeated statics*, in the simplified wording which I shall use henceforth in similar cases. This will even apply when victory is not due to the objective preponderance of one factor, but to the more skilful exploitation of it.) It follows that in evaluating a position, we need to take both the dynamic and the static factors into account. Which one of them prevails will always depend on the concrete details. Now for another couple of examples.

B



Weinstein – Rohde
Lone Pine 1977

Black now had to make the fateful last move before the time-control. He failed to figure out the dynamic merits of his position, and lost as follows.

40...h4??

Instead he should have played 40...f4!, which would have led to an uncomplicated but striking win based on a breakthrough: 41 gxf4 gxf4 42 ♔d4 e3 43 fxe3 (or 43 ♔d3 f3! 44 gxf3 h4 45 ♔e2 h3) 43...f3! 44 gxf3 h4.

In the game, the white king occupied the high ground, leaving Black unable to stir.

41 gxh4 gxh4 42 ♔d4 ♔e6

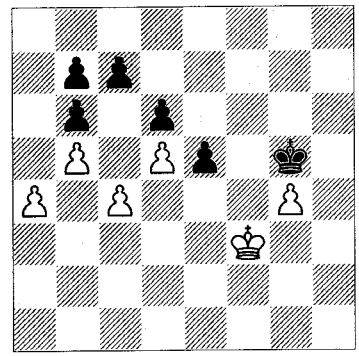
The outside passed pawn now decides the game.

43 a5 bxa5 44 bxa5 ♔d6 45 a6 ♔c6 46 ♔e5 ♔b6 47 ♔xf5 ♔xa6 48 ♔xe4 1-0

In spite of Black's tragic failure, we can very well turn this episode to our own use, and draw a conclusion: *exploiting a dynamic advantage requires resolute action without delay.* This theme will, in fact, occupy us in earnest in the chapters that follow. Note also that once Black hesitated, White took over the dynamic advantage too – it consisted in the activation of his king. This enables us to state one more valuable conclusion: *static or dynamic factors hardly ever exist on the chessboard in a pure form.* Usually they are closely interwoven. We will elaborate this conclusion in due course.

Now, another example in which the dynamic resources of the position outweigh a significant static advantage:

W



Averbakh

In this exercise position from Yuri Averbakh's series of endgame manuals, Black has an immense static advantage in the shape of a protected passed pawn. In pawn endgames this is usually quite sufficient to win, *other things being equal.* Yet here, a dynamic motif – one that we already know about – comes into force:

1 c5! dxc5

If 1...bxc5, then 2 a5 c4 3 a6 bxa6 4 bxa6 c3 5 ♔e2; or if 1...♔f6, then 2 c6 bxc6 3 dxc6 d5 4 g5+ ♔xg5 (4...♔e6 5 g6) 5 a5, etc.

2 a5 bxa5 3 b6 cxb6 4 d6 ♔f6 5 g5+

And White wins.

All this is familiar, simple and clear, but now let us imagine a black pawn on a7 instead of b7.

It turns out that in that situation White has no breakthrough, and it is Black who wins. In other words, in the original position, Black's doubled pawns on the b-file were an important static defect. Then again, let's try a different experiment by giving the players a rook each. This time the doubled pawns prove to be a *positive* factor! From this it follows that *in chess there are very few absolute truths. Almost everything in chess is relative, and the value of each individual element of a position depends purely on how it interacts with other factors.*

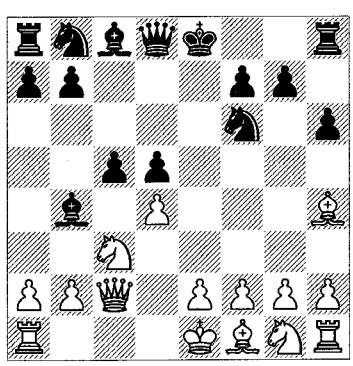
We will now turn to some more complex examples of the interplay between statics and dynamics. Above all else, we need to know how to recognize situations in which one or other of these factors plays the more important role – though it must be said at the outset that this issue is almost inexhaustible.

Keres – Botvinnik
Leningrad/Moscow 1941

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 ♕c2 d5 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♗g5 h6 7 ♗h4

White also quite often plays 7 ♗xf6 here.

7...c5 *(D)*



W

8 0-0-0?

This game is of historical significance since it was played in the period of Botvinnik's approach to the world chess crown, and Keres was one of his most serious rivals. By that time, furthermore, Estonia had been incorporated into the Soviet Union, and it was clear that these two players were going to have many a crucial encounter on the national scene. Botvinnik evolved a plan for putting Keres under psychological pressure and making him dread the very name of his rival! In this he eventually succeeded. Keres was almost incapable of fighting against Botvinnik, and started to rid himself of this curse only after the latter had become World Champion. The present game was the first one in which Botvinnik began to clamp down. Of course he was 'helped' in this by Keres himself, who failed to gear himself properly to the titanic clash of personalities – as we shall presently see.

White's last move is virtually the decisive mistake, though of course this is not easy to believe. It's too early in the game (you will say); the situation still appears too fluid for such an assertion to be made. Well, I have diligently searched for ways to improve White's play later on, and it proved extremely difficult. But there is also another interesting point. The position after queenside castling had occurred in another of Botvinnik's games, a year before the one we are looking at. On that occasion Botvinnik had lost. It is incredible that Keres should venture to play this same position against him. In those years Botvinnik was already widely acknowledged as a master of opening analysis and a man of iron character. There could be no doubt whatever that if he was prepared to repeat a variation with a shaky reputation in an important game, he would have some new weapon up his sleeve! It wouldn't even be so bad if the position were fairly quiet, but it isn't. With his last two moves White has opted for complex, incisive play, and Black has supported him in that intention. A sharp and complicated position has arisen, of the kind in which one error may prove fatal.

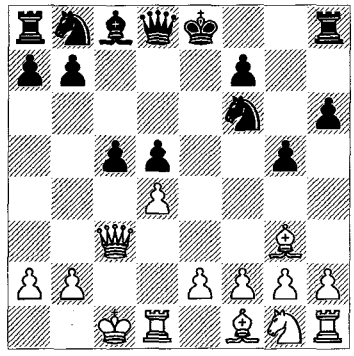
Today this position has been thoroughly investigated. It is well known that White must take the pawn instead of castling, and practice has shown that after 8 dxc5 g5 only two results are likely: a draw if Black is lucky, or a win for White. For instance in Kasparov-Short, London PCA Wch (9) 1993, the continuation was 9 ♗g3 ♘e4 10 e3 ♕a5 11 ♘e2! ♗f5 12 ♗e5 0-0 13 ♘d4 ♗g6 14 ♘b3 ♘xc3 15 ♗xc3! ♗xc2 16 ♘xa5 ♗xc3+ 17 bxc3 b6 18 ♔d2! bxa5 19 ♔xc2 ♖c8 20 h4!, and White's advantage was virtually decisive.

In our game, events now begin to unfold swiftly and almost by force – but in order to understand them, we need to look deeply into this

position. The truth about it is not as simple as may appear at first sight. It looks as if White has created unpleasant pressure against the d-pawn which Black consented to isolate with his last move. The black king's knight is awkwardly pinned. What does Black have in return for these problems that are essentially bound up with his pawn-structure, that is, problems of a static nature? At first sight this isn't very clear. It is no accident that Botvinnik lost this position the first time he happened to play it. At home, however, he succeeded in fathoming its secrets; it became clear that the chief defect of White's position is the situation of his king. At first you can't see a way to 'get at' it, but this is obviously what you must be searching for, and a fact which catches your eye is that Black is ready to open up the c-file where at the moment the white king is placed. After something like these deliberations, the correct plan of action came to light.

8...♗xc3! 9 ♕xc3 g5 10 ♗g3 *(D)*

B



Botvinnik tells us that this position had arisen once before, but Black had played 10...♘e4? which completely contradicts the reasoning given above. The right move is:

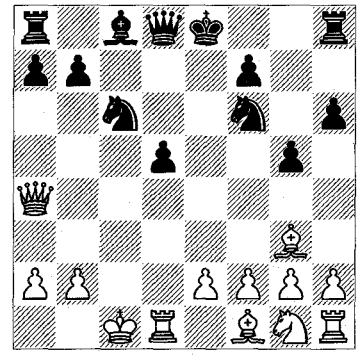
10...cxd4!

This initiates the correct plan of action which Botvinnik had discovered at home and analysed in detail. Painstaking analysis was indeed necessary, since the plan involves some sharp pawn thrusts which seriously impair Black's own pawn-structure. If the attack against the king doesn't succeed, Black won't be able to cope with his weaknesses. In other words, we have here a situation where one player consciously accepts a major weakening of his position and stakes everything on one card – that of dynamics and the initiative. But this policy has a realistic basis – the position of the white king.

11 ♕xd4 ♘c6 12 ♕a4 *(D)*

The other plausible queen move doesn't rescue White from trouble either. The main variation is 12 ♕d3 ♗e6 13 e3 (or 13 ♘f3; on 13 ♕a3, Black has the decisive 13...♗f5! 14 e3 ♖c8 15 ♘e2 b5!), and now Black has an immensely powerful move: 13...♕c8!, after which it turns out that White is in dire straits. For example, 14 ♕c3 (nor is there any salvation in 14 ♕c2 ♘b4 15 ♕xc8+ ♖xc8+ 16 ♔d2 ♘e4+) 14...d4! (15 exd4 ♘e4), and all the black pieces throw themselves on the enemy king position.

B

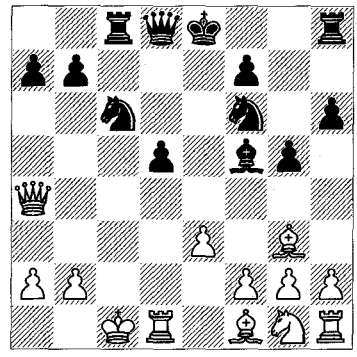


12...♗f5 13 e3

Botvinnik considers that this is where Keres missed his chance to resist more stubbornly. He recommends 13 f3 ♕b6 14 e4 dxe4 15 ♔b1. However, after 15...exf3+ 16 ♔a1 Black has the simple but overwhelming 16...♕b4!, giving him an easily won position. White would seem to have done the best he could. And yet I definitely can't help feeling that some hidden defensive resource has yet to be unearthed. Try looking for it yourself!

13...♖c8 *(D)*

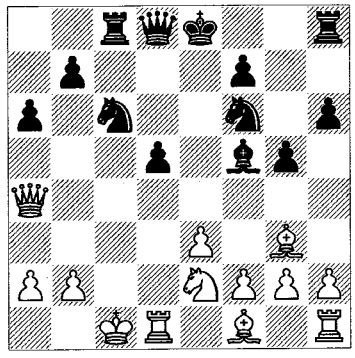
W



14 ♗d3

This loses quickly. Things turn out no better in the event of 14 ♗e5 0-0 15 ♗c3 ♘e4.

However, White *could* perhaps have played more strongly here. Botvinnik examines 14 ♘e2 a6! *(D)*, when there can follow:



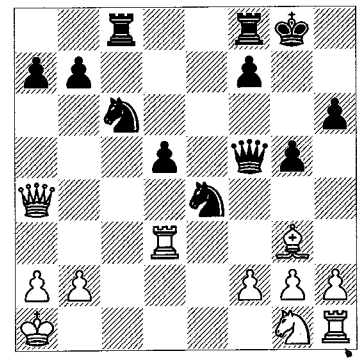
a) 15 ♘c3 b5 16 ♕xa6 b4, and now Botvinnik gives 17 ♗b5, which is parried by 17...♗d7 – and the c3-knight perishes. On the other hand White does have the counter-stroke 17 e4!?, although after 17...bxc3 18 exf5 0-0 we reach a position where Black has very strong pressure. For instance, after 19 ♕a3 (which is not compulsory; 19 ♗d3 looks more natural, but Black's initiative is still very powerful after 19...♘b4 20 ♕b5 ♕e7) 19...♘e4 20 f3, my 'electronic friend' indicates a convincing and attractive line: 20...♕b6! 21 fxe4 ♕e3+ 22 ♔b1 ♘b4! and Black wins. This explains why I said I couldn't think up any improvement for White.

b) After I had written this chapter, the second volume of Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors* appeared. While pursuing different aims from those of the present book, Kasparov examines some of the same games, including the one we are looking at now. I shall quote Kasparov's opinions where necessary. In this variation, he suggests a possible improvement on White's play: 15 ♕a3. Unfortunately, after 15...♘b4+ 16 ♘c3 ♕e7 17 ♔d2 (similarly 17 ♗e5 ♘xa2+ 18 ♕xa2 ♕xe5 leaves White with no saving chances), Black has the very simple 17...0-0 (instead of the strange 17...♗c2?!) which gives him an easily won position. For example: 18 ♔e2 ♖fe8! 19 h3 (defending against a bishop check; 19 ♖d4 ♘c2 is also bad for White) 19...♕c5, and there is no defence against the decisive break ...d4. So alas, this attempt at improvement also fails.

All this means that castling queenside was a serious mistake. But in order to prove it, Black had to assent to a drastic weakening of his own position. In other words he had to make static concessions in order to attain an advantage in the dynamic sphere.

In the game, it was all over quickly.

14...♕d7 15 ♔b1 ♗xd3+ 16 ♖xd3 ♕f5 17 e4 ♘xe4 18 ♔a1 0-0! *(D)*



Black's late castling finally unites his pieces.

Essentially we have here the sort of position that Black was dreaming of (in the most general sense, of course) when he exchanged bishop for knight on c3.

White ought to have resigned now, and the fact that he didn't immediately do so speaks for the state of deep shock in which the events of this game had put him. It's obvious that by winning it, Botvinnik gained much more than just one point.

19 ♖d1

Or 19 ♖f3 ♘d4.

19...b5 20 ♕xb5 ♘d4 21 ♕d3 ♘c2+ 22 ♔b1 ♘b4 0-1

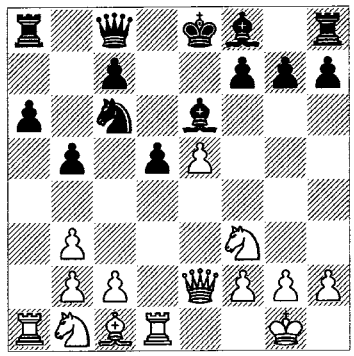
And now, another classic instance of a conflict between static and dynamic factors.

Smyslov – Euwe

The Hague/Moscow Wch 1948

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 ♕e2 ♘c5 10 ♖d1 ♘xb3 11 axb3 ♕c8 *(D)*

This version of the Open Defence to the Ruy Lopez is extremely rare today. At the time of



this game, however, it was highly topical, thanks to the encounter Keres-Reshevsky from the previous round of the same tournament. That game continued 12 ♗g5 h6 13 ♗h4 ♗c5, and now Keres refrained from 14 c4!, which would have given him a strong initiative. He himself indicated a characteristic and important variation which could then have ensued: 14...dxc4 15 bxc4 ♗xc4 16 ♕e4, and now if Black replies with the natural-seeming 16...♕e6? White wins by 17 ♖xa6!, in view of 17...♖xa6 18 ♕xc6+. On the other hand after 16...♕b7 17 ♘bd2, Black can't remove his bishop from attack by 17...♗e6? on account of 18 ♖ac1; White therefore obtains a distinct advantage. Instead, the game continued with 14 ♘c3?, a general 'developing' move but one that is too nondescript for the present concrete situation. With 14...g5 15 ♗g3 ♕b7! 16 ♘xd5 0-0-0! 17 ♘f6 g4 Black seized the initiative, created pressure on all parts of the board, and eventually won. It's important to understand the reason why White's 14th move, which looks natural and conforms to the principles of development, proved to be a serious lapse and landed him in the worse position. Prior to that moment, something out of the ordinary must have occurred to give a special slant to the play. What was it? For the answer, let us turn our attention to Black's 9th and 10th moves. With these two moves Black deliberately offended against the general principles of opening play by expending two tempi to exchange his knight, a piece already developed, for the white bishop. He thereby gained the advantage of the bishop-pair at the cost of falling behind in development. This was the moment, quite early on, when the game acquired a fairly *fixed character*. (For the moment I won't elaborate on this term in too much detail. Let's just say it means that certain features have arisen which are going to persist for a relatively long time and give the position a fairly concrete shape. In this way, the players' freedom to follow their preferences is restricted; they have to give serious attention to the demands of the position. Later, however, it will be very useful to examine this issue much more thoroughly.)

What, then, precisely, *is* the character of the position, and what does it demand of the players?

Both Black's advantages – the bishop-pair, and the slight deterioration in the white pawn-structure – are of a static nature. The sole price he has paid to attain them – his backwardness in development – is a very temporary phenomenon, as you can quite easily understand. It may disappear within the space of a move or two – White only needs to dither somewhere. Thus the position places demands on White first and foremost, and it is obvious what they are: to extract profit from his better development as quickly as possible. If he doesn't do this, his opponent will be left with all the trumps. We shall keep encountering such situations throughout this book; indeed you will meet them very often throughout your own chess career.

With his ill-fated 14th move Keres wasn't actually delaying, in the most straightforward sense of the word; the move did after all bring a new piece into play. He was, however, *missing the favourable moment* to strike at his opponent's position, and such an opportunity was never to recur. Reshevsky instantly took advantage of his opponent's error, boldly giving up a pawn with his 15th and 16th moves and completely taking over the initiative. Don't forget this episode. We shall come across similar ones time and again.

Now let's return to our principal game. Smyslov had studied the foregoing one. He assumed he would find opponents eager to repeat such a successful experiment, and was ready for them. The result was this:

12 c4!

By now the positional foundation of this move is comprehensible. The methods of play, as well as the concrete variations, will be very similar to the possibilities we looked at in the Keres-Reshevsky game.

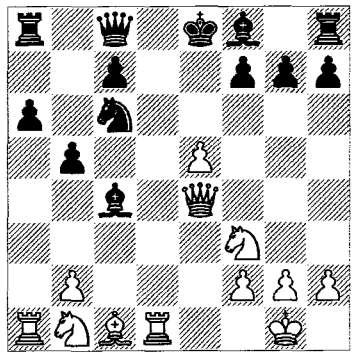
12...dxc4

As Keres pointed out, the other capture is less good: after 12...bxc4 13 bxc4 ♘b4 14 ♘c3 dxc4 15 ♗g5 ♘d3 16 b3 ♗b4 17 ♕c2, White has a clear plus.

13 bxc4 ♗xc4 14 ♕e4! *(D)*

This blow is something else that could have occurred in the earlier game.

B



14...♘e7?

Confronted with an unpleasant surprise in the opening, Euwe proves unequal to the situation. Certainly, his task was no easy one. Completely unexpectedly, he had to cope with a mass of sharp and hazardous variations in which blows from several quarters awaited him. Nor is this surprising, given the dangerous mobility that the white pieces have acquired.

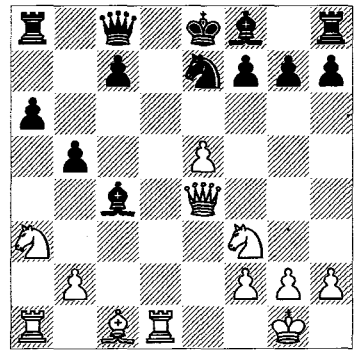
One move that looks feasible, 14...♕b7?!, is prettily refuted after 15 ♘c3 ♖b8. In his notes to the game, the great Paul Keres judged this position to be perfectly acceptable for Black, but there is one important detail he missed. Today, an ordinary master would easily find the move that instantly overturns Keres's verdict: 16 e6!. At any rate, I have given the position to my students as an exercise on quite a few occasions, and nearly all of them suggested this thrust. It fits in with the present-day understanding of chess only too well. The value of the dynamic approach is taken for granted even by medium-ranking players (provided they have been well taught, of course!). Supplying analysis in support of White's breakthrough is another matter; it was done by Smyslov, who gave 16...♗xe6 17 ♘g5 ♘d8 18 ♖xd8+! ♔xd8 19 ♘xe6+ fxe6 20 ♕xe6 ♗e7 21 ♗g5! and wins.

Black's only acceptable reply to White's 14th move is 14...♘b4, whereupon White does best to play 15 ♗g5 – and again Black has a difficult choice to make. On 15...♗c5?!, White has the powerful 16 ♘a3! 0-0 (alas, 16...♗e6 fails to 17 ♖ac1) 17 ♘xc4 bxc4 18 ♕xc4, and wins. The only move is therefore 15...c6, after which 16 ♖d8+ ♕xd8 17 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 18 ♘c3 would leave White with a certain advantage but no more than that; all the play would still lie ahead.

After going wrong here, Black is no longer able to save himself. This recalls the scenario in the Keres-Botvinnik game, doesn't it? And no wonder. In positions where the pieces are highly mobile, any mistake can be decisive.

15 ♘a3! *(D)*

B



This punch from the side is another thing we have seen before. In similar situations, similar devices – both strategic and tactical – often work. I shall never tire of repeating it: if you want to improve, study typical situations and typical methods of action.

15...c6

The whole point lies in the variation 15...♗b3 16 ♖d3! ♗e6 17 ♘xb5, when Black can't play 17...♗f5? (the only move is 17...♖b8, to which White replies 18 ♘c3! with a clear plus) in view of the obvious 18 ♘xc7+. It's easy for us to find this now, but the players of course had to see it in the midst of a mass of other variations!

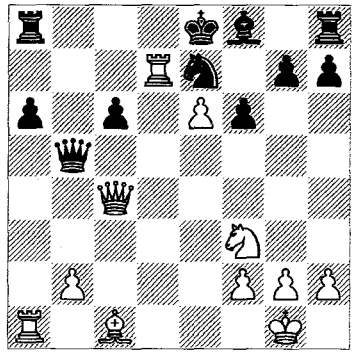
16 ♘xc4 bxc4 17 ♕xc4 ♕b7

The pretty refutation of 17...♕e6 is 18 ♖xa6!, and it's easy to see that White has a decisive plus. But then, a similar tactical stroke appeared before our eyes earlier!

18 e6 f6 19 ♖d7 ♕b5 *(D)*

White has a huge plus, and Smyslov finds a simple and clear solution. In fact it proves the soundest route to victory. All these qualities were a constant distinguishing feature of the great master's play.

W



20 ♕xb5!

The queen was Black's only active piece. Exchanging such a piece is usually helpful.

20...cxb5 21 ♘d4 ♖c8 22 ♗e3 ♘g6 23 ♖xa6 ♘e5 24 ♖b7 ♗c5 25 ♘f5 0-0

Now comes the concluding move of the game, which is neither a dramatic sacrifice nor a shattering knock-out blow. It's a simple 'quiet' move, but it caused Black to resign at once.

26 h3! 1-0

I enjoy drawing the attention of my students and readers to such 'modest', unobtrusive, but highly effective moves which are crucial for the subsequent events. In most cases it is these very moves that lay the essential grounds for victory. In the present position it is all very simple, and the point is revealed in the variation 26...♗xe3 27 ♘e7+ ♔h8 28 ♘xc8. The white king's *luft* is decisive.

Now, we examine another impressive game that opens up various aspects of the theme which interests us.

Stein – Petrosian

USSR Ch (Moscow) 1961

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♘f5

Today this move is rarely seen. Theory concerns itself mainly with 7...cxd4 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 ♕c7 or 7...0-0 8 ♗d3.

8 ♗d3 h5 9 ♕f4 ♘c6?!

Evidently not best; nowadays, 9...♕c7 is played. Now Black runs into difficulties.

10 ♘e2!

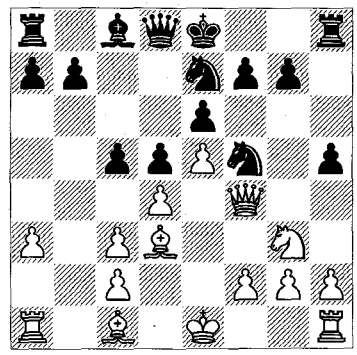
This is a good deal stronger than 10 ♘f3. The knight heads for g3, where there will be plenty for it to do.

10...♘ce7

In the event of 10...c4 11 ♗xf5 exf5 12 a4 (or first 12 h4!?, with a4 to follow), White's bishop is very good and Black has nothing with which to oppose it. The superiority of White's dark-squared bishop over its light-squared adversary is a theme which will play an important role throughout this game.

11 ♘g3 *(D)*

B



11...♘g6?!

This is a serious inaccuracy; Black has overlooked an important tactical refinement. But in any case his position isn't simple to play. Euwe gives the following variation which favours White: 11...c4 12 ♗xf5!? ♘xf5 (12...exf5 13 ♕g5! is also bad for Black) 13 ♘xf5 exf5 14 a4, and again the bishop emerges to a3 – a theme that is important throughout the game. Black should have played 11...♗d7!? at once.

12 ♕d2 ♗d7

Petrosian might seem to have done the right thing in driving the white queen back from its active post and only then continuing his development. But as I said, there is something he has missed. Perhaps he should have played a preparatory 12...♕a5 or 12...♕c7.

13 ♖b1!

This apparently simple attack is the way to exploit Black's error on move 11.

13...♖b8

Black has to play this way and forfeit the right to castle queenside, which is extremely important in this situation. The natural 13...♕c7 is met by the strong retort 14 ♕g5!, when it turns out that by moving his knight to g6 Black was seriously weakening f5. As a result he has to make major positional concessions; the main line goes 14...cxd4 15 ♘xf5 exf5 16 cxd4 ♕c3+

17 ♕d2! ♕xd4 18 ♖xb7! ♕xe5+ (18...♘xe5 is even worse; after 19 ♗b2 ♘xd3+ 20 cxd3 ♕c5 21 0-0, Black can resign) 19 ♔d1, and Black is in deep trouble.

From this point on, Black's position steadily deteriorates, precisely because of his loss of the right to castle queenside.

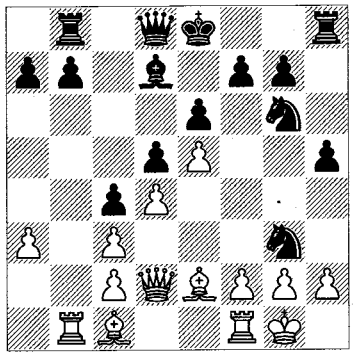
14 0-0 c4

On 14...h4 15 ♘xf5 exf5, White has the unpleasant reply 16 dxc5; for instance: 16...h3 17 g3 ♕c7 18 f4 with an indisputable plus.

15 ♗e2 ♘xg3 *(D)*

A thematic situation that is already familiar to us arises after 15...h4 16 ♘xf5 exf5 17 ♗f3 ♗e6 18 a4!, and there is nothing to oppose the dark-squared bishop.

W



16 fxg3!

This capture goes against the generally accepted principle that pawns should take towards the centre, but here it is not only useful but practically forced. The point is that right from the very opening, White was assenting to some permanent pawn weaknesses in return for the bishop-pair and a space advantage in the centre. If these assets aren't brought into play somehow or other, the weaknesses will gradually make themselves felt. The only way White can utilize his trumps is by exerting pressure with his pieces. You may recall that this is precisely what dynamics is all about. Hence the capture with the f-pawn, which makes White's pawn-structure 'uglier' still, is essential to give his pieces new open lines. This is another of those games in which all White's chances depend on playing actively. He is going to stick firmly to this policy.

I would add that at no stage in this game do the pawns play an independent role. Despite this, they exert an immense influence on events by restricting or enhancing the scope for piece-play by one side or the other.

16...h4

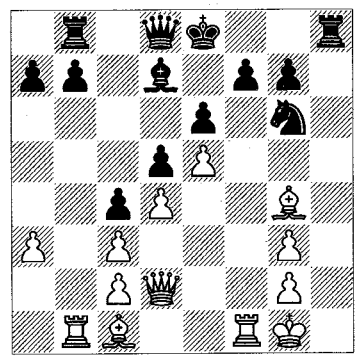
Black would like to block the advance of the a-pawn, but 16...♗a4 is met by the highly unpleasant 17 h4!, after which the h5-pawn is doomed.

17 ♗g4!?

A move with some thought behind it (see the further course of the game), but I would prefer an immediate 17 a4! hxg3 18 hxg3 ♗xa4 19 ♗a3 b5 20 ♖f2.

17...hxg3 18 hxg3 *(D)*

B



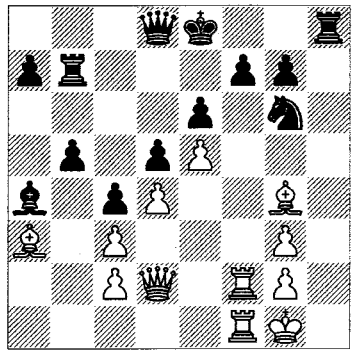
18...♕e7?

A strange decision, especially for such a profound positional player as Tigran Petrosian. Surely he couldn't have imagined that Stein would shrink from sacrificing a pawn! The indicated line was 18...♗a4!? 19 ♕f2 0-0 20 ♗e3. Although in Euwe's view White would still have a clear plus, such a turn of events is something that Black will soon only be able to dream about.

19 a4!

In this game, as we have said, the dynamic factors in the position are considerably more important than the static ones. That means that although static values are present, there is no way they can dominate the play just now; it is the difference in piece activity between the two sides that is all-important in shaping events. This explains why White lightly accepts all sorts of pawn weaknesses, and if he surrenders a pawn to bring his bishop out onto the key diagonal, this hardly even counts as a sacrifice! Black, for his part, is unfortunately in no position to utilize his superior pawn-structure.

19...♗xa4 20 ♖a1 b5 21 ♗a3 ♕d7 22 ♖f2 ♖b7 23 ♖af1 ♕d8 *(D)*



This position is the starting point for the most interesting variations in the game, even though many of them didn't actually occur.

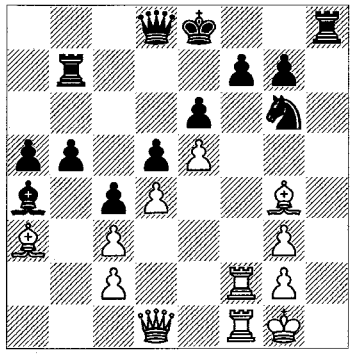
24 ♕d1?!

To my knowledge, all other annotators without exception give this move an exclamation mark. The correct move is revealed at the end of the note to Black's 24th move.

24...♖h6?

None of the annotators append any sign to this move. Presumably they take the hopelessness of Black's position for granted, a view which they support with some analysis:

a) 24...a5 *(D)* and now:



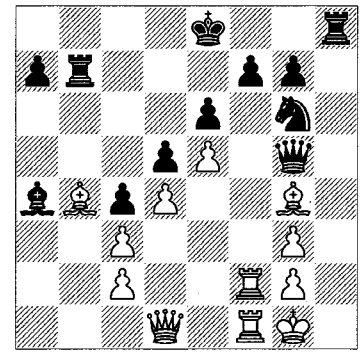
a1) 25 ♖xf7? ♖xf7 26 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 27 ♕f3+ ♔e8 28 ♗xe6 is supposed to win for White, but actually the result is the opposite after 28...♘xe5! 29 ♕f4 (29 ♕e3 b4 30 cxb4 axb4 31 ♗xb4 ♕b6 comes to the same thing) 29...b4 30 cxb4 axb4 31 ♗xb4 (or 31 ♕xe5 bxa3 –+) 31...♕b6 and Black eventually wins.

a2) The correct winning line for White is 25 ♗xe6! fxe6 26 ♕g4 ♘e7 27 ♕xg7 ♔d7 28 ♖f8 ♖xf8 29 ♖xf8 ♕xf8 30 ♕xf8 b4 31 cxb4 axb4 32 ♗c1.

b) 24...♕g5 (a line not given by anyone else, but an important one) 25 ♗c1 ♕d8 26 ♗h5!, with a decisive plus.

The important thing about this last variation is that it reveals the white bishop's sphere of responsibilities: the two diagonals a3-f8 and c1-h6. This being so, isn't there a chance of the bishop becoming overburdened? I had a think about this, and devised a move that I am proud of. (Here I must add that I have made it a rule to analyse a position myself first, and only then to call upon the help of my 'electronic friend'. If I tried doing it the other way round, my own faculties of comprehension would sink almost to absolute zero. So I am proud to have solved this problem within 6 or 7 minutes. A computer would take a few seconds over it!) My move was not given by any of the previous annotators! Here it is:

c) 24...b4!(!!). The critical continuation here is 25 ♗xb4, although taking with the pawn is conceivably better (in reply to 25 cxb4, Black's best move may be 25...♗b5, blocking the crucial diagonal). After 25...♕g5 *(D)*, there are two important variations:



c1) 26 ♗a3 ♕h6 (a perfectly acceptable alternative is 26...♕e3!? 27 ♕f3 ♕xf3 28 gxf3 ♘e7, with a roughly equal ending) 27 ♗h3 (a good reply to 27 ♖f3 seems to be 27...♘e7, and if 28 ♗c1?! then 28...♕h7!) 27...♕e3; and now in answer to the logical-seeming 28 ♕a1 there is 28...♖xh3!, leading to various lines in which Black holds his own: 29 gxh3 (not 29 ♗c1? ♕xg3 30 ♕xa4+ ♔f8 31 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 32 ♗a3+ ♔g8 33 ♕e8+ ♔h7 34 ♕xf7 ♕h2+ 35 ♔f2 ♘f4 –+) 29...♕xg3+ 30 ♖g2 (or 30

♔h1 ♕xh3+ 31 ♖h2 ♕g4! =) 30...♕e3+ 31 ♖ff2 ♘h4! 32 ♖xg7 ♗xc2 =.

c2) 26 ♕e2 is of crucial importance for evaluating the events at move 24. However, after 26...♕h6! 27 ♗h3 ♘f8! Black methodically succeeds in creating counterplay: 28 ♖f4 ♘g6 29 ♖4f2 ♘f8, and if White doesn't agree to a repetition, there can follow 30 ♗a3 ♘h7 31 ♖f4 ♕g6! 32 ♖h4 ♗xc2, when the position is complicated and possibly better for Black. From this line we can see how high the price of a tempo is in the present situation.

However that may be, in all the above cases Black fights actively and not unsuccessfully – in contrast to the actual game, where everything is over in a moment. And yet up until his 24th move White was playing logically and powerfully. If we try looking for an improvement at just that critical moment, then in keeping with the theory of 'candidate moves', 24 ♕e2! will come into our heads. After what we have just seen, the point of this move is obvious: the e3-square is now under control, and following 24...b4! (24...♕g5 25 ♗c1 ♕d8 fails to 26 ♗h5 ♗xc2 27 ♕xc2 ♖xh5 28 ♖xf7!, and wins) 25 ♗xb4 ♕g5 26 ♗a3 ♕h6 27 ♗h3 ♕h5 28 ♕e1!? ♗c6 29 ♕a1, I judge the position to be clearly in White's favour.

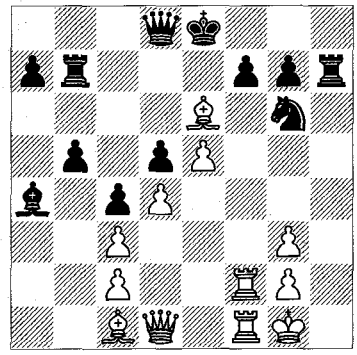
In the game, the conclusion was:

25 ♗c1! ♖h7

On 25...♖h8, White wins by 26 ♗h5! (much better than 26 ♗xe6 fxe6 27 ♕g4 ♘xe5! 28 dxe5 ♕b6 with good defensive chances) 26...b4 27 ♖xf7.

26 ♗xe6! *(D)*

Here this move *is* correct! Against 26 ♗h5, Black could play on with 26...♘h8.



B

1-0

Petrosian resigned in view of 26...fxe6 27 ♕g4 or 26...♘h8 27 ♕f3! fxe6 28 ♕f8+ ♔d7 29 ♕d6+.

The final position deserves a diagram as a convincing example of how one side's forces acting in full cooperation are overwhelmingly superior to the scattered units of the opponent. Don't forget this.

Those who have read my books *Chess Recipes from the Grandmaster's Kitchen* and *Lessons in Chess Strategy* will have seen examples of Tigran Petrosian's positional solutions that are stupendous in their profundity. Yet all of them are concerned primarily with the static factors of the position. In this game, Petrosian went wrong more than once (on moves 18 and 24) in situations where it was essential to think in a 'dynamic' fashion – which would mean forgetting (though only temporarily!) about all the static elements, while focusing on the mobility of the pieces and their scope for concerted action.

Something else too will have been noticed by anyone who reads my books attentively. I like to illustrate a theme by giving examples in pairs, or occasionally in larger groups. This greatly helps to make a variety of ideas and methods stick in the memory. Here too, then, I submit another game featuring the same motif that is fresh in your mind.

Anand – Shirov
Frankfurt rpd 2000

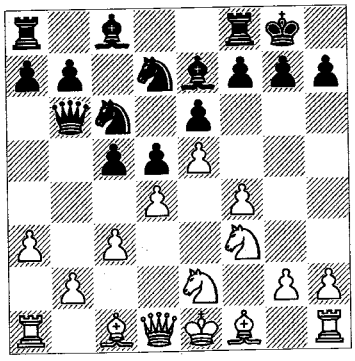
As I have explained before in my writings, I feel that sometimes even the rapidplay games by *top* players are highly instructive, because "behind every move stands the chess-player's knowledge, gained by long hours of daily work, and his talent which enables him to find, sometimes in seconds, solutions that are inaccessible to other titled players without a long period of reflection." (see *Understanding the Leningrad Dutch*, pp. 101-2.)

1 e4 e6

Anand and Shirov have played a large number of games against each other, many of which opened with the French Defence.

2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7 5 ♘ce2 c5 6 c3 ♘c6 7 f4 ♕b6 8 ♘f3 ♗e7 9 a3 0-0 *(D)*

W



10 h4

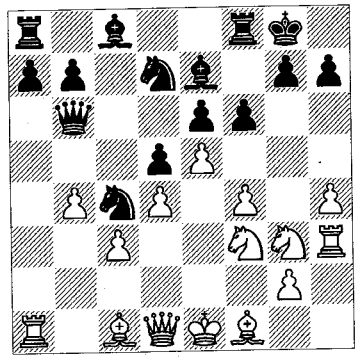
Another method begins with 10 b4, but it isn't surprising that in a rapidplay game Anand chooses a more direct and aggressive plan of attack against the king. With limited thinking time, defending is always more difficult.

10...f6 11 ♖h3 ♘a5?

Anand judges this move to be a positional error, abandoning pressure against the central point d4, and I can only agree with him.

12 b4! cxb4 13 axb4 ♘c4 14 ♘g3 *(D)*

B



14...a5

Shirov must have had this plan in mind when making his 11th move. Anand considers Black's position already to be quite difficult, and advises him to venture on 14...fxe5!? 15 fxe5 ♘dxe5 16 dxe5 ♘xe5. Black would definitely not have full compensation for the piece, but the struggle would be intensified, and when playing to a fast time-limit, activity is a valuable asset.

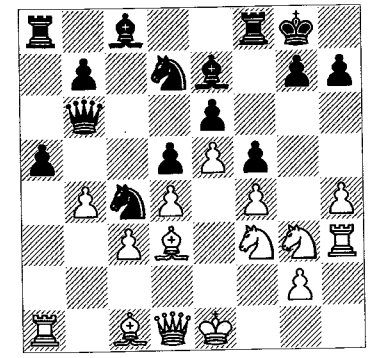
15 ♗d3!

It seems strange to give such a natural move an exclamation mark, but I award it for consistency in pursuing plans which are nowhere near as simple and unproblematic as may appear at first sight. The next few moves will confirm this.

15...f5 *(D)*

Confirmation is supplied by an important variation which Anand indicates. The attempt to relieve the tension in the centre with 15...fxe5 is refuted by 16 ♗xh7+! ♔xh7 17 ♘g5+ ♗xg5 (or 17...♔g8 18 ♕h5 ♘f6 19 ♕g6, and there is no defence against ♘h5) 18 hxg5+ ♔g8 19 ♕h5 and White wins.

W



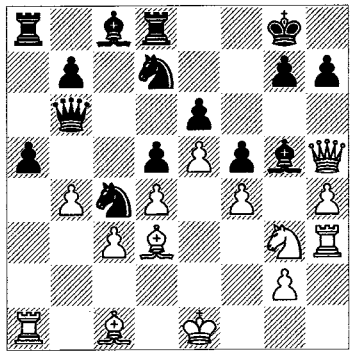
16 ♘g5!

Everything that was said about White's previous move can also apply to this one – in fact even more so, as will presently become clear.

16...♖d8!

The most obvious reply here is 16...h6. Perhaps surprisingly, Anand doesn't even mention it in his notes to the game, although he must have considered it in his calculations. How does White continue? I had to look for the solution myself, and it proved to be far from simple, although the general direction that events must take is obvious. Thus, 17 ♗xc4! dxc4 18 ♕h5 ♗xb4 (the following line shows how other moves would be met: 18...♕c6 19 ♕g6 hxg5 20 hxg5 ♕xg2 21 ♕h5!, and Black is helpless) 19 ♘e2! ♖a6 20 ♕g6 hxg5 21 hxg5, and now Black has no defence whatever against the queen returning to h5, etc. The chief difficulty here, and quite a considerable one, is that nearly all White's moves are without any direct threats. This makes calculation a good deal harder. If Black captures with the bishop instead, the continuation is 16...♗xg5 17 hxg5 ♖d8 18 ♗xc4 dxc4, and now we see an idea familiar from Stein-Petrosian: 19 b5! ♕xb5 20 ♗a3, with consequences that are also familiar.

17 ♕h5 ♗xg5 *(D)*

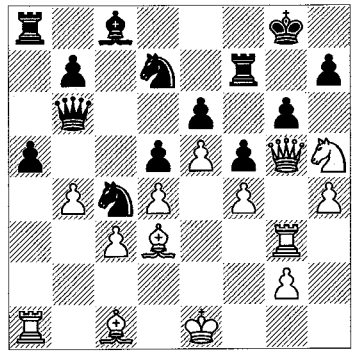


Now the tempting capture 18 hxg5 is met by 18...♘f8 19 ♗xc4 dxc4 20 b5 ♕xb5 21 ♗a3 ♕e8, when Black has beaten off the first wave of his opponent's onslaught. The fact that Black managed to discover such a fine defensive idea, which relies entirely on accurate analysis, within limited thinking time, is the reason for the exclamation mark after his 16th move. But then White too has figured it all out! The exclamation mark for his next move will also now be comprehensible.

18 ♕xg5! ♖f8

Not 18...♘f8 which loses to 19 ♘h5 ♖d7 20 ♘f6+.

19 ♘h5 ♖f7 20 ♖g3 g6 *(D)*

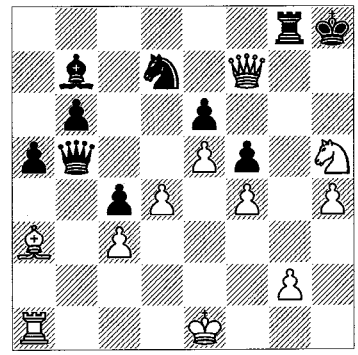


A characteristic situation has arisen, and an important one for the problems examined in this book. White is exerting pressure on his opponent's position with all his developed pieces, but at the moment he can't extract anything decisive from this pressure. In such situations it's always useful to find a way of bringing new forces into the game. It so happens that the solution is the same device that we have seen before:

21 ♗xc4! dxc4 22 b5! ♕xb5

Black can't do anything to stop the bishop from occupying the crucial diagonal in the way that is so familiar to us. This invasion decides the outcome of the game.

23 ♗a3 b6 24 ♕h6 ♗b7 25 ♖xg6+ hxg6 26 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 27 ♕xf7 ♖g8 *(D)*



White can now win by 28 ♘f6 ♘xf6 29 exf6! (note how a new fighting unit joins in the battle!) 29...♕e8 30 ♕xe8 ♖xe8 31 f7, but Anand has seen a more attractive and quicker method.

28 ♗f8! 1-0

If 28...♘xf8, then 29 ♘f6 leads to mate in a few moves.

The game turned out to be an excellent illustration of what I said at the beginning, about the value of games played to a fast time-limit. There is no doubt that many a strong grandmaster would have been glad to play the white side of a game like this in a tournament with the normal time-limit. (Some hope! Such things are not given to everyone.)

And now, another game by Leonid Stein in which statics are relegated to the background at a very early stage.

Stein – Smyslov

USSR Cht (Moscow) 1972

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 e4 ♗b7 5 ♕e2

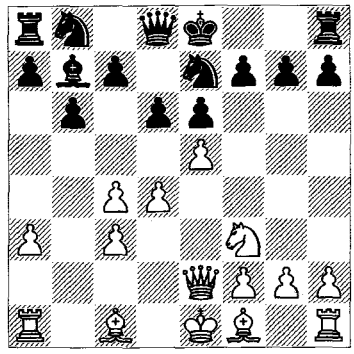
This move was played for the first time in this very game.

5...♗b4 6 e5 ♘g8 7 d4 d6

A more accurate line is considered to be 7...♘e7!? 8 ♗d2 0-0 9 0-0-0 d5!, as in Korchnoi-Karpov, Moscow Ct (3) 1974.

8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 bxc3 ♘e7 *(D)*

W



10 h4!

An excellent decision. In this way White seizes some space on the kingside, sets his sights on the dark squares where Black's lack of a bishop may tell, and prepares to bring his rook out via the h-file. A similar idea is familiar in the French Defence.

10...♘d7 11 h5 ♗xf3?

Alas, this move proves to be a serious error. I think it will be useful to look into its causes. In this situation Black's bishop obviously seems a very important piece. Nor is there any doubt that this kind of positional consideration was extremely obvious to Vasily Smyslov. If he nonetheless decided to part with his bishop, presenting the enemy queen with an ideal square on a key diagonal into the bargain – in other words, making huge positional concessions – then he must have thought there were the most serious of reasons for it.

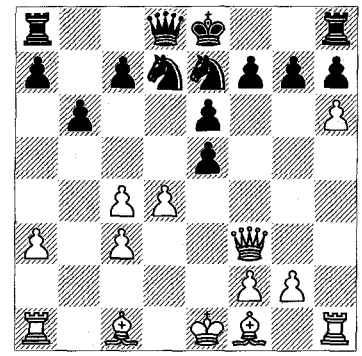
As I see it, he will have felt that White had taken too many positional liberties by seizing space on the flank (with h4-h5) while his centre was under attack. In broad terms, the way to refute this kind of aggressive strategy was well-known as early as the 19th century: you should deliver a counter-blow in the centre. In White's position the obvious target for such a counter-attack is the e5-pawn – which the f3-knight is guarding. Thus the train of thought that led to Black's 11th move is elucidated.

But ... there are quite a few 'buts'! In the first place, given the high price that Black is paying to advance his cause, the question arises whether he has weighed up all the circumstances correctly. In particular, is White's centre really all that weak, and does Black really have such powerful means of attacking it? Secondly, with the action initiated by Black's 11th move, the position suddenly becomes more tense, the opposing pieces come into direct contact, and, as always in such situations, numerous variations crop up, demanding exact analysis. The sharper the position, the more its evaluation depends on precision and depth of calculation. General considerations are not discarded, but *temporarily* (until the gunsmoke of tactical crossfire settles!) they recede into the background. Thus, *in cases where one side opts for a sudden sharpening of the play, positional assessment tends to apply not so much to the initial situation as to the one reached at the end of a line of analysis.* Accuracy of calculation is of course vitally important here. And it was in that department that Smyslov, as we shall see, made a mistake; that is, he miscalculated a very important variation.

All this means that for the moment, shelving any aggressive designs, he ought to have parried White's highly unpleasant threat of h6 by playing 11...h6 himself. White would evidently have replied 12 ♖h3, covering his knight with the rook.

12 ♕xf3 dxe5 13 h6 *(D)*

B



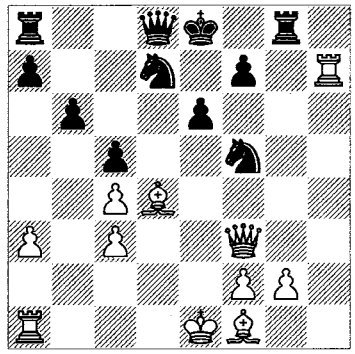
13...gxh6?!

Black carries on with his plan, not yet realizing the flaw in his calculations. Objectively speaking, now was his last chance to avoid major trouble. He should have played 13...g6!?. Then after 14 dxe5 c6 15 ♗g5 ♕c7 White would have the advantage, but Black could put up a stubborn fight.

14 ♗xh6 exd4 15 ♗g7 ♖g8 16 ♖xh7 ♘f5

By now Black is in a bad way whatever he does. On 16...d3, White retains a clear plus with either 17 ♖d1 or 17 ♗xd3, since 17...♖xg7? loses to 18 ♖xg7 ♘e5 19 ♕f6.

17 ♗xd4 c5 *(D)*



This is the position Smyslov had in mind when he started the whole operation in move 11. If the white bishop now had to move, Black would be in very good shape after 18 ♗e3 (or 18 ♗h8 ♔e7! 19 ♕h5 ♕e8) 18...♘f6 19 ♕c6+ ♔e7.

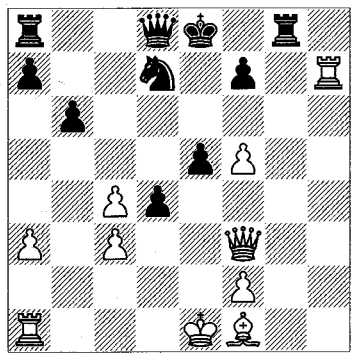
Unfortunately White proves to have something much stronger, so that the diagram position must be assessed as clearly advantageous for him. Here, then, is the move Black missed in his previous calculations:

18 g4! cxd4

Black also does badly with 18...♘d6 19 ♗g7 ♘f8 20 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 21 ♖d1! ♖c8 22 ♕f4!.

19 gxf5 e5 *(D)*

As Stein himself pointed out, Black comes off even worse from 19...♘e5 20 ♕e4 dxc3 21 ♖a2! (only not 21 ♖d1 c2! 22 ♖xd8+?, as after 22...♖xd8 23 ♕xc2 ♘f3+ 24 ♔e2 ♘d4+ it is Black who wins). Taking Stein's variation further, we arrive at 21...f6 22 f4 exf5 23 ♕h1! ♘f7 (or 23...♘g6 24 ♖e2+) 24 ♕b7! and wins.

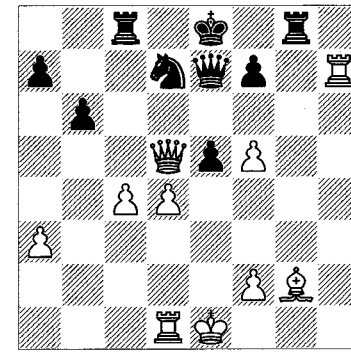


20 ♕d5 ♖f8 21 cxd4 ♖c8 22 ♖d1

Perhaps 22 0-0-0! ♕e7 23 ♖h3! is even stronger.

22...♕e7 23 ♗g2! ♖g8 *(D)*

At this point all variations confirm the overwhelming superiority of White's position. For example, 23...♕xa3 24 c5! exd4 (24...bxc5 25 dxe5 is also bad for Black) 25 ♕xd4 ♕a5+ 26 ♖d2! ♕b5 27 c6 ♘e5 28 f4, or 23...exd4+ 24 ♔f1 ♕c5 25 ♕e4+ ♔d8 26 ♖xd4.



24 ♕b7! ♖xc4?

Black commits a gross blunder, evidently in a mutual time-scramble. We have seen how sharp and intense the struggle has become. An oversight like this is therefore excusable, and doesn't really spoil the impression that the game makes. Black's last chance lay in 24...exd4+ 25 ♔f1 ♕c5 26 ♗d5 ♖f8.

25 dxe5?

An outstanding tactician and a brilliant master of blitz chess, Stein himself now misses the elementary 25 ♕a8+ ♕d8 26 ♕d5, when Black doesn't even get off with losing 'just' the exchange – as we see from 26...♕f6 27 ♕xc4 ♖xg2 28 ♕c8+ ♔e7 29 ♕xd7+!. It seems that blitz chess and time-trouble are not the same thing!

25...♕xe5+ 26 ♔f1 ♕b5 27 ♔g1 ♕c6

It now appears that White has everything accounted for. Black is helpless, as the following variations show: 27...♖cg4 28 ♕c8+ ♔e7 29 ♖xd7+ ♔f6 30 ♖hxf7+; or 27...♖xg2+ 28 ♕xg2! ♕xf5 29 ♕g8+ ♔e7 (29...♘f8 30 ♖d8+ ♔xd8 31 ♕xf8+ ♔d7 32 ♖xf7+) 30 ♖xf7+.

28 ♕xc6 ♖xc6

Now a pretty tactical stroke decides the game:

29 ♖h8! ♖cg6 30 fxg6 ♖xh8 31 ♗c6 ♖g8 32 ♗xd7+ ♔e7 33 ♗f5 fxg6 34 ♖d7+ ♔f6 35 ♗d3 1-0

This was an impressive game which reveals that remarkable player Leonid Stein in the most

attractive light. Why was a single error by Black enough to make his game go steadily downhill? The answer fits in perfectly with our topic. With his critical 11th move, as we have said already, Smyslov gave up his own active bishop and dramatically increased the activity of the enemy queen in order to land a counterblow against the white centre. To visualize the outcome that he must have had in mind, *look again at the positions in the note to Black's 17th move*. There White still retains some activity for his pieces, but it is not dangerous to Black, while the defects of the white pawn-structure are obvious and will remain fixed for the long term. In other words, we can formulate Black's plan by saying that he aimed to attain a static advantage while conceding a temporary dynamic ascendancy to his opponent in return. In the event, however, the dynamic ascendancy proved anything but temporary, and outweighed everything else. Similar misadventures are examined elsewhere in this book, and I also treated the issue quite seriously in Chapter 9 ('Static and Dynamic Features') of *Lessons in Chess Strategy*, when discussing the game Lautier-Anand. It just goes to show that the conflict between statics and dynamics is an eternal aspect of chess, and as long as the game exists, its two fundamental factors will clash with each other on the board.

To pursue the subject further, I will present one example from my own practice. It may seem rather vainglorious to put it here, in among games by the most illustrious masters, but to quote a line from a very good Soviet movie: "If a man gets the chance to boast, he'll do it, without bothering about the consequences!" Aside from that most important of reasons, there is another. The game in question is yet another fairly good example of how a player's dynamic advantage prevents the opponent from utilizing the obvious static merits of his position.

Beim – Herzog
Vienna 2003

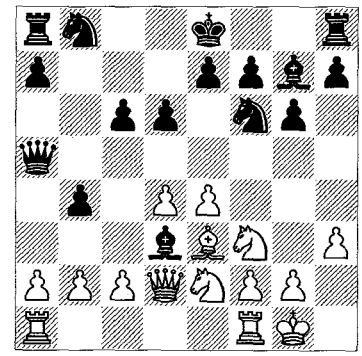
1 ♘f3 g6 2 e4 ♗g7 3 d4 d6 4 ♘c3 ♘f6 5 ♗e3 c6 6 ♕d2 ♕a5 7 h3 b5

This move does sometimes occur, but theory advises Black to refrain from it and play ...♘bd7, either at once or after castling, and then to carry out ...e5. Shirov, for example, played that way in 1995.

8 ♗d3 b4?!

Continuing on the same path, but it doesn't look a very promising one. Instead Black usually plays 8...♘bd7 9 0-0 0-0.

9 ♘e2 ♗a6 10 0-0 ♗xd3 *(D)*



The first critical moment in the game has now arrived. White has to choose which way to take the bishop.

11 cxd3!?

I took with the pawn at once; the thinking time had been used before my previous move. (One of the useful things about annotating your own games is that you can talk about the reasons for a particular decision without having to make any conjectures. You can simply tell the reader what you were thinking about, and what variations you saw during the game.) In this case, I realized that I had to make a fundamental choice with far-reaching consequences. If White opts to continue quietly with 11 ♕xd3, the game could go something like this: 11...♕b5 12 ♕xb5 cxb5 13 ♘g3 ♘bd7, with no particular advantage for White. "But then," I thought to myself, "Black hasn't played the opening as well as he could, and as a result (a) his queenside has been weakened, and (b) he's behind in development. So I want to get something more out of the position, and taking on d3 with the pawn promises to do that. Of course, the minus points are obvious. The white pawn-mass in the centre loses its flexibility, and its mobility. I might win the b4-pawn [by playing a3], but at what a cost – I'd be giving myself doubled isolated pawns on a half-open file (that is, a file that's open only for my opponent!), and I'd have to be careful

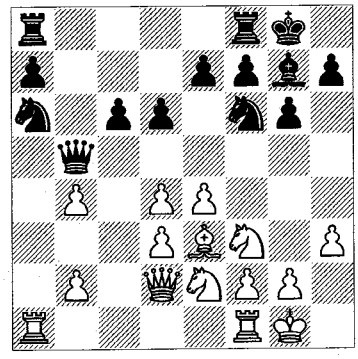
not to lose them both! On the other hand the play gets sharper, and what with my better development and more forces in the centre, I'll be able to seize the *initiative* – and then my opponent won't be able to get at my weaknesses." There will be a chapter on the initiative later!

In White's train of thought, then, a conflict is enacted between the static advantages which he is willing to concede to his opponent, and the dynamic advantages he is securing in return by force, exploiting the consequences of Black's opening play. And of course, when one side deliberately sets out to sharpen the struggle like this, the analysis of variations plays a more important role with every move.

11...0-0

If Black resolves to defend his b-pawn and plays 11...♕b5 to that end, he is falling even further behind in development, and the situation could become dangerous for him: 12 e5! ♘d5 (a thoroughly bad line is 12...dxe5 13 dxe5 ♘d5 14 ♘ed4 ♕b7 15 ♗h6 0-0 16 ♘f5 +–) 13 exd6 exd6 14 ♗f4 ♘xf4 15 ♕xf4, and if now 15...♕d5, then after 16 a3 bxa3? (of course 16...0-0 is better, though 17 axb4 ♖d8 18 ♖fe1 ♕b3 19 ♕d2 still gives White a clear advantage) 17 ♘c3, White has a virtually won position.

12 a3 ♕b5 13 axb4 ♘a6 *(D)*



This is the second critical moment for White. He has to attack the black queen, but there is more than one way to do so, and the correct one must be chosen. No general considerations can help here. The variations need to be worked out, and they go like this:

a) 14 ♖a5 ♕b7 15 b5 cxb5 16 ♖fa1 ♘c7 17 d5 a6 18 ♘ed4 e6, and perhaps the position even looks better for Black. What are the white rooks doing all by themselves, stranded on the a-file?

b) 14 ♘c3?! ♕b7 15 e5 is well answered by 15...♘e8!, and again it isn't too clear how White is to continue.

Therefore, I chose:

14 e5! ♘e8

Or:

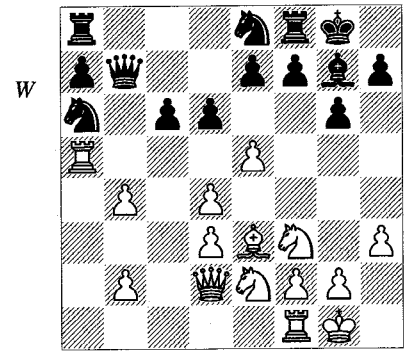
a) After 14...♘d7 15 ♘c3 ♕b7 16 exd6 exd6 17 ♗f4, White's advantage is obvious.

b) Similarly after 14...dxe5 15 dxe5 ♘d5 16 ♘c3 ♕b7 17 b5 ♘xe3 18 bxc6! ♘xf1 19 cxb7 ♘xd2 20 bxa8♕ ♖xa8 21 ♘xd2 ♘b4 22 d4, White has good winning chances.

c) The consequences of 14...♘d5 are the most difficult to follow: 15 ♘c3 ♕b6 16 b5!, and now after 16...♘xe3 (16...♘xc3 17 bxc3 cxb5 18 ♖fb1 ♖fc8 19 c4 b4 20 d5 ♕b7 21 d4! gives White a substantial positional advantage with equal material) 17 fxe3! cxb5 18 ♘d5 ♕b7 19 e4! White has a very significant plus; this is shown by variations such as 19...dxe5 (after 19...e6 20 ♘f6+ ♔h8 21 ♕f4 dxe5 22 ♕h4 h6 23 ♘xe5, White has a dangerous attack) 20 ♕a5, with an overwhelming position.

The move played seems the most accurate, despite its passivity. However, now that the black knight has decided on its position, White can make his own choice.

15 ♖a5! ♕b7 *(D)*

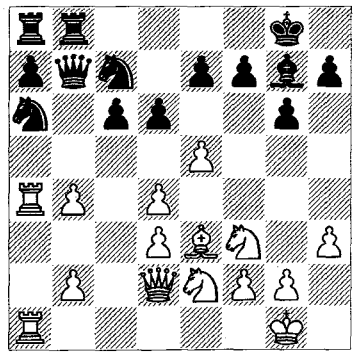


16 ♖a4 ♘ec7

This is the quickest way for Black to unite his pieces. If instead he plays 16...♘ac7, attempting not only to develop them but to *coordinate* them (this theme will be examined in earnest in Chapter 2, 'Development'), then after 17 ♕c2 ♘d5 18 ♗d2 White still has a clear plus.

17 ♖fa1 ♖fb8 *(D)*

W



It might seem that Black has got what he wants, that he will win his pawn back and obtain a good game. However, a key factor in the position now takes effect. Almost all the black pieces have crowded into a narrow sector at a distance from the centre and, especially, from the kingside, leaving the bishop all alone to take care of it – which naturally is insufficient. Understandably, therefore, White immediately strikes out in that direction.

18 ♗f4! d5?

A mistake, after which Black's position is very difficult. But other variations also testify to White's significant plus:

a) 18...dxe5 19 dxe5 ♘xb4 (on 19...e6 20 ♗e3, Black is hard-pressed to find moves) 20 e6! ♘bd5 21 exf7+, and Black's king is in a dangerous position.

b) The natural-seeming 18...♗f8 leads to the most interesting and striking variations. White now initiates play on the kingside, and the black pieces can't get across in time; keep this situation in mind – we shall come across similar ones again. 19 ♗h6! ♗g7 (that this move is essential can be seen from variations such as 19...♘xb4 20 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 21 ♕h6+) and now White has an attractive and convincing way to solve the problems of the position: 20 ♗xg7! ♔xg7 21 exd6 exd6 22 d5! cxd5 (White also has an obvious plus after 22...♘xb4 23 ♕c3+ ♔g8 24 dxc6 ♕b6 25 ♘ed4, or 22...c5 23 bxc5 ♘xc5 24 ♖h4 h5 25 b4 ♘d7 26 ♘ed4! ♘xd5 27 ♖xh5! gxh5 28 ♘f5+ winning) 23 ♘ed4! ♘xb4 (23...♕b6 is met by a piece sacrifice which will be a recurring theme in all the other lines too: 24 ♘f5+! gxf5 25 ♕g5+ ♔f8 26 ♕f6 ♔e8 27 ♘d4 ♔d7 28 ♖xa6 ♘xa6 29 ♕xf7+ ♔c8 30 ♖c1+ ♘c7 31 ♘e6 and wins) 24 ♖e1! ♘e8 (on 24...♘ba6, White again decides the game with 25 ♘f5+! gxf5 26 ♖h4 ♖h8 27 ♕h6+ ♔g8 28 ♖h5; the same familiar sacrifice occurs after 24...♘ca6 25 ♘f5+! gxf5 26 ♕g5+ ♔f8 27 ♕f6 ♔g8 28 ♘h4 +–; Black also loses with 24...♘c6 25 ♘xc6 ♕xc6 26 ♖h4 h5 27 ♖c1 ♕b6 28 ♕c3+ +–) 25 ♘h4! (25 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 26 ♖xb4 ± is also perfectly playable) 25...a5 (or 25...♔g8 26 ♖xb4 ♕xb4 27 ♖xe8+ +–; another equally hopeless try is 25...♔f8 26 ♕h6+ ♔g8 27 ♘hf5! gxf5 28 ♘xf5 +–) 26 ♘df5+ ♔g8 27 ♕h6, and White wins.

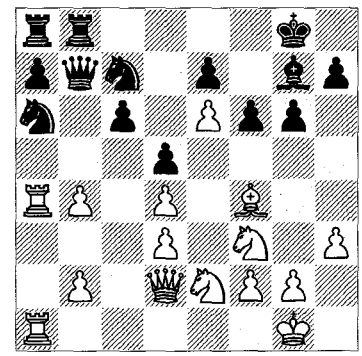
c) Black's best option is probably to take the pawn with 18...♘xb4. Then after 19 exd6 exd6 20 ♗xd6 ♘bd5 21 ♘c3 ♖d8 there would still be plenty of play ahead, notwithstanding White's undoubted plus.

Now an obvious thrust follows, designed to retain the key diagonal for the white bishop.

19 e6! f6?! *(D)*

After this, Black will be completely helpless. He had to take the pawn with 19...fxe6, keeping his bishop's diagonal open and making the f-file available to a rook. Even so, after 20 ♘c1! ♖f8 21 ♘b3 White would have a big advantage.

W



Now, exploiting the helpless position of the black pieces, White brings his last reserves into play, and the game quickly ends.

20 ♘c1! ♕c8 21 ♘b3 ♖b5 22 ♘e1! ♖ab8 23 ♘c2 ♗f8 24 ♘c5 ♘xc5 25 dxc5

Black should have resigned now, but there followed:

25...♘xe6 26 ♗xb8 ♕xb8 27 ♖xa7 ♔f7 28 ♖a8 ♕e5 29 ♖e1 ♕f5 30 ♖xe6 ♕xe6 31 ♘d4 ♕d7

The last phantom of a hope was 31...♗h6 32 ♕xh6 ♕e1+ 33 ♔h2 ♕e5+, but even this

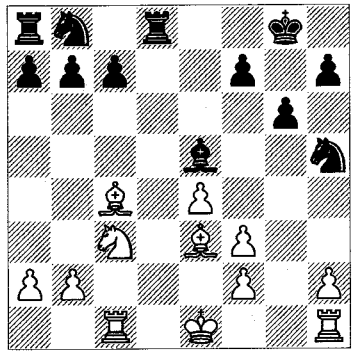
doesn't work: 34 f4 ♕xd4 35 ♕f8+ ♔e6 36 ♕c8+ ♔f7 37 ♕g8#.

32 ♘xb5 cxb5 33 ♕c1 ♕c6 34 ♖b8 1-0

At this point it will be highly appropriate to look at a game with the opposite outcome: the player who has acquired static advantages succeeds in extinguishing his opponent's activity and exploiting his own gains.

Lputian – Ivanchuk
Elista OL 1998

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♗f4 0-0 6 ♖c1 dxc4 7 e4 ♗g4 8 ♗xc4 ♘h5 9 ♗e3 ♗xf3 10 gxf3 e5 11 dxe5 ♗xe5 12 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(D)*



13 b4?!

As Ivanchuk indicates, this is a novelty but not a very successful one. A line known to theory is 13 0-0 ♘d7 14 ♖fd1 ♘b6 15 ♗b3 ♘f4 16 ♔f1 c6 17 ♖b1 ♘d3 with equality, Novikov-C.Horvath, Nova Gorica 1997.

13...♘f4!

It's essential to seize this important blockading square; thus a much weaker choice would be 13...♘c6? 14 ♘d5.

14 ♘d5?

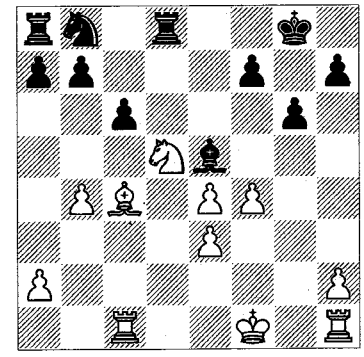
White endeavours to repulse or exchange the strong enemy knight, but evidently goes about this in the wrong way. An improvement seems to be 14 0-0!? ♘c6! (Ivanchuk's exclamation mark) 15 b5 (15 a3? is a good deal weaker: 15...♘d4 16 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 17 ♘d5 c6, with a clear and lasting advantage to Black) 15...♘d4 16 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 17 ♘d5, and although Black retains a plus, it is only slight.

14...♘g2+ 15 ♔f1

The whole point is that 15 ♔e2 would be bad on account of 15...c6 16 ♘e7+ (16 ♖hg1 also doesn't work: 16...cxd5 17 ♗xd5 ♘f4+ 18 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 19 ♗xb7 ♗xc1 20 ♖xc1 ♘d7 21 ♗xa8 ♖xa8) 16...♔f8 17 ♗c5 ♘f4+ 18 ♔f1 (18 ♔e3? ♗d6 19 ♗xd6 ♘g2+) 18...♔e8, and the white pieces are stuck fast. White probably made a miscalculation in one or other of the variations, leading to his weak 14th move.

15...♘xe3+ 16 fxe3 c6 17 f4 *(D)*

Ivanchuk gives the variation 17 ♘f4 ♗xf4 18 exf4 ♖d2 19 ♔e1 ♖b2, and assesses the resulting position as only slightly better for Black. If this is indeed the case, White should have gone into that line. Yet even then, it appears that quite difficult problems would have awaited him.



From here, the game enters a phase of sharp play. The point is that in order to maintain his advantage, which is based on his opponent's pawn weaknesses, Black is forced to engage in some sharp tactical skirmishes to extinguish the activity which White has in compensation.

17...cxd5!

This is the only way to preserve the whole of Black's advantage. The time to 'pacify' the position has not yet come, as we can see from 17...♗d6 18 ♘f6+ ♔g7, when White has the important counter-stroke 19 ♖d1!. There can follow 19...♔xf6 (not 19...b5? 20 ♖xd6!) 20 e5+ ♔e7 21 exd6+ ♖xd6 22 ♖xd6 ♔xd6 23 ♗xf7 ♘a6 24 a3 ♘c7 25 ♔f2 a5 26 h4, and White obtains real counterplay; or 19...♘a6 20 ♗xa6 bxa6 21 e5 ♗xb4 22 ♔e2, and the position can hardly be won.

18 ♗xd5 ♘c6

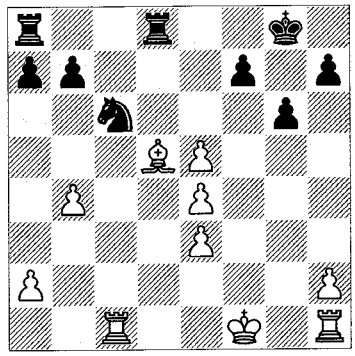
This is the essential follow-up to the decision taken last move. Black can't be at all interested

in 18...♖xd5 19 exd5 ♗d6 20 ♖c8+ or 18...♗b2 19 ♖c2 ♗a3 20 ♗xb7.

19 fxe5 *(D)*

Necessary. In Ivanchuk's view, after 19 ♗xc6 bxc6 20 fxe5 ♖d2 Black has a sizeable plus. Since all Black's subsequent play in the actual game will be based on breaking through to the opponent's second rank, it will be useful to take this variation further so that we can better understand the strength of this threat. Thus, 21 a3 (21 ♖xc6 turns out thoroughly badly after 21...♖xa2 22 ♖g1 ♖d8 23 ♖d6 ♖c8, and the black rooks will double on the second rank with decisive effect) 21...a5 22 h4 axb4 23 axb4 ♖a4!?, and by now Black's big advantage is quite plain to see.

B



19...♘xb4!

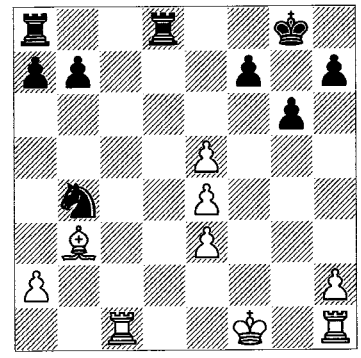
As before, Ivanchuk proceeds with extreme accuracy to stay on top. After 19...♘xe5?! 20 ♔e2 his advantage would be purely formal in character, and could hardly be developed any further. There is one thing I would like to repeat: realizing that he has the advantage and understanding that it rests purely on weaknesses in the white position, Ivanchuk isn't afraid of continuations in which his opponent maintains genuine counterplay. In this sense, the game we are looking at is by no means an exception – on the contrary, it rather represents the norm. Very often, in order to preserve an advantage of the static type, you have to go over to defence for a certain period, although as a rule this means *active* defence. From this moment on, the play features nothing but blows and immediate counter-blows, and becomes so spectacular that interesting and important positions could be diagrammed after literally every move.

20 ♗b3 *(D)*

Ivanchuk points out that White has a choice of continuations here such as 20 e6? ♘xd5 21 exf7+ ♔xf7 22 exd5 ♖xd5 23 ♖c7+ ♔e6. Let us take this further: 24 ♖xh7 ♖d2 25 ♖xb7 ♖f8+ and Black wins.

There is another line that I like much better and which offers White the best chances of saving the game: 20 ♗xb7!? ♖ab8 21 ♖c7 ♖d2 22 ♖g1 ♘a6!? (Black can preserve some advantage with 22...♖bd8 23 ♖g2 ♖d1+ 24 ♔e2 ♖1d7!?, but it isn't clear how big it is) 23 ♖c8+ ♖xc8 24 ♗xc8 ♖xa2 (24...♘c5 allows the white king's rook, which takes no part in other variations, to come into play with 25 ♖g2 – which can't be to Black's liking) 25 e6 ♔f8 26 ♖g5! ♘b4 27 ♖b5 a5. Black has the advantage, but I think White has fair prospects of salvation. Lputian probably avoided this line because he missed something in the analysis.

B



20...♖d2!

Again Black plays the best move, which like all the foregoing ones is based on a profound evaluation of positions arising from a variety of lines, as well as on exact calculation – which focuses not so much on his own actions and attacks as on counterstrokes to answer his opponent's blows; in my view, calculations of this sort are the most difficult aspect of chess analysis.

As Ivanchuk explains, 20...♘d3?! is much weaker: 21 ♖c7 ♖ac8 (or 21...♘xe5 22 ♔e2 ♖d7 23 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 24 ♖c1, with strong counterplay for White) 22 ♖e7! ♘c5 23 ♔e2 ♘xb3 24 axb3, and at the end of it all, White proves to have everything in order.

21 ♖c7 ♖f8!

Not, of course, 21...♘d3 22 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 23 e6.

22 ♖g1

Seeing that 22 ♖xb7 ♖c8 23 ♔e1 ♖b2 is no good, White strives to mobilize his reserves. This is just the kind of variation that Black needed to calculate.

22...♘a6!

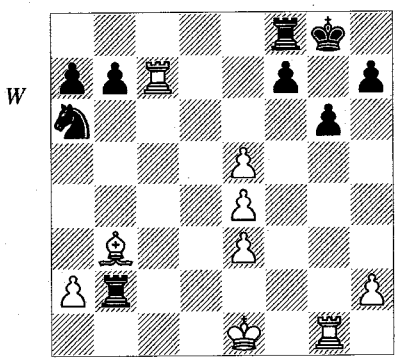
White can only dream about 22...♖xh2 23 ♖g2!, when all his pieces are finally in play. In such situations, every tempo is worth its weight in gold. But the interesting thing is not so much this obvious variation as the fact that the sole correct move in this position, together with the analysis stemming from it, had to be foreseen by Black when he made his 19th move – a real *tour de force*!

23 ♔e1

Taking the pawn straight away leads to the following variation: 23 ♖xb7 ♖c8 24 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 25 ♔e1 ♖xh2 26 ♔d1 ♘c5 27 ♖f1 ♘xb7 28 ♗e6+ ♔e7 29 ♗xc8 ♘c5 30 ♖f6 ♖xa2, with a won position.

23...♖b2! *(D)*

Only so. Ivanchuk gives 23...♖xh2? 24 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 25 ♖f1, or 23...♖xa2? 24 ♖xf7 ♖a1+ 25 ♔e2 ♖xg1 26 ♖f1+!.



24 ♖c3

White flinches and sounds the retreat, which, given his agglomeration of weaknesses, is tantamount to resignation. For better or worse, he had to keep on to the end in pursuit of his one remaining chance. Ivanchuk views the white position sceptically, as we see from the variation he gives: 24 ♖xb7!? ♘c5! (my exclamation mark) 25 ♗xf7+? ♖xf7 26 ♖xb2 ♘d3+. But instead of losing a piece with his 25th move, can White try something else? On 25 ♖xa7? Black wins with 25...♘d3+ 26 ♔d1 ♖c8, but the natural move is 25 ♖c7. Then after 25...♘xb3 26 axb3 ♖xh2 27 ♖xa7 ♖b8 28 ♖a3 ♖b2 (much better than 28...♖c8?! 29 ♔d1 ♖cc2 30 ♖f1 with counterplay) 29 ♖f1 ♖2xb3, we reach a highly unusual endgame in which White of course stands badly but is still quite capable of creating difficulties for his opponent.

Now, by contrast, Black has no need to exert himself.

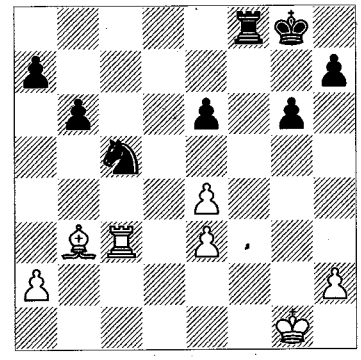
24...b6!

The knight comes across to c5, and the white pawns are doomed.

25 e6?!

This is a blunder, but things are no easier for White after (for instance) 25 h4 ♘c5 26 ♗d5 ♖e8. He could already resign.

25...♖b1+ 26 ♔f2 fxe6+ 27 ♔g2 ♖xg1+ 28 ♔xg1 ♘c5 *(D)*



A mere 7 or 8 moves ago a fierce fight was raging on the board, but now it has emerged that White's activity was insufficient for his attack to succeed. It has been repulsed, leaving his position in utter ruins. A sad spectacle, but at the same time wholly typical of the frequent triumph of static advantages. And yet what a gripping struggle went before! As I wrote in an analogous context in *Lessons in Chess Strategy*: "This time statics defeated dynamics in a complex, sharp struggle. Once again this demonstrates that a player whose taste is for accumulating static assets ... always has to be prepared for the need to resist his opponent's aggression. This in turn requires excellent calculation of variations, faith in your own cause and in your abilities, and also ... a high level of technique for realizing an advantage." You will agree that all this is fully borne out by the game we have just been examining.

The end is of little interest:

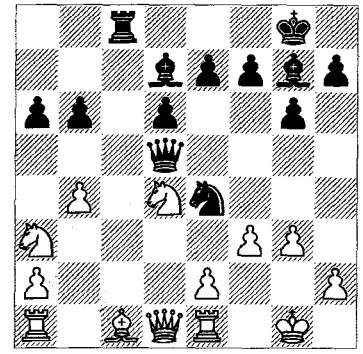
29 ♔g2 ♔g7 30 ♖c2 ♔f6 31 ♖f2+ ♔e7 32 ♖c2 ♔d6 33 ♖d2+ ♔e5 34 ♗c2 ♖f7 0-1

Now let us examine a somewhat surprising but nonetheless essential aspect of our theme: the psychological aspect.

It does sound surprising, but let's just think: the opposition between two such basic concepts as statics and dynamics often grows into a full-scale confrontation. Dynamics is all about piece activity (in the broadest sense). If one player achieves an 'explosion' in the mobility of his forces (for which he may be paying a positional or material price), then the quantity of plausible variations increases dramatically – and differences in the ability to calculate them play an increasing role. If the player with the greater analytical powers holds an advantage in the dynamic sphere, his opponent will be in peril, even if objectively (taking *all* the parameters into account) his position is superior. He will be constantly exposed to the threat of unexpected blows. For this reason, a specialist in calculating variations will quite often be tempted to activate his forces even by objectively dubious means.

The outstanding master of this kind of play was the great Mikhail Tal. This aspect of his talent was defined with splendid precision by Botvinnik: "From the viewpoint of cybernetics and the technique of calculation, Mikhail Tal is an information-processing device that possesses both a larger memory and a higher reaction speed than other grandmasters. In cases where the pieces on the board are extremely mobile, this has a decisive significance. The young Tal had little interest in an objective evaluation of the position he was aiming for; he might not care if it was objectively worse, as long as his pieces were active..." I should add that chess ability structured on these lines was not given to Tal alone. (We are talking about structure, not *level* of talent!) At all times and at any level of chess, there are people with this kind of approach to the game.

We are going to examine a game that Tal played in this manner which in many respects leans heavily on psychology. To make it more comprehensible, however, let's first look at the following truly amazing extract from a different game:



Portisch – Tal
Amsterdam IZ 1964

White is a rook up for just one pawn. Of course he has still to coordinate his forces and parry some threats, but at first sight this task doesn't look insuperable, given that his pieces are not strewn about in total disorder and his king is adequately defended. All the same, caution and the constant intensive analysis of variations are undoubtedly called for; the tension is increasing with every move, and time-trouble is approaching. In such conditions, the 'high reaction speed' of which Botvinnik spoke becomes all-important.

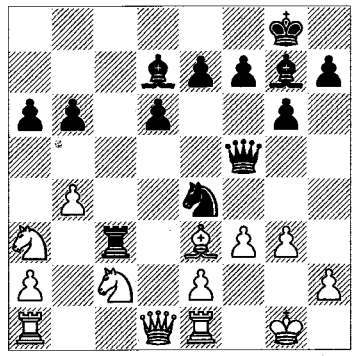
22 ♗e3!

For a long period Portisch plays excellently, taking the right decision at every move. Here, for instance, 22 ♘ac2 can be met by 22...♘c3 (better than 22...♗h3 23 ♕d3 ♘c3 24 e4) 23 e4! ♕c4 24 ♕d2 ♘xa2 25 ♗b2 e5, giving a position where White is still not managing to organize his forces at all, while Black already has a second pawn to reduce his material deficit.

22...♖c3!

In such situations with an immense choice of possibilities, which in practice elude full calculation, Tal always played best. He was relying not only on the 'mechanistic' mental qualities listed above, but also on his powerful intuition, without which it is generally impossible to scale the summits in chess. When I analysed this position with a computer, it repeatedly happened that the 'electronic brain' didn't even mention the moves Tal selected – and these were always the moves containing the most 'poison', the most promising ones in the long term. You will soon see this for yourself.

23 ♘dc2 ♕f5 *(D)*

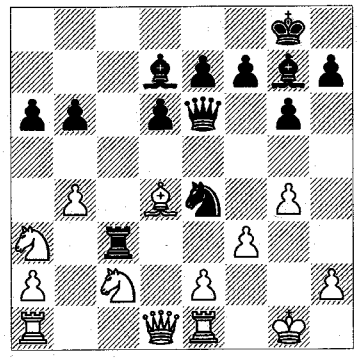


24 g4!

This too is excellently played! After the natural 24 ♗d4 ♕g5!, White suddenly faces serious threats and needs to find a sequence of 'only' moves in order to win: 25 ♗xg7 ♘xg3 26 ♗h6! ♘xe2++ (26...♕xh6 fails to 27 ♕d4!) 27 ♔h1! ♗c6 28 ♘d4!. One of the problems for a player resisting an attack and trying to extinguish his opponent's activity is that one small mistake – even if, objectively, it doesn't let the win slip – will often allow the opponent to fan the smouldering embers and start his fire all over again. In these positions where your opponent hasn't quite exhausted all his resources, you need to exert yourself perhaps more than ever!

24...♕e6 25 ♗d4 *(D)*

Is it finally all over, then?



25...h5!!

Not a bit of it! Tal hasn't enough pieces left, so he goes for mate with his pawns. This is just like him!

26 ♗xg7 hxg4 27 ♘d4!

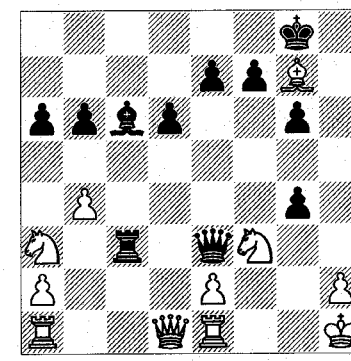
It turns out that White still has problems galore – and don't forget that the clock is ticking away! After the tempting 27 ♕d4 g3! 28 ♕xe4 (leaving the knight alive and allowing a check on h2 is a terrifying prospect – we are all only human) 28...♕h3, Black draws. At first sight 27 e3 looks convincing, but it comes up against 27...♖d3!! and now 28 ♕xd3? gxf3 is quite horrific for White, while 28 ♕e2 ♖d2 also looks unpleasant. After 28 ♘d4 ♖xd1 29 ♘xe6 ♖xe1+ 30 ♖xe1 gxf3 31 ♖f1 f2+ there is still, surprisingly, some lack of clarity in the position.

There would appear to be a forced win with 27 ♗xc3 g3! 28 ♕d4 gxh2+ 29 ♔h1 ♘g3+ 30 ♔xh2 ♕h3+ 31 ♔g1 ♕h1+ 32 ♔f2 ♕h2+ 33 ♔e3 ♘f5+ 34 ♔d2 ♕h6+ 35 ♘e3 ♘xd4 36 ♗xd4, but does everything here really click? It's such a long variation, with Black checking all the way! From a practical viewpoint, therefore, the decision Portisch takes is absolutely correct.

27...♕d5 28 fxe4 ♕xe4 29 ♘f3!

With fewer and fewer pieces, Black still keeps up his threats. On 29 e3, he has 29...♗c8, giving White real chances to founder. Although White could still win by 30 ♖e2 ♗b7 31 ♘ac2 e5 32 ♔f2 ♔xg7 33 ♕g1 exd4 34 ♘xd4, it would be hard to find all these moves under constant fire from the opponent and under time-pressure.

29...♕e3+ 30 ♔h1 ♗c6 *(D)*



31 ♖f1?

Up to here Portisch has played superbly and the win is within his grasp. After 31 ♘c2! all variations end in victory, although there is a thorn in White's flesh that still needs to be extracted. Everything is simple in the case of 31...gxf3 32 ♘xe3 fxe2+ 33 ♔g1 exd1♕ 34 ♘xd1 or 31...♕f4 32 ♗xc3 gxf3 33 e4 f2 34 ♕d3. Nor does White have any particular problems with 31...♕f2 32 ♗d4 ♕h4 33 ♗xc3 g3

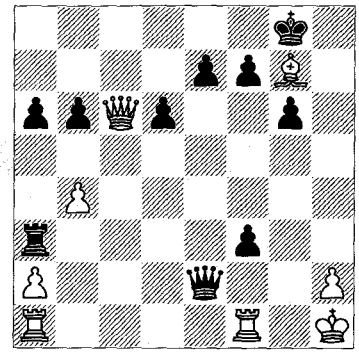
34 e4 ♕h3 35 ♖g1. However, with 31...♖xc2 32 ♕xc2 ♗b7! Black lays a mine which needs to be defused in quite a cunning way: 33 ♗d4! gxf3 (White has the same answer to 33...♕xd4) 34 ♕c8+!.

By now White's time-trouble must have been quite severe, so although it's easy to criticize Portisch, it wouldn't be so easy to step into his shoes.

31...♖xa3

Most probably Tal was short of time too. At this point he could have tried 31...gxf3!? 32 exf3 ♔xg7 33 ♘c2 ♗xf3+ 34 ♕xf3 ♕xf3+ 35 ♖xf3 ♖xf3, with a small but clear plus.

32 ♕c1 gxf3 33 ♕xc6 ♕xe2 *(D)*



34 ♖g1

Necessary, as 34 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 35 ♗d4 ♖f1+ 36 ♖xf1 ♕xf1+ 37 ♗g1 b5 is dangerous for White.

34...♔xg7 35 ♖ae1 ♕d2 36 ♖d1

Since 36 ♖xe7? ♖xa2 is unplayable, White repeats moves.

36...♕e2

Here Black might have tried to play for a win with 36...♕xb4!?, but time-trouble evidently prevailed.

37 ♖de1 ♕d2 ½-½

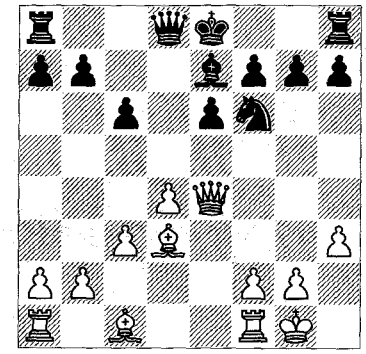
A fantastic finish, and to my knowledge one of the most brilliant illustrations of the might of coordinated and mobile pieces, which is the essence of the concept of dynamism in chess.

A year later the same players faced each other in a world championship candidates match. This was their first encounter over the board since the one we have just seen, and there is no doubt whatever that that game will have left its imprint on the memories of both players. We shall detect echoes of it in the game we are going to examine now. A move like 25...h5!! is hard to forget!

Tal – Portisch

Bled Ct (2) 1965

1 e4 c6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 ♘f3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♗g4 5 h3 ♗xf3 6 ♕xf3 ♘d7 7 d4 ♘gf6 8 ♗d3 ♘xe4 9 ♕xe4 e6 10 0-0 ♗e7 11 c3 ♘f6 *(D)*



12 ♕h4

The opening phase is concluded. Objectively White has a slight edge after 12 ♕e2!? 0-0 13 ♗f4, as Tal indicates in his notes. He also explains, however, that in such a situation he doubted whether he could outplay Portisch, who was a distinguished master of positional chess. He therefore decided to rock the boat, even at the cost of a distinct positional risk. Memories of the previous game must surely have influenced this decision in no small way. Thus the psychology of the struggle between individualities has already entered into the proceedings.

12...♘d5 13 ♕g4 ♗f6 14 ♖e1

With this move, the amazing events which follow are already prefigured, but White's decision is sensible anyway on objective grounds. Tal tells us that in reply to the logical-seeming 14 ♕e4, he didn't like 14...♘e7!, with an equal game and a solid position for Black.

14...♕b6! 15 c4!?

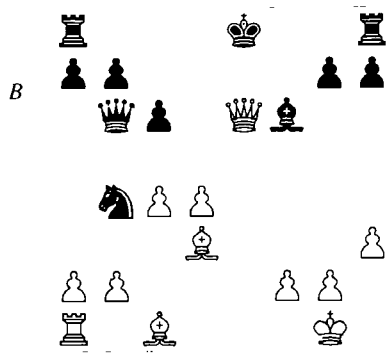
A difficult move to evaluate. In sharp situations such as this the calculation of variations becomes paramount, and yet in the present case it cannot be exhaustive. I award an exclamation mark for the amount of analytical work that White has performed, as well as for sheer bravery. The question mark is to express doubt

about the objective correctness of the move. The weaknesses it creates in White's own position are substantial, so if it doesn't bring success by force, it may lead to defeat.

15...♘b4 16 ♖xe6+

This sacrifice is the automatic consequence of the previous move.

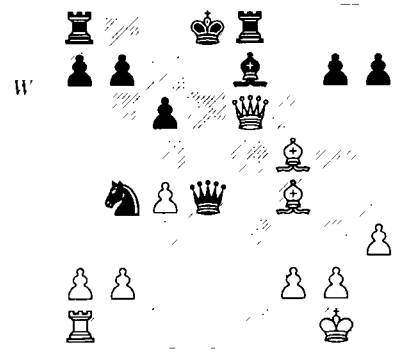
16...fxe6 17 ♕xe6+ *(D)*



This position deserves the closest possible attention. Black has three possible moves. The first of these is the least interesting from a purely technical point of view: after 17...♔d8 18 ♕d6+ ♔e8 19 ♕e6+, etc., the game ends in perpetual check – as Tal himself emphasizes. From the psychological standpoint, however, the move is much more interesting. After all, it was only a few moves ago that Tal deliberately rejected continuations in which his opponent would obtain a solid but not very active position and should therefore have been glad to draw. And yet now, Black doesn't even have to make any effort – he just needs to repeat moves! As Tal himself explains, he was hoping that Portisch, a player with a strictly classical approach to chess, would be seized by a desire to punish his opponent for flouting the classical principles.

We see that the dose of psychology in Tal's handling of this game (and many other games too) was very large. It is no accident that in his best years, some people seriously talked about him hypnotizing his opponents, and the like.

The refutation of the sacrifice, if there is one, must be sought in the variations beginning with 17...♗e7. Then after 18 ♗g5? ♕c7 19 ♖e1 ♘xd3 20 ♗xe7, Black wins with 20...♕d7. However, Tal tells us he was intending something else: 18 ♗g6+!! (a typical 'resulting move', rectifying the faults of the immediate 18 ♗g5? – see *Chess Recipes from the Grandmaster's Kitchen*) 18...♔d8 (forced, as after 18...hxg6? 19 ♗g5 ♕c7 20 ♖e1, the point of the check on g6 is revealed: 20...♘d3 21 ♕xg6+ wins for White; if instead 20...♖f8, one winning line is 21 ♕xe7+ ♕xe7 22 ♖xe7+ ♔d8 23 ♖xg7+ ♔c8 24 ♗e7 ♖f4 25 ♗xb4 ♖xd4 26 ♗c3) 19 ♗f5 ♕xd4 (not 19...♕c7? 20 ♗f4 ♕c8 21 ♕e4 +–) 20 ♗f4! ♖e8 *(D)* and now:



a) If White wants, he can force a repetition with 21 ♗e5 ♕d2 (but not 21...♗f6? 22 ♕xf6+ gxf6 23 ♗xd4, and White wins without much trouble) 22 ♗f4 ♕d4 23 ♗e5.

b) Tal had in mind 21 ♖e1. There could follow 21...g6'?' (Tal's marking) 22 ♗e3 (it is still possible to repeat moves with 22 ♗e5 ♕d2 23 ♗f4 ♕d4 24 ♗e5) 22...♕d6 23 ♗xa7! ♕xe6 (this is the only move Tal examines; in actual fact Black can win at once with 23...♔c7 24 c5 ♕xe6 25 ♗b6+ ♔b8 26 ♗xe6 ♗d8 –+) 24 ♗b6+ ♔c8 (only not 24...♔d7?? 25 ♗xe6+ ♔d6 26 c5#) 25 ♗xe6+ ♔b8 26 ♗d7 and in this position Tal stops, imagining it to be in his favour. Taking the analysis a couple of moves further, we can see that after 26...♘d3! 27 ♖e4 ♖f8 28 ♖xe7 ♖xa2 the advantage turns out to be on Black's side, and White has to worry about saving himself!

I am not raising my hand in criticism of Tal for these flaws in his analysis. When you discover resources like 18 ♗g6+!! and the line with mate in the middle of the board, you are eager to extract more than half a point from the position!

At the same time, I don't doubt for one moment that if the position after 20...♖e8 had actually arisen on the board, Tal would have seen

his way through all the consequences with supreme competence, and forced a draw. Such things have happened now and again in chess history, when a great master has been wrong in his analysis but precise in actual play. Capablanca is an example.

I would also add that Mikhail Tal's annotations are not taken from a newspaper or magazine, but from a book, which would not have been written and prepared for publication in just one day. With books, there is normally time for checking by the author, reviewers and editor.

For the reader, a useful conclusion from all that we have seen is expressed in a direct quotation from Lenin: "Follow your conviction, but keep testing it!" (So there was some point in teaching Marxism-Leninism to the author, both at school and at Odessa Polytechnic!)

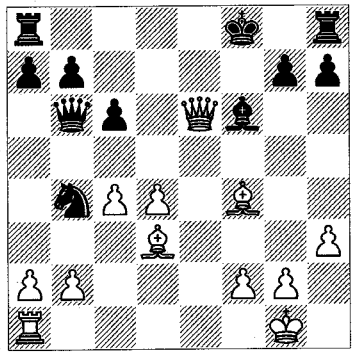
In the game, Portisch chose:

17...♔f8

This too appears to be acceptable, although instead of the desired 'triumph of justice', it was to bring him nothing but problems.

18 ♗f4 *(D)*

B



18...♖d8!

To his misfortune, Portisch couldn't do anything to reduce the workload of analysis. At this point he had to choose between the move actually played (entailing the queen sacrifice which follows) and 18...♕d8, which is much weaker. After 19 ♖e1 ♗e7 20 ♗b1! it is Black to play with an extra rook, and yet acceptable moves are hard to find. For instance: 20...♘a6 21 ♖e5 ♘c7 22 ♖f5+ ♔e8 23 ♕f7+ ♔d7 24 ♖e5 g6 (or 24...♕f8 25 ♖xe7+! ♕xe7 26 ♗f5+ ♔d8 27 ♗g5) 25 ♗g5 ♖e8 26 ♗f5+ gxf5 27 ♕xf5+ ♘e6 28 ♕xe6+ ♔c7 29 ♗xe7 ♕xd4 30 c5, and wins.

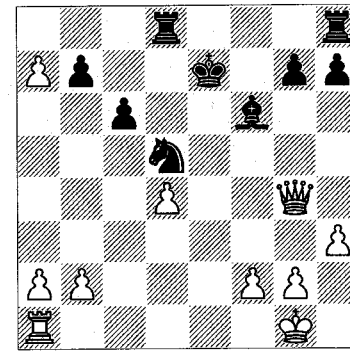
19 c5 ♘xd3 20 cxb6

After 20 ♗h6 ♕xb2 (Tal considers this move natural, but another possibility is 20...♕c7 21 ♕xf6+ ♔g8 22 ♗xg7! ♖e8! 23 ♗xh8 ♘f4; now the obligatory 24 d5 is met by 24...cxd5 25 ♖d1 ♘g6, with unclear consequences), a draw comes about by 21 ♕xf6+ ♔e8 22 ♕e6+.

20...♘xf4 21 ♕g4 ♘d5 22 bxa7 ♔e7?! *(D)*

Tal suggests 22...g6!? as an improvement. The continuation might be something like 23 ♖e1 ♔g7 24 a8♕ ♖xa8 25 ♕d7+ ♔h6 26 ♕xb7 ♖xa2 27 ♕xc6 ♖d8 with unclear play, although White's chances look better.

W



23 b4!

Obvious, but strong. Since the black king hopes to hide on the queenside, White must open lines there. Supporting the a7-pawn can do no harm either.

23...♖a8?

Black's inaccuracy on his last move is followed by quite a serious error. It's a typical story! Earlier we examined the mechanism which produces such lapses.

Another line that looks dismal is 23...♘c7?! 24 ♖e1+ ♔f7 25 ♖e4!, when there could follow 25...♖d5 26 ♕g3 ♖d7 27 b5! cxb5 28 ♕b3+. The only chance to continue the fight is 23...h5!?, trying to make White drive the black king to the queenside where it will find work to do. After 24 ♖e1+ ♔d6 25 ♕g3+ ♔d7 Black stands somewhat worse, but he can very well fight on.

24 ♖e1+ ♔d6 25 b5 ♖xa7?

This loses at once. 25...♖hd8 is better, but even so, White has good winning chances after 26 b6! ♘xb6 27 ♕f4+ ♔d7 28 ♖b1 ♘d5 29 ♖xb7+.

26 ♖e6+ ♔c7 27 ♖xf6 1-0

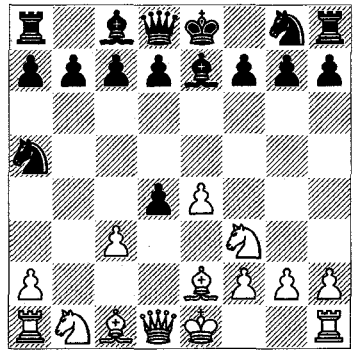
Now that we are generally acquainted with the subject of our study, the moment has finally come to bring on the player whose games will serve in many ways as the foundation for this book. That player is Garry Kasparov, and his selection for this role is not accidental but virtually obligatory. Very few others among the chief protagonists of chess history have demonstrated the essence and importance of the dynamic approach as convincingly as he has. In this respect only Morphy, Alekhine and Tal can be set beside him.

To begin with, let us look at one of his games against the player who, among all our contemporaries, is the most skilled in accumulating and exploiting static advantages.

Kasparov – Anand
Riga (Tal mem) 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗e7 6 d4 ♘a5 7 ♗e2 exd4 *(D)*

W



This is a rare variation of what is today a very rare opening.

8 ♕xd4!

By choosing this opening in the first place, Kasparov was making some long-term concessions (in the Evans Gambit White gives up a pawn 'for real', for a long stretch of time), and now he agrees to a significant worsening of his pawn-structure into the bargain. By playing this way, he stakes everything on developing the activity of his pieces, on exploiting the dynamic assets of his position. In the 19th century, in the games of Anderssen, Morphy and Zukertort, and later Chigorin, this kind of approach was the norm. Of course White would have liked to recapture with the pawn, but after 8 cxd4 ♘f6 (or 8...d5), Black would easily solve his opening problems.

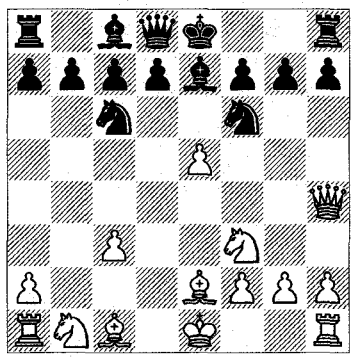
8...♘f6

This looks completely obvious and indeed virtually the only move. However, the chess élite was so strongly influenced by the result of this game, and especially by the way the play went, that very soon afterwards 8...d6 came to the fore instead. Shirov-Timman, Biel 1995 continued 9 ♕xg7 ♗f6 10 ♕g3 ♕e7, and Black ought to have obtained an excellent position.

9 e5 ♘c6 10 ♕h4!? *(D)*

This is not merely a good individual move (it is more accurate than 10 ♕f4 because it doesn't allow the unpleasant retort 10...♘h5!?). It also initiates a plan of action which is deeply thought-out, based on exploiting dynamic advantages of the white position which have not so far been obvious. The plan involves some voluntary sacrifices of material.

B



10...♘d5 11 ♕g3 g6

Black could sacrifice the exchange by 11...0-0 12 ♗h6 g6 13 ♗xf8 ♗xf8, aiming to damp down White's activity, but unfortunately this is inadequate. In the resulting position White would have the advantage, quite apart from the fact that Kasparov gives 13 h4!? as a possibility.

12 0-0 ♘b6

Over the course of several moves starting from now, Black will have the option of castling but will reject it. White would always react along much the same lines. For example if instead 12...0-0, he has 13 ♖d1 ♘b6 14 c4!, after which Black has significant problems with his development. The same or a very similar scenario will occur in what follows.

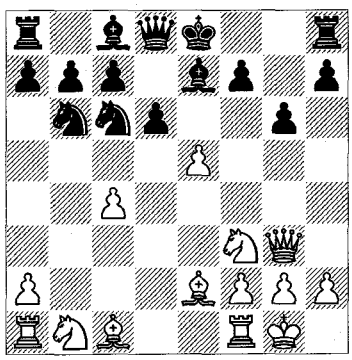
13 c4!?

White plays a move from the variation we have just looked at. In Murray Chandler's opinion, a good alternative is 13 ♗h6!? d6 (13...d5!?) 14 ♗b5, which similarly makes development very difficult for Black. It's natural that Kasparov prefers the plan which he must have worked out at home. And there is one more very important general consideration, involving the theme of this whole book. Beginning with White's 8th move, the tension on the board has been constantly growing. From that moment until the end of the game, there are no more 'simple' moves. At each turn White brings a new unit into the battle; Black too strives to develop his forces – although White is making life very hard for him – and all these freshly deployed forces come into immediate conflict. Thus with each new move, more and more variations demand to be calculated, and what may be called the *price of a move* rises. In other words, the cost of going wrong increases from one move to the next; at this stage, any mistake may be fatal. All this of course applies to Black in particular, as he is constantly under attack.

13...d6 *(D)*

After 13...0-0 14 ♖d1, the position is one we considered in the note to Black's 12th move.

W



14 ♖d1!

A move that belongs to the familiar sequence. At first sight it looks simple, even obvious (but only after it has already been played and its consequences are known to us!). Am I right to give this move an exclamation mark? Yes! In the first place, it isn't the only possible move – some others also appear fairly interesting and logical – and yet (the second point) this one *is* the strongest, as the further course of the game will show. Thirdly, it entails a sacrifice of material which will be compulsory for White in the immediate future, purely for the purpose of developing his initiative. Essentially, this move is the prelude to a positional sacrifice. So why not distinguish it? However, it would be more correct to say that the exclamation mark applies to White's plan as a whole.

14...♘d7

If 14...0-0, then 15 c5 is unpleasant; interesting replies to 14...♗d7 are 15 c5!? and 15 ♘c3!?.

15 ♗h6!

From his 11th move up to here, White has merely been bringing his forces into the fight. Now, however, the forces of both sides have partly been brought out and occupy fairly well-defined posts; the situation, with the possibilities and intentions of both players, has partly become *fixed*. (If you recall, we touched on the essence and meaning of this term in the notes to Smyslov-Euwe.) That means that the position imposes more and more specific demands on the players, progressively curtailing their freedom to 'choose according to their taste'. At this stage, simple developing moves are no longer adequate for White. In order to *retain* his initiative, he has to *increase it at all costs*.

The initiative is a theme to which a whole chapter will be devoted. Here I will just give a few variations to show that although White has played correctly and sensibly up to now, the logic of the position requires him to sacrifice material. After (let's say) 15 ♗f4 dxe5 16 ♘xe5 ♘cxe5! (I'm not as keen on 16...♗h4 17 ♕e3 0-0 {17...♘cxe5? fails to 18 ♖xd7! ♔xd7 19 ♗xe5 ♖e8 20 ♘c3 +–} 18 ♘xc6 bxc6 19 ♘c3, when White maintains some initiative) 17 ♗xe5 0-0 18 ♗xc7 ♗h4, Black is in good shape. For example: 19 ♗xd8 ♗xg3 20 hxg3 ♖xd8 21 ♘c3 ♖f8!?, with approximate equality.

15...♘cxe5

Anand exchanges a piece off in an attempt to reduce the enemy's attacking potential, and this looks logical. After 15...dxe5 16 ♘c3, Black is already hard put to find any moves. 16...♗f8 gives White a pleasant choice:

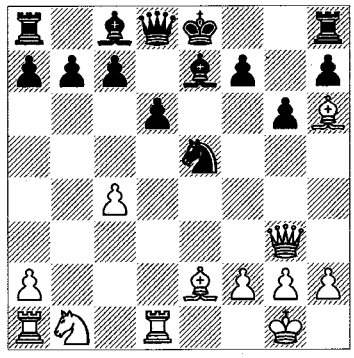
a) After 17 ♕h3 b6 White has a thrust that is typical but no less strong for that: 18 c5! bxc5 19 ♗b5, and there is no longer any salvation for Black.

b) Kasparov gives 17 ♗g5! and shows that Black is in trouble: 17...♗e7 (Black is also in a bad way after 17...f6 18 ♗e3 ♗g7 19 c5 0-0 20 ♗c4+ ♔h8 21 ♘h4!) 18 ♘d5 ♗xg5 19 ♘xg5 h6 20 ♘e6! fxe6 21 ♕xg6+ ♔f8 22 ♗h5, and White wins.

16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 *(D)*

Black also has a difficult position after 16...dxe5 17 ♗g7 ♖g8 18 ♗xe5.

W



17 ♘c3!

So White is now two pawns down, and he carries on with his development as if nothing out of the ordinary has happened; he is convinced that his own activity and the cramped placing of his opponent's pieces are going to take effect. Of course, to play this way you need to have plenty of faith in yourself and in the strength of your position. White's policy is all the more noteworthy since he had the opportunity to win the exchange here with 17 ♗g7!?. However, the position after 17...♗f6 18 ♗xh8 ♗xh8 19 ♘c3 ♘d7!? (or 19...b6) turns out to be wholly unclear. That would be hasty, and trade in his dynamic pluses at too low a price!

17...f6

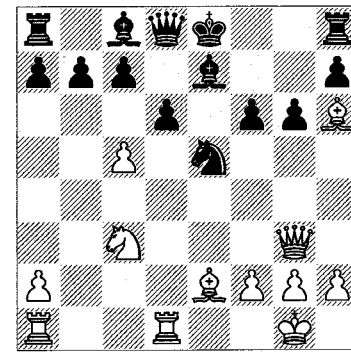
Now, however, after 17...♗e6 18 ♗g7 ♗f6 19 ♗xh8 ♗xh8 20 c5!, the position is clearly advantageous to White, as files are opened for his rooks. As it happens, the game opens up anyway.

18 c5 *(D)*

18...♘f7

This is probably not best. All the same there is no point in criticizing Anand for his error. In this extremely complicated situation there were too many variations for him to calculate, too many sharp and dangerous positions to assess. Even after a better move, Black's troubles would

B



quite likely have persisted, as the following variations show. They are admittedly fairly provisional, and in no case exhaust the content of the position; they merely characterize the possible course of events:

a) 18...♗e6 19 cxd6 ♗xd6 (19...cxd6 can be met by 20 ♖ab1 b6 21 f4 ♘f7 22 ♕e3 ♘xh6 23 ♕xe6 ♕c8 24 ♕b3, and Black's defence is not easy) 20 ♘e4 ♕e7 21 f4 ♘c6 22 ♘xd6+ cxd6 23 ♖e1, and Black's problems are obvious.

b) 18...♗d7 19 cxd6 ♗xd6 (on 19...cxd6, White has the amusing 20 ♗g7!? ♖g8 21 ♗h6, and again the black position is not simple to play), and now 20 ♕h4! is unpleasant, taking aim at f6 and exerting powerful pressure.

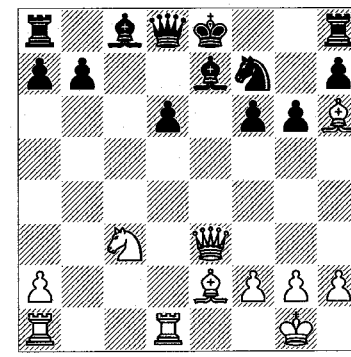
In the game, however, White proceeds with a direct attack.

19 cxd6! cxd6

With 19...♗xd6 Black would lose quickly: 20 ♗b5+ c6 (or 20...♗d7 21 ♖e1+ ♗e7 22 ♗g7 and wins) 21 ♗f4 cxb5 22 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 23 ♖xd6, with an easy win for White.

20 ♕e3 *(D)*

B



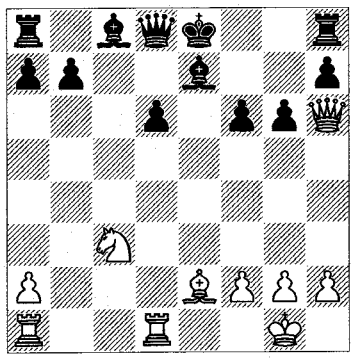
There simply is no other move, but then White doesn't need one! (Incidentally he had to foresee this position at move 18.)

20...♘xh6

Black's position is hopeless after 20...♗d7 21 ♗g7 ♖g8 22 ♗xf6.

21 ♕xh6 *(D)*

B



A most remarkable position. A number of White's attacking units have been exchanged. His rooks have yet to occupy open files, and it is Black to move. For all this, Black's game cannot be saved. The reason lies in the colossal difference in mobility and development between the two sides, and also in the weaknesses around the black king's position.

21...♗f8 22 ♕e3+ ♔f7

Is it perhaps here that we can detect the reason for Black's mistake on move 18. It emerges that 22...♕e7 is bad on account of 23 ♘e4 ♔f7 (23...♕e5 can be met by 24 ♖ac1!? ♗f5 25 ♗b5+ ♔d8 26 ♘g5!! ♕xb5 27 ♘f7+ ♔d7 28 ♘xh8 ♗e6 29 ♕f3 with a winning position) 24 ♘xd6+ ♔g7, and now White has the decisive stroke 25 ♘e8+! ♔f7 26 ♗c4+ ♔xe8 27 ♕b3, after which Black can't save himself, as you can quite easily verify.

Now White calmly brings up his forces for the decisive assault, and Black has nothing with which to oppose this. Such complete ascendancy of one side over the other goes by the name of *domination*.

23 ♘d5 ♗e6

After 23...♗d7, the manoeuvre 24 ♖ab1! appears good, inducing the weakening 24...b6. There can follow 25 ♖bc1! ♖c8 26 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 27 ♖c1 ♕e8 28 ♖c7! with a winning advantage. for White

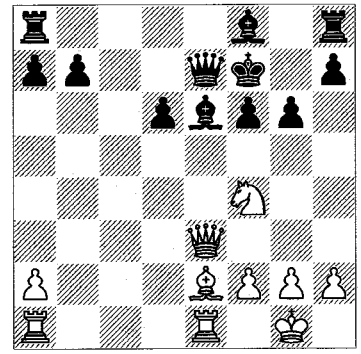
On 23...♗g7 24 ♗c4 ♗e6, Kasparov gives 25 ♗b3! ♖e8 26 ♘f4 d5 27 ♘xe6 ♖xe6 28 ♖xd5! +–.

24 ♘f4 ♕e7

Black could have dragged out his resistance somewhat with 24...♗d7, although after 25 ♕b3+ ♔g7 26 ♕xb7 ♕c8 27 ♖ab1 White should win.

25 ♖e1! *(D)*

B



1-0

Black resigned here, as there are no saving moves to be found:

a) 25...♗d7 26 ♗c4+ +–.

b) 25...d5 26 ♗f3 +–.

c) 25...♗h6 26 ♗c4! +–.

d) 25...♖e8 26 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 27 ♕xe6+ +–.

e) The most stubborn move seems to be 25...♕d7, but even then, after 26 ♗b5! ♕xb5 27 ♕xe6+ ♔g7 28 ♖ab1, we reach a position where there is no sense whatever in playing on against Kasparov.

The final position explains very eloquently what a dynamic advantage is. All White's forces are already in the battle (except for the a1-rook, but we have seen that even this piece is ready to join in at any moment), and acting in concert; they can quickly reach any part of the board where they are needed. Black's forces meanwhile are disunited; they have little mobility and can't get to the decisive areas of the battlefield. Hence White possesses a decisive *advantage in the ability of his forces to travel the board in all directions* – which fully corresponds to, and confirms, the definition we adopted right at the start of the chapter. I should add that all the elements of dynamics that are enumerated here will be examined in detail in the rest of the book.

I conclude this chapter with twin games by Kasparov which illustrate, in a more detailed way than we have so far seen, the *interweaving*

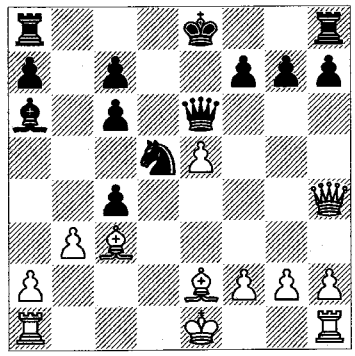
of the two opposing chess principles of statics and dynamics.

Kasparov – Adams
Sarajevo 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘xc6 bxc6 6 e5 ♕e7 7 ♕e2 ♘d5 8 c4 ♘b6 9 ♘c3 ♕e6 10 ♕e4 ♗b4 11 ♗d2 ♗a6 12 b3 ♗xc3 13 ♗xc3 d5 14 ♕h4!?

This was another Kasparov novelty. After this game it immediately became the standard way to handle the variation.

14...dxc4 15 ♗e2 ♘d5 *(D)*



16 ♗d4?!

This move, on the other hand, was some time later recognized as inferior, even though it brought Kasparov complete success in the present game.

16...c5?!

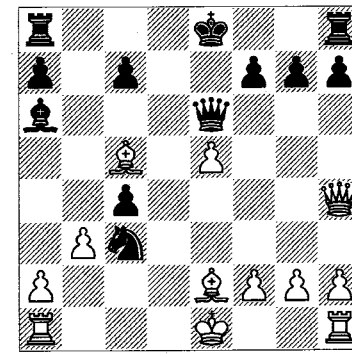
This looks tempting, but we shall see that it isn't sufficient for equality. Instead, Black has a very convincing answer in 16...♕f5!. Morozevich-Piket, Internet blitz 2000 then continued 17 0-0 ♘f4, but 17...♕f4!? is stronger and gives Black the better chances. As to White's correct continuation on move 16, the next game will show us what it is.

17 ♗xc5 ♘c3 *(D)*

Not 17...♕xe5? 18 0-0 ♕f4 19 ♕h3! ♗c8 20 ♕f3! with a winning advantage for White.

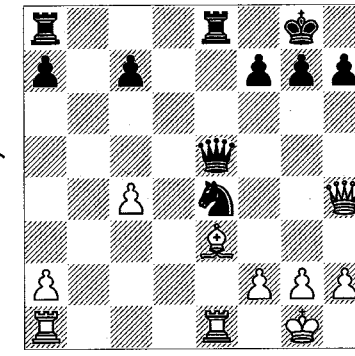
You get the impression that Black has seized the initiative, but this is only apparent. He has too few forces in play to create any real threats. Don't forget this little episode or the verdict on it. The following chapter will be devoted entirely to these very problems.

18 ♗xc4 ♕xe5+ 19 ♗e3 ♘e4!



Understandably, Adams doesn't want to leave his opponent with a unified queenside pawn-chain (constituting a static advantage) after 19...♗xc4 20 ♕xc4 0-0 21 0-0 ♘d5, and in this he is right. Now, however, the 'hanging' position of his knight will lead to some unexpected difficulties. At first sight the problem doesn't look serious, but let us watch how events proceed from here.

20 0-0 ♗xc4 21 bxc4 0-0 22 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 *(D)*

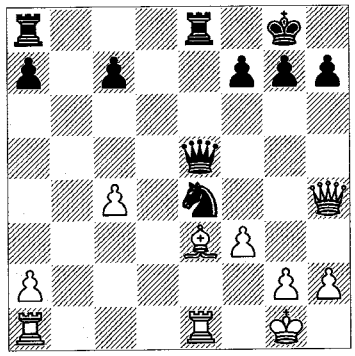


The opening has culminated in this position almost by force. How should it be evaluated? The pawn-structure is symmetrical, with the isolated queenside pawns of both colours constituting a key factor. Who is usually able to profit from such mutual weaknesses? In the most general sense, the answer is simple and natural: *the presence of weaknesses on both sides can be more effectively exploited by the side that is more active.* This very formula points to the connection between static and dynamic elements of the position, and tells us clearly that these elements should always be considered *as a whole.* A practical conclusion follows. White's advantage consists of two elements: the insecure placing of the black knight

(a temporary factor, under the heading of dynamics) and the potential superiority of bishop over knight in certain endgame situations (this is *to some extent* a long-term factor; it falls *to some extent* within statics). In order not to forfeit this advantage, White must act vigorously. A simple developing move like 23 ♖ad1 would not be energetic enough here; after 23...♕a5!, the game would level out. Kasparov, who without any doubt had studied this position at home, plays with extreme precision:

23 f3! *(D)*

B



23...♘d6?!

The knight would seem to have plenty of possible moves, but once you start analysing concretely, it all proves to be less simple:

a) On 23...♘c5?! 24 ♗f2! ♕d6 25 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8, White has 26 ♕d4! winning a pawn.

b) 23...♘c3?! is met by 24 ♕f2!, and if 24...♕a5? then 25 ♗d2! wins.

c) 23...♘f6?! is not good in view of 24 ♗xa7 ♕c3 25 ♗d4, when 25...♕xc4? fails to 26 ♗xf6.

d) The counter-stroke 23...♕f6 also fails to equalize on account of 24 ♕f4!? (Kasparov gives the even simpler 24 ♕xf6 ♘xf6, and now not 25 ♖ab1, when the strong reply 25...♘d7! limits White to a slight edge, but 25 ♗f4! c6 26 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 27 ♖b1 with a clear advantage) 24...♕xf4 25 ♗xf4 ♘d6 26 c5 ♘b7 27 ♖ec1 c6 28 ♖ab1 ♖e7 29 ♖c3, and Black has difficulty holding the position.

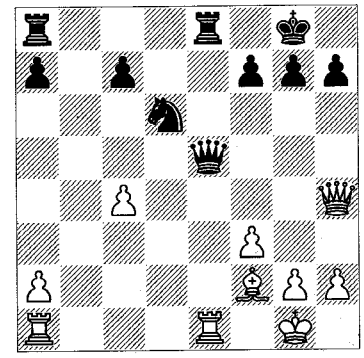
All Black's problems come from the causes set out in the foregoing notes, and show what a fine line separates comfort from trouble in positions where the pieces become very mobile – that is, where dynamic factors predominate.

e) In Kasparov's view Black's best reply is 23...♘c3!, against which he proposes 24 ♔f1!? and I suggest 24 ♕f2!?. In either case White has a small plus.

24 ♗f2! *(D)*

It's important not to let Black off with 24 ♗xa7?! ♕c3, when White has nothing.

B



24...♕f5?

In tense situations every error can tell. According to Kasparov this move is wrong, but the position contains all kinds of dangers for Black, and finding the best reply is anything but simple. Kasparov gives 24...♕c3(?!) 25 c5 ± and 24...♕a5(?!) 25 c5 ♘b7 26 ♕g5! ±. To me it seems that the strongest move is 24...♕b2!?, when there can follow 25 c5 ♘b5 26 ♕a4 c6 27 ♕a6 ♕f6 28 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 29 ♖f1 ♘c3 30 ♕xa7, when White's advantage is still not very great.

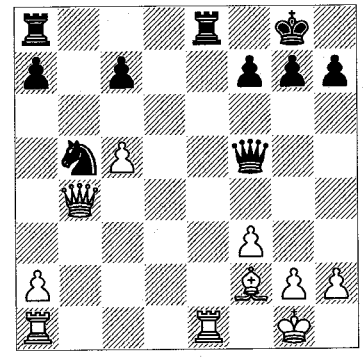
From this moment on, I don't see any point where Black's play could have been significantly improved.

25 c5 ♘b5

Black's weaknesses make themselves felt in the variations 25...♘b7? 26 ♕a4! ♖f8 27 ♕c6, and 25...♖xe1+?! 26 ♖xe1 ♘e8 27 ♕e7.

26 ♕b4! *(D)*

B



26...♕d3

It's hard to suggest anything better; for instance, 26...c6 27 a4 ♘c7 28 ♕b7 ♘e6 29 ♕xc6 ♖ec8 30 ♕d6 with a big advantage, or 26...♖xe1+ 27 ♖xe1 ♕d3 28 a4 ♘c3 29 ♕b7 ♕d8 30 ♗g3! and Black is hard pressed.

27 ♖ed1 a5

Not 27...♕e2? 28 a4, winning at once.

28 ♕a4 ♕e2 29 ♖e1 ♕d3?

This of course is an oversight which greatly speeds things up, but Black had major problems anyway. He would lose just as quickly with 29...♕b2? 30 ♖eb1 ♘c3 31 ♕xe8+. The only move enabling him to fight on was 29...♘c3, when there could follow 30 ♕c6 (or 30 ♕d7) 30...♕b5 31 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 32 ♕xc7 ♘xa2 33 ♕b6!. White would then have a substantial plus, but there would still be some work for him to do.

30 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 31 ♖d1 1-0

Black resigned as 31...♕e2 loses to 32 ♖e1.

Now we examine a second game that illustrates similar ideas, in the same opening line.

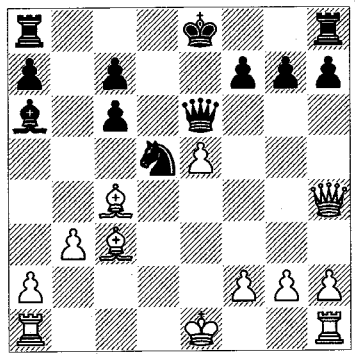
Kasparov – Timman

Wijk aan Zee 2000

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘xc6 bxc6 6 e5 ♕e7 7 ♕e2 ♘d5 8 c4 ♘b6 9 ♘c3 ♕e6 10 ♕e4 ♗b4 11 ♗d2 ♗a6 12 b3 ♗xc3 13 ♗xc3 d5 14 ♕h4 dxc4 15 ♗e2 ♘d5 16 ♗xc4! *(D)*

In the previous game Kasparov played 16 ♗d4, but it later emerged that Black had the powerful retort 16...♕f5!. This gave rise to White's improvement, after which the game takes on rather a different character.

B



16...g5!?

With a shattered pawn-structure, wholesale exchanges of minor pieces are undesirable. Black therefore refrains from 16...♗xc4 17 ♕xc4 ♘xc3 18 ♕xc3, after which 18...f6 (or 18...0-0 19 0-0 f6) 19 0-0 0-0 20 ♖ae1 would give White a definite plus. On the other hand, pawns don't go backwards, and the move Black plays is adding to his weaknesses. In return he hopes to create counterplay with his pieces. It's another case of dynamics versus statics, only this time without aggressive designs; Black is merely trying to hold on in an inferior position. This too is a highly typical case.

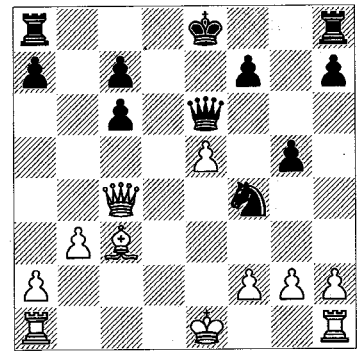
17 ♕d4

White could have won a pawn, but the presence of opposite-coloured bishops would have made it very hard to exploit his advantage, even with his opponent's broken pawn-structure. (This is a most suitable moment to emphasize that the well-known peculiarity of opposite-coloured bishops which neutralizes a material plus in the endgame is essentially their capacity to *block the mobility* of the opponent's extra pawns. That is, it belongs to the dynamic component of chess.)

After 17 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 18 ♕xg5, it's important for Black to play 18...♖d8. Opposite-bishop endgames would then be in prospect. Kasparov understandably has a different continuation in mind.

17...♗xc4 18 ♕xc4 ♘f4 *(D)*

W

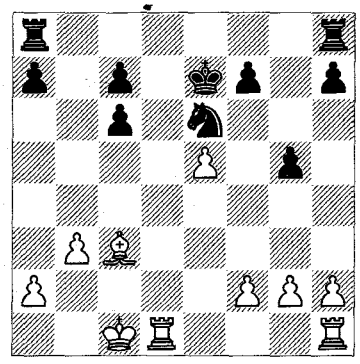


Timman is trying to set up a blockade on the light squares, but he proves to have too many weaknesses.

19 ♕xe6+ ♘xe6

White also has a clear plus in the event of 19...fxe6 20 g3 ♘d5 21 ♗d2 h6 22 ♖c1 ♔d7 23 ♖c4!? ♖hf8 24 h4.

20 0-0-0 ♔e7 *(D)*



White now has to decide where to attack first.

21 ♖he1!

The prospects on the queenside look much clearer, so the rook is transferred to the fourth rank where it will attain maximum mobility and will be best able to attack the opponent's weaknesses.

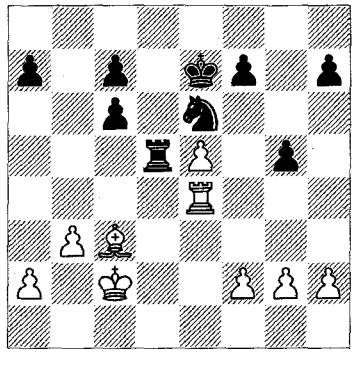
21...♖hd8

For the side with pawn weaknesses, as a rule, it's useful to retain pieces on the board so as not to forfeit possibilities of counterplay. Perhaps Black should avoid exchanging rooks just now and transfer his knight to d5 by means of 21...♘f4!?. Then in the event of 22 e6 (if 22 g3, then 22...♘d5 23 ♗d4 ♖hg8) 22...♖hd8 23 exf7+ ♔xf7, the knight and the d8-rook would keep the white rooks at bay for the present.

22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 23 ♖e4! ♖d5

Now White can meet 23...♘f4 with 24 ♗d2!? ♖d5 (Kasparov examines 24...♘d3+ 25 ♔c2 h6 26 f3 ♖d5 27 h4, again with an obvious advantage) 25 ♗xf4 gxf4 26 f3!? ♔e6 27 ♖xf4 ♖xe5 28 ♔d2 with an undoubted advantage.

24 ♔c2! *(D)*

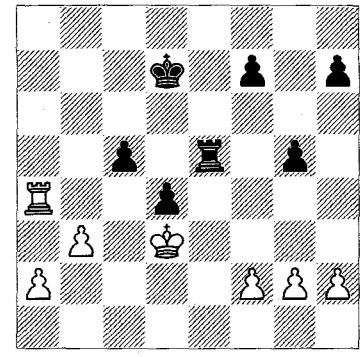


Very typical of Kasparov. He always strives to have all his pieces in play, and this endeavour always rests on a powerful basis of analysis. It's perfectly possible that he already foresaw his 30th move at this point.

24...c5!

The exclamation mark comes from Kasparov. In the event of 24...♘f4 25 g3 ♘d3 26 f4 gxf4 27 gxf4 ♔e6 28 ♖a4, White has an incontestable plus.

25 ♖a4 ♘d4+ 26 ♗xd4 cxd4 27 ♖xa7 ♔d7 28 ♔d3 ♖xe5 29 ♖a4! c5 *(D)*

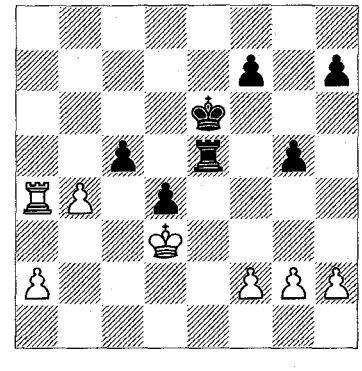


30 b4!

Now it's very difficult for Black.

30...♔e6? *(D)*

This question mark is also Kasparov's. Black is also badly off in other lines. After 30...♔c6 31 bxc5, he can't recapture the pawn: 31...♖xc5 32 ♖c4 is winning for White. A bid for active counterplay with 30...c4+ loses by force to 31 ♔xd4 ♖e2 32 ♖a7+ ♔e6 33 ♖a6+ ♔f5 34 h3 h5 35 g4+ hxg4 36 hxg4+ ♔xg4 37 ♖f6 ♖xa2 38 ♔xc4. Kasparov considers the best defence to be 30...cxb4 31 ♖xb4, when White 'only' has a significant plus and will still have to play accurately to exploit it.



31 ♖a6+

From this moment on, the play is completely forced.

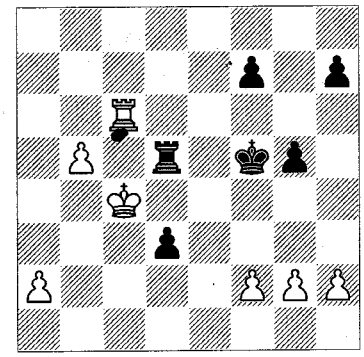
31...♔f5

After 31...♔d5, Black again loses the pawn endgame in which White secures an outside passed pawn: 32 ♖a5 ♔d6 33 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 34 bxc5+.

32 b5 ♖d5

Black goes in search of a miracle. If he tries 32...♖e1, White's winning line is 33 ♖c6! ♖c1 34 b6 ♔e5 35 b7 ♖b1 36 ♖xc5+ ♔d6 37 ♖xg5 ♖xb7 and now a standard manoeuvre settles matters: 38 ♖g4! ♖b2 39 ♖xd4+ ♔e6 40 ♖e4+ ♔d5 41 ♖e2. Black also loses after 32...c4+ 33 ♔xc4 ♖e2 34 b6.

33 ♖c6 c4+ 34 ♔xc4 d3 *(D)*



W

This was the point of Black's 32nd move, but... (I advise you to put a bookmark in place now and try looking for the solution yourself!)

35 ♔xd5 d2 36 g4+! 1-0

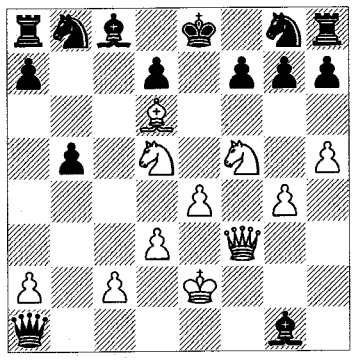
If 36...♔xg4, then 37 ♖c4+.

2 Development

Simple and plain though its title may sound, I view this chapter as the most important one for presenting the theme of the book as a whole. Why this is so will become clear in due course. We shall start out from that 'elementary' principle, thoroughly familiar to everyone, which tells us about the importance of developing the pieces in the opening. You will very often see how even a fairly experienced and strong player 'forgets' about this principle in the heat of coping with specific problems of the position. Perhaps he figures that things which are common knowledge can sometimes be neglected by players of a high enough calibre. The punishment for this kind of aberration is sometimes very painful and usually comes about by 'dynamic' means – that is, at the hands of the opponent's mobile and aggressively deployed pieces, for these qualities fall entirely within the sphere of chess dynamics.

Let's look at a series of examples. The first of them, fittingly, is an extract from what has gone down in chess history as the 'Immortal Game'.

W



Anderssen – Kieseritzky
London 1851

We will only look at the final part of it, as otherwise we would need to wander for ages through the labyrinths of innumerable annotations that have accumulated over the years. What is most instructive about this game, and at the same time fits perfectly into our own set of interests, is splendidly evident from the diagram. In spite of his huge material plus, Black is not in good shape, seeing that only two of his pieces have stepped out onto the battlefield against four white ones. But there is more to it than that. An extremely important question is not just *how many* units have come out, but *where* they have gone, and what they are doing there. In other words, *quality of development is important as well as quantity*. (However, I am running on ahead a little. For the present, let's just talk about the quantitative factor.) In the diagram, even Black's developed pieces are occupying strange positions far away from the urgent needs of their army (chief among which is the predicament of the black king). The white forces, by contrast, are deployed admirably. They are beautifully posted in the centre and *cooperating* excellently. (This last factor, which is highly important, is another one that we shall encounter later.)

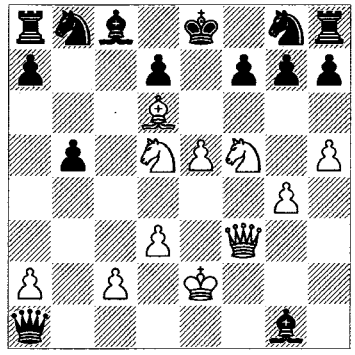
Exploiting all the above-mentioned characteristics of the position, Adolf Anderssen – whom we may confidently call the first player in chess history to be a true master of the attack – concludes the game with a few energetic strokes:

20 e5!! *(D)*

The logic underlying this move is simple. The g7-square beckons the white knight, and once the knight gets there, the queen will reach f7. This is all obvious, and so is the fact that in playing this way, White is keeping up the momentum of the attack. All the same, he has given up both his rooks, and plays a 'quiet' move! What's more, this was an 'off-hand' game in which Anderssen definitely can't have been calculating all possible variations. Nonetheless the great player's intuition didn't let him down. He understood that a united force, even if not a very large one, has a realistic chance of dealing with something that can very well be

likened to an array of military aircraft which haven't even taken off but are left standing around the airfield. One extremely important point, of course, is that in the sector where his king is placed, Black's position is full of 'holes' on the dark squares – a consequence of having his bishop on g1.

B



This position has been the object of numerous investigations which confirmed that even with Black to move and with such a gigantic material plus, he has no adequate defence. These analyses went on for years, and yet for the computer programs of our own day (assuming that you 'nudge' them in the right direction) the calculation of all the consequences is a matter of a few minutes. The main variations go:

a) 20...f6 21 ♘xg7+ ♔f7 22 ♘xf6 and Black can't save himself from mate, as you can quite easily verify.

b) 20...♗b7 21 ♘xg7+ ♔d8 22 ♕xf7 ♘h6 23 ♘e6+.

c) The most stubborn defensive move is 20...♗a6, but even so, White wins by 21 ♘c7+! ♔d8 22 ♘xa6! (the complete knight manoeuvre was indicated by Falkbeer), and now:

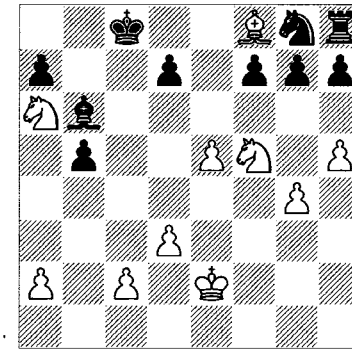
c1) 22...♕xa2 23 ♗c7+ ♔e8 24 ♘b4!.

c2) 22...♕c3 23 ♗c7+ ♕xc7 24 ♘xc7 ♔xc7 25 ♕xa8 ♘c6 (25...♘h6 26 ♘d6 +–) 26 ♘d6 ♘xe5 27 ♘e8+ ♔b6 28 ♕b8+ ♔a5 29 ♕xe5.

c3) 22...♗b6! (the most tenacious) 23 ♕xa8 ♕c3 24 ♕xb8+ ♕c8 25 ♕xc8+ ♔xc8 26 ♗f8! *(D)*.

Now 26...h6 27 ♘d6+ ♔d8 28 ♘xf7+ ♔e8 29 ♘xh8 ♔xf8 30 ♔f3 gives White a won endgame. This whole variation was discovered by Chigorin. Even if Anderssen saw 22...♗b6, he definitely can't have envisaged 26 ♗f8! – if only because he couldn't possibly have been

B



interested in an endgame after he had sacrificed so much, and so spectacularly. Fortunately, both for him and for all later generations of chessplayers, his opponent didn't set him this problem but allowed the game to finish in the most convincing and instructive way:

20...♘a6 21 ♘xg7+ ♔d8 22 ♕f6+! ♘xf6 23 ♗e7# (1-0)

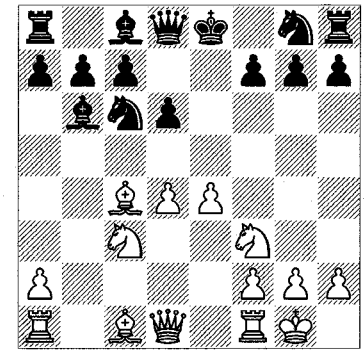
The magnificent final position of this wonderful game is also a concentrated graphic illustration of the theme of the present chapter. Don't forget it!

It is appropriate that the next example should be a game by Anderssen's great historic rival Paul Morphy, the genius who originated the dynamic approach to chess and was ahead of his time by several decades (if not a whole century).

Morphy – Hampton
London 1858

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0 ♗b6 8 cxd4 d6 9 ♘c3 *(D)*

B



9...♘f6?

In the present position, this obvious move proves to be an outright error. Such a verdict always tells us that the natural course of events has already been disrupted. (This doesn't, however, mean that a mistake has already been made. It just means that one side has initiated sharp play at an early stage. As this is an Evans Gambit, it must have been White who did so. Without overstepping the bounds of permissible risk, he is forcing his opponent as well as himself to operate in extreme conditions!) The theoretical continuations here are 9...♗g4 and 9...♘a5. The greatest-ever authority on this variation, and the greatest master at handling it (for both sides!), was Mikhail Chigorin. Morphy too had an excellent command of theory; assisted by his phenomenal memory, he was evidently the best openings connoisseur of his day. Accordingly he follows the strongest line here, which had been demonstrated only once before, in a game Périgal-Popert, London 1830.

10 e5! dxe5

In Morphy-de Rivière, Paris 1858, Black tried to sidestep the 'theoretical dispute' by playing 10...d5, but was quickly crushed after 11 exf6 dxc4 12 fxg7 ♖g8 13 ♖e1+, etc.

11 ♗a3!

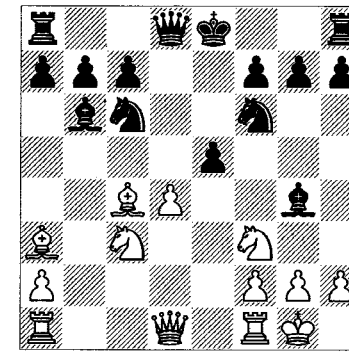
This is the whole point of the central breakthrough. Now Black can't castle, and White's better developed pieces proceed to a direct attack on the king.

11...♗g4 *(D)*

In the original game already mentioned, there followed 11...♘a5 12 ♖e1! ♘xc4 13 ♕a4+ c6 14 ♕xc4 ♗e6 15 ♖xe5 ♕d7 16 ♖xe6+! fxe6 17 ♘e5 ♕c8 18 ♖e1 ♘d5 19 ♘xd5 cxd5 20 ♕b5+ ♔d8 21 ♘f7+ ♔c7 22 ♗d6# (1-0). Two other continuations deserve consideration:

a) 11...♗xd4 12 ♕b3 ♕d7 (much more tenacious than 12...♗e6 13 ♗xe6 fxe6 14 ♕xe6+ ♘e7 15 ♘xd4 exd4 16 ♖fe1 and White won in Morphy-Golmayo Zupide, Havana sim 1864; this was one of the last games by the ill-fated genius) 13 ♖ae1!, and now not 13...♘g4? 14 ♘b5! ♗b6 15 h3 ♘a5 16 ♕c3 ♘xc4 17 ♕xc4 ♕c6 18 ♕b4 and White wins, but 13...♘a5 14 ♘xe5 ♘xb3 15 ♘xf7+ ♕e6 16 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 17 ♘xh8 ♔d7; nonetheless the position is still not simple and White holds the advantage, as is clear from the variation 18 ♖d1 ♔c6 19 ♖fe1! ♗g4 20 ♘e2! ♗c5 21 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 22 ♘f7.

b) On 11...♘xd4 12 ♘xe5 ♗e6 13 ♖e1 c5 14 ♕a4+ ♔f8 15 ♖ad1 ♔g8, the following forced variation looks good: 16 ♘b5! ♕e8 17 ♘xf7! ♕xf7 18 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 19 ♘d6 ♕g6 (19...♕d7 20 ♕c4 ±) 20 ♖xe6, with an undoubted plus for White.



12 ♕b3 ♗h5

Black also loses by force after 12...♕d7 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♘h5 and now, to step up the pace of the offensive, White nonchalantly sacrifices the exchange for good measure with 15 ♖ad1!, *formally losing material but in fact gaining a material plus in the limited part of the board where the decisive events are taking place, during the short interval which White needs in order to consummate his attack.* In concrete terms, White is giving up a rook and capturing a bishop in return. Yet his rook's place is immediately taken by the other one, which until now has been out of the game. In other words, for a short space of time in the main battle area, everything will stay the same on White's side, whereas Black will have a bishop less. It is now a trifling matter for White to conduct his attack to a successful conclusion – if he doesn't, his opponent's formal preponderance will become a real one. We have come across the very same situation before, in *Lessons in Chess Strategy* (see Chapter 1, 'The Geometry of the Chessboard'), and that example too was from a game by Morphy. Actually, everything now unfolds more or less by force: 15...♗xd1 16 ♖xd1 ♕f5, and then comes the key move of the attack: 17 ♘e4! ♖f8 (17...♘f4 18 ♘f6+) 18 ♕b4 c5 19 ♕b5+ and mates.

But as the game goes, Black also has no hope of salvation:

13 dxe5 ♘g4 14 ♖ad1 ♕c8 15 e6 f6 16 ♕b5 ♗g6 17 ♗d5 1-0

I advise you to pay attention to the reason for Black's complete helplessness: all his minor pieces are out, and yet there isn't the slightest *cooperation* between them. By contrast, White's forces are working together splendidly.

The following game was played much later, when you would expect the lessons to have been learned from the great masters of the past.

Spielmann – Chigorin
Nuremberg 1906

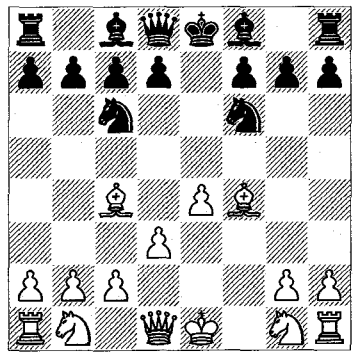
1 e4 e5 2 ♗c4 ♘f6 3 d3 ♘c6 4 f4?!

Spielmann was himself an expert at punishing his opponents for neglecting their development, but his opening play here is strange – especially against Mikhail Chigorin, that brilliant master of dynamic chess (no matter how ageing and infirm at the time), and the direct successor to Anderssen and Morphy. White's undertaking, to put it mildly, is dubious. His third move, though it promises little, is playable, but his fourth merely weakens his own position and wastes time. With it he obtains a highly unfavourable form of King's Gambit, as Chigorin is quick to demonstrate:

4...exf4 5 ♗xf4?! *(D)*

A more accurate line seems to be 5 ♘c3 ♗b4 6 ♗xf4 d5 7 exd5 ♘xd5 8 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 9 ♘f3, with only a slight plus for Black. Now Chigorin immediately obtains the better prospects with a simple blow in the centre.

B



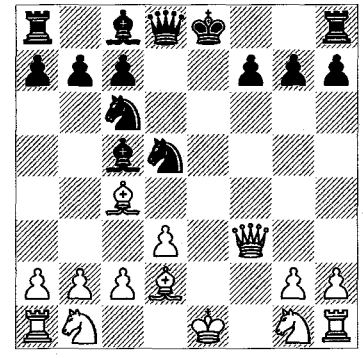
5...d5 6 exd5 ♘xd5 7 ♗d2?!

White doesn't want to part with his bishop-pair, but the loss of time in an open position counts for more. After 7 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 8 ♘f3, Black's advantage wouldn't be dangerous as yet.

7...♗c5 8 ♕f3? *(D)*

Spielmann seems to have gone to pieces. Thanks to his neglect of development, White's prospects are indeed scarcely attractive, as the following variations show: 8 ♘c3 ♘xc3 9 ♗xc3 0-0 10 ♕h5 (10 ♘e2 ♗g4 is thoroughly bad for White; also after 10 ♕f3 ♘d4 11 ♗xd4 ♕xd4, Black's advantage can't be doubted) 10...♕e7+ 11 ♘e2 ♘d4 12 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 13 0-0-0 g6, and to a modern player the advantages of Black's position are obvious. Yet by bringing his queen out into an exposed position at such an early stage, White commits one more offence against all the development rules, with lamentable results.

B



8...♕e7+?!

In this game Black doesn't have to strain himself, but his actions are nonetheless instructive. Bringing the queen out early is rarely correct, but here it is justified by the urgent need to punish the opponent for his opening sins. The point is that in the present situation this has to be done by energetic means, by threats which hamper White's development – a theme that will closely concern us in Chapter 5 (Initiative). These considerations are all absolutely valid, but Black's way of applying them is wrong. Thus the exclamation mark is for assessing the position correctly and choosing the right overall course of action, while the question mark is for calculating the variations inaccurately. The move played is not really a mistake, but it would have been considerably better to insert an intermediate check provoking some useful weaknesses: 8...♕h4+!, and after 9 ♔f1 (the

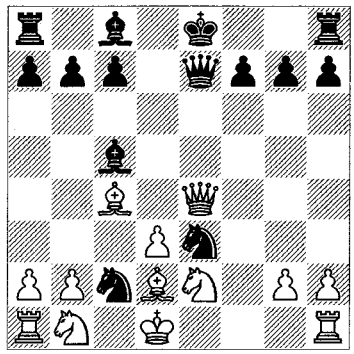
weaknesses I mentioned are revealed in the variation 9 g3 ♕e7+ 10 ♕e2 ♘d4 11 ♕xe7+ ♘xe7 12 ♗b3 ♗e6 13 ♘e2 ♗xb3 14 ♘xd4 ♗d5) 9...♗g4 10 ♕g3 (10 ♕e4+ ♔f8 11 g3 ♕f6+ is wholly bad for White) 10...♕xg3 11 hxg3 0-0-0 Black has a decisive plus.

9 ♘e2?

Now it is White's turn to miss a fortunate chance to make his opponent's task a good deal harder. The ending after 9 ♕e2 ♘d4 10 ♕xe7+ ♘xe7 11 ♗b3 ♗e6! 12 ♘f3 ♗xb3 13 ♘xd4 ♗d5 is none too appealing for White, but still playable. From now on, everything is simple.

9...♘d4 10 ♕e4 ♘xc2+ 11 ♔d1 ♘de3+ *(D)*

W



A gruesome spectacle. It's high time for White to resign.

12 ♔c1 ♕xe4 13 dxe4 ♘xa1 14 ♗d3 ♗e6 15 b4 ♗b6 16 ♔b2 0-0-0 17 ♘c1 ♘ac2 18 ♗xc2 ♘c4+ 19 ♔c3 ♗d4+ 0-1

We have been examining some classical examples in chronological order. In those days, in fact, there were thousands of these games where one player offends against the principle of development and the other punishes him according to all the rules – with dramatic material sacrifices, the opening of lines, and final execution of the stranded king. You wouldn't think it would be hard to draw useful conclusions from such games and rigorously follow the very important lesson they teach – but alas! Human nature seems to be such that you need a taste of the knout on your own hide before you realize it hurts!

Consequently, such crushing defeats are not such a rarity even in our own enlightened age.

Today, of course, players no longer make such naïve and obvious mistakes as in the old days; when they forget to develop, it is out of some 'higher' considerations, in pursuit of certain concrete ends. Yet those considerations will not rescue you if the basic principles of chess are being flouted.

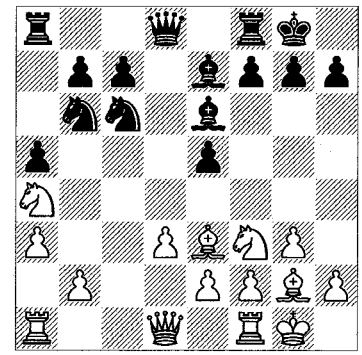
Botvinnik – Portisch
Monte Carlo 1968

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 g3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 ♗g2 ♗e6 6 ♘f3 ♘c6 7 0-0 ♘b6 8 d3 ♗e7 9 a3 a5?!

In his notes to the game Botvinnik was dubious about this move, after which Black already faces some minor difficulties. A good continuation is 9...0-0 10 b4 ♘d4 11 ♗b2 ♘xf3+ 12 ♗xf3 c6, as occurred, for example, in M.Gurevich-Shirov, Sarajevo 2000.

10 ♗e3 0-0 11 ♘a4 *(D)*

B

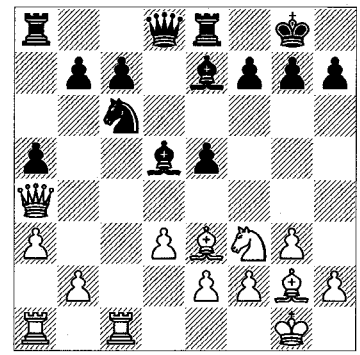


11...♘xa4?!

A second inaccuracy, the consequences of which will make themselves felt throughout the game. Botvinnik recommends 11...♘d5!? 12 ♗c5 b6 13 ♗xe7 ♘dxe7.

12 ♕xa4 ♗d5 13 ♖fc1 ♖e8 *(D)*

W

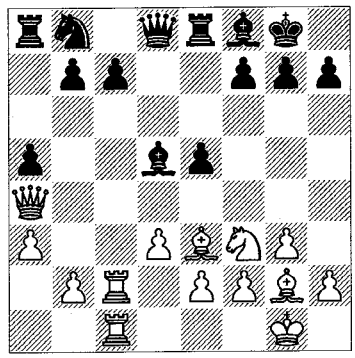


14 ♖c2 ♗f8

Not 14...b5? 15 ♕xb5 ♖b8 16 ♕a4. However, serious consideration should be given to 14...♗d6!? 15 ♕b5 ♘e7.

15 ♖ac1 ♘b8? *(D)*

The crucial moment in the game; we will therefore examine it in detail. Black already has difficulty selecting his move. For instance, the line recommended by Botvinnik himself, 15...e4 16 dxe4 ♗xe4 17 ♖d2 ♕f6 18 ♗f4 ♖ac8, is open to doubt on account of the simple 19 ♗h3 ♗f5 20 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 21 ♕b3, with highly unpleasant pressure. Black may have nothing better than 15...♗d6!?.



Some questions now arise:

1) What was the point of the move Black has just played?

2) What are its drawbacks?

3) If it does have drawbacks, how are they to be exploited?

To answer the first two questions we need only look at the diagram, and we see that Black's main worry are the doubled white rooks on the c-file. Hence the whole point of the odd-looking knight retreat is to try to play ...c6, solving this problem once and for all. The drawbacks are also obvious. For one thing the c7-pawn is left open to attack, and secondly – just look at the position! – Black's pieces were developed a moment ago, and now suddenly all but one of them are on the back rank. This is precisely the kind of situation we talked about. Black is being guided by perfectly logical considerations while offending against one solitary principle, but one that is fundamental to chess – the principle of developing your forces.

Finally, can Black be punished for this transgression? And if so, how? The answer to the second part of the question comes readily to mind: only by the capture on c7. As to the first part, the answer is more complex and can be discovered step by step. First, if we ponder the sense of the foregoing events, we can see that White has acted consistently and logically. As Tigran Petrosian would say in similar contexts, he hasn't done anything bad enough to deserve punishment. But if Black does place his pawn on c6, then both white rooks – and with them the entire sense of White's previous operations – will be 'dead'. Therefore:

1) White *must* take the c7-pawn, even without preliminary calculation! (Though this may sound over-categorical, the logic of chess is embodied in just this kind of reasoning.)

2) The variations are bound to 'come together' in White's favour. If at first sight it appears that they don't, you must search further – and they will certainly work!

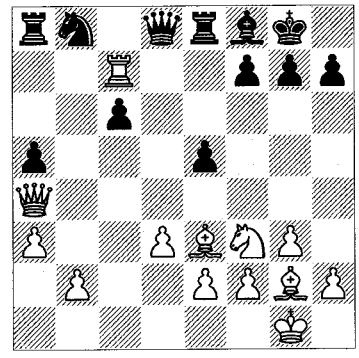
In the game, everything worked precisely and convincingly:

16 ♖xc7! ♗c6 17 ♖1xc6!

This capture too is fully justified by the above reasoning and almost obligatory, seeing that White must on no account slacken the pace of the attack and let Black organize a defence. That is what would happen if White captured the other way: 17 ♖7xc6?! ♘xc6 18 ♘g5 ♗e7.

17...bxc6 *(D)*

Nothing would be substantially altered by 17...♘xc6 18 ♖xf7! ♔xf7 (on 18...♗e7 19 ♕c4 ♔h8 20 ♕g4 ♗f6 21 ♘g5, White has a decisive plus) 19 ♕c4+ ♔g6 20 ♕g4+ ♔f7 21 ♘g5+ and wins (Botvinnik).



Here too, the same blow ensues:

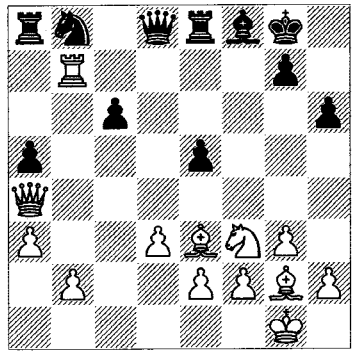
18 ♖xf7! h6

We already know what happens if the rook is taken: 18...♔xf7 19 ♕c4+ ♔g6 20 ♕g4+, etc.

Trying to complicate the issue with 18...e4!? is more interesting, but White still has a forced win, albeit not a simple one: 19 ♘g5 h6 and now the decisive move is the magnificent 20 ♖f5!! (which results from 'repairing' the variation 20 ♕c4 ♕d5). There can follow 20...hxg5 21 ♕c4+ ♔h8 22 ♖xg5 g6 23 ♗d4+ ♗g7 24 ♕f7!, and wins.

19 ♖b7 *(D)*

B



19...♕c8

Other defences are no better: 19...♖e7 20 ♕b3+ ♔h8 21 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 22 ♘h4 +– or 19...♕f6 20 ♕c4+! ♔h8 (20...♕e6 21 ♘xe5 +–) 21 ♖f7 ♕d6 22 ♘h4, winning.

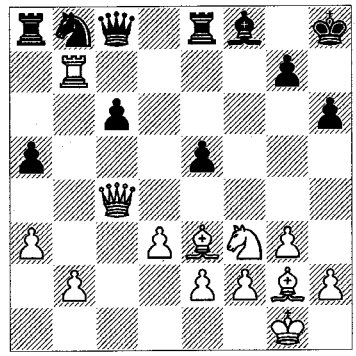
20 ♕c4+!

The right square for the check!

20...♔h8 *(D)*

Or 20...♔h7 21 ♘g5+! hxg5 22 ♗e4+ ♔h8 23 ♕f7 and wins.

W



21 ♘h4!!

Botvinnik conducts the whole game in brilliant style, with extreme accuracy and energy.

21...♕xb7

Portisch allows the most attractive dénouement. Other tries also fail to save him: 21...♖e6 22 ♗h3 ♕xb7 23 ♕xe6 +– or the more complicated 21...♕e6 22 ♕e4 ♔g8 23 ♘g6 a4 24 ♗xh6! gxh6 25 ♘f4 +–.

22 ♘g6+ ♔h7 23 ♗e4 ♗d6 24 ♘xe5+ g6 25 ♗xg6+ ♔g7 26 ♗xh6+! 1-0

A beautiful finish to a superb game. Black's neglect of development received punishment in the best tradition.

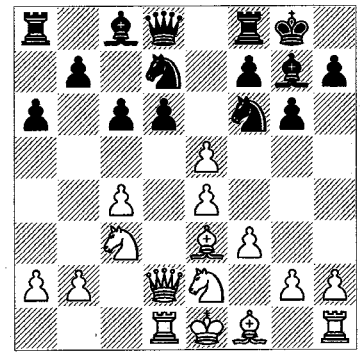
And now another game in a similar vein.

Karpov – Kasparov
Linares 1993

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 ♘ge2 c6 8 ♕d2 ♘bd7 9 ♖d1 a6 10 dxe5?! *(D)*

Looking for ways to deflect Kasparov from his well-prepared and familiar course, Karpov embarks on a dubious undertaking which assists his opponent's development. After 10 d5 c5 the game would be unclear.

B



Now, however, in spite of the hopeless weakness of the d6-pawn (a weakness which is, however, typical of the King's Indian Defence), Black's chances will be superior. The dynamic merits of his position will outweigh its static defects. It's interesting that for all his vast experience of playing Kasparov, Karpov is conceding trumps to his opponent in precisely that field of chess where Kasparov's special strength lies: the field of active piece-play, and on King's Indian territory too, where he has a feel for the finest nuances. The course of the game will soon reveal the danger of this approach.

10...♘xe5!

Kasparov must surely have been prepared for this turn of events, if only as a result of

knowing about Gavrikov-Barbero, Berne 1991. That game went 10...dxe5 11 c5 ♘e8 12 ♘c1 ♕e7 13 ♘b3 ♔h8 14 ♗c4 f5 15 0-0, leading to a typical King's Indian position in which White has a slight but enduring plus.

11 b3

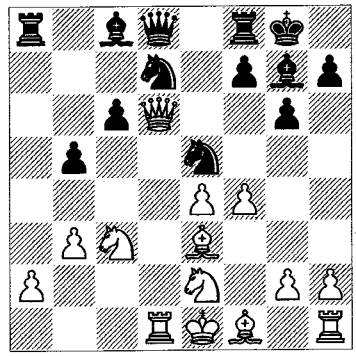
Karpov didn't go in for this variation in order to play 11 ♘c1 ♗e6 12 ♕xd6 and then seek salvation in somewhat the worse ending after 12...♕xd6 13 ♖xd6 ♗xc4 14 ♗e2 (not 14 f4? ♗xf1 15 fxe5 ♘g4 ∓; or 14 ♗d4 ♗xf1, and now 15 ♗xe5 ♗xg2 16 ♖g1 ♘e8 ∓ or 15 ♖xf1 ♘c4! 16 ♖xf6 ♖fd8 ∓) 14...♗xe2 15 ♔xe2 ♘c4.

11...b5! 12 cxb5

The variation 12 ♕xd6?! ♕xd6 13 ♖xd6 bxc4 favours Black.

12...axb5 13 ♕xd6 ♘fd7 14 f4 *(D)*

B



From Black's 10th move up to here, events have unfolded more or less by force – not in the mundane sense, of course, but according to the logic of the chess struggle on a very high level. When setting out on his opening operation, Karpov had most probably foreseen this situation and evaluated it in his own favour – underrating the dynamic power of the black position. These are the considerations I mentioned at the outset of the game. By exactly the same logic of the struggle, Kasparov's reply is completely obligatory. He can't on any account retreat.

14...b4!

This gives rise to immense complications, in which the key factors will be the greatly superior mobility of Black's pieces and – in keeping with our theme – White's backwardness in development. In other words, Black will *always have more forces to hand in the critical sector of the board*, which is the most important thing about a development advantage.

15 ♘b1?

White's choice of moves here is wide and anything but simple. A mass of involved variations spring up, which can't be analysed exhaustively – and need not be, either. An essential skill in such cases is the correct evaluation of positions that arise after a relatively small number of compulsory moves. But even this may not be simple; even over quite a short range, calculation may be very difficult, and the sheer complexity of the ensuing positions may make them that much harder to assess. In these situations a player's intuition assumes an immense role – yet ultimately the ability to analyse remains the deciding factor. In this respect everything that was said about Mikhail Tal in the last chapter applies just as much to Kasparov; hence the particular complexity of Karpov's task here. There were variations like these to be calculated:

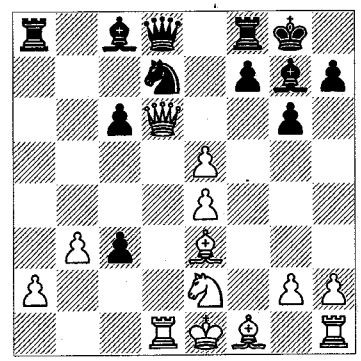
a) 15 ♘a4 ♖xa4! and now:

a1) 16 fxe5 ♖xa2 17 ♕xc6 ♕h4+ 18 ♗f2 ♕g4, with a significant plus for Black.

a2) 16 bxa4 ♘c4 17 ♕d3 ♘b2 18 ♕b3 ♘xd1 19 ♕xd1 ♕a5, and again Black has clearly the better prospects.

b) 15 fxe5 bxc3 *(D)*, with these possibilities:

W



b1) 16 e6 fxe6 17 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 18 ♘c1 (18 ♗d4? c2 19 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 –+) 18...♖f6 19 ♕g4 ♕e7 and White's king is very unsafe; e.g., 20 ♗g5 c2 21 ♖d2 ♘c5 22 ♕f3 ♘xe4 23 ♗xf6 ♗xf6.

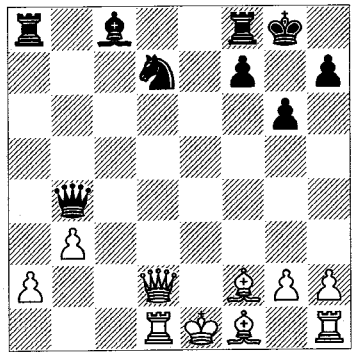
b2) 16 ♘xc3 ♗xe5 17 ♕xc6 is a more complex option:

b21) 17...♕h4+ and now:

b211) Events take a very interesting course after 18 g3 ♗xc3+ 19 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 20 ♖xd2

♕f6 21 ♕xa8 ♘e5 22 ♗e2 ♘f3+ 23 ♗xf3 ♕xf3 24 ♖f1 ♕e3+ 25 ♖e2 ♕xe2+ 26 ♔xe2 ♗g4+.

b212) 18 ♗f2 ♗xc3+ 19 ♕xc3 ♕xe4+ 20 ♕e3 ♕b4+ 21 ♕d2 *(D)*, and now what? Put a bookmark in place, shut the book, and write down the solution for yourself.



21...♖e8+! 22 ♗e2 ♖xa2!! –+.

b213) Kasparov suggests 18 ♔d2 with a wholly unclear position, putting paid to all the brilliance. Such a pity!

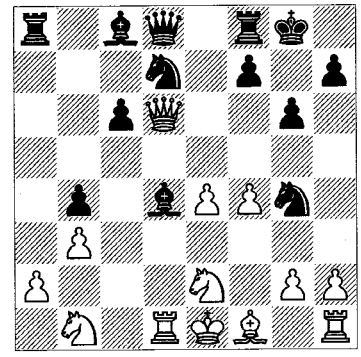
b22) In his view, Black's best course in this very complex situation would be 17...♗xc3+ 18 ♕xc3 ♕h4+ 19 ♔d2! ♖xa2+ 20 ♔c1 ♘f6 21 ♔b1 ♖a8! with somewhat the better chances.

c) Another interesting move is 15 ♕xb4!?, suggested by Knaak. The game may continue 15...c5! 16 ♗xc5 ♘xc5 17 ♕xc5 ♘d3+ 18 ♖xd3 ♕xd3 19 e5 ♖d8 20 ♔f2, and White retains chances of a successful defence, although Kasparov views this variation with scepticism.

15...♘g4 16 ♗d4

In his notes to the game Anand mentions 16 ♗g1 (which was analysed by the players in their *post-mortem*), and gives the following variations: 16...♖xa2 17 h3 (in Anand's view, 17 ♕xc6!? deserves attention), and now a gripping battle is joined: 17...♕h4+!! 18 g3 ♖xe2+! 19 ♔xe2 ♕xg3 20 ♖d3 (a similar or identical situation would arise from 20 hxg4 ♘f6!) 20...♗a6 21 hxg4. Now Anand recommends 21...♘f6! without giving any continuation. Let's try to fathom this situation ourselves. The truth is anything but obvious – the variations are more or less approximate (since there are so many possibilities), yet they do reveal the character of the position and confirm our definition of a development advantage: despite White's *formal* material plus, Black possesses *the actual preponderance of forces on the parts of the board where the clash is taking place*: 22 ♘d2 ♘d5! 23 ♘c4 ♘xf4+ 24 ♔d2 ♕xg4 25 ♕d7 ♕g5 26 ♗e3 ♗xc4! 27 bxc4 ♖a8 28 ♖g1 ♕h4 29 ♕g4 ♕h2+ and Black wins.

16...♗xd4 *(D)*

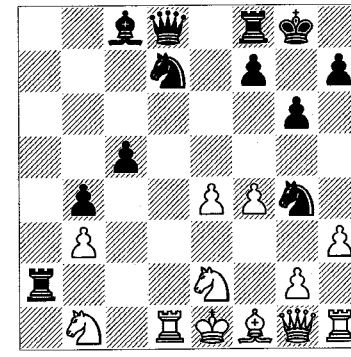


17 ♕xd4

Speelman suggested 17 ♘xd4, to which our counter-suggestion is 17...♘df6! (the consequences of this appear clearer than those of Anand's 17...♖xa2) 18 ♕xc6 (Black has an overwhelming advantage after 18 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 19 e5 c5!; White also does badly with 18 ♘xc6 ♕xd6 19 ♖xd6 ♘xe4 20 ♘e7+ ♔g7 21 ♖d4 ♘ef2 22 ♖g1 ♖e8), and now the queen sacrifice 18...♖xa2!? 19 ♘e6 ♕xd1+ 20 ♔xd1 ♗xe6 gives Black a decisive plus.

17...♖xa2 18 h3 c5 19 ♕g1 *(D)*

Given White's hopeless passivity overall, an active sortie with the lone queen gives nothing: 19 ♕d6 ♘e3 20 ♖d2 ♖a1 and wins.



"I rest my case!" says Anand, by way of commenting on White's last move. I put it to you that the placing of White's pieces speaks for itself – it reveals in the most graphic manner

that no good comes of forgetting about development.

19...♘gf6 20 e5

White would quickly lose after 20 ♘d2 ♖xd2! 21 ♖xd2 ♘xe4.

20...♘e4 21 h4

Little is altered by inserting the moves 21 ♕e3 ♗b7, thus: 22 h4 ♕e7 23 ♘d2 (23 h5 g5! −+) 23...♘xd2 24 ♖xd2 ♖xd2 25 ♕xd2 f6, with a big advantage. If instead 22 ♘d2, Kasparov gives 22...♘xd2 23 ♖xd2 ♖xd2 24 ♕xd2 ♘b6! (his suggestion of 24...♕e7! is also strong) 25 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 26 ♘c1 ♘d5 27 ♘d3 ♘e3 with an overwhelming advantage. But now, fresh forces are able to storm into the game:

21...c4! 22 ♘c1

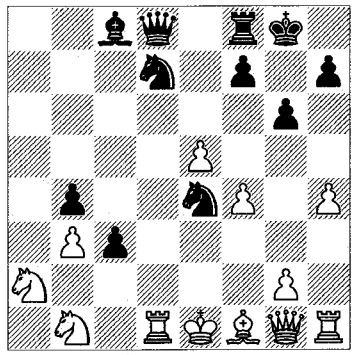
Black wins after 22 bxc4 ♕a5 23 ♕e3 b3+ 24 ♘ec3 ♘dc5. 22 ♕e3 also fails, in view of 22...c3! 23 ♕xe4 c2 24 ♖d2 (or 24 ♖c1 ♘c5) 24...cxb1♕+ 25 ♕xb1 ♖xd2 26 ♔xd2 ♘xe5+.

22...c3!?

The situation speaks for itself, but any position, even if completely won, demands good play all the way to the end. The classic chess masters, whose precepts we all try to follow, invariably recommended taking the clearest and safest path when realizing a big advantage. In the heat of battle, Kasparov sometimes neglects this wise advice. From the most general point of view he may be wrong, but then there is such a thing as subjective as well as objective truth. So for the moment we will refrain from any categorical judgement and just follow the course of events. As Anand points out, there was quite an uncomplicated and painless win here in the shape of 22...♖b2! 23 ♕d4 c3 24 ♕xe4 c2.

23 ♘xa2 *(D)*

B



23...c2

At this point Karpov was already in severe time-trouble. He now loses quickly.

24 ♕d4?!

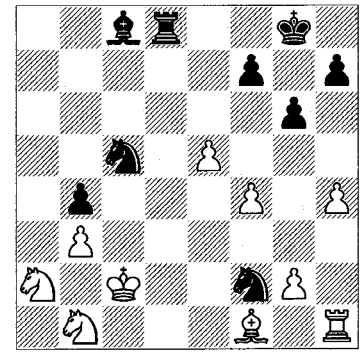
Neglecting the chance to play more stubbornly with 24 ♖c1!?, although even then Black would have a speedy win indicated by Knaak: 24...♘xe5! 25 ♖xc2 (Black also wins after 25 ♕e3 ♘g4! 26 ♕d3 cxb1♕ 27 ♖xb1 ♕b6) 25...♗g4 26 ♘d2 ♘d3+. Kasparov, however (according to Anand!) had a different reply in mind, perhaps less strong but much more spectacular: 24...cxb1♕ 25 ♖xb1 ♘xe5 26 ♖d1 and now the amazing 26...♗g4!!. However, in the variation 27 ♖xd8!? ♖xd8 28 ♗e2 ♘d3+, he underestimated a typical computer-style move (indeed, what human being *would* have assessed it properly and believed in it?): 29 ♔d1!, and now, for example, after 29...♘xf4+ 30 ♔c2 ♖d2+ 31 ♔b1 ♘xe2 32 ♕b6 ♗f5 33 ♔a1 ♘d4 34 ♕b8+ ♔g7 35 ♘c1, my computer can see no win for Black. On the other hand, 27 ♗e2 would quickly be refuted by 27...♕a8! 28 fxe5 ♗xe2 29 ♔xe2 ♘g3+.

24...cxd1♕+ 25 ♔xd1

On 25 ♕xd1, Black wins by 25...♘g3 26 ♖h3 ♘xf1 27 ♔xf1 ♘c5! 28 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 29 ♖e3 ♖d1+ 30 ♖e1 ♗a6+ (Kasparov).

25...♘dc5! 26 ♕xd8 ♖xd8+ 27 ♔c2 ♘f2 *(D)*

W



0-1

Here Karpov overstepped the time-limit. His position is lost, as we can see from the variation 28 ♖g1 ♗f5+ 29 ♔b2 (or 29 ♔c1 ♖d1+ 30 ♔b2 ♖xb1#) 29...♘d1+ 30 ♔a1 ♘xb3#.

The game is very striking, instructive and convincing, but let's return to a theme that was touched on in the note to Black's 22nd move – the relation between the subjective and the objective.

Anand informs us that at this point Kasparov was intending to put the spectacular before the rational, and according to the classical canons he would have been wrong to do so. But this (as we said before) is to take the most general and strictly objective view of the matter. Man is an invariably subjective being, and the objective truth is sometimes outweighed by the subjective. I see this as a case in point. In selecting his move, Kasparov succeeded in unearthing some stunning ideas. If nothing else, look at the possibility of 26...♗g4!!. Can you imagine many players who would be capable of 'immersing' themselves so deeply in the position – or who would have any *wish* to, given that a clearer method was there?

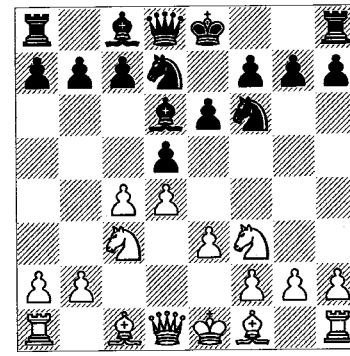
Moreover, through the positive emotional stimulus that it gives you, doesn't this kind of decision sometimes serve to revitalize your powers? (In saying this, I must stress that Kasparov never overdoes these 'transgressions'. He would seem to engage in them from a form of inner necessity. We will come back to this.) After all, the gigantic amount of energy that Kasparov expends during play has to be replenished somehow or other! I suspect that in his case, the vital wellspring is his natural emotionality and his innate ability to convert it into energy. This would appear to be a gift possessed by very few.

Hence the conclusion, in its most general form: an ordinary player *should* follow the path bequeathed to us by the chess classics and tested by long years of experience. Individual deviations from this path can be of benefit only to a player who, in the first place, knows and thoroughly understands all the general principles – and who, in addition, completely knows his own mind when he violates them.

The following game opens up some different aspects of our central topic. Yet among its interesting themes we shall detect some problems which are psychologically akin to those of the Karpov-Kasparov game.

Alekhine – Sterk
Budapest 1921

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 ♘bd7 5 e3 ♗d6?! *(D)*



6 ♘b5?

This is a sheer waste of time. Compare the position after White's 8th move with the possible variation 5...♗e7 6 ♕c2 c6. The position is just the same, only with the other side to play. A simple and good line is 6 c5 ♗e7 7 b4 with an advantage.

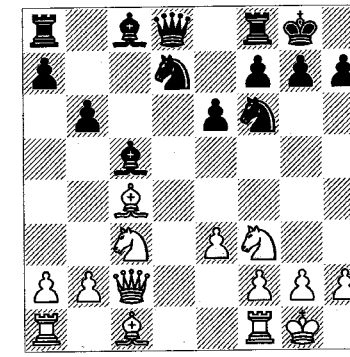
6...♗e7 7 ♕c2 c6 8 ♘c3 0-0 9 ♗d3 dxc4 10 ♗xc4 c5!

Even though this pawn has taken two moves to reach c5, it does good work there, which cannot be said of the white queen on c2. It's already White who is going to face some problems.

11 dxc5

After 11 0-0 ♘b6 12 ♗d3 cxd4 13 exd4 ♗d7, White would have a more or less unfavourable form of an IQP position.

11...♗xc5 12 0-0 b6 *(D)*



13 e4

This advance leads to sharper play but at the same time weakens White's position. In other words, a typical clash between statics and dynamics arises. Positions of this sort were undoubtedly well known to Alekhine, because Rubinstein had played them willingly and with virtuosity, convincingly exposing weaknesses

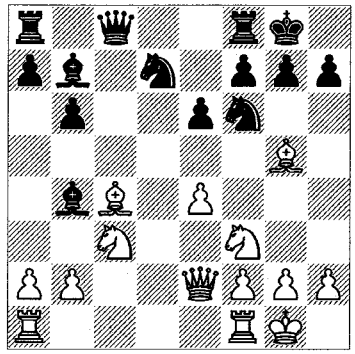
such as those White has just accepted. But then, Alekhine realized that in this game he was not facing Rubinstein! Objectively speaking, a stronger line is 13 ♘e4!? ♗b7 14 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 15 b4 ♗e4 16 ♕c3, with equality and a most probable draw. Alekhine decided to take the risk, rightly supposing that in a sharp tactical struggle he would have the opportunity to outplay his opponent. Look at everything we said in similar contexts about Tal and Kasparov.

13...♗b7 14 ♗g5

Going into action with insufficient development rarely succeeds. Thus, 14 e5? is bad on account of 14...♘g4! 15 ♘g5 g6 16 ♘xe6 ♕h4 17 ♗f4 (17 h3? ♕g3) 17...fxe6! 18 ♗xe6+ ♔g7 19 ♗g3 ♕h5 20 ♗xd7 ♖xf2! –+; but a line I like better is 14 ♗f4!?, when for instance there could follow 14...♖c8 15 ♖ad1 ♗b4 16 ♘e5. As the game goes, Black gains the advantage with a few excellent moves.

14...♕c8! 15 ♕e2 ♗b4! *(D)*

W



16 ♗d3!?

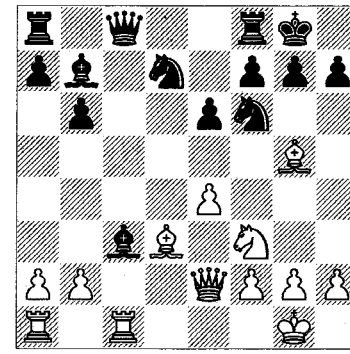
By now, a mere glance at Black's position gives you a sense of its merits. White has to proceed very accurately to maintain the tension of the struggle, and he discovers the best chance – which arises from analysing the variation 16 ♖ac1? ♗xc3 17 ♗d3 ♘c5 18 ♖xc3 ♗xe4! 19 ♗xf6 ♗xd3. In that line, the f1-rook would finish up *en prise*. Hence it is this rook that needs to go to c1. It could, of course, do so at once.

16...♗xc3!

This natural move is also strongest. If only Black had succeeded in working out the consequences! Instead, after 16...♘c5 17 ♗xf6 gxf6 18 ♖ac1 ♕b8!?, Black's position is good but White too has everything in order.

17 ♖fc1! *(D)*

B



17...♘xe4?

The opposing forces have no sooner started clashing directly than Black commits a decisive error! From this example (and a great many others), one very simple but extremely important conclusion can be drawn: sooner or later in every game, a certain stage is reached when the two sides' pieces come into contact, giving rise to variations which increase in number with every move. And if one player has the more promising position at the start of this sequence, it doesn't guarantee that he will still emerge with advantage from the tactical crossfire. The most important factor here is skill in calculating variations. It can probably be said that this very skill is the most valuable quality a chess-player can have. It follows that you shouldn't grudge the time spent on training your powers of calculation if you want to improve as a player.

To that end, you can perfectly well use any position from an annotated game in which there is something to be calculated. But at this point I will repeat my favourite entreaty: "Set up the position from the above diagram, put a bookmark in place, shut the book, and work things out for yourself." You can place a chess clock by the board, give yourself a certain amount of thinking time (for this position you shouldn't need more than 20-25 minutes), and work out the variations without moving the pieces. On the other hand you could also do without the clock; it's only really necessary for players with plenty of training behind them.

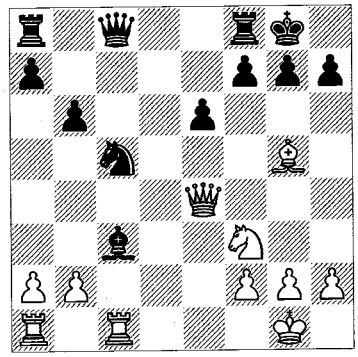
But now to the point – Black's correct choice is 17...♘c5! 18 ♖xc3 ♗xe4 19 ♗xf6 ♗xd3, after which the game continues on more or less forced lines with 20 ♕e3 gxf6 21 b4 ♗g6 22

bxc5 bxc5 23 ♖xc5 ♕a6. At this stage, following Alekhine, Kotov in his book writes: "24 h4 gives an attack for the pawn." If we make another couple of obvious moves – 24...♖fc8 25 h5 ♖xc5 26 ♕xc5 ♖c8 – we can easily see that the pawn *and* the attack are both missing. For anyone just starting to train their analytical powers, it should be enough to work through the first stage of this variation (up to move 19) and stop there. The more experienced *must* continue the analysis to the 23rd move.

18 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 19 ♕xe4 ♘c5 *(D)*

Now some real puzzles arise.

W



You don't need to look at the position for long to discover 20 ♕b1. Then after 20...♗b4, White wins a piece and the game by either 21 ♖c4 a5 22 a3 ♕a6 23 ♕c2 b5 24 ♖h4 or 21 a3 ♕b7 22 b3!. It all happens quickly and simply. Instead, Alekhine chose:

20 ♕e2?

Kotov gave this move an exclamation mark, but objectively it is much weaker than 20 ♕b1, and lets slip nearly all White's advantage.

20...♗a5 21 ♖ab1?!

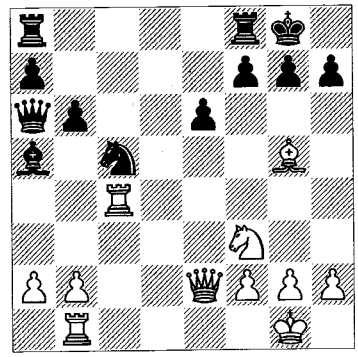
This definitely does forfeit White's plus, part of which he could still have preserved by playing (once again) the most natural move: 21 a3 ♕b7, and now 22 ♕e3! (better than 22 b4?! ♗xb4 23 axb4 ♘b3 with an unclear position). Then after 22...♘a6 23 b4 ♗xb4 (Black could also take the pawn with the knight and retain his bishop) 24 axb4 ♘xb4 White would have the better chances, though there would be plenty of play left.

21...♕a6 22 ♖c4 *(D)*

22...♘a4?

Black returns the favour! The preliminary move 22...h6! would considerably narrow down

B



White's attacking possibilities, as the following variations show:

a) 23 ♗h4 ♘b7! 24 ♗f6 (24 b4 b5 25 ♖g4 ♗d8 26 ♕b2 f6 is in Black's favour) 24...♘d6 25 ♖g4 with perpetual check.

b) 23 ♗e3 ♖ac8! 24 ♗xh6 (or 24 b4 ♘e4 25 b5 ♕b7; on 24 ♖bc1, Black plays 24...♘b7!?, when 25 ♗xh6? fails to 25...gxh6 26 ♖g4+ ♔h7! –+, while Black also has the better prospects after 25 ♘d4 ♖xc4 26 ♕xc4 ♕xc4 27 ♖xc4 ♖d8 28 ♔f1 ♖d7) 24...♘d7! 25 ♘e5! ♖xc4 26 ♘xc4 gxh6, and Black keeps the pawn with a sound position.

c) An unclear situation results from 23 ♗xh6!? gxh6 24 b4 ♗xb4 25 ♖bxb4 ♖ad8.

23 ♗f6!

Of course, 23 b4? would fail to 23...♘c3. However, 23 ♕f1 would be perfectly good; once again White would be winning a piece by the simplest means. The text-move is very powerful and striking, but it is not only good in itself – this position proves extremely useful for our investigations. Why is that?

Observing the course of this battle, you might quite easily have forgotten that the present chapter is all about development. "What's this got to do with development problems, or players offending against the laws of development?" you may be asking. Of course it has nothing to do with them if we apply strictly formal standards. Both sides brought out their pieces in the normal way in the opening stage. However, let's recall what we said in the commentary on the Karpov-Kasparov game about the *essence* of a development advantage: in reality, such an advantage stems from *the capability of one player's forces to form a substantial majority on that part of the board where the fate of the battle is being decided.* If we look at

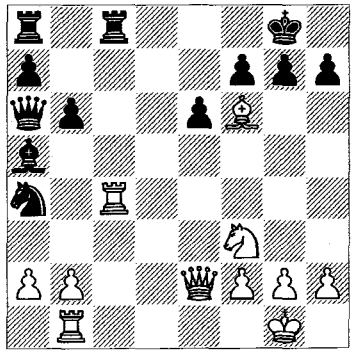
the current position from this viewpoint, we can see at once that all Black's nominally developed pieces are bunched in quite an absurd fashion on the queenside, while on his kingside there are virtually no forces left. Doesn't this mean that in reality, though not formally, Black's pieces are undeveloped? Small wonder that in a few moves White works up a very strong attack against the black king which is left without support.

23...♖fc8 *(D)*

Black no longer has any choice. After 23...h5 24 ♖g4! ♕xe2 25 ♖xg7+ ♔h8 26 ♘g5, he is mated. Likewise after 23...h6 24 ♘e5! g6 25 ♕e3, mate is not far off. Black would lose in similar fashion with 23...♘c5 24 ♘e5! gxf6 25 ♖g4+ ♔h8 26 ♕f3 f5 27 ♘xf7+.

Even now, White's superior forces easily prevail.

W



24 ♕e5! ♖c5

There is no salvation anywhere; for example, 24...♕xc4 25 ♕g5 ♔f8 26 ♕xg7+ ♔e8 27 ♕g8+ ♔d7 28 ♘e5+ +– or 24...♖xc4 25 ♕g5 ♖g4 26 ♕xg4 g6 27 ♕xa4 +–.

25 ♕g3! *(D)*

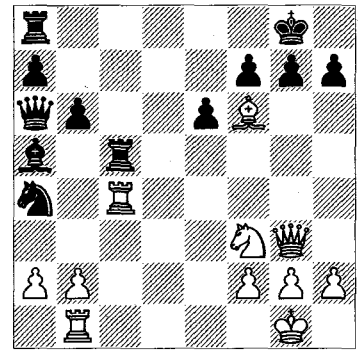
At this point White has other tempting options, such as:

a) 25 ♖g4?! ♕d3 (25...g6? 26 ♕e3 ♖f5 27 ♖xa4 ♖xf6 28 ♖h4! h5 29 b4) 26 ♖xg7+ ♔f8 27 ♖f1 ♖xe5 28 ♘xe5 ♕c2! (not 28...♕f5? 29 ♖xf7+ ♔g8 30 ♖g7+ ♔f8 31 ♘d7+, when White should win) 29 ♖xf7+ ♔g8 and White must settle for a draw.

b) 25 ♖xc5!? gxf6 26 ♕g3+ ♔h8 27 ♘e5!! fxe5 (27...♕b7 28 ♖c7; 27...♖f8 28 ♖c7 fxe5 29 ♕xe5+ ♔g8 30 ♖d1 +–) 28 ♕xe5+ ♔g8 29 ♕g5+ ♔f8 (29...♔h8 30 ♕f6+ ♔g8 31 ♖g5+) 30 ♖c7.

Instead White simply pockets a piece, which seems to me *on principle* to be the most correct method. *There's no point in picking a fight when the game is already over. Winning the game once is quite enough!* The main thing is that the path to victory should be clear-cut and reliable. That is why I take such a sceptical view of the 'beauties' of this game.

B



25...g6 26 ♖xa4 ♕d3 27 ♖f1 ♖ac8 28 ♖d4 ♕f5 29 ♕f4 ♕c2 30 ♕h6 1-0

This game won a brilliancy prize. What do you make of that?

At first I couldn't decide whether to include the whole of this game or just an extract from it, beginning with the position after Black's 22nd move. However, on reflection I realized that the interesting things about the game were not just the factors linking it to our topic, and not just the mutual errors either. Something equally instructive for the reader is the patchy quality of the annotations. It is very hard for the ordinary chess amateur to determine the quality of annotations by prominent players. Quite often they are miles away from accuracy. Sometimes you need to apply a little effort and do some work yourself to check the annotations and judgements that are being offered to you, even if you only do it in some particular places that have caught your interest. This not merely enables you to discern the truth, but it can also become an excellent means of improving your chess.

The next example *is* presented as a mere extract, even though the game is not only excellent in itself but also of considerable historical significance. The point is that if I gave the game in its entirety, we would need to delve into a

multitude of strategic refinements which would not suit our present purpose. Presenting a game like this *without* attending to the fine points would be absurd.

After a complex struggle in the opening and middlegame, the following position arose:

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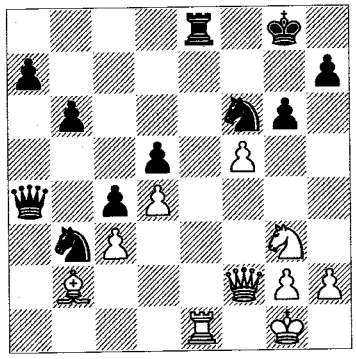


Botvinnik – Capablanca
Rotterdam (AVRO) 1938

It looks unconventional and interesting. Black has an extra pawn and an overwhelming preponderance on the queenside, but since of course the king is the 'senior' piece, it's important to see what resources both players have on that part of the board where the kings are. Here we find that White's chances are far superior. In the first place the black king's shelter has been weakened, and secondly White has far more forces operating in this area. It is obvious why – Black's queen is involved on the opposite wing, and his knight in particular is stranded. White too would seem to have one piece out of play, namely his bishop – but that piece is stopping Black's counter-attack from breaking through via the queenside.

Botvinnik loses no time. He doesn't want to let his opponent bring his inactive units to the battleground, in other words finish developing. He goes into action without delay.

26 ♖e6!

And immediately Black is in trouble. As Botvinnik indicates, 26...♔g7 loses by force to 27 ♖xf6! ♔xf6 28 fxg6+ ♔xg6 (28...♔e7 29 ♕f7+ ♔d8 30 g7) 29 ♕f5+ ♔g7 30 ♘h5+ ♔h6 31 h4! ♖g8 32 g4 ♕c6 33 ♗a3! and mate. (This and many subsequent variations are from Botvinnik's notes to the game – I shall not acknowledge them individually.) Black therefore has to take the rook, but this dramatically improves White's position.

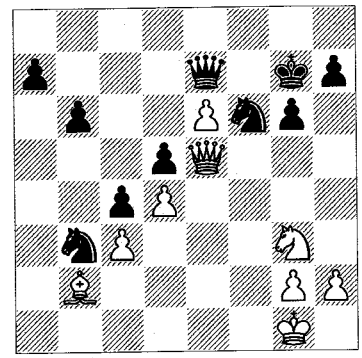
26...♖xe6 27 fxe6 ♔g7 28 ♕f4 ♕e8

Not 28...♕a2? 29 ♘f5+ gxf5 30 ♕g5+ and wins.

29 ♕e5 ♕e7 *(D)*

Black's queen has re-entered the game. His knight could not do so in time: on 29...♘a5, the white bishop would get there first with 30 ♗c1! ♘c6 31 ♗h6+, winning.

W



It now looks as if Black has managed to organize his defence; the knight will find time for the return journey, and it will be hard for White to find means of increasing the pressure. At this very moment, however, a bomb goes off:

30 ♗a3!!

This powerful, decisive stroke is perfectly in keeping with our theme. Cut off from the main action, the bishop sacrifices itself in order to deflect the principal black piece from that very same action and completely expose the black king. After this, White will have a decisive plus on the kingside.

30...♕xa3

On 30...♕e8, White wins with 31 ♕c7+ ♔g8 32 ♗e7 ♘g4 33 ♕d7.

31 ♘h5+! gxh5

Black also loses by force after 31...♔h6 32 ♘xf6 ♕c1+ 33 ♔f2 ♕d2+ 34 ♔g3 ♕xc3+ 35 ♔h4 ♕xd4+ 36 ♘g4+!.

32 ♕g5+ ♔f8 33 ♕xf6+ ♔g8 34 e7

As subsequent analysis showed, White can also win by 34 ♕f7+ ♔h8, when it is imperative to find the very subtle 35 g3!, enabling the king to hide. It is useful, indeed essential, to see such details afterwards – in home analysis. At the board, *in a won position or a much superior one*, it is enough to see a single but reliable way

forward. *Winning the game once is quite sufficient.*

34...♕c1+ 35 ♔f2 ♕c2+ 36 ♔g3 ♕d3+ 37 ♔h4 ♕e4+ 38 ♔xh5 *(D)*

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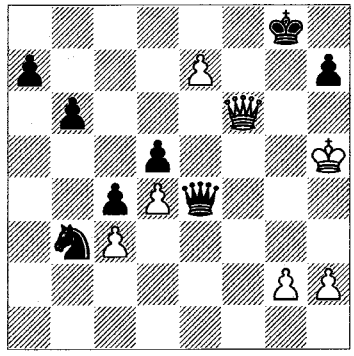

White has to go in for a king march, but he has calculated everything.

38...♕e2+

Black also fails with 38...♕g6+ 39 ♕xg6+ hxg6+ 40 ♔xg6, and for just the same reason – his knight is out of play. It is as good as undeveloped.

39 ♔h4 ♕e4+ 40 g4 ♕e1+ 41 ♔h5 1-0

Now it's all over.

Of course, punishment for neglect of development tends to take the form of an attack on the king, so the scene of events is likely to be the centre and kingside. But then, it's also perfectly possible for the queenside to be the target for an offensive, and with a certain quantity of forces out of play it will be difficult to defend.

Geller – Unzicker
Saltsjöbaden IZ 1952

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 dxc4 5 e4 b5 6 e5 ♘d5 7 a4 e6 8 axb5 ♘xc3 9 bxc3 cxb5 10 ♘g5 ♗b7 11 ♕h5 g6 12 ♕g4 ♗e7 13 ♗e2 ♘d7 14 ♗f3 ♕c7?! *(D)*

This opening variation was in vogue in the 1950s, and in recent decades it has enjoyed some sporadic popularity. Black's last move, however, is considered inferior to 14...♕c8.

15 ♘e4

A more accurate line may be 15 0-0!? ♘b6 16 ♘e4 ♘d5, and only now 17 ♗g5 h6 18 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 19 ♘d6 a6 20 ♗e4, with a dangerous

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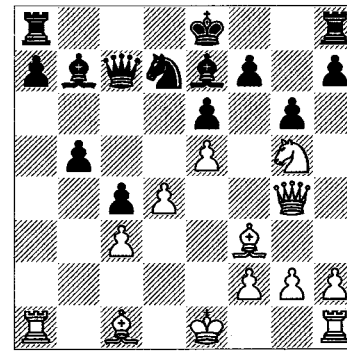

initiative; this occurred in Panno-Maderna, Mar del Plata 1954.

15...♘b6 16 ♗h6!?

Geller's explanation for this move is that he only wanted to place his bishop on g5 after the black knight had been transferred to d5, so that the white knight would no longer be under attack. At the same time the threat of 17 ♗g7 arises, and to defend against it, Black goes wrong with:

16...♖g8? *(D)*

Black hopes to castle by hand, but it will cost time which in this situation is precious. The natural 16...♘d5 looks much better; there could follow 17 ♗g5 0-0 18 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 19 ♘d6!? (Geller gives 19 ♘f6+ ♘xf6 20 exf6 with initiative for White, but after the natural 20...♕c7 there is no initiative or any other compensation either; that being so, the advantage would be with Black) 19...a6 20 h4, with good compensation for the pawn.

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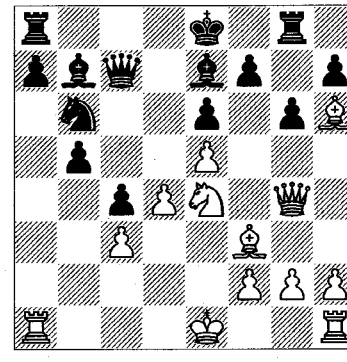

Now White manages to work up some extremely powerful pressure.

17 ♗g5!

It's obvious that with the gaping weaknesses on the dark squares in the black camp, it pays

White to exchange off the enemy dark-squared bishop.

17...♗xe4

Black in turn is obliged to exchange the extremely dangerous white knight. Some further forced play ensues.

18 ♗xe4 ♘d5

Here 18...♖c8?! looks worse, since in the variation 19 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 20 0-0 ♔f8 21 ♖fb1 Black can't play 21...a6.

19 ♗xd5 exd5 *(D)*

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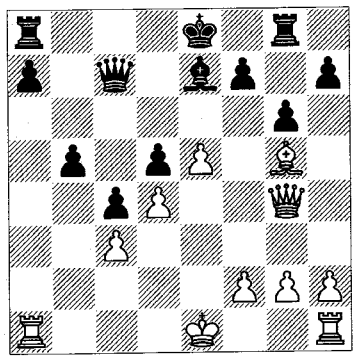


20 ♗xe7!

On the face of it, this is just an exchange. Why, then, do I consider it worthy of an exclamation mark? White doesn't have to play this move as yet. However, in the first place, it pays him to keep his queen within range of f3 (we shall presently understand why). And secondly, it is from this position that White's calculation of the decisive action begins – he has already foreseen the events which are about to unfold. I earlier had occasion to speak of the important role which such 'modest', seemingly unremarkable moves play in deciding the fate of a game. They are often the ones that prepare the ground for the dramatic events which follow. They reveal a player's skill in fathoming the secrets of chess positions; his strength is determined in no small measure by his ability to make the right choice between a number of such 'inconspicuous' possibilities.

20...♕xe7 21 0-0 ♔f8

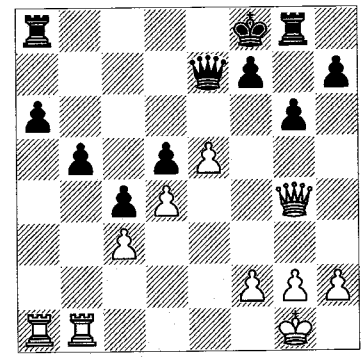
The king must be evacuated, and fast, so as to unite the other pieces.

22 ♖fb1 a6 *(D)*

23 ♕f3!

In spite of Black's extra pawn, there is no doubt at all about White's advantage. But then,

W



this advantage is based solely on the black rook being out of play, and hence is of a temporary nature. If White dallies or fails to find the accurate course of action, his plus will evaporate. For instance after 23 ♖xb5?! axb5 24 ♖xa8+ ♔g7, White is left with only a slight edge, if that. (You will laugh when I tell you that in Ulko-Klichev, Moscow 1997, a draw was agreed in this very position.) White has no advantage at all in the variation 23 ♖xa6?! ♖xa6 24 ♕c8+ ♔g7 25 ♕xa6 ♖b8 26 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 27 ♕xb5 ♕a3. Geller acts with precision and doesn't let the advantage slip.

23...♕e6?

Unzicker hasn't sensed the danger. He had to play 23...♔g7, although even so, Geller gives 24 ♕xd5 ♖gd8 25 ♕e4 ♕e6 26 f4! ♕d5 (26...♖d5 27 ♖xb5!) 27 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 28 ♖a5 with a highly unpleasant position for Black.

24 ♕f6!

This is basically the most natural move, and in a sense obvious. It fully satisfies a number of principles. First, White benefits from exchanging off the most active enemy piece, and secondly it is highly advantageous to split the opponent's forces and shut some of them out of the game. The one thing which comes as a slight surprise is that a queen exchange is being offered by the side that is a pawn down and striving to exploit the shaky position of the enemy king. However that may be, the move makes a powerful visual impression.

24...♕c8

An attempt to extricate the rook without exchanging queens is unsuccessful: 24...g5 25 ♖xb5 ♖g6 26 ♕h8+! ♖g8 27 ♕xh7. The queen exchange is also bad: 24...♕xf6 25 exf6 ♔e8 (25...g5 26 ♖xb5) 26 ♖xb5, with a big advantage. But now the black king's rook is shut away

for good. Following all the rules of strategy, White breaks through on the part of the board that is inaccessible to the isolated enemy unit, and mounts an attack on the black king after all.

25 f4!

Now ...g5 will always be met by f5.

25...♕b7 26 ♖a5 ♔e8 27 ♖ba1 *(D)*

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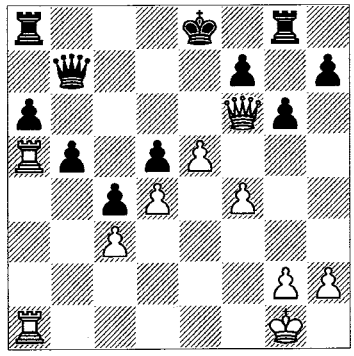


A glance at this position brings home the lesson that the pieces have to come into play as quickly as possible and must not allow themselves to be shut out of the game. Of course Black's cause is completely hopeless. He is playing with an exposed king and, in effect, a rook less.

27...b4 28 cxb4 ♕xb4 29 ♖xd5 ♕b7 30 e6 1-0

Now for another extremely important aspect of our topic. Up to now, we have constantly encountered situations where punishment for backward development takes the form of an attack against the king. And yet it can't always be like that. In chess, the path of material gain – in other words, the technical path to victory – is also very natural and customary. So of course punishment for backward development may also be carried out in that way.

Smyslov – Reshevsky

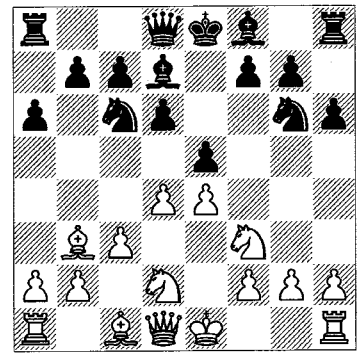
The Hague/Moscow Wch 1948

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 d6 5 c3 ♘e7 6 d4 ♗d7 7 ♗b3 h6 8 ♘bd2 ♘g6 *(D)*

9 ♘c4!

As a result of Black's slow opening play, White has the chance to transfer his knight to a superb post in the centre. He takes the opportunity at once.

W



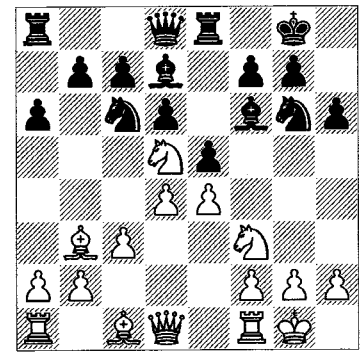
9...♗e7 10 0-0 0-0

The opening is an old-fashioned Ruy Lopez variation. Black tries to obtain a solid if somewhat inactive position. As Kasparov indicates in his notes, instead of castling Black would have done better to play 10...♗g5, aiming to recapture on g5 with the pawn. It would then pay him to renounce kingside castling and leave the rook on its starting square, where it would prove to be an active piece before having made a single move. This is one more detail that comes under the heading of development.

11 ♘e3 ♗f6 12 ♘d5 ♖e8?! *(D)*

Black pursues the correct plan for developing his forces, but commits a serious tactical error. It was virtually essential to exchange in the centre first: 12...exd4 13 ♘xd4 ♖e8.

W



13 dxe5! ♗xe5

Of course Smyslov doesn't miss his chance. He was always an extremely dangerous tactician. Black's recapture with the bishop turns out to be forced, in view of the following variation indicated by Smyslov and expanded by Kasparov: 13...♘gxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 (14...♖xe5 and 14...♘xe5 are alternatives) 15 f4 ♗f6 16 e5! (the point) 16...♗e7 (16...dxe5? 17 ♘xf6+ gxf6

18 ♕h5) 17 ♕h5 ♗e6 18 ♗e3! dxe5 19 ♖ad1, when White works up some dangerous activity and Black has a hard time defending.

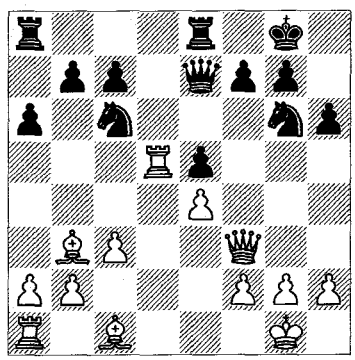
14 ♘xe5 dxe5?!

I think this makes Black's position even worse. As the least of the evils, Kasparov suggests the knight recapture 14...♘gxe5 15 h3 (15 f4 ♘g4) 15...♗e6 16 f4 ♘d7. I would add that here too White can continue advantageously with 17 ♕f3. The trouble with taking with the pawn is that the black knights are left without any outposts – an extremely important matter for knights – while White's rook seizes the d-file and his queen settles on f3, a traditionally favourable square for it in the Ruy Lopez. Maybe Black's 14th move deserves a simple question mark.

15 ♕f3 ♗e6

Reshevsky has decided to exchange off the white knight, which is too strong. On 15...♘a5 16 ♗c2 c6, Smyslov gives 17 ♘e3 ♗e6 18 ♘f5 ♕c7 19 ♕g4 ♔h7 20 h4! f6 21 h5 ♘f8 22 b3, with an obvious plus for White.

16 ♖d1 ♗xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♕e7 *(D)*



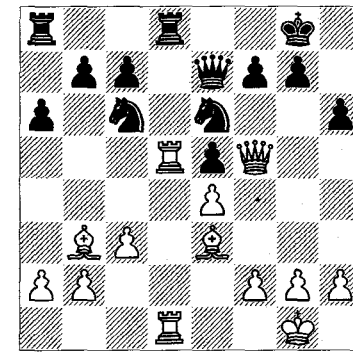
"That's funny," the attentive reader may say. "We're supposed to be talking about the problems of development, about how important it is and how you can get into trouble if you fall behind with it. But who's behind in development *here*? Speaking 'formally', you could say *White* was a bit behind. So why do the annotators come down firmly on his side?"

The answer is fairly clear: in chess there are plenty of other criteria that affect the strength of the opposing positions, and by those criteria White has already accumulated quite a few plus points. Wait a moment, though – the theme of development comes into it too! Let me just state that White's apparent slight backwardness in development is purely superficial. His c1-bishop merely *looks* like an undeveloped piece. In actual fact it is already creating threats against the enemy kingside, since at any moment it is ready to support the *concerted* efforts of White's other pieces: the b3-bishop, the queen, and the rook that is constantly available to join them, all of which are casting glances at the black king. In this last sentence, I would call your attention in particular to the word *concerted*. We shall come across this term very often. And indeed, with his very next move, Smyslov finds a way of directly activating all the hitherto concealed factors.

18 ♕f5! ♘f8

Necessary, as White's last move created a number of threats. The obvious one was 19 ♖d7. A somewhat less obvious one was the attack against the g6-knight, as we see from the variation 18...♖ad8? 19 ♗xh6! (but not 19 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 20 ♕xg6?? ♖d1+) 19...gxh6 20 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 21 ♕xg6+.

19 ♗e3 ♘e6 20 ♖ad1 ♖ed8 *(D)*



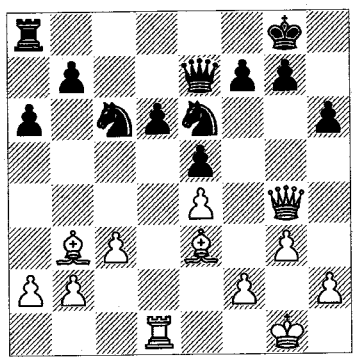
21 g3!

Neither Smyslov nor Kasparov gives this move an exclamation mark (they consider it too obvious), but I will! The point is that this is another of those 'unobtrusive' moves (which I have mentioned more than once already) that don't seem to do anything by themselves and yet create the indispensable conditions for the ensuing 'drastic' action – and are signs of chess mastery on a high level. Why does White need this move? It all has to do with the nature of the black position. Black appears safe enough – he has no obvious weaknesses. In other words his position looks quite acceptable from the static

point of view. But if we try looking for ways to create active play, we find that Black is in no shape for going into action of his own accord and must wait for his opponent to commence hostilities. Therefore since White doesn't need to worry about attacks from his opponent, he prepares to launch his own offensive in the most comfortable circumstances possible. The *luft* is useful since his rooks are on the point of abandoning the back rank; and the g-pawn is the best one to move, as it takes f4 away from the black knight.

21...♖d6 22 ♖xd6 cxd6 23 ♕g4! *(D)*

B



But why does *this* move get an exclamation mark? The threat of taking on h6 is easily parried. Are we to believe that for some reason the white queen is better placed on g4 than on f5? Just wait, and we shall soon see.

23...♔h8

Significantly, going to f8 wouldn't improve Black's position much either. Smyslov gives the following variation, which is characteristic though only approximate: 23...♔f8 24 ♗b6 ♘c7 25 ♕f5 ♘e8 26 ♕h7 ♘f6 27 ♕h8+ ♘g8 28 ♖d3.

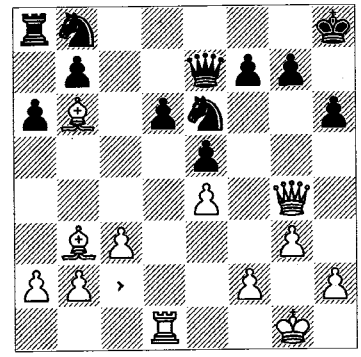
24 ♗b6!

This move is directly linked to White's previous manoeuvre, and limits Black's mobility still further.

24...♘b8 *(D)*

Smyslov gives a variation which well illustrates Black's difficulties. If Black makes the natural attempt to finish his development with 24...♖c8, White can pick up the weak d-pawn by 25 ♖d2 ♘b8 26 ♕d1 ♖c6 (26...♘c5 27 ♗c2 ♖c6? 28 ♗xc5 dxc5 29 ♖d8+) 27 ♗a7 ♘d7 28 ♗d5 ♖c7 29 ♗xe6. Reshevsky therefore begins a manoeuvre aimed at driving the white bishop from b6, but here again White is in a position to force events.

W



The time has finally come when his opponent's mounting pressure has compelled Black to *demobilize* his forces temporarily – just for one move. White is presented with one moment when enemy pieces have departed from the battlefield. (The similarity with the Botvinnik-Portisch game which we examined before is astonishing. In that game the demobilization was even carried out by the same move: ...♘c6-b8.) If White doesn't take immediate advantage, Black will get his defence together. But this was all probably foreseen by Smyslov (see the note to his 23rd move).

25 ♗xe6!

For the sake of specific gains, White parts with one of the components of his positional advantage – his powerful light-squared bishop. Trading one type of advantage for another is a standard chess procedure. But apart from its specific purpose, the move complies with another important general principle: *it pays to exchange the opponent's active (important) pieces*. Right now Black only has two such pieces: the e6-knight and his queen, the latter being especially important. By exchanging the knight, White is able to get at the queen. Incidentally the strength of White's 23rd move is about to be revealed.

25...fxe6

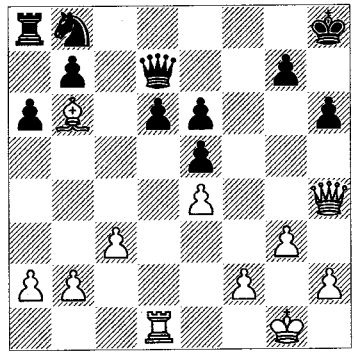
For one thing White's queen is not now under attack, and furthermore it can immediately deal the decisive blow:

26 ♕h4!

With the queen exchange Black's d-pawn perishes, leading to the collapse of his whole position.

26...♕d7 *(D)*

Black would lose even more quickly with 26...♕xh4 27 gxh4. With the move played, he carries on the struggle.



27 ♕d8+! ♕xd8 28 ♗xd8 ♘d7

Or 28...♘c6 29 ♗b6, which is even worse.

29 ♗c7 ♘c5 30 ♖xd6!

The right way. This is much stronger than 30 ♗xd6 ♖d8 31 f4 (31 f3 b5!) 31...exf4 32 e5 ♘a4! with good counterplay.

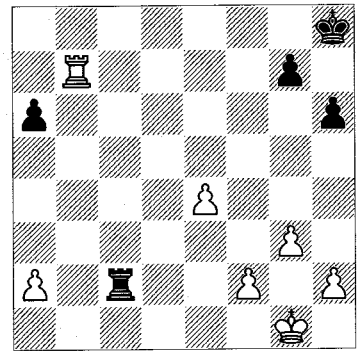
30...♖c8!

Reshevsky finds the only way to prolong resistance. White now has to demonstrate his technique to exploit his advantage, but for Smyslov that was never a problem.

31 ♗b6 ♘a4 32 ♖xe6 ♘xb2 33 ♖xe5 ♘c4

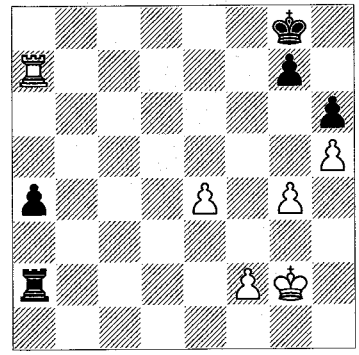
The pawn can't be taken: 33...♖xc3 34 ♗d4 ♖c2 35 ♖e7.

34 ♖e6 ♘xb6 35 ♖xb6 ♖xc3 36 ♖xb7 ♖c2 *(D)*



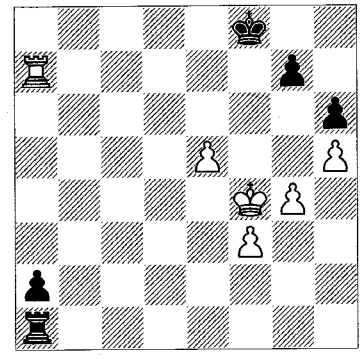
An endgame has come about by force. At first sight it looks unclear. The white a-pawn is about to fall, and its opposite number will advance in an effort to compensate for White's material plus or exchange itself for one of the white pawns – after which a draw will be very likely. Smyslov, however, demonstrates a precise and therefore highly instructive path to victory, based on a principle I examined in *Lessons in Chess Strategy*, in Chapter 5, 'The Space Advantage': he pushes his pawns to cramp his opponent as much as possible on the kingside, while taking constant care of the passed e-pawn, White's chief trump. Faced with this plan, Black proves defenceless. A very important factor is that the white rook is behind Black's passed pawn.

37 h4! ♖xa2 38 ♔g2 a5 39 h5! a4 40 ♖a7 ♔g8 41 g4! *(D)*



When the white king reaches g6, this pawn will be shielding it from checks on the g-file.

41...a3 42 ♔g3 ♖e2 43 ♔f3 ♖a2 44 ♔e3 ♔f8 45 f3 ♖a1 46 ♔f4 a2 47 e5! *(D)*



By pushing his passed pawn, White also protects his king from checks on f6.

47...♔g8 48 ♔f5 ♖f1

If 48...♔h8, then 49 ♔g6 leads to mate; or if 48...♔f8, then 49 f4 ♔g8 50 ♔g6.

49 ♖xa2 ♖xf3+ 50 ♔g6 ♔f8 51 ♖a8+ ♔e7 52 ♖a7+ 1-0

We have seen that the problems connected with such a well-known and obvious principle as that of development are by no means as simple as is sometimes imagined. We have already unearthed some of its interesting aspects. Now let us try going into some of them in more detail. First we shall see whether the concept of development is itself such a simple and crude one, and whether it is covered by purely arithmetical calculations.

Ehlvest – Kasparov
Linares 1991

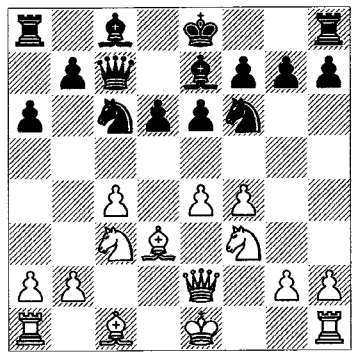
1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 a6 5 c4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♕c7 7 ♗d3

Kasparov has played the white side of this variation several times, on each occasion continuing with 7 a3 to keep the black bishop out of b4. In a game Kasparov-Kramnik, Moscow (2) 2001, Black replied 7...d6, and after 8 ♗e3 b6 9 ♖c1 ♘bd7 10 ♗e2 ♗b7 11 f3 ♗e7 12 0-0 0-0 a typical hedgehog-type position arose. In Kasparov-Vallejo, Linares 2002, Black played 7...b6 instead, and after 8 ♗e3 ♗b7 9 f3 ♘c6 10 ♗e2 ♖b8 11 b4! ♗e7 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♖c1 White obtained some advantage.

7...♗e7

Kasparov himself was sceptical about this move, and even gave it a question mark.

8 f4 d6 9 ♕e2 ♘c6 10 ♘f3 *(D)*



Ehlvest prefers to deploy his forces in a manner that would be usual in an ordinary Sicilian with the white pawn on c2.

10...♘d7

Black goes against the principle of developing the pieces as quickly as possible – he makes a second move with a piece already developed, and aims to repeat this stunt again! His manoeuvre is nonetheless typical of this kind of position. How come? What are the peculiarities of the situation that permit such breaches of an important principle? We will discuss this in due course.

11 a3?

This move looks superfluous at the present moment, but the plan of development underlying it appears even more faulty. White would also have no advantage after 11 0-0 ♗f6 12 ♗d2 ♘c5. A line that appeals to me is 11 ♗d2!? ♗f6 12 ♖c1 0-0 13 0-0, when White retains a small plus. Kasparov suggests that the best continuation is 11 ♗e3 ♘c5 12 ♗c2 b6 13 ♖c1 with advantage.

11...♗f6

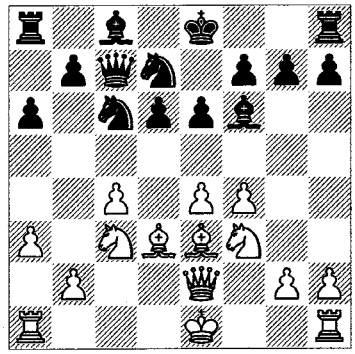
Again Black loses time with his development. However, this move is the natural follow-up to the previous one, and both are aimed at seizing the important d4-square which White has weakened. From this point of view, moving twice with pieces already developed is understandable; establishing control of important squares is another of the chief overall principles of chess. Let us take this reasoning a step further and try to draw some generalized conclusions (which for the time being will only be provisional, but we will later test them against examples). Well, then – what has Black gained from the manoeuvre with his last two moves? The answer is that the c6-knight and the f6-bishop have obtained a possibility for *concerted action* to exploit the weakness of a strategically important object – a central square. There are two key components here, without which Black could not be justified in infringing such a fundamental rule as that of fast development. The object against which he directs his play has to be *genuinely* weak and of *genuine* strategic importance; and in addition, the attack (the seizure of control) has to be accomplished with forces capable of acting together, that is *cooperating*. This last concept – that of *forces in cooperation* – seems to me to be the key to this whole problem, and in what follows we shall try to investigate it further.

12 ♗e3?! *(D)*

Another dubious decision, but then it stems from White's previous move. At this stage, after 12 ♗d2 ♘d4 13 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 14 ♖c1, the

position is even. In the game, things turn out worse.

B



Now Kasparov carries out a blockading operation which is standard though at first sight it looks risky:

12...♗xc3+! 13 bxc3 e5! 14 f5

After 14 0-0 exf4 15 ♗xf4 ♘ce5, the black knights seize excellent outposts in the centre.

14...♘cb8!

But this really is completely unexpected! To the reader of this book it will be all the more surprising since he has already seen two games (Botvinnik-Portisch and Smyslov-Reshevsky) in which this same move ...♘c6-b8 was severely punished. (I admit I deliberately placed this game just after Smyslov-Reshevsky to reinforce the effect and increase the reader's interest.) At this point the reasons given in the last note to justify such provocative play may appear inadequate, and we definitely need to go into the matter more closely.

What, then, is the knight on b8 after? The answer is, it wants to exchange its quarters on c6 for new ones on f6, while the other knight goes to c5 and the bishop goes via d7 to c6. Then the concerted efforts of this whole trio of pieces will be trained against the e4-pawn, which has been stopped dead by Black's last two moves. White will be tied down by this attack and deprived of any activity. Thus we have here an even more exemplary case of cooperating forces.

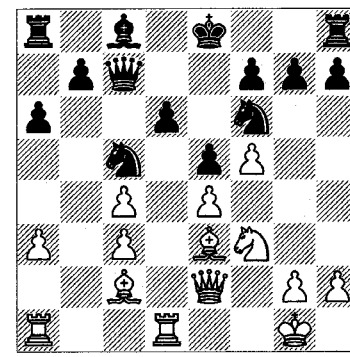
An important point is that the immediate 14...♘c5 15 ♗xc5 dxc5 would lead to complex, double-edged play after 16 0-0 and a subsequent knight march ♘d2-f1-e3-d5. Also 16 f6 might prove unpleasant, bringing a number of white pieces into play. This explains Black's move-order.

All that may be true (you will say), but why was White able to exploit his opponent's obviously backward development in those other two games, and unable to do so now? Well, look at how White's forces are deployed – his forces, not just his pieces! That is, consider how the arrangement of his pawns and that of his pieces fit together. You will then see that he can only realistically hope to attack along the d-file. In fact this is what he could have tried in place of his next move. The game could have gone 15 ♗c2 ♘f6 16 ♖d1 ♘bd7 17 ♕d3 ♔e7!?, and White probably has difficulty making up for his weaknesses by the activity of his pieces. Or, to use a terminology familiar to us: Black's static assets look more weighty than the dynamic assets of his opponent. The reason for all this is the inadequate coordination of the white forces. I think this example clearly shows how essential it is to ascertain how all a player's *forces* are cooperating.

Nonetheless that line seems to me more promising for White than the one he chooses in the game.

15 0-0?! ♘c5 16 ♗c2 ♘bd7 17 ♖fd1 ♘f6 *(D)*

W



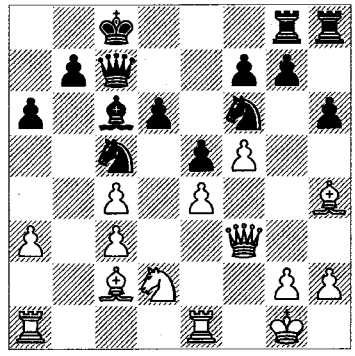
18 ♘d2

Now that White has conceded a tempo, Black is ready to meet the attack on the d6-pawn with simple developing moves: 18 ♗g5 ♗d7 19 ♗xf6 gxf6 20 ♕d2 ♗c6 21 ♕xd6 ♕xd6 22 ♖xd6 ♔e7, with the better chances.

18...♗d7 19 ♗g5 ♗c6 20 ♕f3 0-0-0 21 ♖e1 h6 22 ♗h4 ♖dg8 *(D)*

23 ♔h1?

Exchanging on f6 is now an urgent matter. After 23 ♗xf6!? gxf6 24 ♘f1 the advantage would be with Black, but there would still be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plenty of play in the position. Ehlvest doesn't want to give up his bishop, but it soon turns out that the black knight can accomplish much more; the black g-pawn (together with its neighbour) will also prove to be an active fighting unit. This is probably where White commits the decisive error, which consists of a faulty positional assessment.

23...♘fd7! 24 ♘f1 g5 25 ♗f2

White keeps the game closed, but it makes little difference.

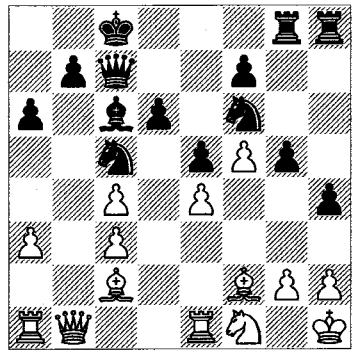
25...h5 26 ♕d1

White would lose a pawn with 26 ♘e3? g4 27 ♕e2 ♘xe4.

26...h4!

By pushing his pawns, Black seizes space and endeavours to open lines for his rooks.

27 ♕b1 ♘f6 *(D)*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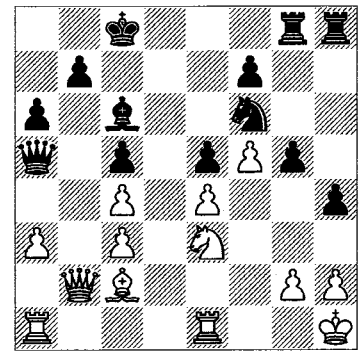
A convincing picture of the triumph of Black's strategy.

28 ♗xc5

Ehlvest understandably doesn't want to go over to lifeless defence with 28 ♘d2. After the reply 28...g4, the outlook for White would be grim.

28...dxc5 29 ♘e3 ♕a5 30 ♕b2!? *(D)*

The active 30 ♘d5 ♗xd5 31 cxd5 is met by 31...♕xc3 32 ♗d3 ♘h5! 33 h3 g4, with a won position.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30...h3 31 g3

The position after 31 ♘d5 hxg2+ 32 ♔xg2 ♗xd5 33 cxd5 (33 exd5 ♕c7 34 ♖ab1 ♖h4 –+) 33...♘e8 holds no appeal for White, so he gives up a pawn in search of counter-chances. However, Black's only task now is to rearrange his forces to fit the new circumstances. That done, his material plus will be decisive.

31...♘xe4 32 ♗xe4 ♗xe4+ 33 ♔g1 ♖d8 34 ♘g4 ♗xf5 35 ♘xe5 ♕c7! 36 ♕f2 ♗e6 37 ♖ab1 ♖d6! 38 ♖b2 ♖hd8 39 ♖be2 f6! 40 ♘g6 ♗xc4 0-1

Let's look at one more famous game which contributes to our topic in an original manner.

Alekhine – Wolf
Bad Pistyan 1922

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 c5 3 c4 cxd4?! 4 cxd5 ♘f6 5 ♘xd4 a6 *(D)*

This move seems based on a reasonable idea. It protects b5 against invasion by the white bishop. Theory, incidentally, shows that this approach (though not the move itself!) is well-founded. Thus, for example, a game Kasparov-Dlugy, Internet blitz 1998 continued 5...♘xd5 6 e4 ♘b4 7 ♗e3 (7 ♕a4+ ♘8c6 8 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 has also been seen; after 9 ♘c3 e6 10 ♗e3 ♗b4 11 ♗b5 ♗d7 12 0-0 ♕a5 13 ♖ac1 White had a plus in Illescas-Salmensuu, Elista OL 1998) 7...♘8c6 8 ♗b5, and after 8...♗d7 9 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 10 ♗xc6+ ♘xc6 11 ♘c3 e6 12 ♕b3 ♗b4 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♖ac1 ♕e7 15 a3 ♗d6 16 ♘b5 White obtained the advantage.

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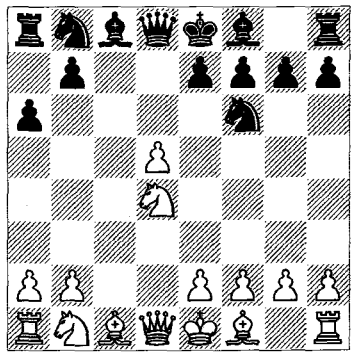


However, Black's slight delay in development inspires Alekhine to search for something, and he finds a remarkable solution.

6 e4!?

The point of this unexpected move is to open lines for bringing out the white pieces and thus increase White's lead in development. True, the price to be paid is the isolation of the centre pawn (a static minus), but Alekhine has calculated that the activity of his pieces (a dynamic plus) will more than make up for this defect.

6...♘xe4 7 ♕a4+!

This move is an essential part of White's design.

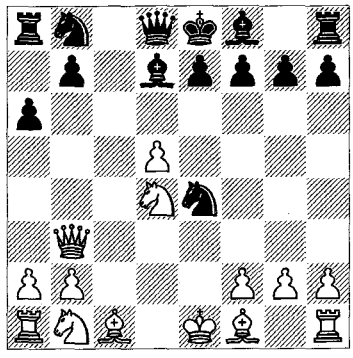
7...♗d7

This seems the obvious reaction, but it may well be that 7...♘d7, preserving a more natural arrangement of the black pieces, is no worse. I happen to have spent a fair amount of time looking for a way to retain White's advantage against that move, and all I could think of was 8 ♗e2! g6 9 ♘e6 fxe6 10 dxe6 ♘ec5 11 ♕d4 ♘f6 12 ♕xc5 ♗xe6 13 0-0 with a slight edge for White.

8 ♕b3 *(D)*

Unfortunately 8 ♕c2 is no good on account of 8...♕a5+.

B



8...♘c5?

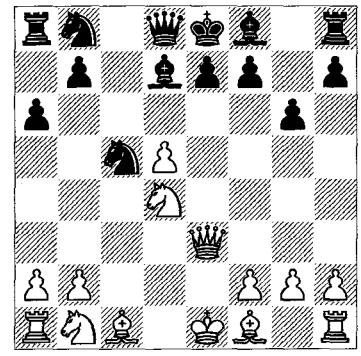
Right from the first few moves the game has proceeded on unconventional lines, which can be 'blamed' on White's energetic and original response to his opponent's dubious opening play. When one player acts unconventionally and yet within the reasonable bounds of positional sense, his opponent too must be ready (and able!) to think originally. The present game illustrates this excellently. Black's last move looks like a natural attempt to repel and defend simultaneously, but it turns out to be a mistake. The knight would be better off on d6. As is well known, knights generally like strongpoints (outpost squares) – but then on d6 the knight would be stopping the black major pieces from getting at the isolated pawn.

The fairly natural try 8...♕c7?! also turns out badly, as White quickly occupies the c-file: 9 ♗e3 g6 10 ♘c3! ♘xc3 11 ♖c1! with an undoubted plus.

Black's best is a move 'against the rules', namely 8...♗c8!, which enables his pieces to re-establish their coordination. I exerted myself for quite a long time looking for White's best continuation here, until I came down in favour of 9 ♗e3 ♘d7 10 ♗e2 (10 ♘c3 isn't entirely clear; after 10...♘xc3 11 bxc3 ♘c5 12 ♕c4 e5 13 dxe6 ♘xe6 14 ♖d1 the initiative is with White, but the variation is not obligatory, and White does have queenside weaknesses) and now if 10...♘dc5, then 11 ♕c2 ♕xd5 12 ♗f3 e5 13 ♘c3 ♕d8 14 ♗xe4 exd4 15 0-0-0 gives White the better chances. I would like to hear other opinions of the position after 8...♗c8!. In the game, White's advantage rapidly increases.

9 ♕e3! g6 *(D)*

W



10 ♘f3! ♕c7?!

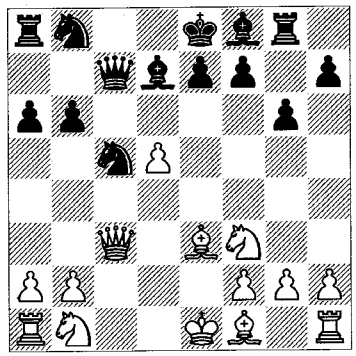
Black has lost the thread completely, and walks into a pin which will cost him dearly. He had to play 10...b6, although after 11 ♕c3 ♖g8 12 ♗e3 ♗g7 13 ♗d4 ♗xd4 14 ♕xd4 White would still have a significant plus.

11 ♕c3!

Eleven moves have been played, and four of White's last five have been made with his queen; his king's knight too has already made its third move! This is a gross offence against the principle of development. And yet White has an almost winning position. How do we account for this paradox? The explanation is that every one of White's moves has created some threat or other. This has been possible thanks to Black's cramped position, the almost total lack of coordination among his forces, and the constant 'hanging' position of his knight – in other words, thanks to Black's positional 'sins'. We should not forget that all White's minor pieces have been ready to come straight into play (with his rooks soon to follow). That means that White has had a lead in development all along. In such circumstances his opponent just needed to commit one inaccuracy – and in essence it would prove to be the decisive error. This is quite likely to happen in any position where one side's pieces are highly mobile. To sum up: White's offences in this game against one key principle (development) have been justified by pursuing another principle of no less importance – that of energetically working up an initiative. We shall study the latter closely in Chapter 5 (Initiative).

11...♖g8 12 ♗e3 b6 *(D)*

W



13 ♘bd2!

Alekhine points out that this is stronger than 13 b4 ♗g7 14 ♘d4 ♕a7. In fact after 15 ♘d2 a5 16 bxc5 bxc5 17 ♘2b3 cxd4 18 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 19 ♘xd4 White would still have an obvious plus, but thanks to the exchange of a pair of knights his pressure would be reduced. The move played is therefore better.

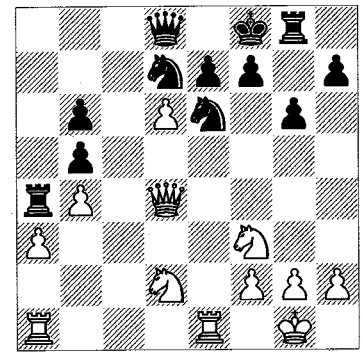
13...♗g7 14 ♗d4 ♗xd4 15 ♕xd4 ♗b5

It's hard for Black to find moves, yet it's imperative for him to develop. That explains this decision.

16 ♗xb5+ axb5 17 0-0 ♖a4 18 b4 ♕d8 19 a3 ♘bd7 20 ♖fe1 ♔f8 21 d6 ♘e6 *(D)* ›

There is no improvement in 21...e6 22 ♕e3 ♘b7 23 ♘e4 ♔g7 24 ♘d4, with an easy win.

W

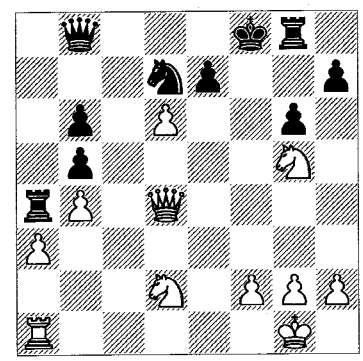


22 ♖xe6!

This blow is obvious and wins in the simplest fashion.

22...fxe6 23 ♘g5 ♕b8 24 ♘xe6+ ♔f7 25 ♘g5+ ♔f8 *(D)*

W



26 ♕d5?!

White has reached a completely won position but relaxes a little too soon. His punishment takes the form of a dozen unnecessary moves and some extra effort, though admittedly not all that much. There was an immediate win with 26 dxe7+! ♔e8 27 ♖e1 ♖a7 28 ♘de4.

26...♖g7 27 ♘e6+ ♔g8 28 ♘xg7+ ♔xg7 29 dxe7 ♘f6 30 ♕xb5

Another inaccuracy. A simpler and quicker way was 30 ♕d4!? ♔f7 (30...♕e8 31 ♖e1) 31 ♖e1 ♖a8 32 ♘e4.

30...♖a7 31 ♖e1 ♕d6 32 e8♘+!

Some unexpected difficulties had arisen, though not very big ones. White just had to pull himself together a little, and he found the simplest and safest solution. What is the important point here? It is just that he *did* have to exert himself and concentrate. Wouldn't it have been better to concentrate all the time and not drag the game out?

32...♘xe8 33 ♕xe8 ♕xd2 34 ♕e5+ ♔f7

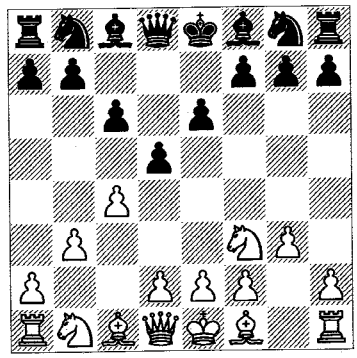
Black could have prolonged his resistance a little with 34...♔h6. The endgame after 35 ♕e3+ ♕xe3 36 ♖xe3 is an easy win for White, but he would still have had to work for an extra half-hour to an hour. Now it is all over.

35 h4! ♖xa3 36 ♕e8+ ♔g7 37 ♖e7+ ♔h6 38 ♕f8+ ♔h5 39 ♖e5+ ♔g4 40 ♖g5+ 1-0

The opening part of the following game appears even more astounding.

Gelfand – Shirov
Linares 1993

1 c4 e6 2 ♘f3 d5 3 g3 c6 4 b3 *(D)*



4...a5

So far, nothing exceptional has happened. Black's last move is a typical reaction to White's second fianchetto in situations of this type.

5 ♗b2 a4

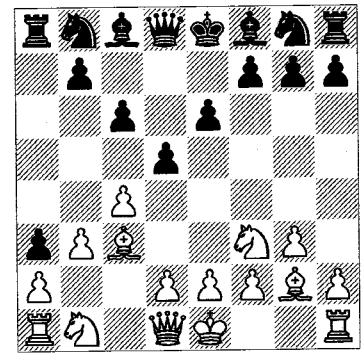
But although this move looks like the logical follow-up to the last one, it usually gets postponed 'until further notice'.

6 ♗g2 a3

Of course this kind of play smacks of an amateur skittles game. "Keep on attacking things, and he may leave something *en prise*!" On the other hand, a serious basis for Black's actions *can* be discerned. In the first place, White hasn't been all that sparing with his own pawn moves, even though he has brought out three pieces more (3-0). Secondly – and more importantly – the position is of a fairly closed type, which means that the mobility of the developed pieces is as yet relatively small. The third point is that Black is taking a risk in order to seize some space, and if his opponent can't punish him for the risk, the space will make itself felt.

7 ♗c3!? *(D)*

I have only found one other game that opened this way. On that occasion White sensibly retreated his bishop, obtaining a good position after 7 ♗c1 ♘f6 8 0-0 ♗d6 9 d4 b6 10 ♕c2 ♕e7 11 ♘c3 0-0 12 e4 (Salimaki-Tella, Vantaa 1993). Gelfand, however, is a combative, intrepid player. He doesn't believe that playing with pawns alone can be justified, and seeks a refutation of his opponent's undertaking.



7...b5

Though this move does look consistent, you can't help marvelling at it. When *is* Black going to get his pieces out?

8 c5

This reply seems to be the only one by which White can fight for an advantage. After any other move, Black would make further territorial gains.

8...♘f6 9 b4 ♘e4

Wonders never cease. No sooner has Black developed his first piece than he moves it again with the aim of exchanging it off! What would

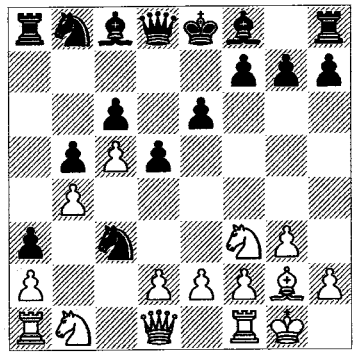
Dr Tarrasch say? And yet, Black could not play otherwise. He intends to exchange his opponent's important dark-squared bishop and thereby acquire an advantage of the long-term kind. In other words, he is accumulating static advantages. Now suppose that, instead of this second knight move, he had played 'by the rules', let's say by developing his bishop to e7. Then after 10 d3 White's advantage would be incontestable, and all Black's previous actions would turn out to have been pointless. From this we can draw a conclusion: once embarked on a risky course, a player has to be consistent and mustn't be afraid to go through with it to the end, however dangerous this may appear. Otherwise nothing will be left of his previous policy except all its drawbacks. We shall encounter this maxim again, more than once.

10 0-0

White can't preserve his bishop from exchange. Thus, 10 ♗d4?! is bad in view of 10...♖a4! (White's important weakness tells) 11 d3 ♖xb4 12 dxe4 dxe4. After 10 ♗e5 ♘d7 11 0-0 (not 11 d3?? ♘xf2! –+) 11...♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 ♕c7 13 d4, the game is approximately equal.

10...♘xc3 *(D)*

W

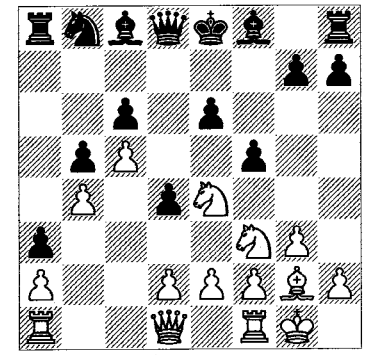


11 ♘xc3?

An astonishing mistake from Gelfand. The only thing that may explain it is some miscalculation or other. After the obligatory 11 dxc3, the continuation might be something like 11...♕d7 (or 11...♕c7) 12 ♕c1 ♕a7 13 ♕f4!? (of course White can pick up a pawn with 13 ♘d4 ♗e7 14 ♘c2, but after 14...0-0 15 ♘bxa3 e5 16 ♘b1 the position seems to me to be unclear) 13...♗e7 (it doesn't pay to lash out with 13...f6?! 14 e4 e5, as after 15 ♕e3 ♗e6 16 exd5! ♗xd5 17 ♘d4 White has a tangible initiative) 14 ♘bd2 0-0 15 e4, and the position looks better for White.

11...d4 12 ♘e4 f5 *(D)*

W



Black still doesn't have a single piece developed, and yet strategically his position must be rated as far superior! This of course is a unique case, but we can still detect some marked similarities between this game and the last one (Alekhine-Wolf). In both games, one player deliberately offends against the fundamental principle of fast development, and attains complete success. For this to happen (as we said before), there need to be some other essential principles that are 'working' for him.

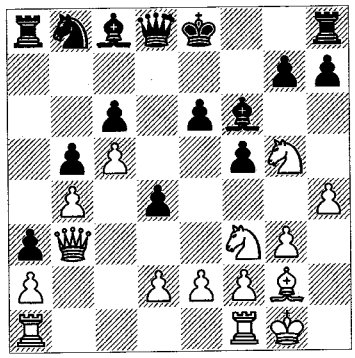
In the present case Black has been risking much more than White did in the previous example, as the positional basis for his actions is much less convincing. He could only hope that White wouldn't manage to get his pieces cooperating properly in a somewhat cramped and closed position. But Gelfand played resolutely and uncompromisingly, and should have obtained an advantage.

In both games, a single mistake – by no means a crude 'blunder' – was enough to spoil an acceptable position. This too is something we have seen before; when the play becomes sharp and tense, any mistake may prove fatal. If the element of tension in the previous game was obvious, in the present case it arises from the very awkward placing of the white knight in the centre (compare the black knight on c5 in Alekhine-Wolf). It might therefore seem natural for White to exchange this knight off, even at the cost of an important pawn, by 13 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 14 cxd6; but alas, the variations after 14...♕xd6 still serve to demonstrate Black's advantage. For instance: 15 e3 e5 16 ♕c2 (if 16

exd4, then 16...e4 is strong) 16...♘a6!? 17 ♘xd4 ♘xb4 18 ♘xf5 ♘xc2! (the right way; 18...♕f8? looks tempting, but loses to 19 ♗xc6+ ♔f7 20 ♕e4 ♘xc6 21 ♕d5+!) 19 ♘xd6+ ♔e7 20 ♘xc8+ ♖hxc8 21 ♖ab1 ♖a4, and Black has much the better ending. Of course, White cannot have had these variations in mind when making his 11th move; I am merely trying to establish the objective truth about this extraordinary game.

13 ♘eg5 ♗e7 14 h4 ♗f6 15 ♕b3 *(D)*

Shirov is negative about this move. In his view, the right line is 15 e3!? h6 16 ♘h3 dxe3 17 dxe3, when 17...♗xa1 18 ♕xa1 gives White compensation. Therefore 17...♕xd1!? is stronger; after 18 ♖axd1 e5 Black is clearly better.



15...♕d5!

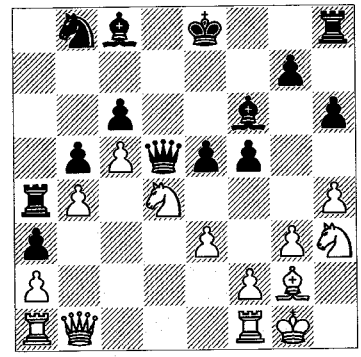
Black's achievements of the 'static' type are evident. You only have to look at the position. His superb dark-squared bishop has no opposite number; he has a space advantage in the centre and realistic chances of destroying the white queenside. He does need to be careful, though. The calm and 'natural' 15...♕e7 would be met by 16 ♖ae1 h6 17 ♘h3 g5 18 e3 g4 19 ♘f4 gxf3 20 ♗xf3, with a wholly unclear situation in which White could turn out to have a dangerous initiative.

16 ♕b1?!

The queen exchange 16 ♕xd5 cxd5 17 ♖ab1 ♘c6 would leave Black with a significant plus. Shirov considers White's strongest reply to be 16 ♕c2! h6 17 ♘h3 e5 18 d3 with counterchances. Now Black marches steadily forward while the white position contracts into a clump. Black's game is easy and carefree.

16...h6 17 ♘h3 e5 18 e3 dxe3 19 dxe3 ♖a4! 20 ♘d4 *(D)*

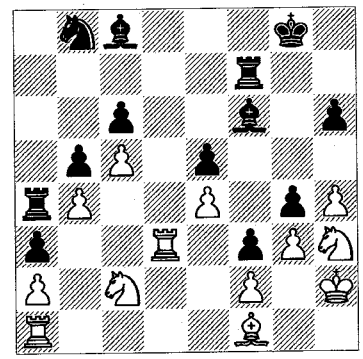
Or 20 ♖d1 ♕c4, attacking b4.



20...♕d7 21 ♘c2 0-0 22 e4 f4! 23 ♕b3+ ♕f7!

With the exchange of queens, White's last hope disappears. Essentially he could resign now.

24 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 25 ♖fd1 f3 26 ♗f1 g5! 27 ♖d3 g4 28 ♔h2 *(D)*



28...♖d7!

One final important touch. The d3-rook is a most important piece, the pride of White's position. The h3-knight is ill-fated, and even if it survives there will be little joy in its life. To this I should add that exchanging one pair of rooks is an extremely useful technical device, depriving the weaker side of an important source of counterplay; the point is that two rooks *acting together* can sometimes make up for any defects in your position. From the technical viewpoint, then, the rook exchange is much more accurate than 28...gxh3?! 29 ♗xh3, when the f3-pawn falls.

29 ♖ad1 ♖xd3 30 ♖xd3 ♗e6 31 ♖d6 ♔f7

This position (which is totally won for Black) illustrates another aspect of the development

question, which we have noticed before: pieces that haven't made a single move can sometimes be in play. Thus it is with the b8-knight. Being 'in play' isn't by any means necessarily the same thing as operating actively. Stopping the activities of enemy pieces is quite enough. The following events could only have occurred in extreme time-trouble.

32 ♗xb5 cxb5 33 ♖b6 ♘a6 34 c6 ♗xa2 35 ♖xb5 ♗b1 36 ♖b7+ ♔e6 37 ♘xa3 ♖xa3 38 b5 ♗xe4 39 ♖a7 gxh3 0-1

At this point White's flag dropped; his torments were finally over.

We have now examined quite a few examples of the 'development' theme, and the time has come to take stock. Some of our conclusions were stated earlier; we will now try to draw them all together. The first conclusion is that development isn't entirely identical with what many of us may have heard and read about it at the start of our chess education. Granted, it is perfectly true and obvious that you shouldn't be slow to bring your pieces forward from the back rank, and it may be extremely useful to get ahead of your opponent in the number of fighting units brought out. However, this is not the whole story.

If we take it that the aim of development is to make your position as battle-worthy as possible, then the important thing (as many of our examples have shown) is not just the *quantity* of pieces brought out from their starting squares, but also the *quality* of their deployment. By quality, we should understand such factors as *the ability of your forces to do their job*, that is, how much work a piece or pawn is able to fulfil; the mobility of a fighting unit, its capacity to control the most important squares on the board; and its power to restrict the mobility of the opponent. A closely related notion is that of centralization: a centralized piece is capable, as a rule, of striking at a greater number of squares than a piece stranded on the edge of the board, which means its mobility is greater – and so on.

All this refers to units (pieces or pawns) viewed in isolation, but we mustn't forget that there is a further, more advanced criterion for assessing the deployment of forces: their degree of *cooperation* or *coordination*. This concept embraces all the above-mentioned capabilities of individual units and the possibility of utilizing them together.

Much of what has just been said can be understood by a chess-player without recourse to formal rationalization. From his cumulative observation of how pieces combine together, in his own games and those of others, he has a feel for what is effective and what is not. Nonetheless the area of the unknown is likely to be greater than the area of his own concrete experience, which is why abstract knowledge – knowledge of the general principles of the game – is essential too. Among these principles, that of *coordination of the forces* occupies an especially important place, and in our next series of examples we shall concentrate on studying it.

As always, our study will be based on examples from games by the most distinguished masters. We shall start with a game from the 19th century.

McConnell – Morphy
New Orleans 1850

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗c5 4 b4 ♗xb4 5 c3 ♗a5 6 0-0

This reply is considered inaccurate. White's strongest is 6 d4!. Then after 6...exd4 7 0-0 Black has to play very precisely to avoid landing in trouble such as this: 7...♘f6 8 ♗a3 ♗b6 9 ♕b3 d5 10 exd5 ♘a5 11 ♖e1+ ♗e6 12 dxe6 ♘xb3 13 exf7+ ♔d7 14 ♗e6+ ♔c6 15 ♘e5+ ♔b5 16 ♗c4+ ♔a5 17 ♗b4+ ♔a4 18 axb3# (1-0) Steinitz-Rock, London 1863.

6...♘f6 7 d4 0-0 8 dxe5

The other capture 8 ♘xe5 has also been played. Then Alapin-Chigorin, Ostend 1905 continued 8...♘xe4 9 ♕h5 ♘xe5 10 ♕xe5 d5 11 ♗xd5 ♘xc3 12 ♗c4 c5 13 dxc5 ♖e8 14 ♕h5 ♗e6 15 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 16 ♘xc3 ♗xc3 17 ♖b1, with equality.

8...♘xe4 9 ♗a3

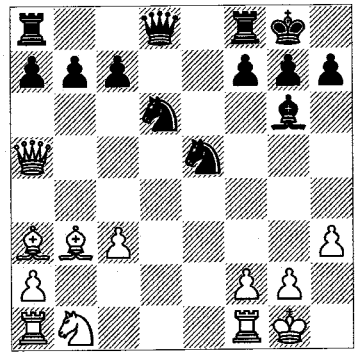
This doesn't work out well. The correct line is 9 ♗d5 ♘c5! 10 ♘g5 ♘xe5 11 f4 c6.

9...d6 10 exd6?

The lesser evil would be 10 ♕c2 ♘g5 11 ♘xg5 ♕xg5 12 exd6 cxd6 13 ♗xd6 ♖d8, with 'no more than' a clear positional plus for Black.

10...♘xd6 11 ♗b3 ♗g4 12 h3 ♗h5 13 ♕d5 ♗g6 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 ♕xa5 *(D)*

This loses quickly. A more tenacious move is 15 ♕xe5, when after 15...♗b6 White is still in a bad way but can fight on.



Now the black pieces round on the lonely white king.

15...♕g5 16 ♔h1 ♗e4 17 f3

White also loses with 17 ♖g1 ♕h5 –+.

17...♗xf3! 18 gxf3 ♕g3 19 ♘d2

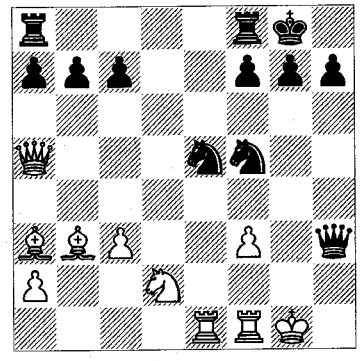
Exchanging off a knight doesn't save White either: 19 ♗xd6 ♕xh3+ 20 ♔g1 ♕g3+ 21 ♔h1 cxd6 22 ♕d5 ♖ae8 23 ♕xd6 ♕h3+ 24 ♔g1 ♘xf3+ and wins.

Now one more black piece joins in the hunt for the white king:

19...♘f5! 20 ♖ae1

Or 20 ♗xf8 ♕xh3+! 21 ♔g1 ♕g3+ 22 ♔h1 ♘e3 23 ♖f2 ♕xf2 24 ♖g1 ♕h4#.

20...♕xh3+ 21 ♔g1 *(D)*

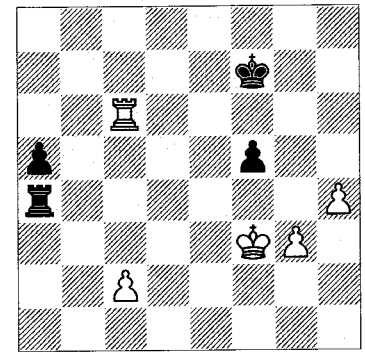


21...♖fe8

There may have been an even simpler win in 21...♕g3+ 22 ♔h1 ♕h4+ 23 ♔g1 ♕g5+, but it was very characteristic of Morphy to choose variations in which as many of his pieces as possible were working together – even in some cases where other, quicker solutions were possible. Today the same approach is constantly adopted by Kasparov – we shall later see some examples. Both these players acquired exceptional powers, and doesn't this approach supply a reason for their strength? I think this understanding of the essence of chess was bestowed on both of them by nature.

22 ♖f2 ♕g3+ 23 ♔f1 ♘d3 24 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 0-1

This game presents the 'coordination' theme in an entertaining way, but the play is too one-sided to do more than that. We will now try to go further into the subject by looking at some examples of concerted action by pieces in deceptively 'simple' positions. We shall thereby verify that the principle of coordination applies to all phases of the game.



Schlechter – Lasker
Vienna Wch (1) 1910

Black's difficulties are obvious. Not only is he a pawn down but his king is cut off along the 6th rank, both his pawns are isolated, and he urgently needs to do something about White's threat of c4 followed by ♔f4. His only real compensation for all this seems to be his passed a-pawn, but another big question is how strong his counterplay with this pawn will be.

All of a sudden, in disregard of all these considerations, Lasker played:

54...♖e4!!

This looks both startling and incomprehensible. For a better understanding of the reasons behind it, let's look at some possible alternatives.

a) 54...♔g7 is met by 55 c4 ♖a3+ 56 ♔f4 ♖c3 57 c5 a4 58 ♔xf5 ♖xg3 59 ♖c7+ ♔h6 60 ♔e5 a3 61 ♖a7 and wins.

b) On 54...♖a1, Tartakower gives 55 ♖a6 a4 56 ♔f4 ♖f1+ 57 ♔g5 ♖f3 58 ♖xa4 ♖xg3+ 59 ♔xf5. Let us take this further for the sake of clarity: 59...♖c3 60 ♖a7+ ♔f8 61 ♖a2, and White wins.

It isn't hard to see that the decisive role in these variations is played by the active white king, cooperating splendidly with the rook. Meanwhile its black counterpart is hardly influencing events at all. To alter this state of affairs radically, Black is prepared to part with a second pawn – his *passed* pawn, no less. What does he get in return? First of all he activates his rook and clears the path for the a-pawn, so the white rook will have to be diverted to attend to it. Secondly and most importantly, the black rook's line of action along the 4th rank will no longer be cut off if White plays c4. This is the most vital feature of the position, since the white king will not now be able to advance and act in concert with the rook. In other words, Black is giving up his last-but-one pawn in order to obstruct the coordination of White's pieces. More than that: by going after the a-pawn, the white rook will have to allow the black king into the game, and then the *black* pieces will begin to act in concert. On the other hand, two extra pawns are a lot of material, especially in an endgame. And yet in this example the material factor will be outweighed by the change in the relative strengths of the players' positions. Nor will this be at all accidental. On the contrary, it is a typical phenomenon, which we shall later come across repeatedly.

55 ♖c5

Instead of this, Marco recommended 55 c4, but after 55...a4 56 c5 ♖c4 57 ♖a6 ♔g7! 58 ♖a5 ♔f6! 59 ♔e3 a3 60 h5 a2 61 ♖xa2 ♖xc5 a drawn position comes about.

55...♔f6 56 ♖xa5 ♖c4

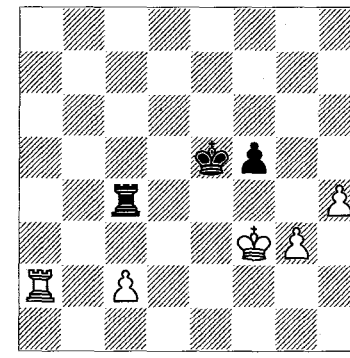
Schlechter now repeats moves to gain time on the clock.

57 ♖a6+ ♔e5 58 ♖a5+ ♔f6 59 ♖a6+ ♔e5 60 ♖a5+ ♔f6 61 ♖a2 ♔e5 *(D)*

The situation has been clarified, and it turns out that White has no plan for converting his advantage into a winning one. This is all because his king can't come into play without loss of material.

62 ♖b2 ♖c3+ 63 ♔g2 ♔f6 64 ♔h3 ♖c6!

Schlechter just set a fairly simple trap into which Lasker, of course, didn't fall: 64...f4? 65

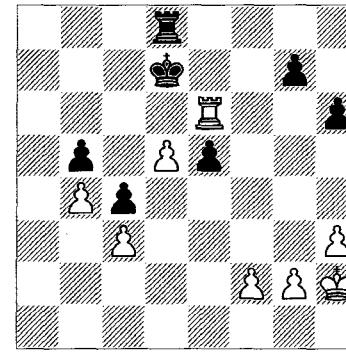


W

♖b3! ♖xc2 66 ♖f3 +–. White therefore tries his last resource – he gives up the passed c-pawn to activate his pieces, but Black easily manages to keep them disunited and the game heads towards a draw.

65 ♖b8 ♖xc2 66 ♖b6+ ♔g7 67 h5 ♖c4 68 h6+ ♔h7 69 ♖f6 ♖a4 ½-½

The following example, which is much more complicated, will now be easier to understand.



W

Geller – Smyslov
Palma de Mallorca IZ 1970

At first sight White's advantage seems immense. He has an extra pawn and only one weakness (on c3) while his opponent has three weak pawns. On top of that, it is White's move. And yet the situation remains far from clear. There are some trumps for Black too, such as the well-known drawish tendency of rook endgames. I shall presently give variations to show that the weakness of White's c-pawn is of real importance. But the main thing, which the variations will also illustrate, is that the black king is ready to penetrate to the centre – to d6 or d5 –

at any moment, after which the king and rook will be cooperating excellently.

Some discussion of what the term *cooperation* entails will be highly appropriate here. In the present case, for instance, the black king and rook will not be uniting in the assault on a particular weakness. Instead, the idea will be something like this: the king will guard its domain against enemy invasion, and if Black should obtain a passed c-pawn it will be supported by the king when necessary; the rook meanwhile will attack the white pawns. In this way the two pieces will share the work between them; they will be working for a common cause, which is what cooperation means. Incidentally, for chess-players, this concept is perhaps even better expressed by the German word *Zusammenspiel*, which literally means 'playing together'. If I bring in this word from time to time, don't be surprised.

Now for some possible variations in which White goes after the black pawns. The 'candidate moves', as they are customarily called, are as follows:

a) 46 ♖xe5 ♖a8 47 ♔g3 ♔d6 48 ♖e3 ♖a2! with good counterplay and realistic chances of saving the game.

b) 46 ♖g6 ♖a8 47 ♖xg7+ ♔d6 48 ♖g6+ ♔xd5 49 ♖xh6 ♖a3 50 ♖b6 ♖xc3 51 ♖xb5+ ♔d4 52 h4 ♖b3 53 h5 c3 54 h6 c2 55 ♖c5 ♖c3 56 ♖xc3 ♔xc3 57 h7 c1♕ 58 h8♕ ♕f4+ 59 ♔h3 ♕f5+ and draws.

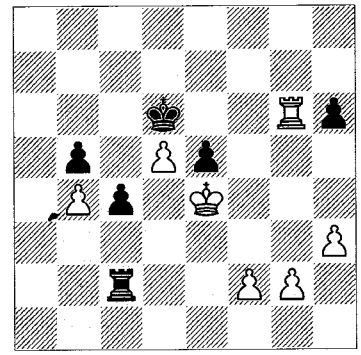
c) 46 ♖b6 ♖a8 47 ♖xb5 ♖a3 48 ♖b7+ ♔d6 49 ♖xg7 ♖xc3 50 ♖g6+ ♔xd5 51 ♖xh6 ♖b3 52 ♖h8 ♖xb4 53 ♖c8, again with a draw.

I don't claim that these variations exhaust the possibilities of the position, but they clearly show that if White plays at all inaccurately, his advantage vanishes.

46 ♔g3!!

This move is very hard to understand if you haven't looked at the above variations. Geller has seen that the main issue is whose king will occupy the centre and keep its opposite number out. The decisive factor will not be material but coordination of forces.

46...♖a8 47 ♔f3 ♖a3 48 ♔e4 ♖xc3 49 ♖g6 ♖c2 50 ♖xg7+ ♔d6 51 ♖g6+ *(D)*

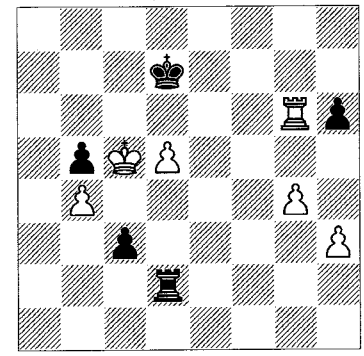

B

This is the very position Geller had in mind when he took his decision on move 46. Even though Black has one very important endgame trump – a protected passed pawn – the undoubted advantage is on White's side, and for one sole reason: the excellent cooperation between his king, rook and passed pawn. This outweighs everything else.

51...♔d7 52 ♖g7+ ♔d6 53 ♖g6+ ♔d7 54 ♔xe5

Better than 54 ♖f6? ♖e2+ 55 ♔f3 ♖d2.

54...♖e2+ 55 ♔d4 ♖xf2 56 ♖g7+ ♔d6 57 ♖g6+ ♔d7 58 g4! ♖d2+ 59 ♔e5 ♖e2+ 60 ♔d4 ♖d2+ 61 ♔c5 c3 *(D)*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Geller now employs a device that is typical of rook endings. Pay attention to it – such things are very useful to know! In endgames generally – following Emanuel Lasker's wise advice – the main thing is to study methods of play rather than individual positions.

62 ♖d6+!

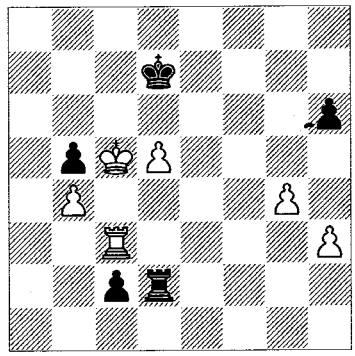
In fact 62 ♖g7+ ♔e8 63 ♖c7 is perfectly playable, but the text-move is even stronger.

62...♔e7

This is more tenacious than 62...♔c7 63 ♖xh6! c2 64 ♖c6+.

63 ♖e6+! ♔d7 64 ♖e3! c2 65 ♖c3 *(D)*

As the result of White's manoeuvre, his rook occupies its ideal post.



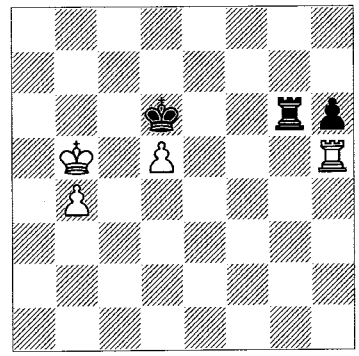
65...♖h2

On 65...♖d3, White wins by 66 ♖xc2 ♖xh3 67 ♖a2 ♖c3+ 68 ♔xb5 ♔d6 69 ♖a6+ ♔xd5 70 ♖xh6.

66 h4!

This is better than 66 ♔xb5 ♔d6 67 ♔c4 ♖xh3 68 ♖xc2 ♖h4, when White still wins but with unnecessary difficulty – which means more likelihood of going wrong.

66...♖xh4 67 ♖xc2 ♖xg4 68 ♖h2 ♖g6 69 ♔xb5 ♔d6 70 ♖h5 *(D)*



70...♔c7

Black finally managed to bring his king to the desired square d6, and now he has to abandon it. The reason is shown by the variations 70...♖g5 71 ♖xh6+ ♔xd5 72 ♔b6 and 70...♖f6 71 ♔b6; in either case White has a theoretically won position. From now until the end of the game Black must abandon any idea of cooperation between his pieces.

71 ♔c5 ♖f6 72 ♖h1 ♔b7 73 b5 ♖g6 74 ♖h5 ♔c7 75 ♖f5 ♖g1 76 b6+ ♔b7 77 ♖f7+ ♔b8 78 d6 ♖c1+ 79 ♔d5 1-0

There is no hope left for Black; for example, 79...♖d1+ 80 ♔e6 ♖e1+ 81 ♔f6. Therefore he resigned.

Geller conducted this endgame brilliantly. In particular, he conducted it ... in 'Smyslov style'! Against an opponent who had played many a superb rook ending, Geller played in much the same manner. I strongly advise you to improve your endgame technique by studying the games of Vasily Smyslov.

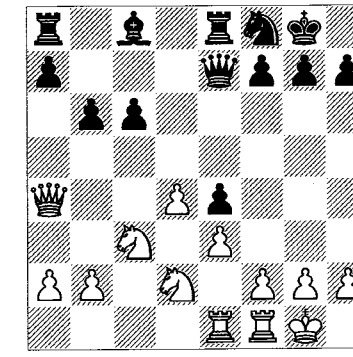
And now, another example of the importance of coordination. It looks relatively uncomplicated, but is convincing and attractive.

Botvinnik – Robatsch
Amsterdam (IBM) 1966

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗g5 c6 6 e3 ♗e7 7 ♕c2 0-0 8 ♗d3 ♘bd7 9 ♘f3 ♖e8 10 0-0 ♘f8 11 ♖ae1 ♘e4 12 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 13 ♗xe4 dxe4 14 ♘d2 b6?!

Not an effective line; 14...f5 is perfectly acceptable.

15 ♕a4 *(D)*



15...f5

This move shouldn't be specially criticized, as there is no good alternative:

a) On 15...a5 16 ♕xc6 ♗b7 17 ♕xb6 ♗a6 18 ♘dxe4 ♗xf1 19 ♖xf1, White has an undoubted plus.

b) White's chances are also better after 15...b5 16 ♕a5 ♗f5 17 ♖c1.

c) Botvinnik suggested the continuation 15...♗b7'!?' 16 ♘dxe4! (my exclamation mark), and now 16...c5, which to me seems unconvincing after 17 f3. 16...b5 is also bad for Black: 17 ♕b3 b4 18 ♘c5 bxc3 19 ♕xb7 ♕xb7 20 ♘xb7 ♖eb8 21 ♘c5! ♖xb2 22 ♖a1! ♖ab8 23 ♘a4 ♖c2 24 ♖ac1! (not 24 ♖fc1?! ♖bb2!), with a big advantage.

Black's major inaccuracy had already occurred on move 14, which is why he has problems in all these variations.

16 f3

This move is essential for White in such situations. Though his pawn-structure is weakened, all his pieces are activated, and the resulting dynamic benefits outweigh the static concessions.

16...exf3 17 ♘xf3 ♗b7?

This is simply bad, as it leads to the loss of two tempi and allows White to exert extremely powerful pressure. Instead 17...♕d6 looks virtually obligatory.

18 ♘e5 ♕e6 19 ♕c2 ♗c8 *(D)*

After 19...g6 20 e4 fxe4 21 ♘xe4 ♖e7 22 ♕c3! White works up a decisive attack; for example: 22...♖d8 23 d5! cxd5 24 ♘f6+ ♔g7 25 ♘c6, and wins.

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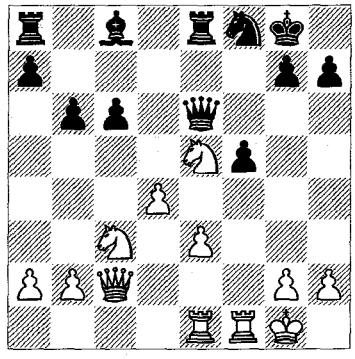


20 e4

This pawn advance is also typical of such positions.

20...♕d6

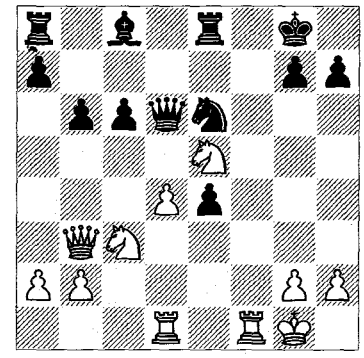
White undoubtedly also has a substantial plus after 20...fxe4 21 ♖xe4.

21 ♖d1 ♘e6 22 ♕b3! fxe4 *(D)*

23 ♖f7!!

Unexpected and immensely strong. Black was hoping for the 'obvious' 23 ♘xe4 ♕d5 24 ♕xd5 cxd5, when after 25 ♘d6 ♖d8 26 ♘f5 ♖e8 White has the advantage but Black's defence is holding. After the move found by Botvinnik, Black is beyond salvation. What is the point of this move, and how do such continuations come into a player's head? Let's look at the position. Black's king is insufficiently protected by the pieces, given their bad state of development; its pawn-cover has also been noticeably weakened. The white queen and the

W



e5-knight are already aiming at the enemy king position, but their strength is inadequate by itself; they require support from other pieces. The question as to which other piece should join them first is very important, as we have already seen how crucial the time factor is in such sharp positions. To answer this question, we need to locate the most vulnerable points in the black camp, and we perceive that these are on the seventh rank – the pawns and squares next to the black king. Thus it occurs to us to place our rook on that rank, and quickly. After this, the calculation of variations follows (see below!), and the solution is found!

23...a5

This loses at once, but as the following analysis shows, White wins in all variations anyway:

a) 23...♘xd4 24 ♖f8+ ♔xf8 25 ♕f7#.

b) 23...♘g5 24 ♘xe4! ♘xe4 25 ♖f8+ and mate next move.

c) 23...♖f8 24 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 25 ♘xe4 ♕d5 26 ♕f3+ +–.

d) White has the most trouble after 23...e3!? 24 ♘e4 ♕d5 25 ♕xe3 ♖f8 (more stubborn than 25...♘xd4 26 ♘f6+, an important line given by Botvinnik) 26 ♕f3 *(D)* and now:

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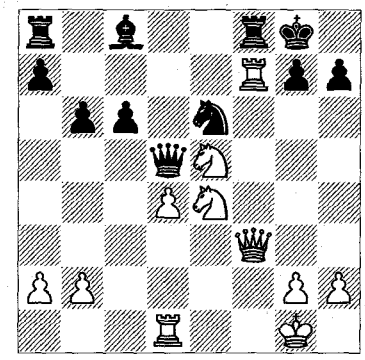
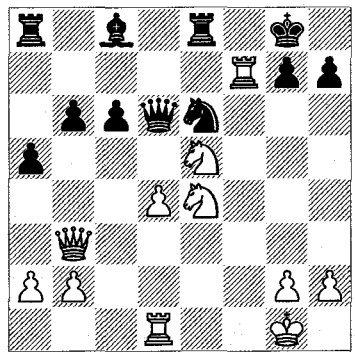


d1) 26...♗b7? 27 ♕f5! ♔h8 28 ♘f6.

d2) 26...♗a6 27 ♘xc6 ♔h8 (or 27...♕xc6 28 ♘f6+ ♔xf7 29 ♕xc6 ♖fc8 30 ♕a4 +–) 28 ♘c3 ♕xf3 29 ♖xf3, and the d-pawn secures the win without difficulty.

d3) 26...♕d8 27 ♖f1! ♕xd4+ 28 ♔h1 ♗a6 29 ♕h5!! (if 29 ♕f5, then 29...♕xe5! 30 ♕xe5 ♖xf7 31 ♕xe6 ♗xf1 32 ♘d6 ♖af8 33 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 34 ♕e8+ ♖f8 35 ♕xc6 h6) 29...♖xf7 (or: 29...♗xf1 30 ♘f6+; 29...♕xe4 30 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8 31 ♕f7+; 29...h6 30 ♘f6+) 30 ♕xf7+ +–.

24 ♘xe4 *(D)*



1-0

Black resigned in anticipation of 24...♕d5 (24...♘xd4 25 ♖f8+; or 24...♕d8 25 ♕g3 ♖f8 26 ♘xc6) 25 ♖xg7+! ♔xg7 (25...♘xg7 26 ♘f6+) 26 ♕g3+ ♔f8 27 ♖f1+.

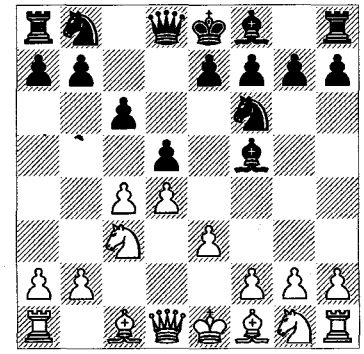
What we have just seen permits us to draw another useful intermediate conclusion. It often happens that one side has an obvious advantage but a decisive continuation cannot be seen, although you feel it ought to be there. The decision in such cases is almost always (perhaps *always*) brought about by fresh forces joining in the play. After that, it is sometimes even astonishing how easily the game is won.

Thus in the following well-known encounter, White refutes his opponent's opening errors by simply bringing new fighting units into the game one after another.

Alekhine – Opočensky
Paris 1925

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e3 ♗f5?! *(D)*

Theory considers this bishop development inadequate.

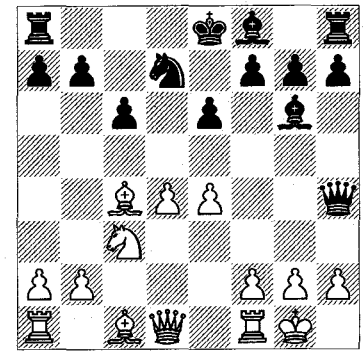


5 cxd5 ♘xd5

The reason why Black's fourth move was bad, and why he retakes with the knight here, lies in the variation 5...cxd5 6 ♕b3 ♕b6? 7 ♘xd5 ♕xb3 8 ♘xf6+, winning a pawn. Black's move 6 is the standard response to White's queen sortie to b3, but in this case it doesn't work – which is Black's whole problem. Capablanca (in a game against Alekhine in 1924), and many others after him, retreated the bishop to c8 instead, which is naturally unappealing. In Yusupov-Förster, Schwäbisch Gmünd 2000, Black played 6...♕d7, but this also turned out badly after 7 ♗b5 ♘c6 8 ♘f3 e6 9 ♘e5 ♕c7 10 ♕a4 ♖c8 11 ♕xa7 ♗d6 12 ♘xc6 bxc6 13 ♕xc7 ♖xc7 14 ♗e2.

6 ♗c4 e6 7 ♘ge2 ♘d7 8 e4 ♘xc3 9 ♘xc3 ♗g6 10 0-0 ♕h4? *(D)*

Black has obtained a cramped and passive game from the opening. In such cases you need to play accurately and persistently to set your position to rights. To this end Black should have carried on developing with 10...♗e7. His strange excursion with the queen does nothing to improve his position and merely wastes time, permitting Alekhine to proceed to the attack at this early stage.



11 d5!

This break is possible because Black's pointless queen move will eventually cost more than just one tempo.

11...exd5

Black does badly with 11...♘e5 12 dxe6 or 11...cxd5 12 ♗b5.

12 g3 ♕f6 13 exd5 ♗c5

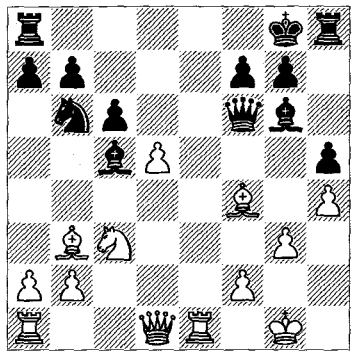
Black remembers about his development, but his position is already seriously compromised. Thus 13...♘e5 is met by 14 dxc6, when after 14...bxc6 White has the surprising but logical and powerful stroke 15 ♘d5! ♕d6 (not 15...cxd5 16 ♗b5+ ♔e7 17 ♕xd5 ♖d8 18 ♕b7+ ♔e6 19 ♖e1 and White wins) 16 ♗f4 f6 17 ♕a4 with a big advantage. As the game goes, Black fares little better.

14 ♖e1+ ♔f8 15 ♗f4 ♘b6 16 ♗b3 h5

After 16...♖d8 17 ♖c1 ♗d4 (17...cxd5 is strongly answered by 18 ♘b5 ♘c4 19 ♘c7!) 18 ♕d2, White has a large plus.

17 h4 ♔g8 *(D)*

W



White has attained a significant plus, but as yet no decisive blow is to be found. This is not surprising, seeing that his queen and queen's rook have still to enter the fray. Alekhine therefore continues developing.

18 ♖c1 ♗d4 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♘e4 ♗xe4 21 ♖xe4

This exchange greatly benefits White, as it deprives the black king of a defender and allows both white rooks to become much more active.

21...c5 22 ♕e2 g6 23 ♗g5 ♕d6 24 ♕f3

White is playing very simply; he merely brings out his last undeveloped pieces and forces his opponent's pieces back. Yet his advantage has been increasing all the while, and is now decisive. The ease with which this has happened is explained by Black's battered and disorganized position.

24...♕f8 *(D)*

Black's position is also without hope after 24...♖h7 25 ♖e7 ♖f8 26 ♖xa7.

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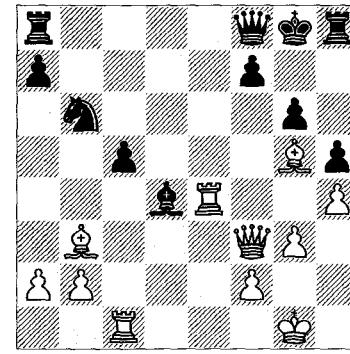


25 ♖xd4!

This stroke is simple and obvious. It also wins the game at once. At the same time we should note how it obeys the principles of development and coordination; essentially it procures White an extra piece in the crucial area, for the crucial time-span. This is a theme we discussed in detail earlier.

25...cxd4 26 ♖c6 ♔h7 27 ♗xf7 ♖c8 28 ♖xg6 1-0

The next game proceeds in a largely similar manner.

Kasparov – Andersson
Tilburg 1981

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 a3 ♗b7 5 ♘c3 ♘e4 6 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 7 ♘d2 ♗g6 8 g3 ♘c6

Theorists are less than convinced by this move. In the last few years Black has mostly been playing 8...♗e7. Then for instance after 9 ♗g2 d5 10 e4 dxe4 11 ♘xe4 0-0 12 0-0 c6 13 ♗f4, White acquired a small plus in Stohl-Romanishin, Kaskady 2002.

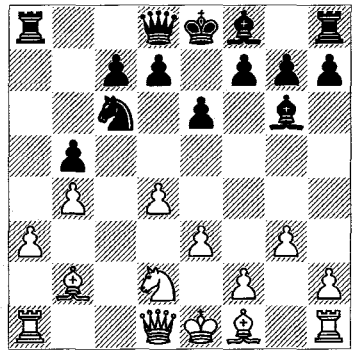
9 e3 a6?!

This is hard to explain. Ulf Andersson is a player in the classical mould, yet suddenly he sets out on a highly dubious operation which finally leaves him way behind in development. When you consider that on top of this he is facing Kasparov (who at that time was already

well known though still very young), his actions have an air of hara-kiri about them.

10 b4 b5?! 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♗b2 *(D)*

B



12...♘a7?!

For good measure the knight voluntarily leaves the centre for the edge of the board. Andersson is unrecognizable! A better line seems to be 12...♖b8 13 ♖c1 ♘e7.

13 h4!

Kasparov's actions are easy to understand. Black has been neglecting his own kingside, so White turns his attention to that part of the board. To begin with, he induces a first weakness there.

13...h6 *(D)*

The other defensive try is also dismal: 13...f6 14 h5 ♗f7 15 h6.

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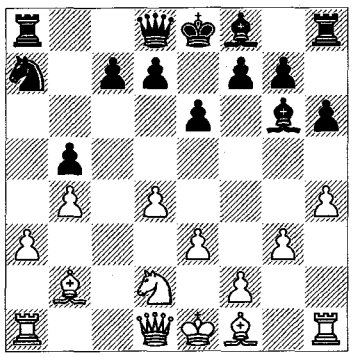


14 d5!

After this, castling will be difficult for Black for some time. Meanwhile White will try to open up the central files against the black king.

14...exd5

In the light of what has been said, 14...c6!? looks more logical, endeavouring to keep the position as closed as possible. For example: 15 h5 ♗h7 16 e4 exd5 17 ♗g2 dxe4 18 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 19 ♘xe4 d5.

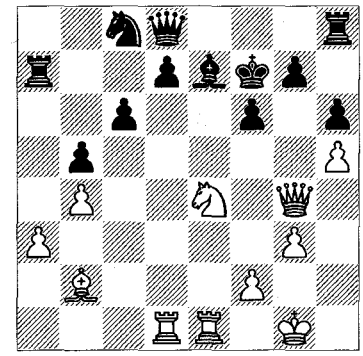
15 ♗g2 c6

At this stage material is not the main thing. With every move the time factor plays an increasing role. Hence I feel that a better line is 15...♘c8!? 16 ♗xd5 (16 0-0 ♘b6) 16...c6 17 ♗g2 ♘b6, when White's advantage wouldn't be so formidable. Now he works up a direct attack on the king.

16 0-0 f6 17 ♖e1 ♗e7 18 ♕g4 ♔f7 19 h5 ♗h7 20 e4 dxe4 21 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 22 ♘xe4 ♘c8 23 ♖ad1 ♖a7 *(D)*

All Black's previous errors are now beginning to tell. Natural moves no longer work: 23...♘b6 24 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 25 ♖xd6 ♖e8 26 ♖xe8 ♕xe8 27 ♖xf6+! and mates. In other words, in consequence of his backward development Black can no longer coordinate his forces. This demonstrates the link between development and coordination, which is a very important concept; it explains why I gave the heading 'Development' to a chapter in which the principle of coordination receives most attention.

W



After Black's last move, things still aren't any easier. The following blow – easy to predict, but attractive – is enough to make his position collapse. This isn't at all surprising. You only need to compare the white and black pieces in their capacity for concerted play. (*Zusammenspiel*, remember?) The fact that White's pieces have adequate open lines is further testimony to the cooperation between his pieces and his pawns. Without any doubt at all, Kasparov is one of the greatest-ever masters of the art of coordinating forces to maximum effect.

24 ♘xf6! gxf6

Black would also lose with 24...♗xf6 25 ♕g6+ ♔f8 26 ♗xf6 gxf6 27 ♖e6.

25 ♕g6+ ♔f8 26 ♗c1

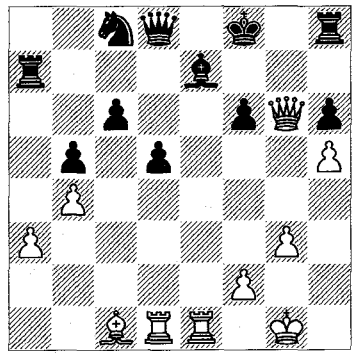
We were presented with a similar picture in the game by the young Morphy which we examined at the start of our discussion of the coordination principle. White has an overwhelming advantage, and in such cases there will usually be more than one path to victory, so that choosing between them is a matter of taste. However, tastes differ in quality, and good taste springs from sound principles. Victory could also have been achieved by 26 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 27 ♗xf6 ♕h7 28 ♗xh8 ♕xg6 (28...♕xh8 turns out to be even worse: 29 ♖e1 ♘e7 30 ♕d6 ♕g7 31 ♕b8+) 29 hxg6 with a won ending, but Kasparov chooses a continuation that obeys two principles:

1) After his highly eccentric play, Black doesn't deserve to reach an ending. This applies all the more because Ulf Andersson is widely known as a passionate lover of endgames and would have offered lengthy and stubborn resistance.

2) The move played brings the white bishop into the game, when it had nothing to do on the long diagonal apart from the combinative line just mentioned.

26...d5 *(D)*

White wins easily in the event of 26...♕e8 27 ♗xh6+ ♖xh6 28 ♕xh6+ ♔f7 29 ♕h7+ ♔f8 30 h6 ♕f7 31 ♕f5 ♘d6 (or 31...♘b6 32 ♖d4 +–) 32 ♕f4, and the black rook can only watch the king's death agony.



27 ♖d4!

Here again Kasparov's choice of move fits in perfectly with our argument. This rook was not active enough. White could have gone ahead with a straightforward continuation utilizing the pieces that were already fully engaged: 27 ♗xh6+ ♖xh6 28 ♕xh6+ ♔g8! 29 ♕g6+ ♔h8! 30 ♖e6, and although White's advantage is not in doubt, he would still have some minor problems to solve. Yet once the rook is in the game, the rest all runs on oiled wheels. Kasparov, like Morphy before him, is endowed by nature with a feeling for coordination of the highest order.

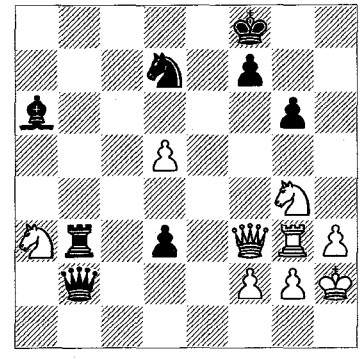
27...♘d6 28 ♖g4!

There was also an easy win with 28 ♗xh6+ ♖xh6 29 ♕xh6+ ♔e8 30 ♕xf6, but the game continuation is more attractive and quicker. Observe that in this case too, the winning process is accelerated and made easier by bringing one more fighting unit to the sector where the clash of pieces is taking place.

28...♘f7 29 ♗xh6+! ♔e8 30 ♗g7 1-0

Black resigned since after 30...♖g8 31 h6 he won't get away with losing less than a rook.

I shall often use the phrase 'coordination of *forces*', bearing in mind that the arrangement of pawns has a very significant influence on the scope of the pieces. It is not for nothing that pawn-structure is one of the most fundamental chess concepts. But that is a major theme in itself. It sometimes happens that the pawns themselves become fighting units that take a decisive part in the attack. This happened for instance in the following truly monumental game. Kasparov's notes to this game in his book about this match take up 20 pages! I shall merely give the finale of the game, but even that will demand more analysis than many a complete encounter. The variations are extremely vivid and fascinating.



Kasparov – Karpov
London/Leningrad Wch (16) 1986

This position is from a very famous game. Despite the relatively small number of pieces left on the board, the situation is very sharp and complex. What strikes you is that each player has concentrated his forces in 'his own' sector of the board, and also that the white knight on a3 is condemned to perish. Since, however, White is a pawn up and his pieces are aiming at the enemy king – always an ominous sign – the position is virtually impossible to assess by its general features alone. Calculation of variations is bound to play a decisive role.

Kasparov played...

33 ♕f4

...whereupon Karpov committed the decisive error:

33...♕xa3?

Kasparov gives a mass of complicated variations here, from which the first conclusion to be drawn is that the position hardly lends itself to exhaustive calculation in limited thinking time; intuition must play a major part too. Not that it can replace a constant and painstaking effort of analysis, of course; analysis will supply intuition with data, and intuition in turn will suggest a direction for the analysis to take.

a) Kasparov demonstrates that capturing the knight with the rook would also have lost. On 33...♖xa3?, White plays 34 ♖f3! *(D)* with these consequences:

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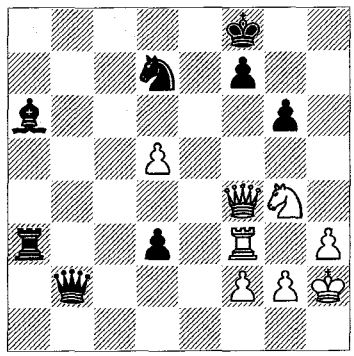


a1) 34...f6? 35 ♕d6+ ♔e8 36 ♘xf6+ and wins.

a2) 34...f5 35 ♕d6+ ♔e8 36 ♖e3+ ♔d8 37 ♘e5 ♗b5 38 ♘c6+ ♗xc6 39 dxc6 ♕b8 40 ♖e8+! +–.

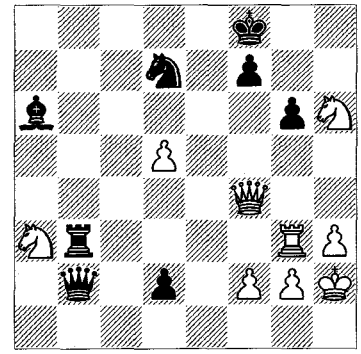
a3) 34...♔e8 35 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 36 d6 ♕h8 37 ♘f6 +–.

a4) 34...♔e7 35 ♕xf7+ ♔d6 36 ♕e6+ ♔c7 37 ♖f7 ♗b5 38 ♘e5 d2 39 ♖xd7+ ♗xd7 40 ♕xd7+ +–.

a5) 34...♕b8 35 d6 ♕e8 36 ♖e3! ♕c8 37 ♖e7 ♗c4 38 ♕h6+ ♔g8 39 ♖xd7!.

b) Kasparov considers Black's sole correct move to be 33...d2!, leading ultimately to equality but only by a most complex and contorted route. He supports this view with some long and intricate variations, in which both sides have plenty of scope for error. (Black has more of it than White, though. This allows us to conclude that the position after White's 33rd move is objectively equal but subjectively easier for White to play – provided of course that he has adequate stocks of optimism and tactical prowess.) White continues with 34 ♘h6 *(D)*, and now:

B



b1) 34...♕f6? is decidedly poor: 35 ♕xd2 ♕d6 36 ♘c2 ♘f6 37 ♕d4! ♘h5? 38 ♘f5! +–.

b2) The same goes for 34...♔e8 35 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 36 d6 d1♕ 37 ♕g8+ ♘f8 38 ♕xf8+ ♔d7 39 ♕e7+ ♔c6 40 ♕c7+ ♔d5 41 d7 +–.

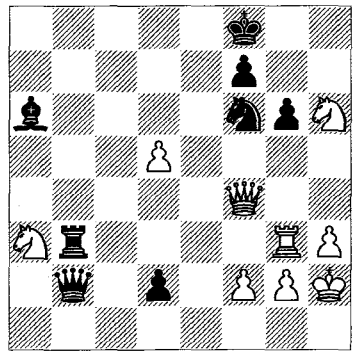
b3) 34...♘e5? is also bad: 35 ♖xb3 ♕xb3 36 ♕xe5 d1♕ 37 d6 +–. The position is characteristic of many variations in this game; Black's two queens lose to White's scanty but ideally coordinated forces.

b4) After 34...♘f6! *(D)*, there is much more in the way of analysis.

b41) 35 ♖xb3 ♕xb3 36 ♕xf6 ♕xd5 37 ♘xf7 and now:

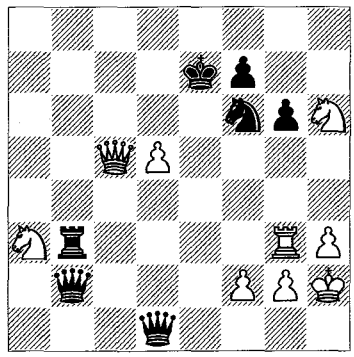
b411) A small miracle occurs in the variation 37...♔e8? 38 ♘b1!! d1♕ 39 ♘c3!. One of the queens succumbs to a unique fork, and White is left with his extra pawns!

b412) 37...d1♕ 38 ♘d6+ ♔g8 39 ♕xg6+ ♔f8 40 ♕f6+ ♔g8 41 ♘f5!. Again it looks as if



the two queens lose, but Black can draw by giving one of them up: 41...♕xf5! 42 ♕xf5 ♕d6+.

b42) 35 ♕d6+ ♔e8! (35...♔g7? loses to 36 ♘f5+ ♔h7 37 ♕f8 ♘g4+ 38 ♖xg4 ♕e5+ 39 f4 ♖xh3+ 40 gxh3 ♕e2+ 41 ♖g2 +–) 36 ♕c6+, and now not 36...♘d7? 37 ♕xa6! d1♕ (or 37...♖xg3 38 ♕c8+ ♔e7 39 ♘g8+ ♔d6 40 ♕c6+ ♔e5 41 ♘c4+) 38 ♕c8+ ♔e7 39 ♘g8+ ♔d6 40 ♘c4+ ♔xd5 41 ♘xb2 +–, but 36...♔f8! 37 ♕d6+ ♔e8 38 ♕xa6 d1♕ (at each turn Black has to find the only move; he would lose with 38...♖xg3? 39 ♕c8+ ♔e7 40 d6+ ♔xd6 41 ♘c4+) 39 ♕c8+ ♔e7 40 ♕c5+ *(D)*.



The most dangerous moment in this variation arrives. Black's only move to survive is 40...♔d7!!. Take note: apart from the fact that there are dangers lurking on all sides, this would have been the last move before the time-control. Is it conceivable that any mortal could go through all this without a mistake? (Black can't play either 40...♔e8? 41 ♘c4! ♕bd4 42 ♕c8+ ♔e7 43 ♕c7+ ♘d7 44 ♘f5+! gxf5 45 ♕d6+, or 40...♔d8? 41 ♘c4 ♕bd4 42 ♘xf7+ ♔e8 43 ♘cd6+ ♔e7 44 ♘f5++ ♔xf7 45 ♕e7+.) The analysis continues: 41 ♘c4 ♕ba1! 42 ♕c6+ ♔d8!, when White should take the draw by 43 ♕d6+ ♔c8 44 ♕c6+ ♔b8 45 ♕d6+ ♔a7 46 ♕c5+, etc. Instead, the line given by Kasparov, 43 ♘xf7+(?) ♔e7 44 ♕c5+ ♔xf7 45 ♘d6+ appears to lose to the surprising 45...♔g8!! (Kasparov considered 45...♔e7 46 ♘f5++ ♔d8 47 ♕e7+ and 45...♔g7 46 ♕c7+ ♔h8 47 ♘f7+ ♔g8!, which both lead to a draw) 46 ♕c8+ ♔h7 47 ♕c7+ ♘d7!, when nothing seems to work for White. However, as we said before, playing like this is much easier for White than for Black, who is walking through a minefield the whole time.

In the actual game everything ended more quickly and in a less spectacular manner, but there is still something very useful here for us to study.

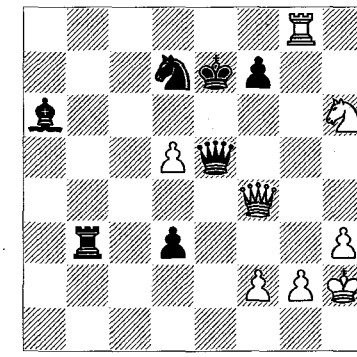
34 ♘h6 ♕e7

On 34...♔e8 or 34...♔e7, White wins by 35 ♖e3+ ♔d8 36 ♘xf7+ ♔c8 37 ♘d6+, while 34...f6 loses to 35 ♖xg6.

35 ♖xg6 ♕e5

Everything is simple after 35...♔e8 36 d6, winning. After the text-move, however, White's queen is pinned and he is a piece down...

36 ♖g8+ ♔e7 *(D)*



Now 37 ♘f5+? would lose to 37...♔f6. It looks as if White's pieces aren't acting well enough together, while Black's on the contrary possess good coordination. Yet the intervention of a mere pawn abruptly alters the entire picture:

37 d6+!

The truth now turns out to be the very opposite! White's small but united force has acquired amazing coordination, shattering the opponent's entire set-up. And this was achieved by bringing just one pawn to the aid of the attacking pieces!

That's why chess can be so difficult – there are often so many factors you have to take into account!

37...♔e6 38 ♖e8+ ♔d5 39 ♖xe5+ ♘xe5 40 d7 ♖b8 41 ♘xf7 1-0

"Coordination of forces doesn't come by itself, if you don't take measures..." This can be asserted with assurance, slightly adapting words by the famous Soviet poet Mayakovsky. You must work hard to achieve coordination against a strong opponent, since he is aiming for exactly the opposite outcome. We saw that in the last example and it recurs in those which follow.

Yusupov – Kasparov
Novgorod 1995

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♗g5 ♗g7 4 c3 c5 5 e3

Generally speaking the point of White's 4th move is to take the pawn at once with 5 dxc5!?. Then, for example, 5...♘a6!? 6 ♕d4 ♘c7!? 7 ♘bd2 ♘e6 8 ♕c4 b6 9 cxb6 ♕xb6 occurred in Sorokin-Sakaev, St Petersburg 1993, leading to a complex position in which Black has compensation for the pawn.

5...♕b6 6 ♕b3 0-0 7 ♘bd2 d6 *(D)*

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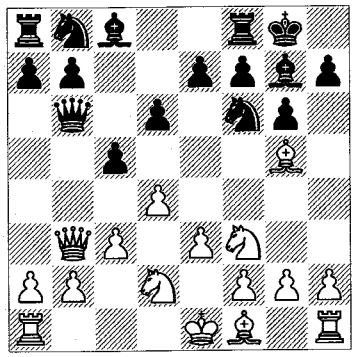

8 ♕xb6

The opposition of the queens is finally resolved. Black now has some minor weaknesses in his queenside pawn-structure, but it's hard for White to get at them. In return, the a-file is opened up for Black; this doesn't usually amount to much, though White does need to exercise some care.

8...axb6 9 ♘c4 ♘bd7 10 ♗e2

The moment has come for White to choose his plan. Yusupov opts for a kingside offensive. Quite a good plan for seizing the b5-square was also possible: 10 ♗xf6!? ♗xf6 11 ♘a3 d5 12 ♘b5, and now if 12...♖a5 13 a4 e5?, then 14 b4 wins a pawn.

10...d5 11 ♘ce5 h6 12 ♗f4 c4

Since White has unambiguously disclosed his plan for kingside play, Black creates pressure on the opposite wing, where he has some basis for doing so.

13 h4!? b5 14 g4 ♘b6 15 g5 hxg5 16 hxg5 ♘e4 *(D)*

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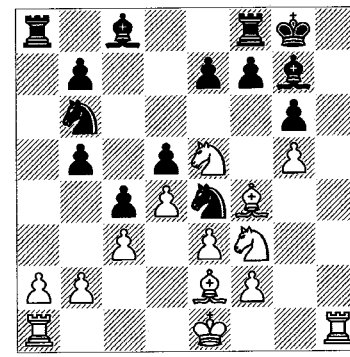

17 ♘d2 ♗f5

This move is evidently necessary. White would have a clear advantage after 17...♘d6?! 18 ♘g4! ♖d8 19 a3 ♘a4 20 0-0-0.

18 ♗g4

If 18 f3, then 18...♘xd2 or 18...♘d6 gives Black an excellent position.

18...♘a4 *(D)*

For 18...♗xg4 19 ♘xg4 ♘a4 20 f3, see the next note.

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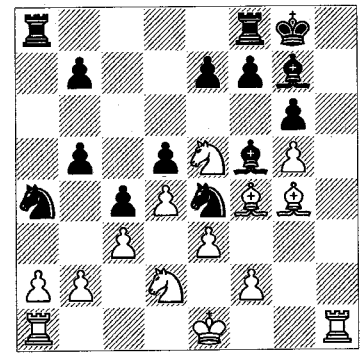

19 ♘xe4

I don't think this move is best. It seems to me that a good idea for White is 19 f3!? ♘xd2 20 ♔xd2 ♗xg4 21 ♘xg4; then after 21...♘xb2 22

♖hb1 ♘d3 23 ♖xb5 ♖a7 24 ♖xd5 ♖fa8 25 a3 ♖xa3 26 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 27 ♖xa3 e5 28 ♗g3 b5 the game is about equal.

19...dxe4!

This is better than 19...♗xe4, after which 20 f3 followed by 21 ♖h2 would give White the advantage.

20 ♗xf5

The immediate 20 ♖b1 leads to a situation similar to the game, after 20...b4 21 cxb4 ♘b6 22 a3 ♖fc8.

20...gxf5 21 ♖b1

21 0-0-0 also deserves attention, because in Kasparov's variation 21...♘xc3 22 bxc3 ♖xa2 23 g6 f6 24 ♘f7 (not 24 ♘d7? ♖fa8 25 ♖h5 b4!) 24...♖fa8 25 ♖h7 ♖xf2 26 ♔b1 ♖fa2!, White has 27 ♖c1! (a big improvement over 27 ♔c1? ♖g2! –+). Black can either acquiesce to a repetition, or choose instead 21...b4!?.

21...b4!

Kasparov is in a resolute mood. By sacrificing a pawn he greatly increases the active scope of his pieces, especially his rooks which need open files. He considers that after 21...♘b6 22 a3 ♗xe5 (pay attention to this exchange – it will be an important factor in many variations; its point is that Black will have the chance to restrict the white bishop, which is hampered in any case by its own pawn-structure; meanwhile, the black knight will take up a dominating, impregnable position on d5) 23 ♗xe5 f6 24 gxf6 exf6 25 ♗f4 ♖f7 26 ♔e2 ♖h7, the position would be equal. However, in assessing the consequences of his positional sacrifice, Kasparov had to be sure that the lines he was opening could be better utilized by Black than by White.

22 cxb4 *(D)*

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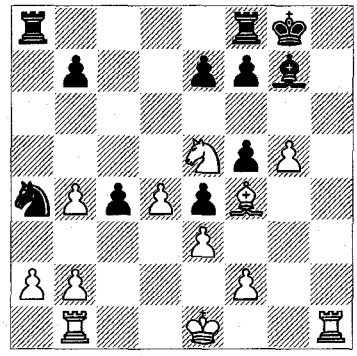

22...♘b6?!

At this point, in his own opinion, Kasparov goes wrong. He demonstrates that an immediate 22...c3? gives Black nothing: 23 b3! ♘b2 24 a4 b5 25 a5 ♘d3+ 26 ♘xd3! exd3 27 ♖d1 d2+ 28 ♔e2, with a clear advantage for White. On the other hand 22...♖fc8!? is strong: 23 g6 ♗xe5 24 gxf7+ ♔xf7 25 ♗xe5 c3 26 bxc3 ♘xc3 27 ♖b2 ♘d5! with a small but stable plus for Black, whose pieces have greater scope than in the game continuation.

23 a3 ♖fc8 24 g6

Better than 24 ♖c1 ♘d5 25 ♔d2 b5.

24...♗xe5 25 gxf7+ ♔xf7 26 ♗xe5 ♘d5 27 ♔d2

As I see it, 27 ♖h7+!? ♔e6 28 ♖h6+ ♔d7 29 ♖h5 is a perfectly good option. If I saw such a real chance of drawing with Kasparov, I wouldn't be able to resist it. Still, there is nothing wrong with the game continuation either.

27...c3+ 28 ♔c2 cxb2+ 29 ♔xb2 ♖c3 *(D)*

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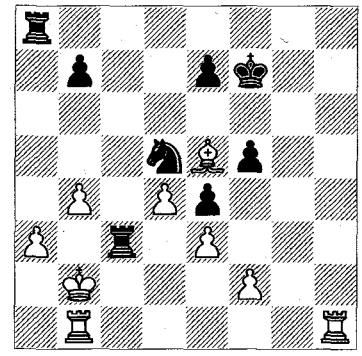

30 ♖a1

White has quite a wide choice. He must avoid 30 ♖h5? ♖axa3 31 ♖xf5+ ♔e6 32 ♖h5 ♔d7 followed by 33...♘xb4 –+. Another inaccurate line is 30 ♖bc1?! ♖cxa3 31 b5 ♖a2+ 32 ♔b3 ♖xf2 33 ♖h7+ ♔e6 34 ♖h6+ ♘f6 35 ♖c7 ♖a1 36 ♖xb7 ♖b1+! with advantage to Black. Yet as Kasparov shows, White has quite a simple draw with 30 ♖h7+!? ♔e6 31 ♖g1 ♖axa3 32 ♖g6+ ♔d7 33 ♖d6+ ♔e8 34 ♖xd5 ♖ab3+ 35 ♔a2 ♖a3+. Yusupov sidesteps this chance for the second time, and it would be interesting to know why. Was it deliberate, or an oversight?

30...b5!

After 30...♖d3 31 ♖h7+ ♔e6 32 ♖g1 ♖axa3 33 ♖g6+, the game would be drawn in the way we have seen already. Kasparov is going all-out to win.

31 ♖hc1

The black pieces are more active, and by now there are dangers lurking for White at every turn. If 31 ♖h5?, then 31...♖ac8! 32 ♖xf5+ ♔e6 with a decisive attack. Another bad line is 31 ♖hd1?! ♖ac8! 32 ♖dc1 ♘b6 33 ♖xc3 ♘a4+ 34 ♔c2 ♖xc3+ 35 ♔d2 ♔e6 36 ♗f4 ♔d5 with a clear advantage to Black.

31...♖d3 32 ♖c5

This time if 32 ♖d1?, Black wins by means of 32...♖axa3!.

32...♘b6! *(D)*

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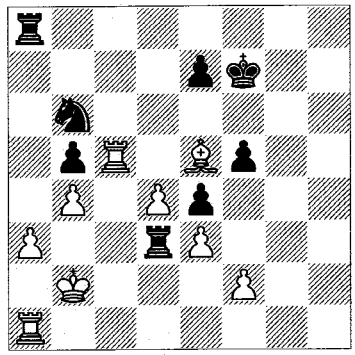

33 ♖xb5?

Finally White commits a decisive error. As Kasparov demonstrates, he could have saved himself by 33 ♔c2! ♘c4 34 a4! ♖d2+ 35 ♔b3 ♖d3+, with repetition. It's hard to blame Yusupov for this oversight. To keep on finding accurate moves when under fire from the opponent's dominant forces is anything but easy. What's more, I'm sure Yusupov must have been in time-trouble. Even with plenty of time, it would have been difficult to see how his move would be refuted.

33...♘c4+ 34 ♔c1

White loses at once with 34 ♔c2? ♖axa3! or 34 ♔b1? ♖d1+.

34...♖g8 35 ♗g3 *(D)*

Now, on the other hand, everything seems in order.

What can Black do? On 35...♖c8? 36 ♖c5, White has a clear plus, while 35...♖h8?! 36 ♔c2 ♘xa3+ 37 ♖xa3 ♖xa3 38 ♖xf5+ is also in his favour. The advantage is also on White's side after 35...♖c3+?! 36 ♔d1 ♖h8 37 ♖a2! ♖h1+ 38 ♔e2 ♖cc1 39 f3. In all these cases the black pieces, though much more active, are unable to breach the enemy defence. In such

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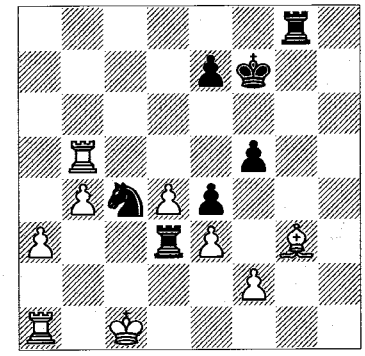


situations, as we have said more than once before, you have to look for a chance to support your attacking pieces with extra reserves of some kind. Often a pawn will be enough. So it is here:

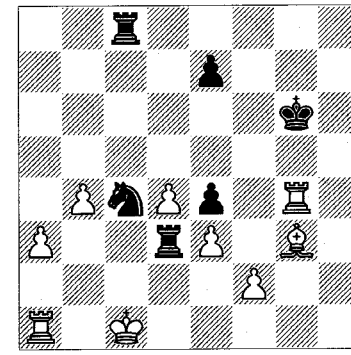
35...f4!! 36 ♖f5+

We can now see that Black's pawn thrust has shattered the defensive coordination of White's forces. (Coordination is naturally essential in defence as well as attack. See, for example, Fischer-Larsen Denver Ct (1) 1971, which is one of my favourites; and also the fine game which follows below.)

If 36 ♗xf4, Black mates with 36...♖c3+. A more interesting try is 36 exf4, whereupon Kasparov gives 36...♖c3+! 37 ♔d1 (or 37 ♔b1 ♖h8 −+) 37...♖h8 38 ♖a2 (only move) 38...♖h1+ 39 ♔e2 ♖xg3! 40 ♖c2 ♖gg1! (much stronger than 40...♖e3+ 41 fxe3 ♖h2+ 42 ♔e1 ♖xc2 43 ♖c5, when Black has a technical task ahead of him) 41 ♖xc4 ♖d1 42 ♖f5+ ♔e8 43 f3 ♖he1+ 44 ♔f2 e3+ and mates.

36...♔g6 37 ♖xf4 ♖c8 38 ♖g4+ *(D)*

B



38...♔h5

Played in time-trouble. A simpler way is 38...♔f7! 39 ♖f4+ ♔e8 40 ♖f5 e5!.

39 ♖h4+ ♔g6 40 ♖g4+ ♔h5 41 ♖h4+ ♔g5! 42 f4+ ♔g6 43 f5+ ♔g5 0-1

On 44 ♖h2 (what else is there?), Black wins with 44...♘d2+!.

The final position splendidly illustrates the total superiority of coordinated forces.

This was a high-class game. Kasparov's outstanding tactics, his energetic and bold actions, make a powerful impression. It is no accident that he succeeds more often than other players in pulling off such memorable strokes as 35...f4!! in this game, or conducting remarkable attacks like the one against Karpov that we examined before. It all has to do with his approach to chess, his constant focus on gaining dynamic advantages, his readiness for material or positional sacrifices (or both) in the interests of achieving maximum coordination.

And now, as promised, we come to coordination in defence. We already saw a brilliant illustration of this theme in the game Lputian-Ivanchuk in Chapter 1 (Dynamics). Here is another striking example.

Fischer – Polugaevsky
Palma de Mallorca IZ 1970

1 c4 ♘f6 2 g3 c6 3 ♗g2 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗f5 5 ♕b3 ♕b6 6 cxd5 ♕xb3 7 axb3 cxd5

In Polugaevsky's view, taking with the knight is more precise. After 7...♘xd5!? 8 d3 ♘b4 Black has everything in order.

8 ♘c3 ♘c6 9 d3 e6

This opening rather recalls the famous game Janowski-Capablanca, New York (Rice mem) 1916. By (admittedly distant) analogy with that game, it may well be that the bishop retreat 9...♗d7!? is a good idea. The continuation might be 10 ♗f4 e6 11 0-0 ♗b4 12 ♖fc1 ♔e7, with an equal game. Polugaevsky writes that he saw 9...♗d7 but decided not to lose any time.

10 0-0 ♗e7 *(D)*

But now, after...

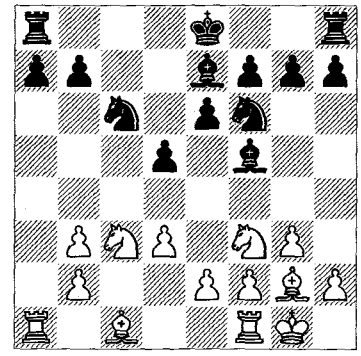
11 ♗e3!

...he had to start thinking. And yet he did so to very good effect. He probed deeply into the position and succeeded in finding a splendid forcing line of play, beginning with:

11...♘g4!

That Polugaevsky's cogitations didn't begin too soon, we can see from the following

W



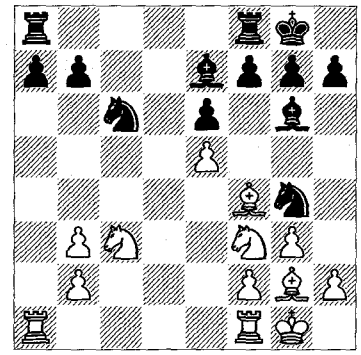
variation: the 'natural' 11...0-0 is met by 12 ♘d4! ♘xd4 13 ♗xd4 a6 14 e4, and White works up some unpleasant pressure.

12 ♗f4 0-0 13 e4

According to Polugaevsky it was worth considering 13 ♖fc1!?, but Fischer follows a course which looks highly attractive.

13...dxe4 14 dxe4 ♗g6 15 e5 *(D)*

B



At this point Black can't very well continue with simple development. If 15...♖fd8, then 16 h3 ♘h6 17 g4, and the knight is stuck on the edge of the board. Then after 17...♖d7 18 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 (Black's defence is also difficult in the case of 18...♖xd1+ 19 ♖xd1 ♖d8 20 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 21 ♘d2) 19 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 20 ♘d2, White has a clear plus. Black therefore has to go in for sharp play to forestall the dangerous manoeuvre that forces his knight back. A tactical shoot-out begins, in which the black forces demonstrate their power of cooperation.

15...♗d3! 16 ♖fd1!

White has to accept the challenge. After the alternative 16 ♖fc1 ♗c5 17 ♘d1 ♗b6 18 h3 ♘h6 19 g4 f6!, Black has fully adequate counterplay.

16...♗c2 17 ♖dc1!

The only way! 17 ♖d2 ♗xb3 18 ♖d7 ♗c5 19 ♘e4 ♗b6 20 h3 ♗d5! turns out in Black's favour.

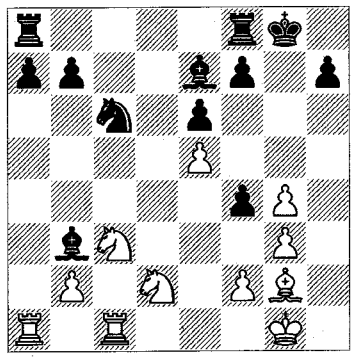
17...♗xb3 18 h3 g5!

This continuation is essential. On 18...♘h6? 19 ♘d2, White's advantage is obvious.

19 hxg4 gxf4 20 ♘d2! *(D)*

Now it is Fischer's turn to make a forced but powerful move, avoiding 20 gxf4 ♖fd8 with advantage to Black. It's interesting to follow how at every turn, the slightest inaccuracy can reverse the verdict on the position. This is quite typical of sharp situations.

B



Now again Black seems to be faced with awkward problems. The consequences of 20...♗d5 21 ♘xd5 exd5 22 gxf4 ♖fd8 23 ♘b3 and 20...♘d4 21 gxf4 look favourable to White. Instead there followed:

20...f3!!

Black performs miracles. According to Polugaevsky, before making his 15th move he was already intending this superb and extremely effective counter-stroke. In this way – as one chess coach whom I know very well is fond of saying – he largely "uncoordinates his opponent's coordination". This is calculation on a high level! At every turn we can see how each player is striving to disrupt his opponent's coordination of forces and improve his own. The first mistake by either of them could gravely damage his cause.

21 ♗xf3

Black also preserves equal chances after 21 ♘xb3 fxg2 22 f4 f6 23 exf6 ♗xf6 24 ♔xg2 ♖ad8.

21...♘xe5 22 ♗g2! *(D)*

White too is obliged to play carefully. He does badly with 22 ♗xb7?! ♖ab8 23 ♗e4 (Black is better after 23 ♗g2 ♘d3!, while 23 ♖xa7? fails to 23...♗c5 24 ♖a5 ♘d3 –+) 23...♘xg4, with advantage to Black.

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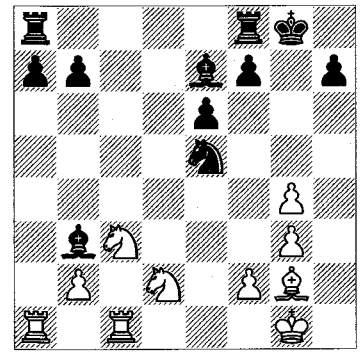


22...♗d5 23 ♘xd5

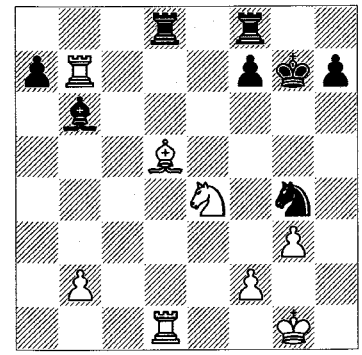
The other try, 23 ♗xd5 exd5 24 ♘xd5 ♗d8 25 ♘c4!? ♘xg4 26 ♘d6 ♘f6!?, would rapidly exhaust the resources of both sides and lead to a draw.

23...exd5 24 ♖c7 ♗d8 25 ♖xb7 ♗b6

It's clear by now that Black has held the position by his superlative defence. The draw is not far off.

26 ♗xd5 ♖ad8 27 ♘e4 ♘xg4 28 ♖d1 ♔g7 *(D)*

W



29 ♖d2

White can't improve his position any more; 29 ♔g2? fails to 29...♗xf2! 30 ♔f3 ♘e3, while 29 ♖d3 leads to repetition after 29...♘e5 30 ♖d1 ♘g4.

29...♘f6 30 ♘xf6 ♔xf6 31 ♖d3 ♔g7 32 ♔g2 ♖b8 33 ♖d7 ♖bd8 34 ♗c4 ♖xd7 35 ♖xd7 ♔g6 36 g4 ♖d8!

This draws in the simplest manner. In such cases it doesn't pay to dither.

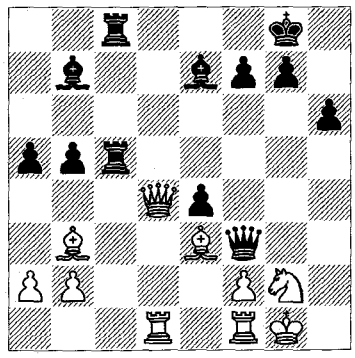
37 ♗xf7+ ♔g5 38 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 ½-½

An impressive tactical duel between two masters of calculation.

There is one more very important phenomenon to which I must draw attention. In the games of Tal, Kasparov, Shirov and very many others, the aim of coordinating the forces is pursued by methods that are sharp, quite often risky, and dynamic. (At this stage I don't think there is any need to dwell on this last term. I hope it is comprehensible to the reader by now.) And yet the great majority of other leading masters have an excellent command of, and a liking for, what we may call 'peaceful' means to achieve the same ends; in other words, rather than trust to extreme measures, they employ positional manoeuvring, technical devices and the like. The main thing is the attainment of coordination (we could also use a favourite word of Vasily Smyslov's – *harmony*). I will take the risk of stating that coordination constitutes *the* overriding principle in chess, to which all other principles are subordinate; to follow these general chess principles is always to pursue the ultimate aim of attaining coordination of the forces (or improving it when once attained).

Now let's look at some instances of what I have called 'peaceful' methods of achieving this end. I should like to begin with an example taken from Capablanca's *Chess Fundamentals*.

This excerpt, which isn't even very complex, made an overwhelming impression on me when I first saw it. To this day it appeals to me as a brilliant example of consistent logical thought in search of the solution to an original position. Capablanca is discussing the following extract:



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Réti – Yates
London 1922

26 ♕d7

Capablanca criticizes this move. He considers it a serious mistake, and claims that "White would have lost if Black had replied 26...♖5c7, driving the white queen off the h3-c8 diagonal, and then ...♖c6 threatening ...♖g6." Let's begin by testing the correctness of this claim. After 27 ♕xb5 ♖c6!, an attempt to bring the queen across to the defence fails miserably: 28 ♕e5? ♖g6 29 ♕h2 ♗a6 30 ♖c1 ♖xc1 31 ♖xc1 ♗e2! 32 ♖c8+ ♔h7 33 ♖c3 ♗d6 34 ♕h1 ♕f5, and Black wins. Presumably Capablanca had something like this in mind, underestimating 28 ♘f4!, which is White's best move. In reply, I haven't managed to find anything better for Black than 28...♕g4+ 29 ♔h1 ♕h4+ 30 ♔g1 ♕g4+ 31 ♔h2 ♗a6 32 ♕d5 ♕h4+ 33 ♔g1 ♕g4+ 34 ♔h2 ♕h4+, with repetition of moves. As we see, Capablanca's judgement was too categorical, but this isn't where the value of the extract lies.

The main thing comes later, when he writes: "In my personal opinion White could have parried all Black's threats by playing 26 ♖d2." And further: "The move I am suggesting ... frees d1 for the bishop, which from this square would attack the queen on f3 and at the same time keep the d1-h5 diagonal in its sights. Moreover 26 ♖d2 would maintain the threat of ♕d7 in all its force. The latter move would be very strong if White managed to carry it out. Another point is that 26 ♖d2 liberates the e3-bishop, which otherwise couldn't move because of the reply ...e3 ... And once the dark-squared bishop obtains freedom to manoeuvre – let's say, to occupy f4 – this makes room for the g2-knight, which may go to e3 at a suitable moment. In this way, the white pieces will gradually reach their best positions. ... If all this could be achieved without loss of material, space and time, there would be no doubt as to who had the better game."

Let us first test Capablanca's assertions with a little analysis, and then discuss them. After 26 ♖d2 ♗c6 27 ♗d1 ♕h3 28 ♗f4 ♖d5 29 ♕e3 ♕xe3 30 ♗xe3 ♖cd8 31 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 32 b3 g5 (or 32...a4 33 ♘f4 ♗c6 34 ♗e2 g5 35 ♘h5 f5 36 ♖c1 ♗e8 37 ♖c7 with a slight advantage for White) 33 ♗e2 b4 34 ♗b6 ♖b8 35 ♘e3 ♗e6 36 ♗d4 ♖d8 37 ♖d1 *(D)*, the advantage is undoubtedly on White's side.

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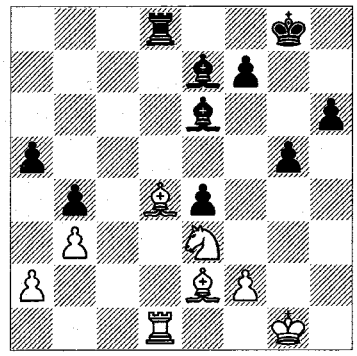


Of course this is another of those variations that are only very approximate, although it is based entirely on Capablanca's directives. Exploiting White's advantage will still be a very tricky problem, and yet what we have seen lends definite confirmation to the great player's words. And now, to the most important points.

First: the regrouping scheme that Capablanca describes is precisely the kind of plan for coordinating White's forces by 'peaceful' means (that is, without extreme expedients) of which I have spoken. Incidentally it is also one more example of effective coordination in defence. The last diagram splendidly illustrates White's achievements in this direction.

Secondly, Capablanca didn't give a single variation! The analysis he performed was purely logical in character. Capablanca's analysis derives its particular value from being lucid and comprehensible to anyone. Its simple and consequential presentation is very useful to those who wish to study a great master's process of thought. I will repeat that on my first acquaintance with it, and indeed afterwards, this extract made a tremendous impression on me, and I believe it taught me something – in particular, how to set about appraising a situation and looking for solutions by means of logical deduction. I hope it will be of benefit to you too.

In the game, Black failed to find the right move and lost as follows:

26...♖h5? 27 ♕xe7 ♖c6

Or 27...♖f8 28 ♖d8 ♖xd8 29 ♕xd8+ ♔h7 30 ♗d1 (Beim), which is also hopeless for Black.

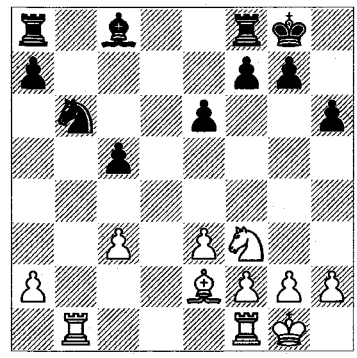
28 ♗xf7+ ♔h7 29 ♕e8 ♖c8 30 ♗g6# (1-0)

Anatoly Karpov, a player whose style is in many ways very similar to Capablanca's, succeeded in conducting the following game in a manner highly reminiscent of the above example.

Karpov – Kasparov
Moscow Wch (27) 1984/5

1 ♘f3 d5 2 d4 ♘f6 3 c4 e6 4 ♘c3 ♗e7 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 7 e3 0-0 8 ♕c2 c5 9 dxc5 dxc4 10 ♗xc4 ♕a5 11 0-0 ♗xc3 12 ♕xc3 ♕xc3 13 bxc3 ♘d7 14 c6 bxc6 15 ♖ab1 ♘b6 16 ♗e2 c5 *(D)*

W



As you can quite easily see, White hasn't obtained very much out of the opening, and his advantage is of a slight and temporary nature. Black just has to play accurately over the course of the next few moves and prevent White's small lead in development from increasing. An important factor in the position is the c5-pawn, which considerably restricts the scope of some of White's pieces but at the same time represents a weakness. In addition the a7-pawn may very well become weak, but to get at it, White will have to place a rook on the a-file. Since the c5-pawn can't be attacked immediately either, White completes his development and prepares the conditions for a later assault on his opponent's weaknesses.

17 ♖fc1!

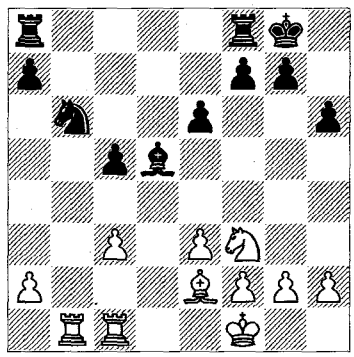
The correct way! After 17 ♖fd1 ♗b7 18 ♘e5 ♖fd8, the game would level out at once.

17...♗b7?!

A major inaccuracy, after which difficulties arise for Black. In later games Black profited from the lessons of this one, and invariably played 17...♗d7! to keep the white rook away from b5. Every single game played in that way ended in a draw.

18 ♔f1 ♗d5 *(D)*

Geller points out that White would also retain a slight advantage after the alternative 18...♗c6 19 ♘e5 ♗a4 20 ♗b5 (20 ♗a6!? also deserves consideration) 20...♗xb5+ 21 ♖xb5 ♖fc8 22 ♘d3.



19 ♖b5! ♘d7?

Not, of course, 19...♗xa2? 20 c4 ♖ad8 21 ♖b2, but Black had to play 19...♖ac8! 20 ♖a5 ♖c7 21 c4 ♗a8. White would then have the advantage, but Black would be quite capable of holding on. Now White unexpectedly acquires a decisive plus:

20 ♖a5! ♖fb8 21 c4! ♗c6

White now carries out the final steps of his regrouping manoeuvre; his forces will attain ideal coordination. Black is already powerless to hinder this.

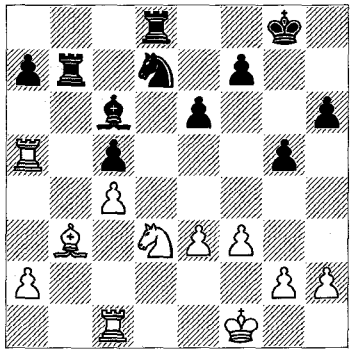
22 ♘e1! ♖b4 23 ♗d1!

White prevents the exchange of his chief attacking unit, which would occur after 23 ♘d3? ♖a4.

23...♖b7 24 f3!

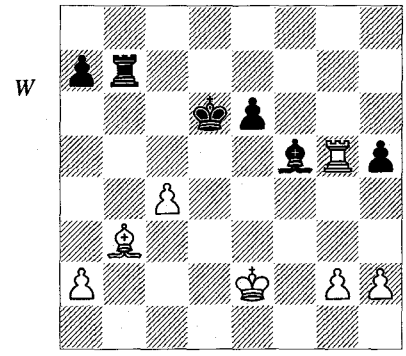
A useful link in the plan. After 24 ♘d3 ♗e4 25 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 26 ♖xc5 ♖b2, Black could hope for counterplay.

24...♖d8 25 ♘d3 g5 26 ♗b3! *(D)*



White has achieved the ideal deployment of his forces. The c5-pawn falls, and the game enters its technical phase. You will agree that Karpov's conduct of this phase is very impressive.

26...♔f8 27 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 28 ♖xc5 ♖d6 29 ♔e2 ♔e7 30 ♖d1 ♖xd1 31 ♔xd1 ♔d6 32 ♖a5 f5!? 33 ♔e2 h5 34 e4!? fxe4 35 fxe4 ♗xe4 36 ♖xg5 ♗f5 *(D)*



37 ♔e3?!

It is perhaps only here that White's play can be faulted. It's strange that such a brilliant master of the endgame as Karpov should miss the chance for an elementary but important device – the fixing of a weakness. Most likely he was short of time and therefore decided against altering the pawn-structure. After 37 h4! ♗g4+ 38 ♔e3, as indicated by N.Popov, White would have little trouble in winning. Now there *will* be trouble for him! Kasparov defends magnificently and makes White's task a good deal more complicated.

37...h4! 38 ♔d4 e5+ 39 ♔c3 ♗b1 40 a3 ♖e7 41 ♖g4 h3!

Things would be simpler for White after 41...♖h7 42 h3!, with quite an easy win.

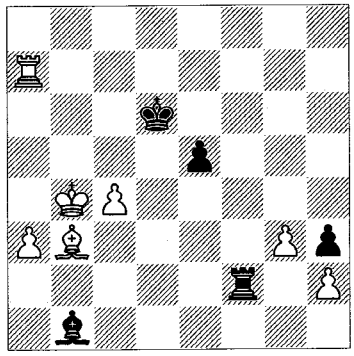
42 g3 ♖e8 43 ♖g7! ♖f8 44 ♖xa7 ♖f2 45 ♔b4 *(D)*

Look at the position that has been reached; it appears wholly unclear. If these events had not taken place after adjournment analysis, White's task would not have been at all easy.

45...♖xh2

Matters seem even more complicated after 45...♖b2 46 c5+ ♔c6 47 ♔c4 ♗c2 48 ♖a6+ ♔c7 49 ♗xc2 ♖xc2+ 50 ♔d5 ♖xh2 51 ♖a7+ ♔b8 52 ♖h7 ♖h1. The only way to win here is 53 ♔e4! (after 53 g4 h2 54 ♔c6 e4 55 ♖h8+ ♔a7 56 g5 e3, Black draws) 53...h2 54 ♔f3 ♖a1

B



55 ♖xh2 ♖xa3+ 56 ♔g4 ♖c3 57 ♖e2 ♖xc5 58 ♔f5, a variation indicated by Geller. As a result of Karpov's lapse at move 37, all this effort might have been imposed on him – with all the consequent risk of letting the win slip!

46 c5+ ♔c6 47 ♗a4+ ♔d5 48 ♖d7+ ♔e4

In answer to 48...♔e6, Popov gives the following variation: 49 c6 ♖b2+ 50 ♗b3+ ♖xb3+ 51 ♔xb3 ♗e4 52 ♖d8 ♗xc6 53 ♖h8 ♗g2 54 a4 ♔f5 55 ♖h4 and wins.

49 c6 ♖b2+ 50 ♔a5 ♖b8 51 c7 ♖c8 52 ♔b6 ♔e3 53 ♗c6 h2 54 g4 ♖h8 55 ♖d1

Instead 55 ♖d8 ♖h6 would give White nothing.

55...♗a2

On 55...♗c2, White wins with 56 ♖h1! and 57 ♖xh2.

56 ♖e1+ ♔f4 57 ♖e4+ ♔g3 58 ♖xe5 ♔xg4 59 ♖e2 1-0

And now, another example of attaining coordination by 'peaceful' means – or 'almost' peaceful, as the winning side is played by Kasparov.

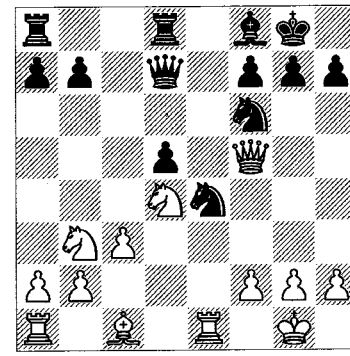
Kasparov – Kharitonov

USSR Ch (Moscow) 1988

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ♘gf3 ♘f6 5 exd5 exd5 6 ♗b5+ ♗d7 7 ♗xd7+ ♘bxd7 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 dxc5 ♘xc5 10 ♘d4 ♕d7 11 ♕f3 0-0 12 ♘2b3 ♘ce4 13 ♕f5 ♖fd8 14 ♖e1 ♗f8 15 c3 *(D)*

The opening variation has given White very little. To compensate for the weakness of his isolated pawn, Black has a spatial advantage and outposts in the centre. Now in the event of 15...♘d6!, Kasparov considers the position equal. Instead Black played illogically:

B



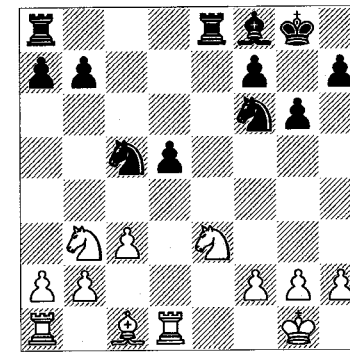
15...♕xf5?!

Now one white knight will leave d4 – where it wasn't much needed anyway, since one piece for this square is enough – and will settle on e3, where it will be attacking the weak pawn. In other words, the coordination of White's pieces noticeably improves. So you see – without any tactical mistakes, one ill-considered move can significantly strengthen the opponent's position!

16 ♘xf5 g6 17 ♘e3 ♖e8 18 ♖d1 ♘c5?! *(D)*

This move too is not the most effective. An improvement is 18...♖ad8!?, and if 19 g4? (White should play 19 ♘c2 ♘c5 20 ♗g5 with a plus), then 19...♗h6!. Another possibility is 18...h5!?, though White would still retain some advantage with 19 f3 ♘c5 20 ♔f1.

W



19 g4!

A stratagem typical of this kind of position. White seizes some space on the kingside and molests the knight which is defending the IQP. Black will now have to defend on two fronts, and this is not simple.

19...h6 20 h4 ♘xb3 21 axb3 ♗c5 22 g5 hxg5 23 hxg5 ♘e4

The variation 23...♗xe3 24 ♗xe3 ♘g4 25 ♗xa7 ♖e2 26 ♗d4 favours White.

24 ♘g4!

A brilliant decision, typical of Kasparov. I'm convinced he didn't even look seriously at 24 ♖xd5 ♖ad8, after which the white pieces appear awkwardly placed while the black ones gain a good deal of activity. As always, Kasparov is striving for activity himself.

24...♗b6?!

Another error. Black would also do badly with 24...♗e7 25 ♖xd5 ♖ad8 26 ♖e5!, but the correct line is 24...♖ad8! 25 ♔g2 f5 26 gxf6 ♔f7. Then either 27 ♖a5!? or 27 ♗e3!? would retain a plus for White.

25 ♔g2 *(D)*

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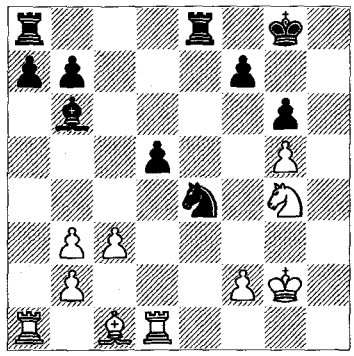

25...♔g7?!

This loses quickly. A much more stubborn line is 25...♔f8!? 26 ♖xd5 ♖ad8, although after 27 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 28 ♗f4 ♖d5 29 ♘e3 ♗xe3 (not 29...♖d2? 30 ♔f3! ♘xf2 31 ♘c4 ♖c2 32 ♘xb6 axb6 33 ♗e5) 30 ♗xe3 a6 31 f4 White still has a significant plus.

26 ♗f4 ♖ad8 27 f3 *(D)*

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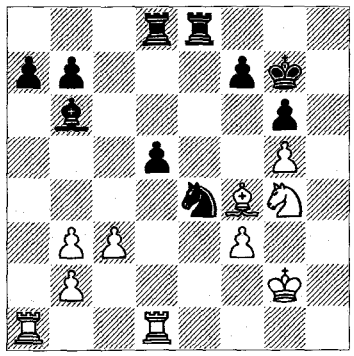


27...♘c5

By now White has a choice of continuations. One possibility is 28 ♗e5+ ♖xe5 (Black loses by force with 28...♔f8 29 ♖h1 ♘d7 30 ♗f6! ♘xf6 31 gxf6 ♔g8 32 ♖h4! ♖e2+ 33 ♔g3 g5 34 ♖h5 ♗c7+ 35 f4!) 29 ♘xe5 ♘e6, and now after 30 c4! White has sufficient advantage to win, though he will still have some work to do. Kasparov once again takes a decision that is characteristic of him. Instead of a material advantage, he plays for a positional one, which is based on White's considerable superiority in the coordination of his forces. In this situation his choice is fully justified.

28 b4! ♘b3

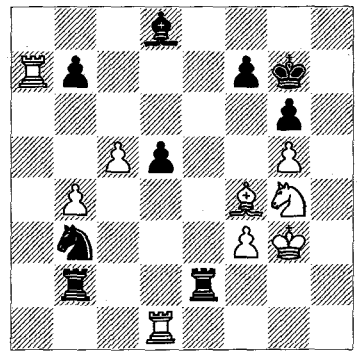
White also wins without much trouble in the event of 28...♘e6 29 ♗e5+ ♔f8 30 ♘f6! ♘xg5 31 ♘xe8 ♖xe8 32 f4.

29 ♖a3 ♖e2+ 30 ♔g3 ♖xb2 31 c4 ♖e8

There is no relief in 31...♔f8 32 c5 ♘xc5 33 bxc5 ♗xc5, on account of 34 ♖ad3 d4 35 ♗e5 and wins.

32 c5 ♗d8 33 ♖xa7 ♖ee2 *(D)*

W



We have now reached the position for the sake of which this game was selected as a textbook example. The diagram demonstrates most convincingly the essence and supreme importance of *Zusammenspiel* – the concept of the coordination of forces. At first sight it looks as if Black has been more successful in this department. Has he not doubled his rooks on the seventh rank? Meanwhile on the white side, only the knight and bishop, which are much weaker than a pair of rooks, can boast of being coordinated. And yet, the position is completely won for White. How is this? The point is that in reality, the coordination of Black's pieces is extremely limited. The bishop is doing nothing, either on its own or grouped with any other pieces. The same can be said of the knight. As for the rooks on the seventh rank, they are

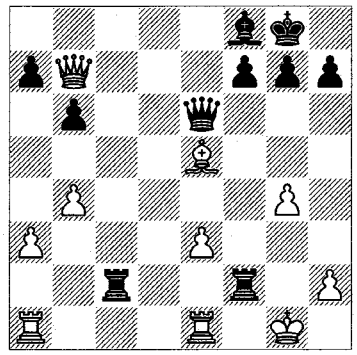
perfectly harmless in this situation for two reasons. First, the white king has escaped to the safety of the third rank; secondly and even more importantly, their action is severely restricted by the white bishop and knight. In view of all this, the coordination of Black's forces is a matter of mere outward appearance. White's situation is completely different, for *his* rooks in actual fact have excellent prospects. There is nothing to prevent them from breaking into the enemy camp and doubling on the seventh – with decisive effect. This indeed is what happened:

34 ♖xd5 ♗e7 35 ♖xb7 1-0

What conclusion is to be drawn from what we saw in that game? *The coordination of forces is the ability of pieces and pawns to perform concerted work.* To do so, they don't always have to be aiming at one object or one part of the board. It's just as in real life – someone charges into the attack with a cry of hurrah, while someone else stands guard over objects in their own sector. Both are performing the common task of repulsing the enemy and invading his territory. Both roles are equally important, but I should add that you usually try to assign as few forces as possible to the guard duties, so that all the more can join in the attack. Lasker called this *the economical defence principle.*

In my previous book *Lessons in Chess Strategy* I gave one example I am very fond of:

W



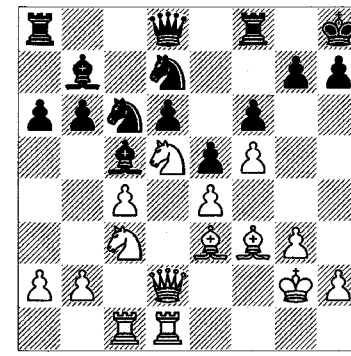
Nimzowitsch – Capablanca
New York 1927

In this position, Lasker's principle is illustrated perfectly. It only remains to be added that without his 'unimpressive and passive' bishop, Black's entire plan of attack could scarcely have succeeded. This is what coordination of the pieces is all about.

Much the same watching and guarding function which the bishop performs in this last example is very often performed by pawns; ideally, they support the aggressive efforts of their own pieces and clear the path for them, while simultaneously restraining the activity of the opponent's forces. This kind of situation arises in Keres-Petrosian, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1950, which is also examined fairly thoroughly in *Lessons in Chess Strategy.*

Now, as something that logically flows from what has been said, let me state one more very important maxim. It quite often happens that in order to attain the ideal coordination of the forces – that is, the maximum effectiveness of their concerted work – one piece (or occasionally more than one) has to relinquish what looks like the most attractive post for it *as a piece taken in isolation.* It has to occupy a more modest position – which may even seem ungainly – to further the common cause. In *Lessons in Chess Strategy,* we saw a very convincing example on these lines. Here it the critical moment:

W



Karpov – F. Olafsson
Amsterdam 1976

Look at this position for half a minute, and then 'off the cuff', without reflection, answer this question: which of White's pieces is occupying the strongest post? Isn't it the knight on d5? However, there followed:

25 ♘e2! a5 26 ♘dc3!

In effect, the pride and joy on d5 has been transferred to e2. And yet, after...

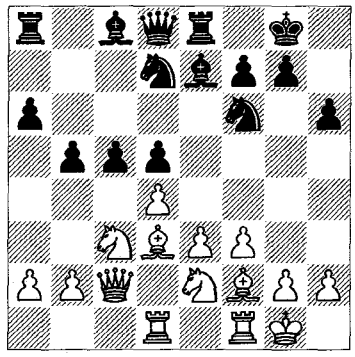
26...♖f7 27 ♘b5

...Black's position collapsed (although White subsequently made a meal of realizing his advantage). Why, then, did the sudden worsening of the white knight's position lead to an improvement of White's game as a whole? Because the knight's departure from the crucial d-file increased the pressure of White's major pieces on that same file. Is any further evidence needed that the principle of coordination stands above all else in chess? If it *is* needed, here is one more vivid example:

Botvinnik – Larsen
Noordwijk 1965

1 c4 e6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 d4 ♘f6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗g5 c6 6 e3 ♗e7 7 ♕c2 0-0 8 ♗d3 ♘bd7 9 ♘ge2 h6?! 10 ♗h4 ♖e8 11 f3 c5 12 0-0 a6 13 ♖ad1 b5 14 ♗f2 *(D)*

B



This is a Queen's Gambit variation to which Botvinnik made a large contribution, working out the scheme of development which he employs in the present game and which is popular in our own day too; Kasparov has used it many times and with a great deal of success. White's basic idea is to try to seize the centre with his pawns and afterwards transfer the play to the kingside. Larsen's next move unties White's hands in the centre and makes it easier for him to carry out his plan. In return Black obtains counterplay on the queenside.

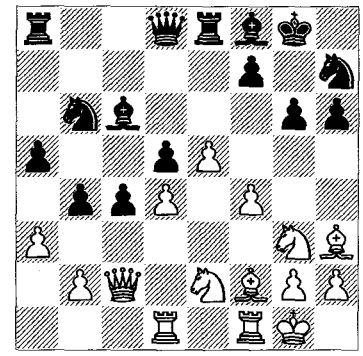
14...c4 15 ♗f5 ♘b6 16 ♘g3 ♗f8 17 a3 ♗b7

White has everything ready and now moves forward.

18 e4 g6 19 ♗h3 a5 20 e5 b4 21 ♘ce2 ♘h7 22 f4 ♗c6 *(D)*

White is quite happy to give up a pawn to gain time in which to work up his initiative. After 22...bxa3 23 f5! g5 24 bxa3 ♗xa3 25 f6 Black's affairs are in a dismal state.

W



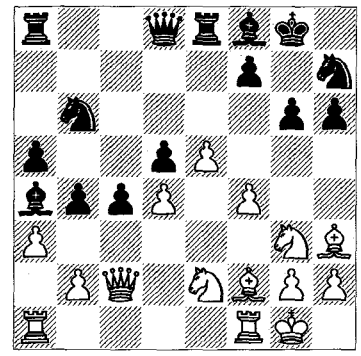
What is White to do now though? Give up the exchange to save time, or move aside with his queen or rook? Botvinnik writes that in the case of an immediate 23 f5 ♗a4 24 ♕b1, he considered the position to be unclear after 24...♘g5! 25 fxg6 ♘xh3+. This means White has to move aside. But with which piece, and where to?

23 ♖a1!

This is quite incomprehensible! Why not to e1? There the rook would be united with the rest of White's force. We must wait a little while for the answer.

23...♗a4 *(D)*

W



24 ♕b1!

A startling decision about the future of White's strongest pieces, and the decision is not taken by just anyone, but by Botvinnik himself!

24...f5

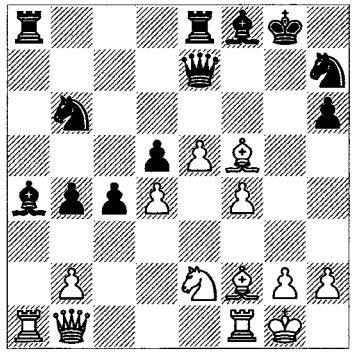
This move is essential to prevent White from playing f5. It was with just this in mind that White decided where to place his queen and rook.

25 axb4!

With the rook having gone to a1, this move is understandable – but will White derive any benefit from the open file?

25...axb4 26 ♘xf5! gxf5 27 ♗xf5 ♕e7 *(D)*

W



It was to obtain this position that White made his astounding 23rd and 24th moves. It now unexpectedly turns out that all the white pieces can work in harmony.

28 ♘g3!

White has given up a piece for only two pawns, but is in no hurry to force events. For the moment he is bringing up his forces. This proves possible thanks to the extremely awkward placing of Black's minor pieces – especially the knight on h7.

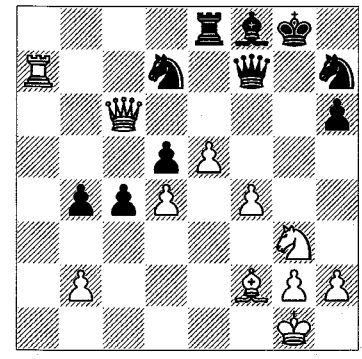
28...♗d7

This leads to some forced play in which White will be on top. 28...♖eb8!? seems to be an improvement, after which it is hard to demonstrate any strictly forced variations. However, the following line may be cited as characteristic though by no means obligatory: 29 ♘h5 ♔h8 30 ♕e1 ♕f7 31 g4 c3 32 e6 ♕c7 33 bxc3 ♗b5 34 ♖xa8 ♘xa8 35 cxb4 ♗xf1 36 ♔xf1 ♗d6 37 ♗xh7 ♕xh7 38 f5 ♖c8 39 ♗g3 ♕c7 40 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 41 ♕e5+ ♕xe5 42 dxe5 ♘c7 43 ♔e2 ♖b8 44 e7 ♖xb4 45 e6 and White wins.

As the game goes, it's remarkable how the white queen and the a1-rook prove to be most effectively placed. We can only admire the profundity with which Botvinnik has fathomed the secrets of the position.

29 ♗xd7 ♘xd7 30 ♕g6+ ♕g7 31 ♕c6 ♖xa1 32 ♖xa1 ♕f7 33 ♖a7 *(D)*

B



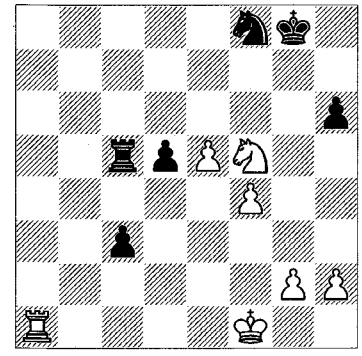
33...♘xe5?!

Of course this move is not good, but then a good one is difficult to find. Black would lose at once with 33...♖e7? 34 ♖xd7. His only answer would seem to be 33...♘b8, but then Botvinnik gives 34 ♕b6 ♘d7 and now 35 ♕a5!, which is based on a logical deduction. The sense of this move becomes clear when we look at the line it improves upon: if 35 ♕b5?, then 35...♖e7, after which the most natural move 36 f5 allows the counter-stroke 36...♘xe5! 37 ♖xe7 ♕xe7 38 ♕xd5+ ♘f7. By contrast, after 35 ♕a5 ♖e7 36 f5, the queen is defending the a7-square and White retains a substantial advantage.

The move played leads by force to an endgame in which the black passed pawns are easily blocked and White's only serious problem (presumably) was time-shortage.

34 dxe5 ♕e6 35 ♕xe6+ ♖xe6 36 ♘f5 ♖c6 37 ♔f1 c3 38 bxc3 bxc3 39 ♗e3 ♗c5 40 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 41 ♖a1 ♘f8 *(D)*

W

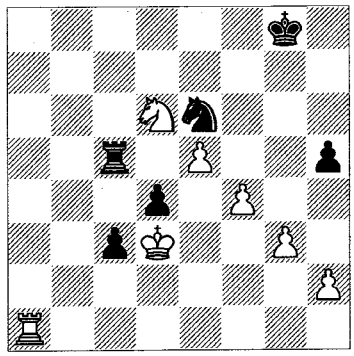


42 ♔e2!

White *could* have taken the pawn, but after 42 ♘xh6+ ♔h7 43 ♘f5 ♘e6 Black would obtain some counter-chances. They would still be insufficient, but that is not the point. For the moment the black h-pawn is not influencing the play, so it is more correct for White to attend to his chief problem – that of blockading the passed pawns. The win will then be guaranteed.

42...♘e6 43 g3 h5 44 ♔d3 d4 45 ♘d6! *(D)*

B



The knight transfers itself to the commanding square e4, and the game is over. Black could already resign.

45...♖c7 46 ♘e4 ♔h7 47 f5 ♘d8

A decisive manoeuvre by White's knight now follows:

48 ♘f6+! ♔h6 49 ♘d5 ♖b7 50 e6 ♘c6 51 ♖a6 ♘e5+ 52 ♔xd4 1-0

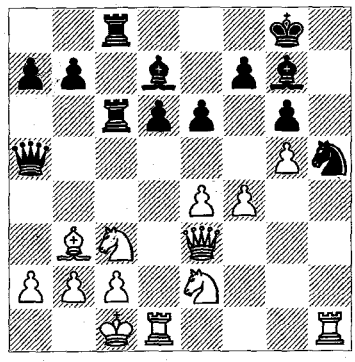
The game makes a powerful impression. It must be said that in Botvinnik's play you could always observe a clear preference for dynamic rather than static values. Most of his work on the openings was based on exploiting concealed dynamic possibilities in a variety of positions (some of which, in fact, were already quite well known), as opposed to the static factors which were often plain enough to see. And a similar path has always been followed by the one pupil to whom Botvinnik devoted the most time and energy: Garry Kasparov.

3 King Moves for Attacking Purposes

After the foregoing heavyweight chapters it will not come amiss to strike a rather lighter note and discuss a topic that is much less wide-ranging and may even seem a little 'exotic' – though it too is fully in keeping with the subject of this book.

The king moves I shall be talking about are king moves made by the active, attacking side – which are something of a rarity. Before even beginning to study the 'Initiative' theme, we can firmly state that in sharp situations you are rarely justified in holding up active operations – so it will be all the more interesting and instructive to acquaint ourselves with some cases where this principle is called into question, even if only in appearance.

Let us go straight to practical examples.



Fischer – Gligorić
Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade Ct 1959

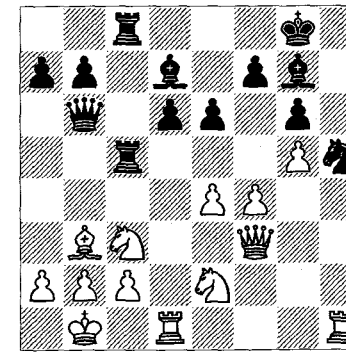
It's more than 30 years now since Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games* appeared in Russian. It made a tremendous impression on me; I came to know it almost by heart. I well remember how astonished I was by the following move and the note to it, even though according to present-day notions it is not at all complicated and even obvious.

21 ♔b1

Fischer writes, "An important preparatory move. On the immediate 21 f5?!, 21...exf5 22 ♘d5 ♕xa2! gives Black good play." For the moment I refrain from commenting. This time we will try to collect a little more material and postpone conclusions until later.

What I remember for sure is my amazement at White's apparent loss of time in a double-edged situation where every tempo can prove decisive. Well then, let us see if Fischer was right.

21...♕b6 22 ♕f3 ♖c5 *(D)*



23 ♕d3!

Basically this is the only way to continue the attack, since as Fischer points out, the attractive-looking 23 f5?! is bad: 23...exf5 24 ♖xh5 (not 24 ♘d5? ♕d8 25 exf5 ♗xf5 26 ♖xh5? ♖xc2!, when Black wins) 24...gxh5 25 ♘f4 ♖xc3! (the typical counter-attack in such situations) 26 bxc3 ♖xc3 27 ♕xh5 ♖xb3+! 28 cxb3 ♕e3 and White is in serious difficulties.

23...♗xc3

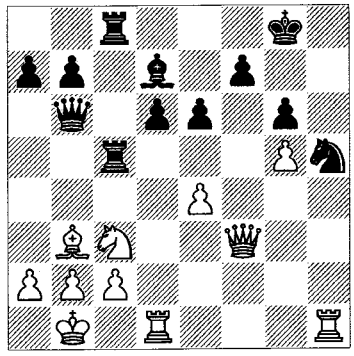
The only reasons for surrendering such a bishop are either immediate and substantial gains, or else sheer necessity. Fischer convincingly demonstrates that other continuations also turn out badly: on 23...♖5c6 24 f5! exf5 25 ♖xh5! gxh5 26 exf5 White has an overwhelming position, while 23...♖8c6 loses to 24 ♘a4. Finally, on 23...♗f8 White wins by 24 f5! exf5 25 ♘d5 ♕d8 (25...fxe4 loses to 26 ♕xe4 ♗f5 27 ♕xf5) 26 ♖xh5! gxh5 27 ♘f6+ ♔g7 28 ♕h3.

24 ♘xc3

In view of 24 bxc3? ♗b5 White has to return the pawn, but this suits him perfectly well.

24...♘xf4 25 ♕f3 ♘h5 *(D)*

As Fischer says, 25...e5 loses to 26 ♘e2!. To continue the variation: 26...♗e6 27 ♘xf4 exf4 28 ♕xf4 ♕d8 29 ♕h2!, and Black can resign.



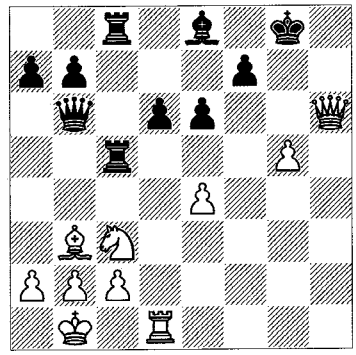
26 ♖xh5!

This sacrifice is typical of the Dragon Variation, but it should also be obvious to us from our previous chapter. Now Black hasn't a single piece left near his totally exposed king.

26...gxh5 27 ♕xh5 ♗e8

Or 27...♔f8 28 ♕h8+ ♔e7 29 ♕f6+ ♔e8 30 ♖h1 ♗b5 31 ♗xe6! and White wins.

28 ♕h6! *(D)*



28...♖xc3 29 bxc3 ♖xc3

White's winning line in reply to 29...♕e3 was indicated by Bronstein. After 30 ♖h1 ♕xc3 31 g6 ♕g7 32 ♕h2! Black has absolutely no defence even though he is a pawn up, it is his move, and White's none too numerous pieces are quite a distance from their target. For example, 32...♕f6 33 g7! or 32...♕e5 33 ♕h7+ ♔f8 34 ♖g1! ♕g7 35 ♗xe6!. How do we explain this phenomenon? The answer is simple: White's forces are cooperating perfectly, while Black's are just strewn about.

In the game, the conclusion was similarly quick:

30 g6! fxg6 31 ♖h1 ♕d4 32 ♕h7+ 1-0

Kramnik – Leko

Cologne TV rpd (1) 2000

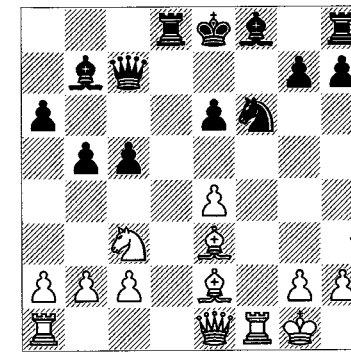
1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♗e2 ♕c7 6 ♘c3 a6 7 0-0 b5 8 ♘xc6 dxc6 9 ♗e3 ♗b7 10 f4 c5 11 f5 ♖d8

The rare variation chosen by Leko is not very effective for Black, as the only two games with it in *Mega Database* demonstrate. Stein-Taimanov, USSR Ch (Erevan) 1962 went 11...♘f6 12 fxe6 fxe6 13 ♗h5+ ♘xh5 14 ♕xh5+ g6 15 ♕g4 with advantage to White. Gaprindashvili-Hindle, Hastings 1964/5 saw instead 11...exf5 12 ♗f4 ♕b6 13 a4 c4+ 14 ♔h1 ♘f6 15 axb5 ♖d8 16 ♕e1 ♗b4 17 ♕g3, and White acquired a large plus. Also after 11...♗d6 12 fxe6 fxe6 (12...♗xh2+? turns out badly after 13 ♔h1 fxe6 14 ♗xb5+ axb5 15 ♕h5+ g6 16 ♕xh2) 13 ♗h5+ g6 14 ♗g4, White has the better chances.

12 ♕e1 ♘f6

In the event of 12...b4?! 13 fxe6 fxe6 14 ♖xf8+! ♔xf8 15 ♘a4, White works up a very dangerous initiative.

13 fxe6 fxe6 *(D)*



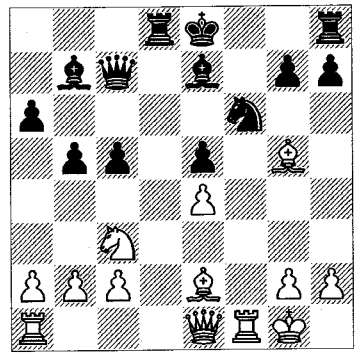
We have here quite a familiar situation where one player is behind in development and his opponent needs to act energetically to profit from this in good time. A recipe for doing so is easy enough to formulate and even prove. Applying it effectively in an original concrete situation is much harder. For instance, what is the best

thing for White to attack in this position? Your eyes are immediately drawn towards the knight on f6. It can easily be attacked, and you would very much like to clear the f-file for the white rook. But if you hit the knight at once, then after the forced variation 14 ♗g5 ♗d6! 15 ♗xf6 gxf6 16 ♖xf6 ♗xh2+ 17 ♔h1 ♕g3! 18 ♖xe6+ (the play is similar after 18 ♕f1 ♕h4 19 ♖xe6+ ♔d7 20 ♕f7+ ♔c8 21 ♕e7 ♕xe7 22 ♖xe7 ♗d6 23 ♖f7 ♗e5, and Black easily holds the position) 18...♔d7 19 ♕xg3 ♗xg3 20 ♗g4 h5 21 ♗f5 ♔c7, a fairly typical position arises in which Black's two bishops compensate for the pawn minus. Kramnik therefore chooses a different, more promising way:

14 ♗f4! e5

Forced. Not 14...♕c6 15 ♗f3 c4 (15...♗e7 16 e5 ♘d5 17 ♕g3 0-0 18 ♗h6 ♖f7 19 ♗h5 +–) 16 e5 ♘d5 17 ♘xd5 exd5 18 ♗g5, with a big advantage to White. Another bad line is 14...♕b6 15 ♗e5.

15 ♗g5 ♗e7 *(D)*



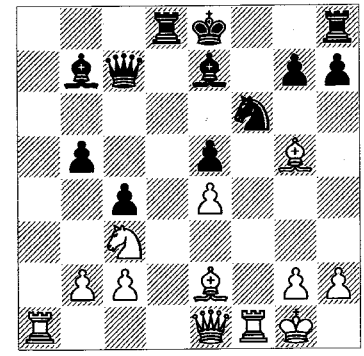
Now that a new and quite significant weakness has appeared in the black position, the white side has become easier to play.

16 a4! c4?!

Leko wants to avoid weakening his pawn-structure still more by 16...b4, whereupon Kramnik gives 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♘d5 ♗xd5 19 exd5 ♕d6 20 ♗h5+!? g6 21 ♗g4 with a solid plus for White, though the win would still be a long way off.

17 axb5 axb5 *(D)*

By not weakening his structure further with 16...b4, Black avoided worsening the static components of his position, but at a price: he spent a tempo on 16...c4 which didn't develop or defend anything, and thereby allowed his

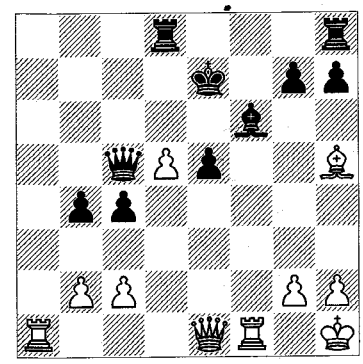


opponent some dynamic advantages. The result, as we can see now, is that White has a choice of aggressive possibilities, but again the question arises: what exactly should he be attacking? The answer, in its most general form, is: his opponent's weaknesses. This means the f-file as before, and now the b5-pawn as well. The best thing would be to combine both these attacks. We may suppose that this is what prompted White's next move:

18 ♔h1! b4

Defending the b-pawn is essential but very difficult. Kramnik gives 18...♕b6 19 ♕g3 0-0 20 ♕xe5 with a large advantage for White, but Black's pawn move, though virtually obligatory, does nothing to help the defence of his kingside. Thus White's timely king move, depriving Black of a useful check in a whole range of variations, proves to be an important gain of tempo for the attack. From here, events unfold almost by force.

19 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 20 ♘d5 ♗xd5 21 exd5 ♕c5 22 ♗h5+! ♔e7 *(D)*



Again White needs to locate the weakest link in his opponent's position. The relevant points are the squares a7, e6 and g7, as well as the

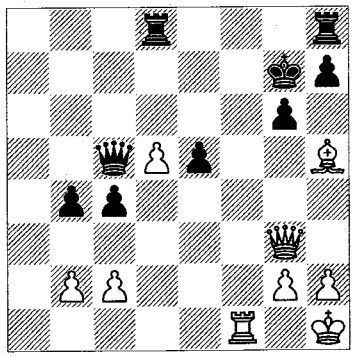
whole of the f-file. Almost everything is being held by the black bishop. This piece is already under attack, and White just needs to create the optimum conditions for capturing it. Kramnik steers his queen in the required direction.

23 ♕g3! g6

By now Black's game can hardly be saved. The alternatives are 23...♖a8 24 ♖ad1 ♕d6 25 ♖xf6! ♕xf6 26 d6+ ♔d8 27 ♕e3 and 23...♕b6 24 ♗e2 ♖hf8 25 ♗xc4 ♖d6 26 ♕d3 g6 27 ♕h3 with a decisive plus. Leko chooses a line which allows his opponent a sparkling (even though not very complicated) series of sacrifices:

24 ♖xf6! ♔xf6 25 ♖f1+ ♔g7 *(D)*

W



Now the *coup de grâce*:

26 ♗xg6! hxg6 27 ♕xe5+ ♔g8

Or 27...♔h6 28 ♖f4 and mates.

28 ♕e6+ ♔h7 29 ♖f7+ ♔h6 30 ♕h3+ ♔g5 31 ♕g3+ ♔h5 32 ♕e5+ 1-0

If 32...♔h6, then 33 ♖f4; or if 32...g5, then 33 ♕e2+ ♔g6 34 ♕e6+ ♔h5 35 ♖g7.

We can detect a similar idea in the following game.

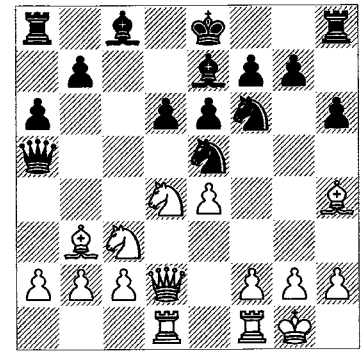
Tal – Larsen
Portorož IZ 1958

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♗g5 ♘bd7 7 ♗c4 ♕a5 8 ♕d2 e6 9 0-0 h6 10 ♗h4 ♗e7 11 ♖ad1 ♘e5 12 ♗b3 *(D)*

This game too opens with a comparatively rare variation. The move Tal plays here looks perfectly obvious, yet it was soon to be totally ousted by the bishop's retreat to e2. The reason for this was Tal's game against Korchnoi a year later, part of which we are shortly going to see.

12...g5

B



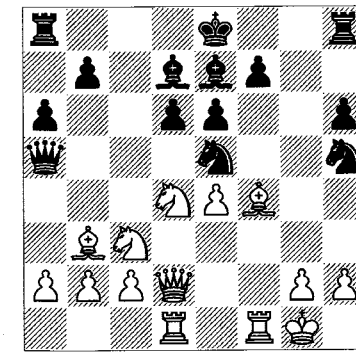
Clearly 12...0-0? 13 ♘d5 ♕d8 14 ♘xe7+ is no good for Black. Larsen evidently didn't like 12...♘g6 13 ♗g3 0-0 14 f4 ♘h5 15 f5 either. He therefore goes in for sharp play, trying to secure e5 as an outpost for his pieces.

13 ♗g3 ♗d7?!

This quiet developing move proves to be a significant loss of tempo in quite a sharp position. The aforementioned game Tal-Korchnoi, USSR Ch (Tbilisi) 1959 showed that Black has an improvement in 13...♘h5! 14 ♗a4+ b5 15 ♗xe5 dxe5 16 ♘c6 ♕c7 17 ♘xe7 ♔xe7 18 ♗b3 ♘f6 19 ♕e3 ♗b7 20 a4 b4 21 ♘a2 a5 22 c3 ♗a6 23 ♖fe1 bxc3 24 ♖c1 ♖ab8 25 ♖xc3 ♕b6, with an excellent game.

14 f4 gxf4 15 ♗xf4 ♘h5 *(D)*

W



16 ♗xe5!?

Tal is of course ready for a tactical fight, and therefore prefers this method to 16 ♗e3 ♘g4 17 ♘f3 ♘xe3 18 ♕xe3 ♘f6, when Black has a perfectly acceptable game.

16...♕xe5

The other recapture is bad: 16...dxe5 17 ♘f5 ♗c5+ 18 ♔h1 0-0-0 19 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 20 ♕xd6 with a clear plus for White.

17 ♔h1!

This is played from motives which recall the analogous move in the previous game. An important factor in Black's defence would be the option of checking on c5, for instance in the variation 17 ♘f3 ♕c5+ 18 ♔h1 0-0-0 with wholly unclear play. So White won't be able to do without the king move in the course of the coming aggressive action. He therefore plays it at once, and will afterwards choose a continuation according to his opponent's reply.

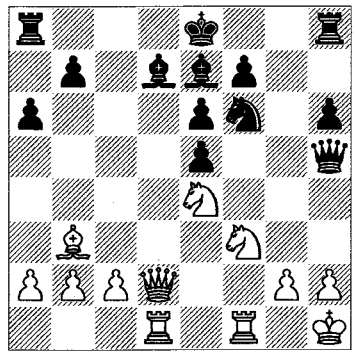
17...♘f6

If Black plays an immediate 17...♕c5, the thematic breakthrough follows with 18 e5!. Then after 18...♕xe5 19 ♘f5! exf5 20 ♖fe1 ♕c5 21 ♕e2 White has an obvious plus.

18 ♘f3 ♕h5

The other queen move 18...♕c5 would probably lead to difficulties: 19 e5 dxe5 20 ♕e2 (but not 20 ♘e4 ♕c7), and if 20...e4 then 21 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 22 ♕xe4 ♗c6 (White's advantage is obvious after 22...0-0-0 23 ♘e5) 23 ♕g4 (the position is unclear after 23 ♕f4 ♖g8 24 ♕xh6 ♕f5) 23...♗f6 (or 23...♗d7 24 ♕g7 0-0-0 25 ♕xf7 and Black is in a bad way) and at this point White has the attractive solution 24 ♗xe6! fxe6 25 ♘h4!! with a decisive plus.

19 e5! dxe5 20 ♘e4 *(D)*



20...0-0-0?

Up to here Larsen has avoided the worst, but now he commits the decisive error and loses at once. 20...♗b5?! 21 ♘g3 ♕g4 22 c4 ♖d8 23 ♕f2 ♖xd1 24 ♖xd1 ♗c6 25 ♘xe5 is clearly in White's favour, but some interesting play could result from 20...♘xe4! 21 ♕xd7+ ♔f8 22 ♕xb7 ♘g3+ 23 ♔g1 and now 23...♘xf1! (*not* 23...♗c5+? 24 ♖f2 and White wins) 24 ♕xa8+ ♔g7 25 ♕a7 (25 ♕e4 is met by 25...♘xh2!; all Black's counterplay is based on this stroke) 25...e4 26 ♕xe7 ♘xh2! (stronger than 26...♘e3 27 ♖d7 exf3 28 ♗xe6, with a big advantage) 27 ♗xe6! exf3 28 ♕xf7+ ♕xf7 29 ♗xf7 ♔xf7 30 ♔xh2. The resulting endgame is clearly better for White, but this was probably Black's best option.

21 ♘g3 ♕g4 22 ♘xe5 ♕h4 23 ♕c3+ ♔b8 24 ♘xd7+ 1-0

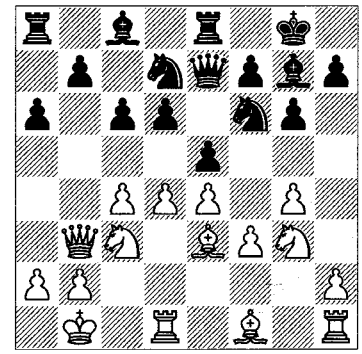
In the next game there is no genuine struggle, but White's method of realizing his advantage is quite instructive.

Tal – Soloviev
Riga 1955

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 0-0 5 ♗e3 d6 6 f3 e5 7 ♘ge2 c6 8 ♕b3 ♘bd7 9 0-0-0 ♕e7?! 10 ♔b1 ♖e8?! 11 g4 a6

Black hasn't played the opening well. His 9th and 10th moves look especially odd. His last move is again too slow; 11...a5!? appears preferable.

12 ♘g3 *(D)*



12...♘f8?

This is total positional capitulation. For good or ill, Black had to seek counter-chances. A way of doing so was 12...exd4 13 ♗xd4 ♘c5 14 ♕a3 ♘e6 (another possible plan, though a more passive one, begins with 14...♘fd7) 15 ♗e3 ♘d7, and if White takes the pawn with 16 ♕xd6, Black has hopes of compensation after 16...♕xd6 17 ♖xd6 ♗e5.

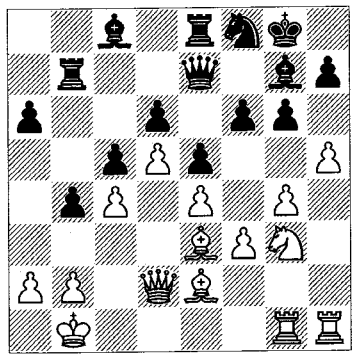
13 d5 ♘6d7 14 h4 c5 15 ♗e2 ♖b8 16 ♖dg1 b5 17 h5 b4?

With this Black capitulates for good. Everything White can dream about in this sort of position is granted to him totally for free. Of

course White would still have a huge plus after 17...bxc4 18 ♕c2!?. The variation 17...♘b6 18 cxb5 axb5 19 ♗xb5 would also be clearly in his favour, but Black mustn't submit to his fate as meekly as he does! His sole consolation is that the game is now dragged out a little longer.

18 ♘a4 ♘b6 19 ♘xb6 ♖xb6 20 ♕d3 ♖b7 21 ♕d2 f6 *(D)*

W

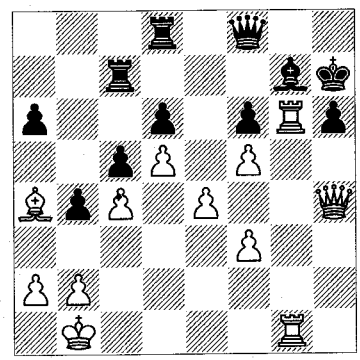


22 hxg6 ♘xg6

A ghastly move from the positional point of view, but at this stage it can scarcely count as an error, seeing that after 22...hxg6 the white rooks would have another open file at their disposal and the game could finish 23 ♗d1! ♗d7 24 ♘f5! gxf5 25 gxf5 ♘h7 26 ♖g6! ♘f8 27 ♖g4, with a quick win. There now follows a long sequence of moves which require no explanation.

23 ♘f5 ♗xf5 24 gxf5 ♘f4 25 ♗d1 ♔h8 26 ♕h2 h6 27 ♗xf4 exf4 28 ♖g6 ♕f8 29 ♕xf4 ♔h7 30 ♗a4 ♖d8 31 ♖hg1 ♖a7 32 ♕h4 ♖c7 *(D)*

W



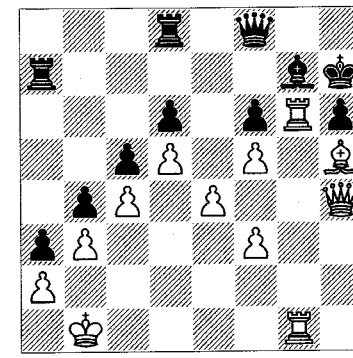
The verdict on the position is obvious. White only needs to find the most precise way to break through his opponent's defences. As this can't be done with the forces already on the kingside, Tal next move brings up his bishop.

33 ♗d1! ♖e8 34 ♗e2 a5 35 ♗f1 a4 36 ♗h3 a3 37 b3 ♖f7 38 ♗g4 ♖a7

If Black plays 38...♕e7, trying to bring his queen out onto the long diagonal, then 39 ♖h1 puts it back in its place.

39 ♗h5 ♖d8 *(D)*

W



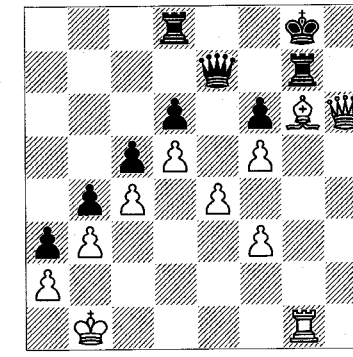
Now in order to remove the barrier from the h-file, White gives up his active rook for the passive enemy bishop, but the result – the activation of all White's other forces – is well worth it.

40 ♖xg7+! ♖xg7 41 ♗g6+ ♔g8 42 ♕xh6 ♕e7 43 ♗h7+ ♔h8

The check was a test of Black's alertness. On 43...♔f8?, the game would end at once with 44 ♖g6. Now White has to do a little more work, though it isn't very hard.

44 ♗g6+ ♔g8 *(D)*

W



It's only now that the hero of this chapter enters the scene – the attacking side makes a 'mysterious' king move. The mystery is soon dispelled, though.

45 ♔c1! ♖d7 46 ♖h1 ♔f8 47 f4!

We now see that the king was removing itself from a possible check so that the pawns could advance. What isn't yet clear is how this advance can benefit White.

47...♖c7 48 ♔d2 ♖d7 49 ♔d3 ♖c7

Here is the answer. By playing e5, White will bring one more fighting unit into the attack on the enemy king, and this will be the deciding factor.

50 ♖e1!

This could have been played on move 48, but Black was of course completely helpless and the delay alters nothing.

50...♔g8 51 e5 dxe5 52 fxe5 fxe5 53 ♖h1 1-0

On 53...e4+ 54 ♔e3 ♔f8, White has 55 ♕h8+ ♖g8 56 f6.

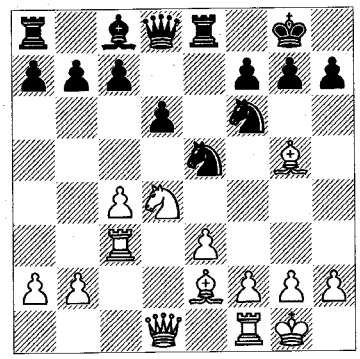
The next game contains a similar feature. In the course of preparing a massed onslaught against the enemy king, the attacker repeatedly has to trouble his *own* king.

Alekhine – Yates
Semmering 1926

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 d4 exd4 5 ♘xd4 ♗b4 6 ♗g5 0-0 7 ♖c1 ♖e8 8 e3 d6

In this variation it's very important for Black to play ...h6, and he is well advised not to put it off. The present game clearly bears this out. In Smirin-Onishchuk, New York Open 1998, the continuation was 8...h6 9 ♗h4 ♘xd4 10 ♕xd4 c5 11 ♕d6 ♖e6 12 ♕d1 ♕a5 13 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 14 a3 ♗xc3+ 15 ♖xc3 d6 16 ♗e2 ♗d7 17 ♗f3 ♖b8 18 0-0 b5 19 cxb5 ½-½.

9 ♗e2 ♘e5 10 0-0 ♗xc3 11 ♖xc3 *(D)*



11...♘g6?

Missing his last chance to play 11...h6, and if 12 ♗h4, *then* 12...♘g6. After White's next move, the game assumes a settled shape; the pawn position will be fixed for an extremely long period and in a manner highly unfavourable to Black. Thus, a seemingly minor error sometimes has grave consequences.

12 ♘b5!

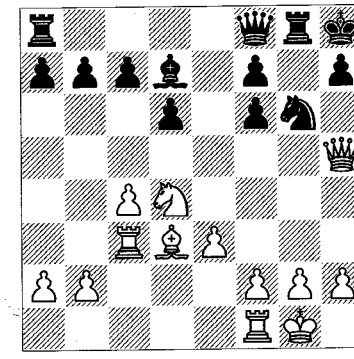
Here is Black's punishment. It is simple but effective.

12...♗d7 13 ♗xf6 gxf6 14 ♗d3

In a settled position, with features that are fixed for the long term, the subjective factor becomes less significant. That is, there is less scope for selecting a plan to suit your own taste; the demands of the position start to play an increasing role.

I mention all this because the plan chosen here by Alekhine does *not* seem to me to be especially suited to the character of the position. Black's obvious weakness is his kingside pawn-structure, but the question is what to attack – the pawns on the f-file, or the one on h7. Alekhine, as we shall see, chooses the latter. I feel that attacking the f-pawns is more natural, and would therefore prefer either 14 ♗f3!? (but not 14 c5 ♗xb5 15 ♗xb5 c6 16 ♗e2 d5) 14...♕c8 15 ♘d4 ♘e5 16 c5, when White has a clear plus and comfortable play; or else 14 ♘d4!? ♕e7 (if 14...♘e5, then 15 f4 – compare the game continuation) 15 ♕c2 ♖ad8 16 c5, again with a highly attractive position. With the plan Alekhine adopts, White will face distinct difficulties. It will take time and energy to overcome them – but then, this will make for a large-scale, unconventional and in some ways instructive contest. Every cloud, as they say, has a silver lining.

14...♔h8 15 ♘d4 ♖g8 16 ♕h5 ♕f8 *(D)*

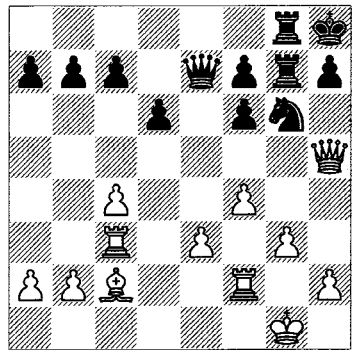


17 f4 ♖e8 18 ♖f3 ♖g7 19 ♘f5

The tempting bishop exchange doesn't work: 19 ♗f5?! c5!. Still, the white bishop will now be stronger than the black knight.

19...♗xf5 20 ♗xf5 ♕e7 21 ♗c2 ♖eg8 22 g3 ♕d7 23 ♖f2 ♕e7 *(D)*

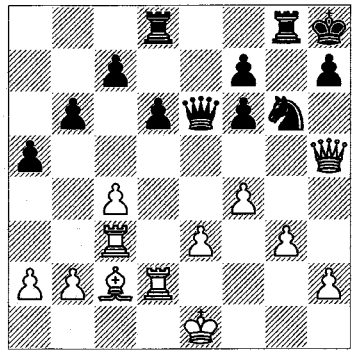
W



Two things have now become clear: (a) White can't break through to his chosen objective without pushing his own kingside pawns, and (b) as long as White doesn't undertake anything sharp, Black is forced to wait passively. These circumstances give rise to Alekhine's plan of transferring his king to the queenside and then launching a pawn attack on the other wing. In this case we are dealing not just with an individual king move that is useful for some reason or other, but with an entire king march!

24 ♔f1 ♖d8 25 ♖d2 b6 26 ♕d5 ♖gg8 27 ♕f5 a5 28 ♔e1 ♕e6 29 ♕h5 *(D)*

B



29...♕e7

Here there are two more things I would like to call to your attention. The first is the fact that the white rook is chained to c3 for ages by the need to defend the e3-pawn. The second is a recommendation by Kotov. He advises Black not to wait, but to harass the enemy king by advancing his own pawns towards its new residence. However, if this advice is tested by analysis, we find that after (e.g.) 29...c6?! 30 ♔d1 ♖b8 31 ♔c1 b5 (which is what Kotov gives), White obtains an overwhelming position by the simplest of means: 32 ♗f5! ♕e7 33 ♕f3 c5 34 ♕c6. Therefore we have to acknowledge that Yates was right to arrange his queenside and centre pawns in the most solid manner possible. His serious mistakes come later. For the moment, the play proceeds at a leisurely pace.

30 ♔d1 ♖g7 31 ♔c1 ♘f8 32 ♗f5 ♖e8 33 g4 ♘g6 34 a3 ♕d8 35 ♗c2 ♕c8 36 ♔b1 ♘e7 37 h3 ♘g6 38 ♕h6 ♕d8 39 ♔a2 ♘e7 40 ♔a1

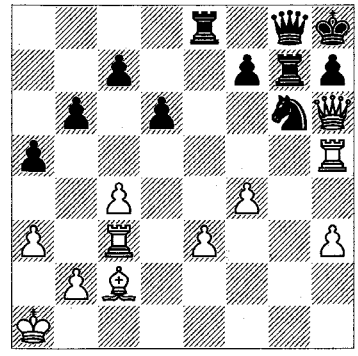
Not 40 ♕xf6? ♘d5 41 ♕xd8 ♘xc3+.

40...♘g6 41 ♗a4 ♖eg8 42 ♗d1 ♕e7 43 ♗c2 ♘f8 44 ♖d5 ♘g6 45 ♖f5 ♖e8 46 g5

White would like to bring more pawns into play and open up the h-file at the same time, but Black has organized an effective defence; after 46 h4 ♕e6 47 h5? ♘e7 48 ♖xf6 ♕xg4 White's queen turns out to be trapped and he has no good answer to the threat of ...♘g8. I would add that this variation is by no means accidental but results from the circumstances we discussed before. On the unopened h-file there isn't enough room for all White's major pieces, and in any case one of them is stuck on c3 – so that White has inadequate forces for mounting an attack. For these very reasons the plan beginning with 14 ♗d3 was in my view not the strongest.

46...fxg5 47 ♖xg5 ♕f8 48 ♖h5 ♕g8 *(D)*

W



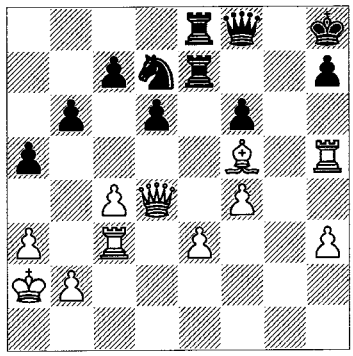
49 ♔a2!?

This move is easy to understand if you consider the uncomplicated variation 49 f5 ♘e5 50 f6 ♖g1+ 51 ♔a2 ♘g6.

49...♘f8

This looks like just another of those waiting moves that we are used to seeing in this game, but perhaps it should count as an inaccuracy, as the white queen now slips out of its corner into the open spaces, improving White's position. As an attempt to prevent this, the unexpectedly sharp 49...f6!? would be worth trying. There could follow 50 f5 ♘e5 51 ♕xf6 b5 52 ♕h4 b4 53 f6 ♖f7 54 ♖b3 c5, with unclear consequences. It must be said that moves causing such an abrupt change in the pace of the game are very difficult to find, especially for the defending side. It is even more difficult to resolve on playing them when facing a stronger opponent whose authority weighs on you psychologically.

50 ♕f6! ♘d7 51 ♕d4 f6 52 ♗f5 ♕f8 53 ♖h6 ♖ge7 54 ♖h5 *(D)*



54...♘c5?

Another very important moment. There is no doubt that 54...♖g7! is stronger than the move played. Alekhine writes that he intended to reply 55 e4 (with a view to bringing his rook to g3 in some lines), but then Black has 55...♖ee7!, whereupon 56 ♕f2 (which Alekhine indicates as part of his plan) comes up against the powerful retort 56...♘c5!. I can therefore see nothing better for White than 56 ♖h4!? or 56 ♗xd7!?, renouncing his ambitious attacking plans in favour of that prosaic play against weaknesses which he could have initiated much earlier.

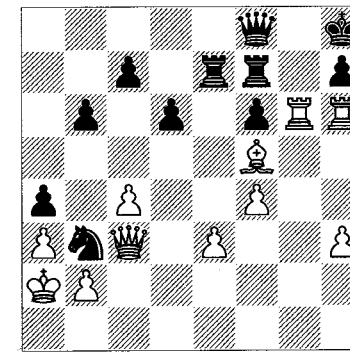
55 ♖c2! ♖g7 56 ♖g2!

As a result of Black's imprecise manoeuvring in a cramped and passive position, White has rid himself of both his liabilities (see above); all his pieces are now operating together against his opponent's weakened kingside. Similar transformations of a position occurred in our last chapter, and we studied their dire consequences for the weaker side.

56...♖ee7

Obviously not 56...♖xg2? 57 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 58 ♕d5+.

57 ♖g4 a4 58 ♖h6! ♖gf7 59 ♖gg6 ♘b3 60 ♕c3 *(D)*



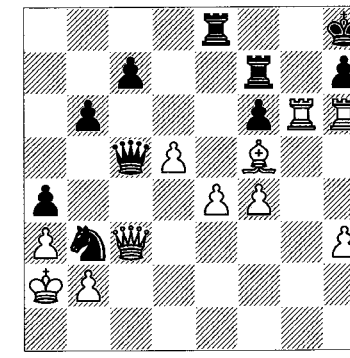
60...d5

This loses quickly, but even after 60...♖e8 (which Alekhine gives as the only move to prolong Black's resistance) White would have two ways of winning:

a) 61 e4!? (Alekhine's own recommendation, improving on 61 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 62 ♖xf6 ♕g7 63 ♖f7 ♕xc3 64 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 65 bxc3 ♖xe3) 61...♕e7 62 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 63 ♖xf6 ♕g7 64 ♖f7, and White still has some work to do in this won endgame.

b) A simpler way is 61 ♖h4 ♖ee7 62 ♖gh6 ♔g8 (62...♘c5 is also bad in view of 63 ♗xh7 ♖xh7 64 ♖xf6) 63 ♕c2.

61 cxd5 ♖e8 62 e4 ♕c5 *(D)*



And now at last, the ideal coordination of White's pieces makes itself felt:

63 ♖xh7+! ♔xh7 64 ♖xf6+ ♔g7 65 ♖g6+ ♔f8

Or 65...♔h7 66 ♖g4+.

66 ♕h8+ ♔e7 67 ♖e6+ ♔d7 68 ♕xe8# (1-0)

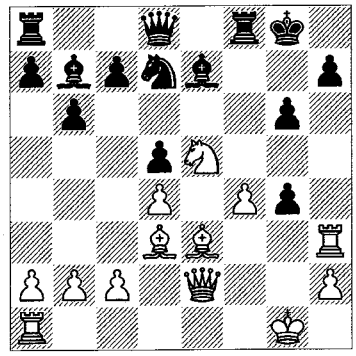
Now another example, in which the analysis is positively replete with king moves! The game is a very famous one by the young Steinitz. Many of the variations are from Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors*.

Steinitz – Mongredien

London 1862

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 ♕xd5 3 ♘c3 ♕d8 4 d4 e6 5 ♘f3 ♘f6 6 ♗d3 ♗e7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♗e3 b6 9 ♘e5 ♗b7 10 f4 ♘bd7 11 ♕e2 ♘d5? 12 ♘xd5 exd5 13 ♖f3 f5 14 ♖h3 g6 15 g4 fxg4 *(D)*

W



Black's opening play has been poor, and with his last move Steinitz has launched a direct attack on the king. At this point he has the choice between the immediate rook sacrifice which actually occurs, and the simple recapture of the pawn. We shall first examine the consequences of the latter move. After 16 ♕xg4 ♘f6 17 ♕g2 ♗c8, White plays the sacrifice which in this game is thematic: 18 ♖xh7! ♔xh7 19 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 and in this position the obvious 20 ♔h1 follows, after which the rook joins in the attack, winning quickly. In the game, events take a very similar course, only with a somewhat greater number of possible variations.

16 ♖xh7! ♘xe5

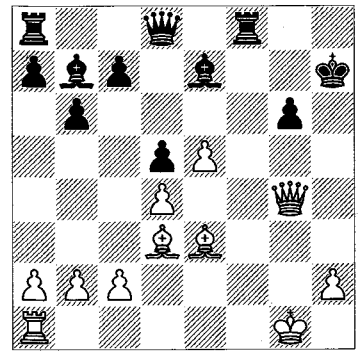
If Black takes the rook at once, White's thematic king move is again indispensable: 16...♔xh7 17 ♕xg4 ♘f6 (17...♘xe5 18 fxe5 transposes to the game) 18 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 19 ♔h1 and wins. Other defensive tries don't help either: 16...♘f6 17 ♖h6, or 16...♖f6 17 ♕xg4! ♔xh7 18 ♗xg6+.

17 fxe5 ♔xh7

The unexpected resource 17...♗g5!? appears more cunning; Black hopes for 18 ♗xg6 ♖f3, with distinct counter-chances. As Kasparov shows, the correct reply is 18 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 19 ♖xc7 ♗c8 (after the sly 19...g3, White has to switch to defence temporarily: 20 hxg3! ♕xg3+ 21 ♕g2 ♕e3+ 22 ♔h1 ♕h6+ 23 ♕h2, with an easy win) 20 ♔h1, with a big advantage.

18 ♕xg4 *(D)*

B



18...♖g8

A more stubborn defence is 18...♕e8 19 ♕h5+, and now:

a) 19...♔g7 20 ♕h6+ ♔g8 21 ♗xg6 ♖f7 and again White's king move proves very useful: 22 ♔h1! ♗f8 23 ♕h5 ♗g7 24 ♖g1 ♔f8. At this point, according to Kasparov, the only winning move is 25 ♖g3!!. (Actually, though, this shouldn't unduly surprise us. It's a case we are perfectly familiar with: one piece merely joins in a combined operation with other pieces, though this is not to deny the striking effect of the move.)

b) On 19...♔g8 White wins with 20 ♗xg6 ♖f7 21 ♔h1 ♗f8 22 ♖g1 ♗g7 23 ♗h6!.

Black could try 18...♖f5 19 ♗xf5 gxf5 20 ♕xf5+ ♔g7 (if 20...♔h8 21 ♕h5+ ♔g8, then the decisive move of course is 22 ♔h1) but here too the ever-recurring 21 ♔h1 wins.

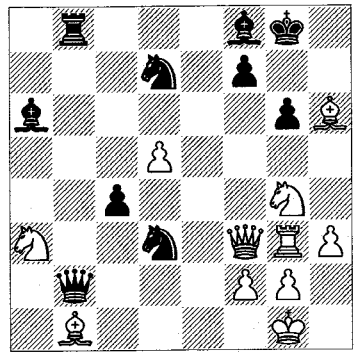
19 ♕h5+ ♔g7 20 ♕h6+ ♔f7 21 ♕h7+ ♔e6 22 ♕h3+ ♔f7 23 ♖f1+

By throwing in a pawn with 23 e6+! (followed by 23...♔g7 24 ♗h6+! or 23...♔e8 24 ♕h7) White could have won more quickly than by bringing up his rook, but as long as something is thrown into the fight, it doesn't matter!

23...♔e8 24 ♕e6 ♖g7 25 ♗g5 ♕d7
On 25...♗c8, White wins with 26 ♕c6+!.
26 ♗xg6+ ♖xg6 27 ♕xg6+ ♔d8 28 ♖f8+ ♕e8 29 ♕xe8# (1-0)

And now, an extract from one of Kasparov's own games. The conclusion of this tremendous and hugely complicated game was analysed in our previous chapter. Here too, many of the variations are from Kasparov's book of the match.

W



Kasparov – Karpov
London/Leningrad Wch (16) 1986

In general terms, the assessment of the situation isn't much different from the one we gave in the previous chapter. Black has an overwhelming plus on the queenside. The a3-knight appears doomed. On the other hand White has excellent prospects of an attack on the kingside. He has to act energetically and boldly, as in such situations tempi decide everything.

30 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 *(D)*

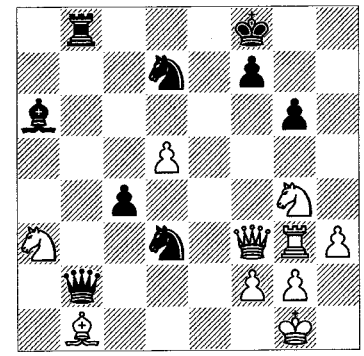
Taking with the rook is worse: 30...♖xf8?! 31 ♘h6+, and now:

a) On 31...♔h7?, Kasparov gives the attractive forced variation 32 ♘xf7 ♕xa3 33 ♕e4 ♕c1+ 34 ♔h2 ♕h1+! 35 ♔xh1 ♘xf2+ 36 ♔g1 ♘xe4 37 ♗xe4 ♖xf7 38 ♖xg6! ♘c5 39 ♗c2 ♗b7 40 ♖c6+ ♘d3 41 ♖xc4, and wins.

b) 31...♔g7 32 ♘f5+ ♔h7 33 ♕e3, and if 33...gxf5? (better is 33...♕c1+ 34 ♕xc1 ♘xc1 35 ♘d4, when White has the advantage but Black's position is still perfectly playable), then 34 ♗xd3 cxd3 35 ♕g5 ♕f6 36 ♕h5+ ♕h6 37 ♕xf5+ ♔h8 38 ♕xd7 d2 39 ♕g4 ♖c8 40 ♔h2! and White wins.

31 ♔h2!

W



Despite the need to be energetic, White makes a move with his king; yet without this move the attack can't proceed, as is clear from the variation 31 ♘h6? ♕c1+. Apart from that, the usefulness of this move will be seen in the subsequent play.

31...♖b3!

For instance we see it here, where 31...♕xa3? is bad on account of 32 ♘h6. The analysis goes:

a) 32...♘7e5 33 ♕f6 *(D)* and now:

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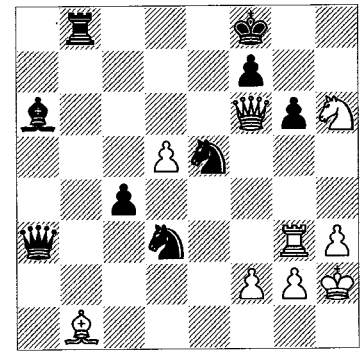

a1) 33...♕b2 34 ♖xg6 ♔e8 and here the astonishing 35 ♖g5!! gives White a decisive plus. A very important point is that Black can't take the bishop with check. Without check, the capture is no good (35...♕xb1 36 ♕d6 ♘g6 37 ♖xg6 fxg6 38 ♕e6+ ♔d8 39 ♘f7+ ♔c7 40 ♕c6#), so Black has to play for simplification, and after 35...♘g4+ 36 ♘xg4 ♕xf6 37 ♘xf6+ ♔e7 38 ♗xd3 cxd3 39 ♘e4 White wins the endgame.

a2) Since 33...♖xb1 also occurs without check, White wins by 34 ♖xg6.

b) 32...♕e7 33 ♖xg6 ♔e8 and now White has the forced variation 34 ♗xd3! ♕e5+ (or 34...cxd3 35 d6 ♕e5+ 36 g3 fxg6 37 ♕f7+ ♔d8 38 ♕g8+ and wins) 35 g3 fxg6 36 ♗xg6+ ♔e7,

whereupon the decisive move is a pawn thrust that is well known to us from the previous chapter: 37 d6+!. The cooperation of Black's forces is finally destroyed and the game comes to an end. It's simply amazing how similar this situation is to the one that arose in the game.

32 ♗xd3 cxd3

This gives the position in Chapter 2 (Development); its consequences are already familiar to us.

In the following dramatic and unconventional game, a voluntary king move serves as a prelude to aggressive operations. Later on, the king has to go on a march to avoid interfering with the concerted action of its own pieces.

Spassky – Polugaevsky
USSR Ch (Moscow) 1961

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 ♘c3 ♗b7 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6 e3 ♘e4 7 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 8 ♗f4 0-0 9 ♗d3 ♗b4+

Giving up a tempo to stop White from castling. Another perfectly playable line is 9...♗g6 10 0-0 d6 11 ♗xg6 hxg6 12 e4 ♘d7, and Black subsequently equalized in Seirawan-Christiansen, USA Ch (Chandler) 1997.

10 ♔f1

White chooses this square so that he can retake with the queen after 10...♗xf3.

10...♗xd3+ 11 ♕xd3 ♗e7 12 h4!?

Spassky goes into action, but for now this amounts to no more than a bid for the initiative.

12...f5 *(D)*

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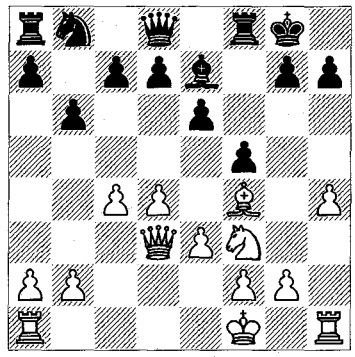

Despite the criticism that has been levelled at it, this move looks logical and not at all bad. It is later that Black goes wrong.

13 ♔e2!?

To continue with his fight for the initiative, White is prepared to take a definite risk. This is perfectly normal.

13...d6

Another plan is also worth considering: 13...♗d6!? 14 ♖ag1 ♘c6, with an unclear position.

14 g4!? ♘d7

Of course, 14...fxg4? is bad on account of 15 ♘g5 ♗xg5 16 hxg5 g6 17 ♕e4 and wins. However, 14...♕d7!? looks quite good; after 15 ♖ag1 ♘c6 the chances are about even.

15 ♖ag1 *(D)*

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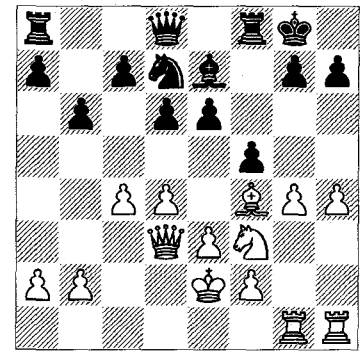


One annotator considers this position to be a good deal better for White. Is he right? What grounds are there for such a verdict? I don't think White has any real advantage. True, he has a spatial plus, but not a very significant one. He has a lead in development, but it is only slight. At present Black's light squares are a little weak, but White no longer has a light-squared bishop, and the rest of his pieces are as yet in no position to attack c6 or e6. It follows that these weaknesses are purely nominal and have no role to play. On the other hand White's king position is not safe enough, and although this isn't a tangible factor just now, it may begin to tell once the position opens up. From all this it is clear that White's position should be assessed as just a little more active, and Black's as sufficiently solid with realistic counterchances.

15...fxg4

I have doubts about this move, and would prefer 15...♕e8!? 16 ♖h2 fxg4 17 ♖xg4 ♘f6 18 ♖g1 ♘h5.

16 ♖xg4

It was worth thinking seriously about 16 ♘g5 ♗xg5 17 hxg5 ♖f5 18 ♖xg4 ♘f8 19 e4, with the better chances for White.

16...♘f6 17 ♖g5!

The right square, not permitting 17...♘h5!.

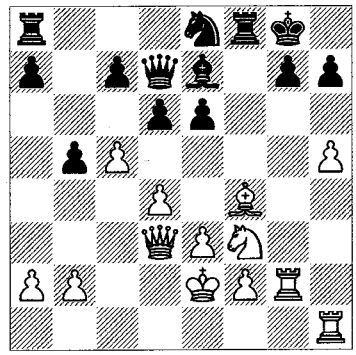
17...♕d7 18 h5 ♘e8 19 ♖g2 b5!?

Polugaevsky has regrouped his pieces quite effectively and now endeavours to counter-attack.

20 c5! *(D)*

Spassky finds the only way to sustain the initiative. Black would be satisfied with the position after 20 cxb5 ♖b8 21 a4 a6.

B



20...dxc5?

The first critical moment in the game has arrived. Black makes his only real mistake, but one that should have proved decisive. Such things are no rarity in sharp positions, as we have seen more than once. After 20...♕c6!?, the right line for White is not at all simple to find. All I *did* manage to find was something fairly involved: 21 cxd6 ♗xd6, and now the surprising 22 d5! ♕xd5 (the whole point is that 22...exd5? fails to 23 h6!, the thematic punch of this game; if then 23...g6, White wins with 24 ♖xg6+ hxg6 25 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 26 ♗e5+) 23 ♕xd5 exd5 24 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 25 ♖c1, when White has splendid compensation for the pawn, though I think Black ought to hold the position without too much difficulty. Now the scene suddenly changes.

21 h6! ♖f5 *(D)*

Other variations are no fun for Black either: 21...c4 22 ♕xh7+! ♔xh7 23 hxg7+ ♔g8 24 gxf8♕+ ♔xf8 25 ♖h8+ ♔f7 26 ♘e5+ and White wins; or 21...g6 22 ♖xg6+ hxg6 23 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 24 ♘e5 ♕d5 (24...♖f6 25 ♘f7+ ♖xf7 26 ♕xf7 +–) 25 ♖g1 +–.

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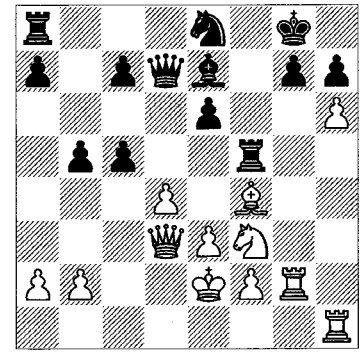

22 ♗e5!

Spassky was always very strong in attack. Here too he plays with precision. A much weaker line is 22 hxg7 ♘f6 23 ♗e5 ♕d5, when the position is unclear.

22...c4

On 22...♕c6 23 e4 ♖f7, White wins by 24 ♗xg7!.

23 ♕e4 ♕d5 24 ♕g4 c3 25 b3! b4

Seeking his chances. On 25...♖f7, White has a simple win with 26 hxg7 ♘f6 27 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 28 ♖xh7.

26 e4 ♕b5+ 27 ♔e3! *(D)*

There was a great chance for Black concealed in the variation 27 ♔e1?? ♕d3! 28 ♗xg7 ♗g5!, when White must resign!

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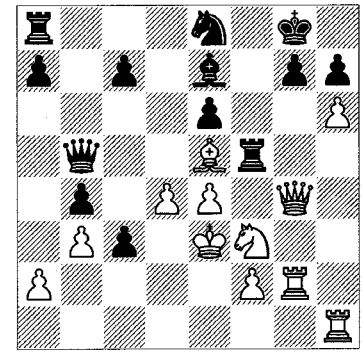

27...♖f7 28 hxg7 ♘f6

The attempt to open up a broader attacking front against the white king fails: 28...c5 29 ♖xh7 ♖xf3+ 30 ♔xf3 ♕d3+ 31 ♔f4 ♕d2+ 32 ♔g3, and wins.

29 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 30 ♖xh7!

This blow crops up in nearly every variation of White's attack and is therefore obvious, but there was something else that required calculating:

30...♖xf3+ *(D)*

This represents Black's last chance.

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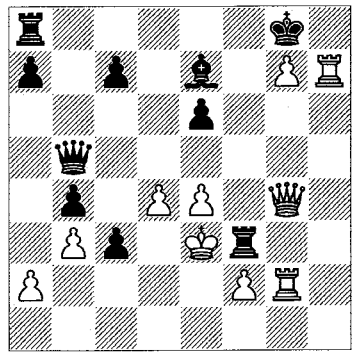

31 ♔xf3

Not, of course, 31 ♕xf3?? ♗g5+.

31...♕d3+ 32 ♔f4 ♗d6+

A remarkable 'thematic' line was pointed out by Moiseev: 32...♕d2+ 33 ♔e5 ♗d6+ 34 ♔xe6 ♖e8+ 35 ♔d7 ♖e7+ 36 ♔d8. The white king is invulnerable, while the black one will quickly be mated. Working out all these marches with his king was what was so difficult about the operation Spassky undertook.

33 ♔g5 ♔xh7

Now an extraordinary thing happened. After the obvious 34 ♔f6! ♕xd4+ 35 ♔f7 *(D)*, the following dream position would have come about:

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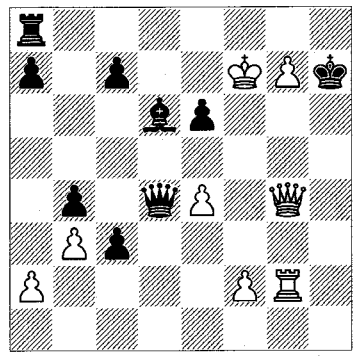


Spassky says he saw this variation, but some demon prompted him to play instead:

34 ♔h5??

What he missed, of course, was the following check:

34...♕b5+!

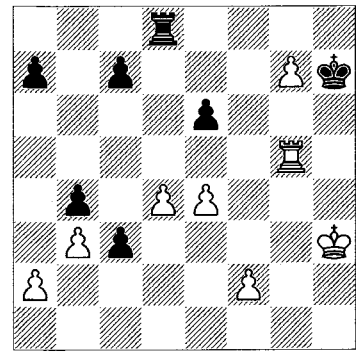
In a state of shock (who wouldn't be?), he replied:

35 ♔h4?

This move even throws away the forced draw that could have been achieved by 35 e5! ♕e8+ 36 ♔h4 ♗e7+ 37 ♔h3 ♔g8 38 ♔h2! ♕f7 39 ♕h3 ♕f4+ 40 ♔g1 (not 40 ♔h1 ♕h4 −+) 40...♕c1+, with perpetual check.

35...♗e7+ 36 ♔h3 ♕g5! 37 ♕xg5 ♗xg5 38 ♖xg5 ♖d8 *(D)*

W



Of course the endgame that has unexpectedly arisen must be evaluated in Black's favour thanks to the mighty passed pawn on c3, but for the moment he is tied down by the enemy pawn on g7. White should therefore hasten to bring his king into play; after 39 ♔g3 ♔g8! 40 ♖c5 ♖xd4 41 ♔f4 ♖d2 42 f3 ♖xa2 Black still has the advantage, but White might preserve some drawing chances.

There was also another method: the paradoxical 39 g8♕+!? ♖xg8 40 ♖c5 ♖g1! (40...♖g7? can be met by 41 a3!, while after 40...♖d8 41 ♖c4 a5 42 ♔g4 ♔g6 43 ♔f4 the chances are equal) 41 ♖xc7+ ♔g6 42 ♔h2 ♖a1 43 ♔g3 ♖xa2 44 ♔f4 a5. Again Black keeps a plus, but here too it seems that White can hope to save himself. Instead, emotionally shattered, Spassky played:

39 f4?!

There followed:

39...♔g8! 40 ♖c5 ♖xd4 41 ♖xc7 ♖xe4 42 ♔g4 *(D)*

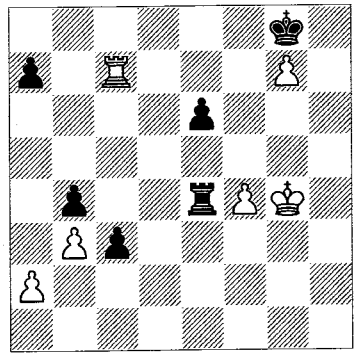
White also loses after 42 ♖xa7 c2 43 ♖c7 ♖e3+ 44 ♔g4 ♖c3.

42...e5!

It now turns out that Black has a forced win.

43 a3

The whole point is that after 43 ♔f5 ♖xf4+ 44 ♔g6 ♖g4+ 45 ♔h6 Black wins with 45...e4! (here's a good exercise to practise your calculation; see if you can work out the rest by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yourself!) 46 ♖c8+ ♔f7 47 ♖f8+ ♔e6 48 g8♕+ ♖xg8 49 ♖xg8 e3! 50 ♖e8+ ♔d5 51 ♖xe3 c2 52 ♖e1 ♔d4 53 ♔g5 ♔c3 54 ♔f4 ♔d2 55 ♖h1 c1♕ 56 ♖xc1 ♔xc1.

43...♖xf4+ 44 ♔g5 a5 45 axb4 axb4 46 ♔g6 ♖g4+ 47 ♔f6

On 47 ♔h6, Black wins with the familiar 47...e4!.

47...♔h7! 48 g8♕+

In the event of 48 ♔xe5 ♖xg7 49 ♖c4, the winning line is 49...♖g1! 50 ♔d4 ♖b1.

48...♔xg8 49 ♔xe5 ♖g1! 50 ♔f6 ♖f1+ 51 ♔e5

White also loses after 51 ♔g6 ♔f8.

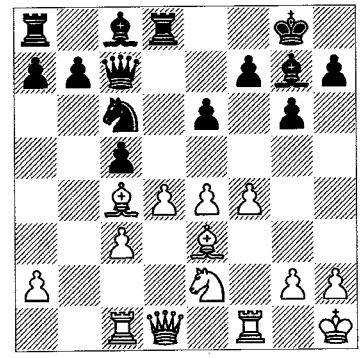
51...♖b1 0-1

"O woe, O woe!", as the unforgettable Isaak Boleslavsky would (no doubt rightly) have said.

It leaves an unpleasant taste when a brilliant attack is spoilt so lamentably. To make up for it, I want to present a real masterpiece of a game which made a tremendous impression on me when it was played. It did so not just because of its sheer magnificence but also because I was lucky enough to follow it move by move as it was relayed by telephone from Moscow to Odessa chess club. (In case anyone doesn't know, Efim Geller came from Odessa. Well, I too had the good fortune to be born in that wonderful city which I very much love, and to spend a large part of my life there.) The moves were shown, with a commentary, on a demonstration board in front of the chess fans assembled in the spacious hall, and I happened to be one of the assistants who brought the moves hot from the telephone to the commentator. To this day I remember the mouths gaping with amazement, the commentators' included! We shall duly examine the moments of the game when that happened.

Geller – Smyslov
Moscow Ct (4) 1965

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♗g7 7 ♗c4 c5 8 ♘e2 0-0 9 0-0 ♘c6 10 ♗e3 ♕c7 11 ♖c1 ♖d8 12 f4 e6 13 ♔h1 *(D)*


B

13...b6?

Smyslov did more than anyone else to develop this opening variation, but this time he mishandles it. As theory was later to show, the correct move here is the immediate 13...♘a5; for example: 14 ♗d3 f5 15 g4 b6 16 gxf5 exf5 17 ♘g3 ♗b7 with an excellent game for Black, as in Přibyl-Schmidt, Polanica Zdroj 1973.

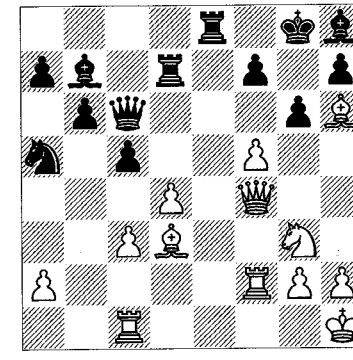
14 f5 ♘a5

On 14...exf5, Geller gives 15 ♗g5 ♖f8 16 d5 ♘a5 17 d6 ♕d7 18 ♗d5 ♗b7 19 exf5 with advantage to White.

15 ♗d3 exf5 16 exf5 ♗b7 17 ♕d2 ♖e8 18 ♘g3 ♕c6 19 ♖f2 ♖ad8

As Geller points out, an attempt to reduce material by 19...♖xe3 20 ♕xe3 cxd4 would lead to an obvious plus for White after 21 ♕f4 dxc3 22 f6.

20 ♗h6 ♗h8 21 ♕f4 ♖d7 *(D)*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22 ♘e4!

White loses no time in bringing his forces to the scene of the decisive battle – on the kingside. Geller was a wonderful master of the attack and a player with strong principles; that is, he always endeavoured to play according to the requirements of the position. In the present game, these qualities thoroughly make their mark.

22...c4?!

The general remarks that can be made about this move are all simple and obvious. After releasing the tension in the centre, Black will be unable to work up any counterplay there. But then, just as obviously, Smyslov must have understood this. If a player of his calibre takes such a decision, he must have some reasons for it, and even if he turns out to be wrong it will be useful to follow his train of thought. Presumably Smyslov thought it would be useful to double rooks on the open e-file, but calculated the variation 22...♖de7 23 fxg6 hxg6 (23...♕xg6 24 ♘f6+ ♕xf6 25 ♕g4+) 24 ♘d6 ♖e1+ 25 ♗f1!, winning for White. For this reason he made a move which offends against a well-known general principle in order to coordinate the actions of his rooks. Geller gives 22...♕c7 as more tenacious; he was intending to reply 23 ♖e1! ♗xe4 (not 23...♕xf4? 24 ♘f6+) 24 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 25 ♕xe4, with an obvious plus. It was evidently to avoid this kind of thing that Smyslov conceded the centre.

23 ♗c2 ♖de7 *(D)*

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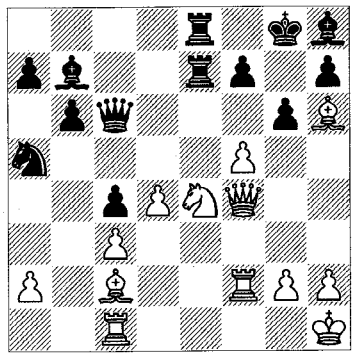


24 ♖cf1!

This is where the spectators' jaws first dropped a little. White makes this move not out of any desire for outward show, but because after 24 fxg6 hxg6 he can't play 25 ♘d6?? on account of 25...♖e1+ and mate. On the other hand, allowing Black to seize the initiative would be fatal. Geller therefore continues to mobilize his pieces in the face of the enemy's fire. From this point on, the play proceeds almost on forced lines, and calculation of variations naturally comes to the fore.

24...♖xe4

Black has to capture to prevent ♘d6.

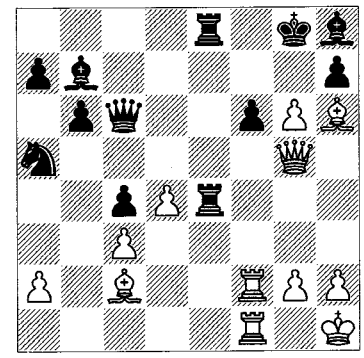
25 fxg6! f6

Black has no choice. The white queen is immune, and 25...♕xg6 26 ♕xf7+ ♕xf7 27 ♖xf7 is no good either.

But what now? Another jaw-dropping move ensued:

26 ♕g5! *(D)*

B



26...♕d7

Other replies don't improve Black's position: 26...♕c7 27 gxh7++ ♔xh7 28 ♕h5 ♔g8 29 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 30 ♕g6+ ♗g7 31 ♖xf6, or 26...♕e6 27 ♗xe4 ♕xe4 28 g7.

After the text-move, Geller naturally enough started looking at the capture on f6, but the analysis worked out like this: 27 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 28 ♕xf6 hxg6 (not 28...♕e7? 29 ♕f7+) 29 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 30 ♗g5 ♖4e6 (only move) 31 ♗f6+ ♖xf6, and now if 32 ♕xf6+, then 32...♕g7 33 ♕h4+ ♔g8 with a big advantage to Black; if 32 ♖xf6, then 32...♖e1+ is worse still. Geller's next idea was to 'repair' this natural-looking variation somehow or other. After some thought, here is how the idea materialized:

27 ♔g1!!

It was when this move was passed to the commentator that I saw that experienced master's mouth gape in astonishment. As for me, my hands and feet were trembling from the feeling of the miracle which, starting from White's

previous move, was taking place before our very eyes.

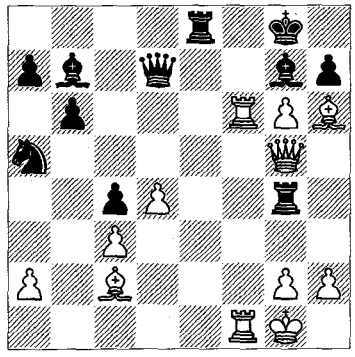
27...♗g7

It emerges that in spite of being presented with a breathing space, Black can't use it in any helpful way. On 27...♕e7 28 gxh7++ ♔xh7, White wins with 29 ♕h5 ♗g7 30 ♖xf6! ♔g8 31 ♖f7.

28 ♖xf6 ♖g4 *(D)*

This time, with the king on g1, the variation 28...♗xf6 29 ♕xf6 hxg6 30 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 31 ♗g5 ♖4e6 32 ♗f6+ ♖xf6 would lead to a win for White after 33 ♖xf6!. He now wins in any case.

W



29 gxh7+ ♔h8 30 ♗xg7+ ♕xg7 31 ♕xg4! 1-0

An extremely attractive and powerful game by Geller. It's very hard to blame Smyslov for the decision he took on move 22, for in order to demonstrate his advantage and get in first with his attack, Geller had to perform a minor miracle on the chessboard. Contending with miracles, or even foreseeing them, is known to be difficult.

Furthermore I think that the move 27 ♔g1!! in this game would be sufficient by itself to justify the existence of this entire chapter. In fact, this chapter was prompted and inspired in the first place by this miraculous game.

Still, for the sake of justice I must add that in the position after Black's 26th move, White also had another way to win: 27 gxh7++ ♔xh7 28 ♕h5 ♖8e6 29 ♖f3 ♕e8 30 ♕f5+ ♕g6 31 ♕h3!. Yet this of course in no way detracts from either the strength or the beauty of Geller's conception. For the aesthetic element in chess is one of the most important strands in the centuries-long history of our beloved game.

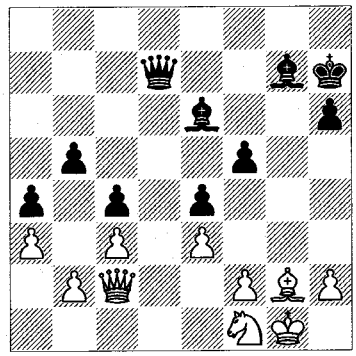
Now the time has come to draw some conclusions from all that we have seen. They will not be very surprising. The king moves we have studied were made for various reasons and served various ends. Sometimes the purpose was simply to evade unpleasant checks, sometimes it was to make way for other pieces. Yet in the most general sense, all these moves were geared to *improving the coordination of the active forces*. Hence my main task in the present chapter was to confirm and demonstrate – even with this material of a fairly recondite kind – the *general* applicability of that law we studied in Chapter 2 (Development), the *law of coordination in chess*. In this chapter too we saw that even when the attainment or improvement of coordination demands a major expenditure of tempo, it is still the supremely important factor.

4 Breakthrough

The subject of this chapter is a pleasant one to write about, as the material is dramatic and easy to take on board.

We acquainted ourselves with some simple examples of a breakthrough in Chapter 1 (Dynamics), and will now try to go further into the subject. To begin with, here is an example of a good opportunity that was missed.

B



Ståhlberg – Geller
Zurich Ct 1953

Black has acquired an obvious advantage, but the position is of the blocked type, and another thing which proved even more important was that Black had two moves to make before the time-control. Geller was well known as an inveterate time-trouble addict, and there is no doubt at all that he must have been short of time again here. In such circumstances, especially when you have a secure plus, you find it very hard to decide on any radical measures, so it isn't easy to criticize Geller for missing his chance – his only one, as things turned out. We are more inclined to sympathize with him and try to draw some useful conclusions for ourselves.

For his next move, Black improved his position with:

39...♕d3!

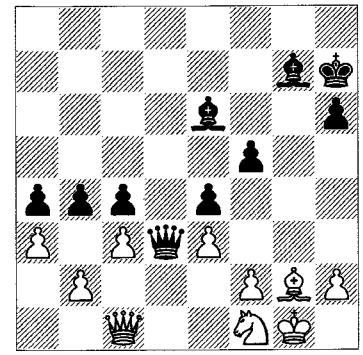
White replied:

40 ♕c1

Exchanging would be bad; after 40 ♕xd3 cxd3 41 ♘d2, Black wins with a typical breakthrough, the thematic one for this game: 41...b4! 42 axb4 and now 42...♗xc3!.

Yet despite the presence of this resource in the foregoing variation, Geller's final move before the time-control throws away the chance to reach a won position in a similar manner. He could now have played 40...b4! *(D)*.

W



The analysis goes as follows:

a) 41 cxb4 ♕b3 42 ♕b1!?, and now a move straight out of our previous chapter: 42...♔h8! (avoiding 42...♕xb2? 43 ♗xe4! with chances of a successful defence), after which White can't save himself. That variation supplies the reason why I put this example at the start of this chapter, by way of a bridge between the two topics. However, White's other reply is more interesting:

b) On 41 axb4, the breakthrough continues with 41...a3! 42 bxa3 (Black also has a winning position after 42 ♕a1 axb2 43 ♕xb2 ♕xc3 44 ♕b1, and now not 44...♕b3? 45 ♗xe4!, but 44...♕d3! 45 ♕a2 ♕d6!?) 42...♕xc3, when neither of White's possibilities can rescue him:

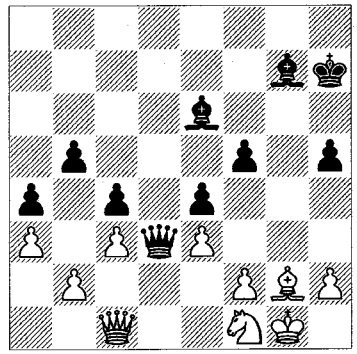
b1) 43 ♕d1 ♕b3 44 ♕h5 (44 ♕xb3 cxb3 45 ♘d2 b2 is also hopeless for White) 44...c3 45 ♗h3 (or 45 ♘g3 c2 46 ♘e2 ♕xa3 –+) 45...♕d5 46 ♕e2 and again Black needs to make a prophylactic king move to win: 46...♔h8! deprives White of any counter-chances involving checks

on f5 or e8. After 47 b5 ♕b3, it's time for him to resign.

b2) 43 ♕xc3 ♗xc3 44 ♘g3 ♗b2 45 ♘e2 ♗d7! 46 ♗f1. At this point Black's simplest winning method is the king move 46...♔g7!, leaving White in dire straits.

In the game, Black delayed by one move:

40...h5? *(D)*

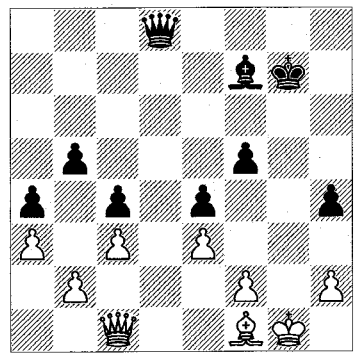


And White managed to hold on, even though the position remains difficult:

41 ♘g3 h4

Alas, the breakthrough no longer works: 41...b4 is met by 42 ♗f1.

42 ♘h5 ♗f7 43 ♘xg7 ♔xg7 44 ♗f1 ♕d8 *(D)*



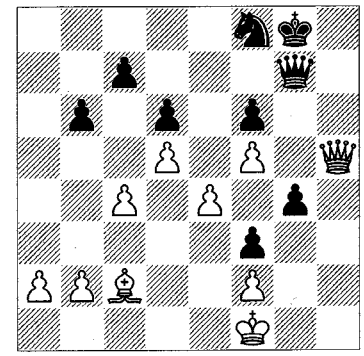
The position still looks dangerous for White, but he discovers a fine defensive resource:

45 ♗e2! ♕g5+ 46 ♔f1 h3 47 ♕d1 ♕g2+ 48 ♔e1 ♕xh2 49 ♕d4+ ♔h7 50 ♗f1!

After this superb move, there is no longer a win.

50...♕g1 51 ♕d7 ♔g8 52 ♕d8+ ♔g7 53 ♕d4+ ♔g6 54 ♕d6+ ½-½

The following game extract will acquaint us with another typical variety of breakthrough.



Alekhine – H. Johner
Zurich 1934

In this position there is no doubt about White's advantage, but how is he to convert it into a win? If he tries to create a passed pawn at once with 44 b4 ♘d7 45 a4 ♘e5 46 a5, then 46...bxa5 47 bxa5 g3 leads to unclear play. If he tries 44 ♗a4 to keep the knight away from e5, then after 44...♘h7! 45 b4 ♘g5! 46 ♕xg4 ♕h6 Black again obtains counter-chances. If you think about the reasons why White's apparently logical plans lead to no clear result as yet, you quite easily perceive that although he has a pawn more, his pieces are not cooperating. These considerations lead on to the thought that if only the white bishop could get into play, a check with it on the a2-g8 diagonal would be devastating. From here it is a short step to discovering Alekhine's solution to the problem:

44 e5!!

Spectacular and strong, but to us that is not even the main thing. What we should consider most important is that the breakthrough serves the purpose of coordinating the player's forces. This purpose will be present in all the examples we shall examine.

44...dxe5?

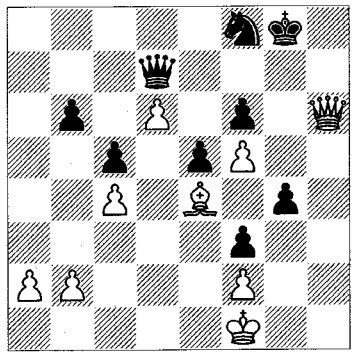
Black loses his head and succumbs without a fight. I would add that a breakthrough always looks imposing, and this sometimes produces a psychological impact on the opponent. Black could have put up much stiffer resistance with 44...fxe5 45 f6 ♕xf6 46 ♕xg4+ ♔f7. Then, for example, after 47 ♗e4 ♔e7 48 ♕xf3 ♕g5 49 ♕g3, White has an undoubted plus – his bishop is now cooperating with his queen – but there would still be a fair amount of play ahead. Now the spectacle continues:

45 d6! c5

White also wins after 45...♕d7 46 ♕xg4+ ♔f7 47 dxc7 ♕xc7 48 ♗d1. On the other hand in answer to 45...cxd6 one more pawn break takes place to clear the diagonal: 46 c5! ♕b7 (or 46...♘d7 47 c6 ♘c5 48 ♕e8+ ♔h7 49 ♕g6+) 47 ♗b3+ d5 48 ♕xg4+ ♔f7 49 ♕xf3, and again White wins.

46 ♗e4 ♕d7 47 ♕h6! *(D)*

B



1-0

In the final position White has achieved all the aims of his breakthrough. We now see very clearly that the aim was by no means only to create a passed pawn but also to activate the pieces and bring them into cooperation. The latter function of a breakthrough is perhaps its principal one, and will be the object of our study throughout the present chapter.

It happens that the breakthrough theme occurs quite frequently in Geller's games. His aggressive, dynamic style may have been the reason.

Geller – Taimanov

USSR Ch (Leningrad) 1960

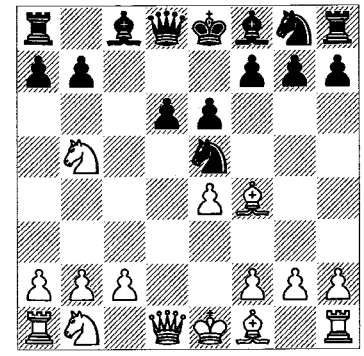
1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♘b5 d6 6 ♗f4 ♘e5?! *(D)*

This old move currently enjoys little popularity. Nowadays everyone plays 6...e5.

7 c4

Apart from this solid continuation, Boleslavsky's suggestion of 7 ♘1a3!? is interesting. Then after 7...a6 8 ♗xe5 dxe5 9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10 0-0-0+ ♔e7 11 ♘d6 b5 12 c4 b4 13 ♘c2, White acquired some advantage in Wahls-Teske, Bundesliga 1991/2.

W



7...a6 8 ♘5c3 ♘f6 9 ♗e2 ♗e7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♘d2 b6 12 ♗e3

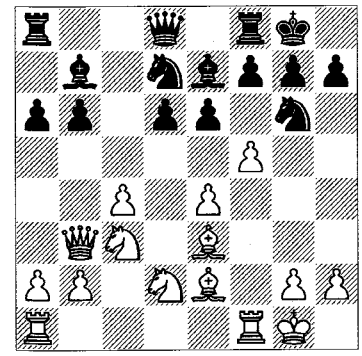
The other retreat 12 ♗g3 is also playable.

12...♗b7 13 f4 ♘g6

This position is fairly typical of the hedgehog set-up. In this system Black quite often has to make a decision about where to retreat his knight from e5. In this case 13...♘ed7 would be quite acceptable and also more typical, but the point of the move played is that if the white bishop goes to f3, the knight can attack it from h4. However, this way Black is taking less good care of his b-pawn, so there follows:

14 ♕b3!? ♘d7 15 f5!? *(D)*

B



As always, Geller's play is energetic and uncompromising. Choosing Black's next move is a problem.

15...♗g5!?

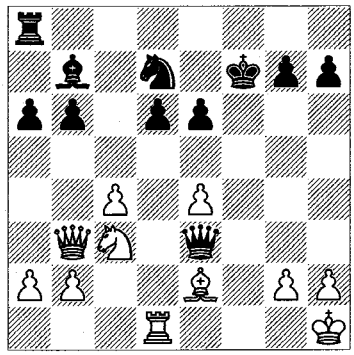
In my view, he solves it correctly. The other possibility is 15...♘ge5 16 fxe6 fxe6, but then White would carry out the breakthrough he was aiming for when he brought his queen out to b3: 17 c5!, and now the analysis goes:

a) 17...dxc5? 18 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 19 ♘c4! with a clear plus for White; for instance, 19...♗f6 20 ♖ad1 ♕e7 21 ♕xe7 ♗xe7 22 ♗f4!?.

b) The other capture 17...♘xc5?! also favours White: 18 ♗xc5 dxc5 19 ♕xe6+ ♘f7 20 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 21 ♗c4 ♕d4+ 22 ♔h1 ♕f6 23 ♖f1 ♕xe6 24 ♗xe6 ♖af8 25 ♘c4, and the b6-pawn is lost.

c) 17...d5!? is Black's best reply. After 18 cxb6 ♘c5 19 ♗xc5 ♗xc5+ 20 ♔h1 an unclear position arises, but it should still no doubt be assessed as rather more promising for White.

16 ♗xg5 ♕xg5 17 fxg6 ♕xd2 18 gxf7+ ♖xf7 19 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 20 ♖d1 ♕e3+ 21 ♔h1 *(D)*



21...♕c5!?

Once again I think Black makes the right choice. The alternative is 21...♘f6, but then after 22 ♖xd6 ♘xe4 23 ♕xb6! ♘f2+ 24 ♔g1 ♘h3+ 25 ♔f1 ♕f4+ 26 ♔e1 ♗xg2, either 27 ♖d7+ or 27 ♕d4 would leave White with a plus.

22 ♘a4 ♕a5? *(D)*

This time, however, Black's choice is wrong – a gross error, in fact. He should have evaluated the following replies:

a) 22...♕e5?! 23 ♘xb6 ♘xb6 24 ♕xb6 ♗xe4 25 ♖xd6 ♗xg2+ 26 ♔xg2 ♕xe2+ 27 ♕f2+ ♕xf2+ 28 ♔xf2 and the ending looks dangerous for Black.

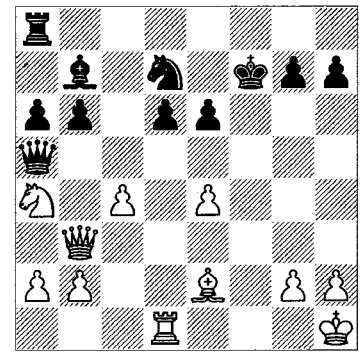
b) 22...♕c6! 23 ♗f3 b5 24 cxb5 ♕xb5 25 ♕a3 ♖c8 26 ♘c3 ♕c5 27 ♕b3 ♗c6, and though Black's king position may not appear safe enough, the position is about equal.

We may say that Black's error lay in 'scattering' his pieces, disrupting their coordination (of his own accord!).

Now comes the breakthrough that is already familiar to us:

23 c5!

Greatly enhancing the activity of White's pieces, and shattering the black position.



23...♖e8

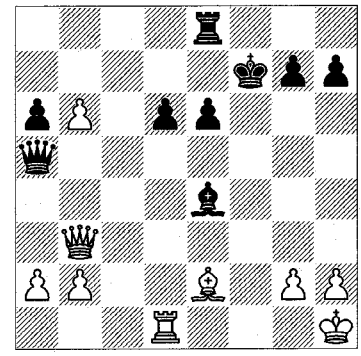
Other replies also work out in White's favour: 23...♘xc5 24 ♖f1+ ♔g8 (24...♔e7 loses to 25 ♘xc5 ♕xc5 26 ♕f3 ♔d7 27 ♕f7+ ♔c6 28 e5!) 25 ♕f3 and wins. Or 23...d5 24 exd5 ♗xd5 (the position after 24...exd5 25 ♗f3 is clearly better for White) 25 ♗c4 ♗xc4 26 ♖xd7+! ♔e8 27 ♕d1 ♗b5 (or 27...♗e2 28 ♕xe2 ♔xd7 29 ♘xb6+ +–) 28 ♖xg7 ♗xa4 29 ♕h5+ ♔d8 30 ♕h4+ ♔c8 31 ♕e4! and again White wins.

24 ♘xb6 ♘xb6

Black would lose at once with 24...♘xc5 25 ♕f3+ ♔g8 26 ♖f1.

25 cxb6 ♗xe4 *(D)*

A situation has arisen with material equality but a terrible white passed pawn. On top of this, Black's king position is shaky. His bishop may be useful in attending to either of these problems. It therefore pays White to exchange it off.

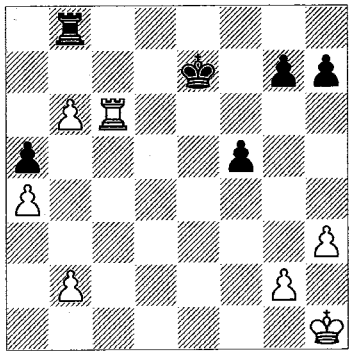


26 ♗f3! ♗xf3 27 ♕xf3+ ♕f5

The endgame after 27...♔g8 28 ♕c6 ♖b8 29 b7 ♕c5 30 ♕xc5 dxc5 31 ♖d7 is won for White.

28 ♖xd6 ♖c8 29 ♕xf5+ exf5 30 h3 ♖b8 31 a4 ♔e7 32 ♖c6 a5 *(D)*

W



The crowning breakthrough now takes place:

33 b4! axb4 34 a5 b3 35 ♖c3!

And to follow, a typical manoeuvre to stop and destroy the opponent's passed pawn. If White hadn't been in time-trouble, Black would surely have resigned now.

35...♔d6 36 ♖xb3 ♔c6 37 ♖e3! f4

Or 37...♔b5 38 ♖e5+ ♔a6 39 ♖xf5.

38 ♖e7 ♔b5 39 ♖a7 g5 40 b7 h5 41 a6 1-0

And now, yet another game by Efim Geller! Isn't this overdoing it? But what else can I do when he had so many fine 'breakthrough' games to his credit? And he was from my part of the world, too!

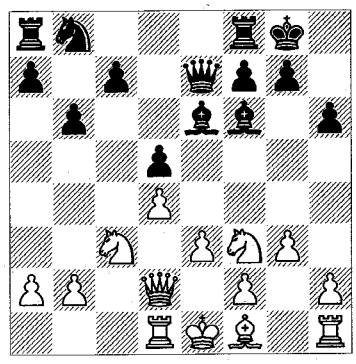
Psakhis – Geller

Erevan Z 1982

As a basis for the notes to this game, I have used the variations given by Kharitonov in *Mega Database*.

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗e7 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗h4 0-0 7 e3 b6 8 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 9 cxd5 exd5 10 ♕d2 ♗e6 11 ♖d1 ♕e7! 12 g3 *(D)*

B



12...c5!?

This move improves on Black's play in T.Georgadze-Geller from the same tournament, which went 12...♘d7 13 ♗g2 ♖fd8 14 0-0 ♖ac8 15 ♖c1 c5, after which White's chances should be rated as slightly superior. But Geller's move demanded thorough pre-game analysis, as we shall soon see.

13 dxc5?!

Psakhis overrates his position and underrates his opponent's home preparation. After 13 ♗g2 ♘c6 14 0-0 cxd4 15 exd4, the chances are about equal.

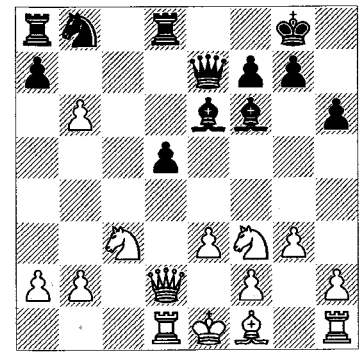
13...♖d8!

The right way, of course. Not 13...♗xc3 14 ♕xc3 bxc5 15 ♗g2 ♘d7 (15...d4 16 ♕a3 ♗c4? 17 ♘d2 is to White's advantage) 16 0-0.

14 cxb6 *(D)*

The only consistent follow-up. In any case, 14 ♗g2 bxc5 15 0-0 ♘c6 clearly favours Black.

B



Now comes a thrust which is obvious, but no less strong for that:

14...d4! 15 ♗g2!

The only way! This is the point of the plan initiated by White's 13th move, and he had evidently prepared it in advance. All other tries turn out badly, though not all the variations are simple:

a) 15 ♘xd4? fails to 15...♗xd4 16 exd4 ♗d5+.

b) 15 exd4? ♗d5+ is also hopeless.

c) 15 ♘e2?! ♕b7 16 ♗g2 ♗d5 (only not 16...dxe3?? 17 ♕xd8+ ♗xd8 18 ♖xd8+ ♔h7 19 ♘g5+), and after the obligatory 17 ♘exd4 Black acquires a large plus by means of 17...♘c6! 18 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 19 ♕e2 ♖xd1+ 20 ♕xd1 ♖d8 21 ♕e2 ♕xb6.

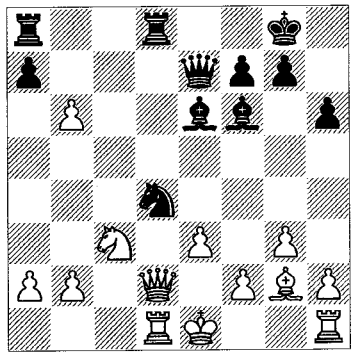
d) The most striking variation is indicated by Geller: 15 ♘e4? ♗d5 16 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 17

♕xd4 ♕xf3 18 b7 ♖d7! 19 ♕a4 (White also loses with 19 bxa8♕ ♗xa8, or 19 ♗b5 ♕xh1+ 20 ♔d2 ♕xd1+ 21 ♔xd1 ♗f3+) 19...♕xd1+! (given by Geller; 19...♗xb7!? wins more prosaically) 20 ♕xd1 ♗xh1 21 f3 ♖xd1+ 22 ♔e2 ♖d2+ 23 ♔xd2 ♗xf3.

15...♘c6 16 ♘xd4!?

The best decision. After 16 ♘e4 dxe3 17 ♕xe3 ♖xd1+ 18 ♔xd1 axb6, Black is clearly better. He also has a plus in the event of 16 exd4 ♗b3+ 17 ♕e3 ♗xd1 18 ♕xe7 ♘xe7.

16...♘xd4 *(D)*



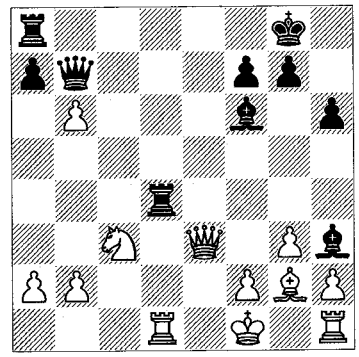
17 exd4!

Again Lev Psakhis rises to the occasion; 17 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 18 exd4 ♗d5+ 19 ♕e2 ♗xh1 20 ♕xe7 ♗xe7 would be bad for White.

17...♗h3+ 18 ♔f1 ♖xd4 19 ♕e3

It's hard to say for sure, but I like this move better than the more complicated and less clear variation 19 ♕xd4 ♗xd4 20 ♖xd4 (20 ♗xh3 ♗xc3 ∓) 20...♕f6!? 21 ♖f4 (21 ♖d5 ♕f3) 21...♕c6 22 ♖g1 ♗xg2+ 23 ♖xg2 axb6 24 f3, with a slight advantage to Black.

19...♕b7! *(D)*



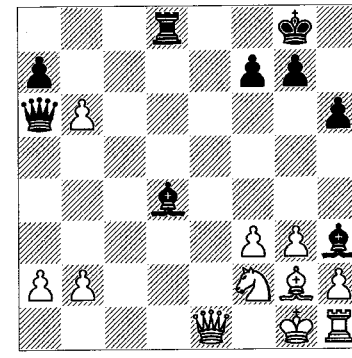
20 f3?

The similarity of themes between this and the previous game is astonishing. After treading sure-footed through a series of complex ordeals, Geller's opponents make a suicidal mistake at the decisive moment. We can see how hard it is to play against an opponent's unrelenting pressure, evading new difficulties with every move. A computer is much better at coping with such problems – it has nerves of steel! After the obligatory 20 ♖g1 ♖xd1+ (it might be worth trying 20...♖ad8 21 ♖xd4 ♗xg2+ 22 ♖xg2 ♗xd4, but White has an acceptable position even so) 21 ♘xd1 ♖d8 22 ♕e2! ♗xg2+ 23 ♖xg2, we reach a position where Black has compensation for the pawn, but I doubt he has more. Now everything concludes by force.

20...♖xd1+ 21 ♘xd1 ♕a6+ 22 ♔g1

Nothing in particular is altered by 22 ♔f2 ♖d8 23 ♕e2 ♕xb6+, and wins.

22...♖d8 23 ♘f2 ♗d4 24 ♕e1 *(D)*



24...♗xf2+! 0-1

White resigned in view of 25 ♔xf2 ♕xb6+ 26 ♔f1 ♗c8!.

In the following game, in which the strategic themes overlap to some extent with those of the previous one, we shall look at a typical situation with hanging pawns in the centre.

Korchnoi – Karpov

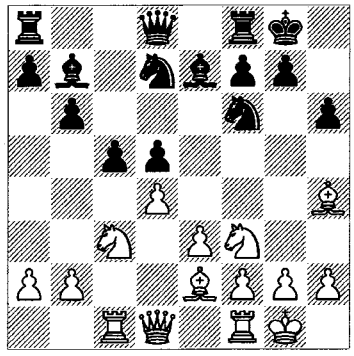
Merano Wch (1) 1981

1 c4 e6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 d4 ♗e7 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗h4 0-0 7 e3 b6 8 ♖c1 ♗b7 9 ♗e2

The bishop's development to d3 is also quite often seen.

9...♘bd7 10 cxd5 exd5 11 0-0 c5 *(D)*

W

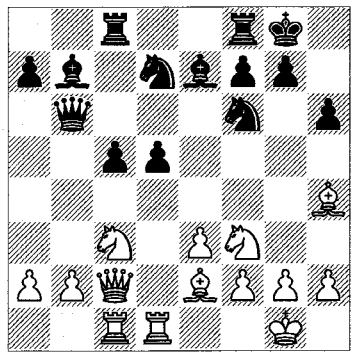


12 dxc5?!

Theory doesn't approve of this decision. White decides on a specific type of position too early, and this helps his opponent to arrange his pieces in the best way possible. Today the generally accepted continuation is 12 ♕a4. This occurred for instance in Yusupov-Short, Linares 1992, which went 12...a6 13 dxc5 bxc5 14 ♖fd1 ♕b6 15 ♕b3 (a very important move in such situations; without queens, Black will find it much harder to utilize his assets; what those assets are, we shall later see in more detail) 15...♖fd8 16 ♗g3 ♖ac8 17 ♘e5 ♕xb3 18 axb3, and White obtained some advantage which he went on to exploit in a highly accurate manner.

12...bxc5 13 ♕c2 ♖c8 14 ♖fd1 ♕b6 *(D)*

W



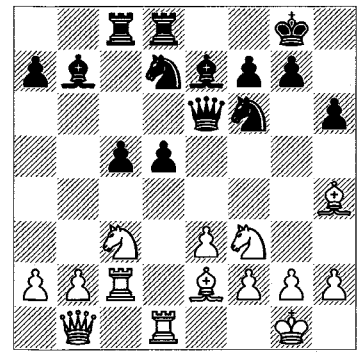
A fairly typical position with hanging pawns has come about, and we must examine it in some detail. There are two conspicuous factors which greatly affect the possibilities open to the players. First, hanging pawns cannot – by definition – be defended by other pawns, and therefore require pieces to be deflected from other tasks in order to protect them. This means that in specific circumstances the hanging pawns may become a genuine weakness. Secondly, these same pawns, standing side by side on the same rank, are keeping almost all the central squares under control as well as securing a distinct spatial advantage for their own army. Such are their defects and merits. It is therefore obvious that no generalized statements can be made as to whether hanging pawns should be considered strong or weak. Everything depends on the concrete situation, so let us look closely at the one we have before us. A spatial plus can be more effectively exploited when there are plenty of pieces on the board, whereas exchanges generally benefit the side that is cramped – so in this connection we can state with confidence that Black has an obvious point in his favour. Conversely, suffering from lack of space, White's possibilities for attacking the hanging pawns are severely limited. Such pawns are most effectively attacked by major pieces, but as long as they are defended by minor ones, this attack will rarely be successful. That is precisely the case we have here.

One conclusion is beyond doubt: when playing against hanging pawns, it is useful to aim for exchanges of minor pieces, and often queen exchanges too. Why queen exchanges? The very game we are looking at will supply the answer.

Now, to the game continuation. For the moment White is not in a position to set about exchanging pieces, and needs to pay attention to his opponent's active possibilities before anything else. This purpose could be served by a move that is thematic in such positions, the bishop retreat 15 ♗g3!?. Black would then continue mobilization by 15...♖fd8. Instead, Korchnoi concocts an involved plan for reorganizing his forces within their very restricted space – a plan which soon proves unsuccessful.

15 ♕b1?! ♖fd8 16 ♖c2?! ♕e6! *(D)*

W



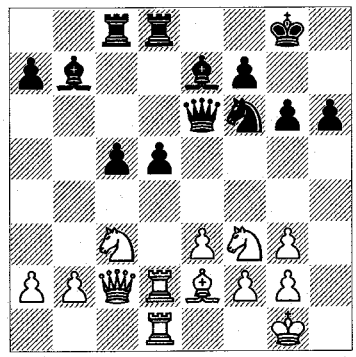
Black's last move is also highly characteristic of such positions. His queen is transferred to a strategically important square (see the variations that follow), while vacating b6 – which in this kind of situation is the rightful square for the knight. It now turns out that White has trouble even finding a playable move, let alone a coherent plan! Korchnoi could find nothing better than:

17 ♗g3

The reason for this decision is that in answer to the planned 17 ♖cd2?, Black has a tactical ploy which again is typical: 17...♘e4! 18 ♘xe4 dxe4 19 ♗xe7 exf3, and now 20 ♗xd8?! (the position is also highly unpleasant for White after 20 ♗b5 ♗e4! 21 ♕c1 c4! 22 ♗h4 ♗d3) leads to a win for Black after 20...fxe2 21 ♖xe2 (White also loses with 21 ♖xd7 ♕g4 22 ♖1d5 ♗xd5 23 ♖xd5 ♕b4!) 21...♖xd8 22 ♖ed2? ♕g4 23 f4 ♘f8!.

The variation 17 h3 ♗d6! 18 ♘b5 ♗b8 19 b4 a6! also favours Black. White's best course may be to return his rook from c2 to c1 and then try to exchange some minor pieces. But that way of playing is not for Korchnoi! The following exchange of knight for bishop leaves Black with an enduring positional advantage.

17...♘h5 18 ♖cd2 ♘xg3 19 hxg3 ♘f6 20 ♕c2 g6!? *(D)*



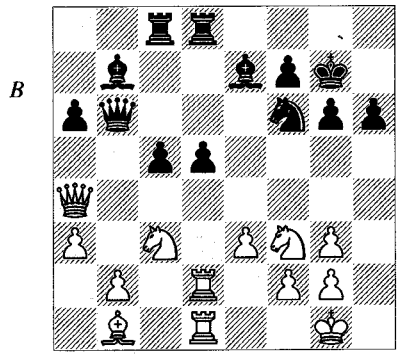
Typical of Karpov! White can't develop any real activity, so Black prepares the most congenial conditions for his own campaign of attack. White is deprived of the f5-square, while the black king will occupy a more comfortable and safer position.

21 ♕a4 a6 22 ♗d3

Korchnoi prepares a lengthy manoeuvre to bring his bishop to a2. This would indeed be the best place for it, but Black gets his blow in first.

22...♔g7 23 ♗b1 ♕b6 24 a3? *(D)*

This move fits in with White's plan, but is already the decisive mistake. He should have given some attention to his own security with 24 ♘e2, as recommended by Botvinnik.



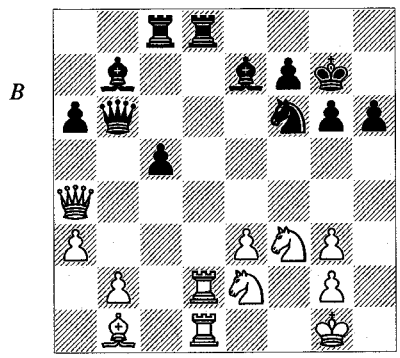
24...d4!

This breakthrough has been maturing for some time. It is also highly characteristic of these hanging pawn positions. In fact the present game is full of typical situations and decisions, and is therefore extremely instructive.

25 ♘e2

White is obliged to play this ghastly move, after which his position is strategically quite hopeless. Some fairly simple variations show that he had no choice: 25 exd4 ♗c6! 26 ♕c4 (or 26 ♕c2 ♗xf3 27 gxf3 cxd4) 26...♗xf3, and now 27 gxf3 cxd4, or 27 dxc5 ♗xd1 28 cxb6 ♖xc4 29 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 30 ♘xd1 ♖c1.

25...dxe3 26 fxe3 *(D)*



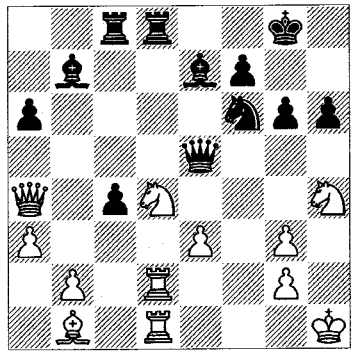
This position can serve as a good illustration of the 'coordination of forces' theme.

26...c4!

Black shouldn't have any particular difficulties in realizing his advantage, but precise play is always called for. This move not only cuts off the white queen from the kingside where the decisive events will take place; it creates far more scope for Black's own pieces than for White's, so there should be no qualms at all about giving up the d4-square.

27 ♘ed4 ♕c7 28 ♘h4 ♕e5 29 ♔h1 ♔g8! *(D)*

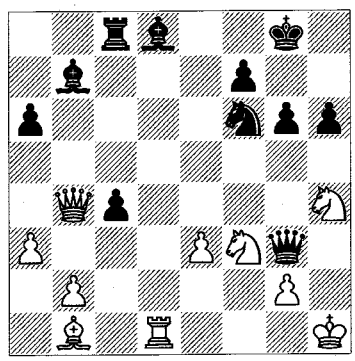
W



This simple little move, depriving White of a check on f5, essentially constitutes a dual attack and wins one of the white pawns. The game is already decided, but there was still some slight hope of time-trouble.

30 ♘df3 ♕xg3 31 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 32 ♕b4 *(D)*

B



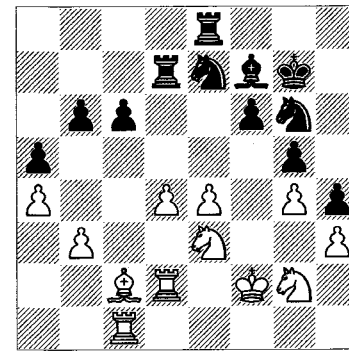
32...♗e4!

Another move that is highly instructive although not complicated. Its purpose is to seize the commanding outpost on e4 for the knight. Black will then have a winning attack. The rest needs no explanation.

33 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 34 ♖d4 ♘f2+ 35 ♔g1 ♘d3 36 ♕b7 ♖b8 37 ♕d7 ♗c7 38 ♔h1 ♖xb2 39 ♖xd3 cxd3 40 ♕xd3 ♕d6 41 ♕e4 ♕d1+ 42 ♘g1 ♕d6 43 ♘hf3 ♖b5 0-1

The next example is also very good and will repay study.

B



Botvinnik – Petrosian
Moscow Wch (18) 1963

Despite the absence of queens, the position still contains plenty of fight. There are some strategic points in Black's favour, such as a smaller number of pawn-islands and a pawn-structure better suited to his remaining bishop. In return White has some spatial advantage, which promises rather more mobility to his pieces. With his next move Black concedes some further space in an attempt to profit from his assets and increase his activity. This brings the game to life.

42...c5! 43 d5 ♘e5 44 ♖f1?

White wastes a very important tempo, which proves to be a major error now that Black's 42nd move has increased the tension in the position. It was essential to play 44 ♘c4 ♘xc4 45 bxc4 ♘c6 46 ♘e3 ♗g6 47 ♖b1 ♘b4 48 ♘f5+ ♗xf5 49 exf5 ♖de7, when a draw is the most likely outcome, though White will evidently still have to play with a certain accuracy.

44...♗g6 45 ♔e1

After 45 ♘c4 ♘xc4 46 bxc4 ♘c8, Black wins the e4-pawn.

45...♘c8 46 ♖df2 ♖f7 47 ♔d2

Or 47 ♘f5+ ♗xf5 48 ♖xf5 ♘d6 49 ♘e3 and now Black acquires a substantial plus with 49...c4! 50 bxc4 ♖c8!.

47...♘d6

Black's gains are obvious. His knights have seized important strongpoints in the centre.

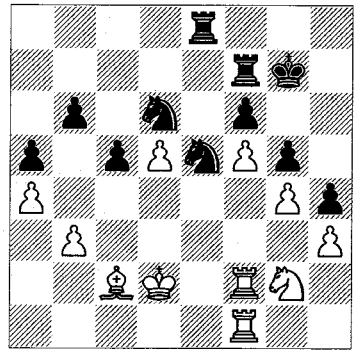
48 ♘f5+

The only move.

48...♗xf5 49 exf5 *(D)*

David Bronstein suggested 49 ♖xf5!? as a way of trying to contain Black's pressure, but the answer is a move we have seen already: 49...c4!, breaking through and winning easily.

B



As it is, Black decides the game with this very same thrust:

49...c4! 50 ♖b1 b5!

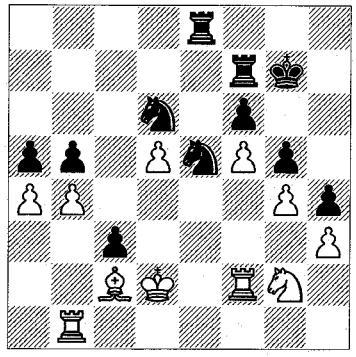
A further blow, which has the same point: Black's excellently placed pieces break through into the enemy camp.

51 b4

Other continuations are no better. After 51 axb5 ♘xb5 52 bxc4 (or 52 ♖a1 c3+ 53 ♔c1 ♘d4! 54 ♔b1 ♖b8 with an overwhelming plus) 52...♘xc4+ 53 ♔d3 ♘e5+ 54 ♔d2 ♘a3, Black has a very strong initiative.

51...c3+! *(D)*

W



A cascade of breakthrough moves! The position is unblocked once and for all, and with the sacrifice of one pawn Black clears a road for all his pieces into White's position. This most effectively illustrates what a breakthrough is.

52 ♔xc3

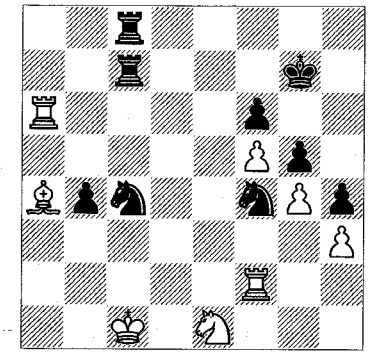
White can't defend successfully after 52 ♔c1 axb4 either.

52...♖c7+ 53 ♔d2 ♘ec4+ 54 ♔d1 ♘a3! 55 ♖b2

White also loses in other lines: 55 ♖b3 ♘xc2 56 ♖xc2 ♖xc2 57 ♔xc2 ♖e2+, or 55 ♖a1 axb4.

55...♘dc4 56 ♖a2 axb4 57 axb5 ♘xb5 58 ♖a6 ♘c3+ 59 ♔c1 ♘xd5 60 ♗a4 ♖ec8 61 ♘e1 ♘f4 *(D)*

W



0-1

In the final position you are struck by the superb coordination of the black pieces. Every breakthrough in the game had the purpose of achieving this.

As we have already seen repeatedly, the purpose of a breakthrough is to increase the mobility of your own forces and improve their cooperation. It isn't by any means necessary that the pawns making the break should be clashing with the opponent's pawns, as long as the main aim is achieved. The following game provides an example.

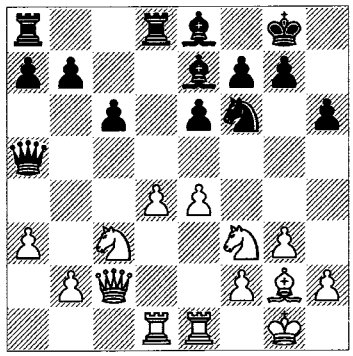
Ravinsky – Smyslov

USSR Ch (Moscow) 1944

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 ♗g2 dxc4 5 ♕a4+ ♗d7 6 ♕xc4 ♗c6 7 ♘f3 ♗e7 8 ♘c3 0-0 9 0-0 ♘bd7 10 ♗g5 h6 11 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 12 ♖ad1 ♕d6 13 ♕d3 ♕b4 14 ♕c2 ♕a5 15 e4 ♖fd8 16 ♖fe1 ♗e8 17 a3 c6 *(D)*

The game has opened with a quiet variation of the Catalan System. White has an advantage in space; Black has a pair of bishops and is very keen to carry out the ...c5 advance, to open up the game for their benefit.

W



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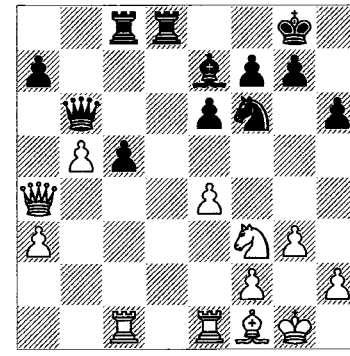


18 ♘a4?!

White decides to forestall his opponent's plan, but is neglecting the opportunity to increase his territorial gains. The indicated line was 18 e5!? ♘d5 19 ♘e4 ♖ac8 20 ♘fd2, followed by bringing a knight to d6.

18...♖ac8 19 b4

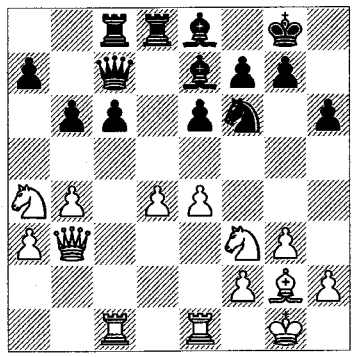
I don't think this is best either, and would prefer 19 ♘c5 ♕c7 20 b4 b6 21 ♘d3. The knight would then be very effectively placed, controlling the important squares c5, e5 and b4.

19...♕c7 20 ♕b3

Here too 20 ♘c5!? was worth considering.

20...b6 21 ♖c1 *(D)*

B



21...c5!

So Black has, after all, achieved what is the thematic break in this opening variation.

22 dxc5

In the event of the other pawn capture 22 bxc5, Black would have a slight edge after 22...♕d7!?.

22...♗xa4 23 ♕xa4 bxc5 24 ♗f1

Also after 24 ♖c2 ♕b6 25 e5 ♘d5 26 ♖ec1 ♖c7!, Black's chances should be rated as slightly better.

24...♕b6 25 b5 *(D)*

In this position it must be said that the bishops are the key to the play. Although the remaining bishops are on opposite colours, any drawish consequences are a long way off. The prospects for Black's bishop should be rated as better than for White's. Compare the respective positions on the kingside – look at the a2-g8 and a7-g1 diagonals.

For White it is therefore imperative either to blockade the black c5-pawn or else to go into action himself as quickly as possible. He might very well succeed in something of the kind, if, for instance, the game went 25...♕b7 26 ♘e5 or 25...♕b8 26 e5 ♘d5 27 ♕e4 ♘b6 28 ♗d3. What, then, is the strategic task for Black? It is absolutely essential for him to try to activate his own forces at once, and not wait for his opponent to act first. From all this, Black's next move *inescapably* follows. (I stress the word *inescapably*. It asserts that there is not even any need to analyse variations in detail. When the position demands it, you are in duty bound to be a hero!)

25...c4!

Black opens lines for his queen, rook and bishop. At the same time the cooperation between the queen and bishop is significantly improved. On top of that, the knight joins their company! If White can't neutralize all these gains within a short time, it means at the very least that the pawn sacrifice is justified.

26 h3?!

In consequence of Black's last move the number of possible variations has sharply increased, and White was faced with no simple choice. Smyslov gives the following analysis:

a) 26 ♗xc4 ♘g4 and now:

a1) 27 ♖f1 ♖d3! 28 ♗xd3 ♖xc1 29 ♘d4 (only move) 29...♖c3 30 ♗e2 ♘xf2! 31 ♖xf2

♗c5 and Black has an enduring initiative, based precisely on the difference in strength between the bishops.

a2) 27 ♖c2!? deserves serious attention, although even then, after 27...♖d7 28 ♖f1 ♖dc7, Smyslov considers that Black's lasting initiative fully compensates for the pawn.

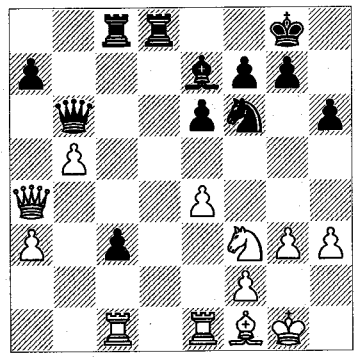
a3) 27 ♖e2 ♖d3! 28 ♗xd3 (or 28 ♔g2 ♖xa3) 28...♖xc1+ 29 ♔g2 ♖c3 30 e5 (White has a bad ending after 30 ♕d1 ♕xf2+! 31 ♖xf2 ♘e3+) 30...♖xd3 31 ♕xg4 ♕xb5, with a slight but persistent advantage for Black.

b) In Smyslov's view, White's best option is 26 ♖xc4 ♘g4 27 ♖e2! ♖xc4 28 ♕xc4 ♗c5 29 ♕c2 ♕xb5 30 e5 ♗b6, when Black retains the initiative but White has every reason to count on a successful defence.

By declining the offered pawn, White allows Black to develop his initiative in complete comfort.

26...c3 *(D)*

W



27 ♕b3?

This move turns out to be the decisive mistake, though a barely noticeable one. Its implications strongly recall those of White's error on move 44 of the Botvinnik-Petrosian game. It looks natural but proves to be an extremely important loss of tempo in defence. The correct move is 27 ♔g2!. Now Black's pressure becomes irresistible.

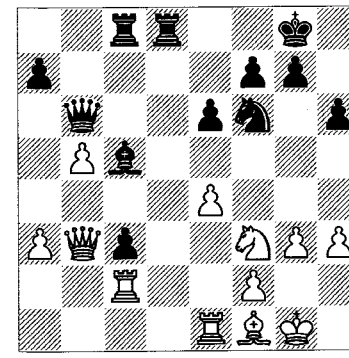
27...♗c5 28 ♖c2 *(D)*

As Smyslov demonstrates, 28 ♖e2 loses to 28...♗xf2+ 29 ♖xf2 ♘xe4 30 ♕c2 ♕e3! 31 ♖a1 ♖d2. White is also in a bad way after 28 ♕c2 ♗xa3.

But after the text-move Black also delivers a decisive blow:

28...♖d2! 29 ♖xd2

B



On 29 ♘xd2, Smyslov gives the pretty variation 29...♗xf2+ 30 ♔g2 ♗xe1 31 ♘f3 ♕e3! 32 ♖e2 ♕xe2+ 33 ♗xe2 c2.

29...cxd2 30 ♖e2 ♗xf2+ 31 ♔g2 ♖c3 32 ♕d1 ♗e3 33 ♘xd2 ♕d4 34 ♕e1 ♘xe4 35 ♘xe4

Against 35 ♘f3, Black wins with 35...♕d6! 36 a4 ♗f2!.

35...♕xe4+ 36 ♔h2 ♕d4 37 ♖g2 ♖c1!

It was also perfectly possible to take the a-pawn, but that would be delaying things unnecessarily. As it is, Black has everything ready for the final assault. His forces are fully coordinated, his opponent's king is poorly defended, and in addition there are opposite-coloured bishops, which, as is well known, only reinforce the attack.

38 ♕e2 ♕a1 39 ♕xe3 ♖xf1 40 g4 ♖e1 0-1

Since 41 ♖e2 is met by 41...♖h1+ 42 ♔g3 ♕f1 43 ♖g2 ♕xb5.

In the next game, the same device is utilized in an even more convincing and attractive manner.

Kasparov – Salov

Barcelona (World Cup) 1989

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 b6 3 ♘c3 c5 4 e4 d6 5 d4 cxd4 6 ♘xd4 ♗b7 *(D)*

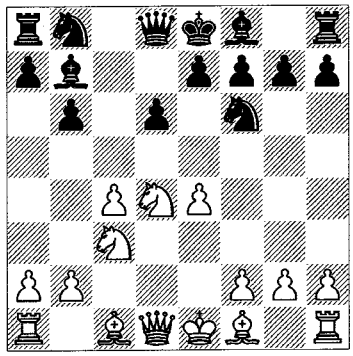
7 ♕e2!?

Kasparov steers the game into a little-known channel (but one that *he* knows!). The usual continuation is 7 f3.

7...♘bd7

This is evidently not best. The standard method of development in such situations looks more accurate: 7...e6!? 8 g3 ♗e7 9 ♗g2 a6! 10 0-0 ♕c7, as played with success, for instance,

W



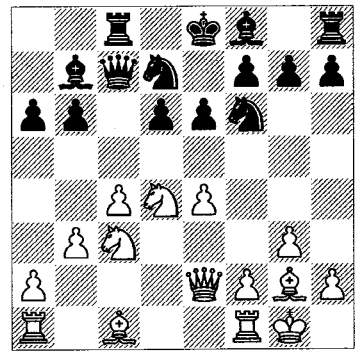
in Ehlvest-Kudrin, New York 1991 and Serper-Kudrin, Chicago 1996.

8 g3 ♖c8 9 ♗g2 a6 10 0-0 ♕c7?!

Another inaccuracy, after which quite a few problems arise for Black. Admittedly in Lautier-A.Sokolov, French Cht 1992, White also worked up dangerous pressure after 10...e6 11 ♖e1 ♘e5 12 f4 ♘xc4 13 b3 ♘a5 14 ♗b2 ♘c6 15 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 16 ♘d5.

11 b3 e6 *(D)*

W



12 ♘d5!

This sacrifice, a typical one in such positions, had been prepared by Kasparov for the present game. Black doesn't manage to cope with the ensuing complexities.

12...♕b8

For better or worse, he should have accepted the sacrifice. After 12...exd5 13 exd5+, the options are as follows:

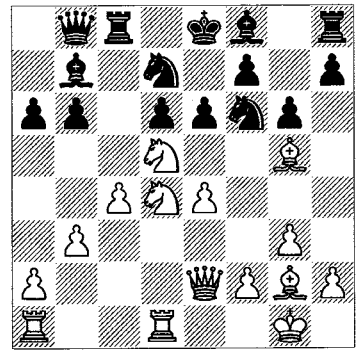
a) 13...♘e5 14 f4 ♕c5 15 ♗b2 ♘fd7 16 fxe5 dxe5 17 ♔h1, with an overwhelming position for White.

b) 13...♗e7 14 ♘f5! (but not 14 ♖e1? 0-0!, when 15 ♕xe7? loses to 15...♖ce8) 14...♘e5 (14...♕d8? allows the devastating 15 ♘xd6+ ♔f8 16 ♘xb7 ♕c7 17 ♗f4 ♕xb7 18 d6) 15 ♘xg7+ ♔d8 (White also has a dangerous initiative after 15...♔f8 16 ♗h6 ♔g8 17 ♘f5) 16 ♘f5, and White has more than enough compensation for the material. Therefore Black's strongest reply is:

c) 13...♔d8. Kasparov tells us he was intending to continue with 14 ♗b2, and considers that White has only slightly the better prospects in that position.

13 ♖d1! g6 14 ♗g5! *(D)*

B



14...♗g7

Now, however, taking the knight would be bad, as Kasparov indicates: 14...exd5 15 exd5+ ♗e7 16 ♘c6 ♗xc6 17 dxc6 ♘e5 18 f4 h6 19 fxe5 dxe5 20 ♗e3, with a winning position for White.

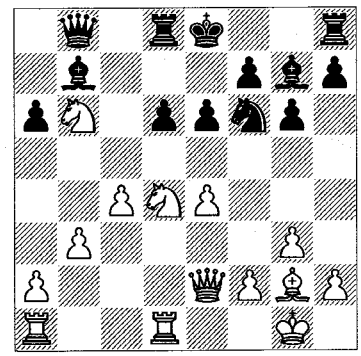
15 ♗xf6 ♘xf6

The other recapture also leaves Black in a bad position: 15...♗xf6 16 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 17 e5! ♗xg2 18 exf6 ♗h3 19 ♕e4!? h5 20 ♕h4.

16 ♘xb6 ♖d8? *(D)*

After this, White has the opportunity for a breakthrough and concludes the game in a forcing and impressive manner. The sole acceptable defence is 16...♖c7!?, but even then, after 17 ♘a4, White's advantage is substantial.

W



17 e5! ♗xg2

On 17...dxe5 18 ♘c6 ♗xc6 19 ♗xc6+ ♔e7 20 c5, White has an overwhelming position.

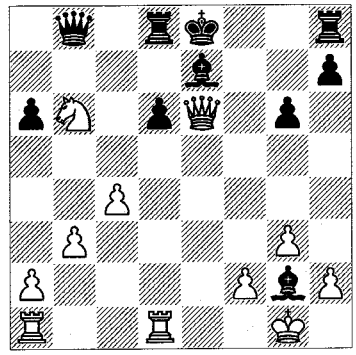
18 exf6 ♗xf6 19 ♘xe6!

This sacrifice is the point of the operation begun with White's 17th move. A different move-order would be faulty: 19 ♔xg2? ♕xb6 20 ♘xe6 fxe6 21 ♕xe6+ ♗e7 22 ♖e1 ♕b7+.

19...fxe6

On 19...♗xa1 20 ♘xd8+ ♗e5, White wins with what is the thematic move of many variations in this game: 21 c5!.

20 ♕xe6+ ♗e7 *(D)*



21 c5!!

Kasparov had already foreseen this striking and effective thrust before making his 17th move. The endgame after 21 ♖e1 ♕b7 22 ♕xe7+ ♕xe7 23 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 24 ♔xg2 is also advantageous to White, but there would still be plenty of play ahead. Now there is no defence in any variation.

21...♗b7

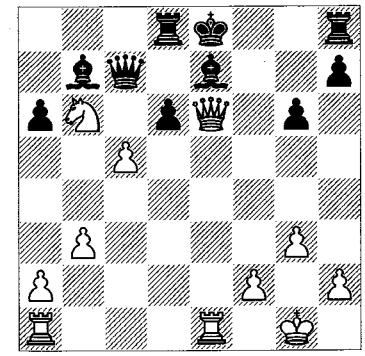
The alternative bishop retreat 21...♗c6 would lose to 22 ♖ac1 ♕c7 (or 22...♗d7 23 ♘xd7 ♖xd7 24 cxd6 ♖xd6 25 ♖c8+) 23 cxd6 ♖xd6 24 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 25 ♕xd6 ♗xd6 26 ♖xc6. White also has a won position in the event of 21...dxc5 22 ♖xd8+ ♕xd8 23 ♔xg2.

22 ♖e1 ♕c7 *(D)*

The merits of White's position are obvious, but how is he to continue the onslaught? If you recall the lessons of Chapter 2 (Development), you can find the next move – or at the very least you can understand the sense of it, and how it works.

23 c6!

This pawn sacrifice enables White to bring another fighting unit into the game, namely his



queen's rook, which has played no part until now. In this way the outcome of the contest is immediately decided. A typical and convincing example of the power of a breakthrough.

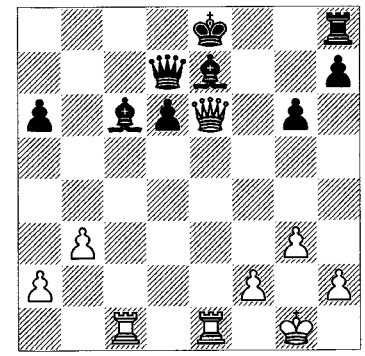
23...♗xc6

Black also loses with 23...♗c8 24 ♘d5 ♗xe6 25 ♘xc7+.

24 ♖ac1 ♖d7

The last chance to drag out his resistance, but even this is inadequate.

25 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 *(D)*



26 ♕c4!

As always, Kasparov is energetic, precise, and elegant into the bargain. The continuation he finds is much stronger than 26 ♖xc6?! ♕xe6 27 ♖xe6 ♔d7 (the point of the defence devised by Black's 24th move) 28 ♖xe7+ ♔xc6, when White would still have quite a bit of work to do in the endgame.

26...♗b7

Or 26...♗b5 27 ♕e4 ♔f7 28 a4, which is also hopeless for Black.

27 ♕c7! ♖f8 28 ♕b8+ ♔f7 29 ♖c7 1-0

A brilliant finale. Kasparov's play, elegant and powerful at the same time, makes an immensely strong impression.

Among today's generation, Vladimir Kramnik is the player whose games most often incorporate the breakthrough theme.

Kramnik – Beliavsky
Belgrade 1995

1 ♘f3 d5 2 g3 c6 3 ♗g2 ♗g4 4 0-0 ♘d7 5 d4 e6 6 ♘bd2 f5

Players make this move in order to avoid 6...♘gf6 7 ♖e1 ♗e7 8 e4.

7 c4 ♗d6 8 ♕b3 ♖b8 9 ♖e1 ♘h6

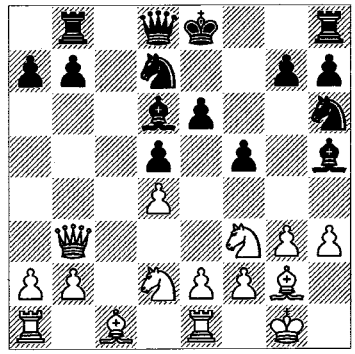
This had been played in Hug-Speelman, Altensteig 1994. Seeing that Black's move is refuted in the present game, Kramnik recommends 9...♘gf6 instead, although he still rates White's chances as better after 10 cxd5 cxd5 11 ♘g5 ♕e7 12 f3 ♗h5 13 e4.

10 cxd5 cxd5 11 h3!

The indispensable prelude to the following action.

11...♗h5 *(D)*

After 11...♗xf3 12 exf3, White's advantage is obvious.



Now comes an unexpected and very powerful stroke which is aimed at opening lines. From the positional viewpoint, the justification of this move is not hard to grasp. You need only give attention to Black's king which remains uncastled, the weakness of the e6-pawn, and the placing of White's queen on b3 and rook on e1, in order to understand how the idea of such a breakthrough comes into a player's head. The calculation of variations then follows, establishing how realistic the idea is and what sequence of moves is correct for implementing it.

12 e4!! fxe4

After 12...♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 fxe4 14 ♘xe4 dxe4 15 ♕xe6+ ♕e7 (15...♗e7 16 ♗xh6 exf3 17 ♗xg7 +–) 16 ♖xe4, the position differs from the actual game only in a very insignificant detail. Instead, 12...dxe4 13 ♘g5! ♗f7 (13...♕xg5 14 ♘xe4 ♕e7 15 ♘xd6+ +–) 14 ♘dxe4 fxe4 transposes to the game continuation.

13 ♘g5!

Another superb stroke, after which Black is defenceless. If now 13...♕xg5 14 ♘xe4 ♕e7 15 ♗g5 ♘f6 (on 15...♕f8, there is an attractive and quick win with 16 ♕xd5!!), White plays 16 ♘xf6+ gxf6 17 ♗xh6 with a won position. If 13...♕e7, then 14 ♘xe6! and again Black has no defence in any of the variations:

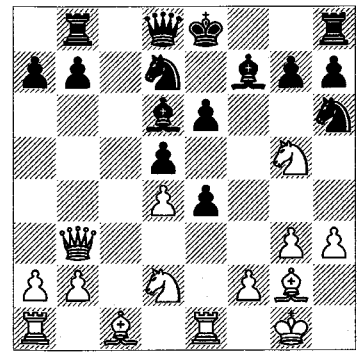
a) 14...♘f6 15 ♗xe4! (this time it is pieces that carry out a breakthrough, sacrificing themselves to open lines for their colleagues that remain on the board; it follows that a breakthrough doesn't have to be a pawn break, although most often it *is* pawns that are sacrificed) 15...dxe4 16 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 17 ♖xe4 +–.

b) 14...♕xe6 15 ♖xe4 +–.

c) As the most complex line, Kramnik gives 14...♗f7 15 ♘xg7+! ♔f8 16 ♘xe4 ♔xg7 (or 16...dxe4 17 ♗xh6 +–) 17 ♗g5! ♕f8 18 ♗xh6+ ♔xh6 19 ♕e3+ ♔g7 20 ♕g5+ ♗g6 21 ♘xd6 and wins.

All these variations are made possible by the activity of White's pieces, which was dramatically increased by the breaks carried out on his 12th and subsequent moves.

13...♗f7 *(D)*



14 ♘dxe4! dxe4 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6

Other replies also fail to save him. After 15...♕e7 16 ♖xe4, White has a winning attack. On 15...♕f6 16 ♖xe4 ♗e7 17 ♗f4 ♖d8 (17...♖c8 is very strongly answered by the

simple 18 ♕xb7) 18 ♖ae1, White also wins quickly.

16 ♕xe6+ ♕e7

Nor is there any hope for Black in 16...♗e7 17 ♗xh6 gxh6 18 ♗xe4.

17 ♖xe4 ♔d8

The ending after 17...♕xe6 18 ♖xe6+ ♗e7 19 ♗xh6 ♔f7 20 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 21 ♗xg7 is hopeless for Black, but that way at least the game could have been prolonged.

18 ♕d5 *(D)*

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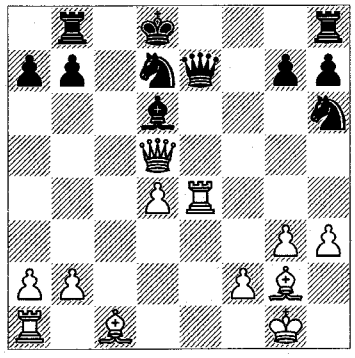


1-0

Beliavsky resigned here to avoid further torment. His decision may have been a little premature but it was not unfounded, as the following variations show:

a) 18...♕f8 19 ♖e6 ♘f7 (or 19...♗e7 20 ♖xe7! +–) 20 ♖xd6!? ♘xd6 (20...♕xd6 is no better in view of 21 ♕xf7 ♕e7 22 ♕d5 +–) 21 ♗f4 ♘f6 22 ♕xd6+ ♕xd6 23 ♗xd6 ♖c8 24 ♗xb7 ♖c2 25 b3 +–.

b) 18...♘f6 19 ♖xe7 ♘xd5 20 ♖e6 ♘f5 21 ♗xd5.

Kramnik – Timman
Belgrade 1995

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 d4 ♘bd7 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♗g5 c6 7 e3 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 ♘h5 9 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♕b1!?

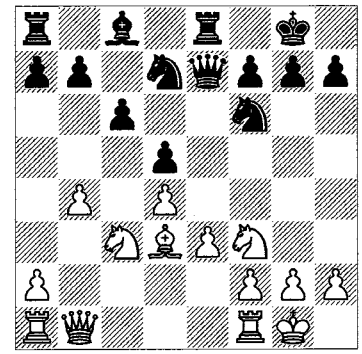
Kramnik thought of this move over the board, as an improvement over the customary 11 ♖b1. The point is that at the same time as supporting the b4-pawn, the queen will be increasing White's control of the e4-square.

11...♘hf6

Astonishing though it may seem, this natural move may be an inaccuracy. V.Milov-Borgo, Bratto 2001 went 11...g6 12 b4 a6, and after 13 a4 ♘b6 14 b5 axb5 15 axb5 ♖xa1 16 ♕xa1 c5 17 dxc5 ♕xc5 18 ♖c1 ♗g4 Black held the position.

12 b4 ♖e8 *(D)*

W



13 ♖c1!

This refined positional move supports the knight in order to meet 13...♘e4 with 14 b5, when Black will not be able to reply ...c5.

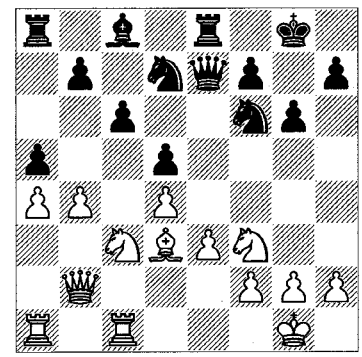
13...a6 14 a4 g6

After 14...♘e4 15 ♗xe4 dxe4 16 ♘d2 f5 17 b5, Kramnik assesses the position as clearly favourable for White.

15 ♕b2!? a5?! *(D)*

Another move I have doubts about. Black is trying to solve his problems by playing with some of his pieces only, and gets into serious trouble. A more effective line seems to me to be 15...♘f8 16 b5 axb5 17 axb5 ♖xa1 18 ♖xa1 c5.

W



16 bxa5!

Typical and strong – and much better than 16 b5 c5 (this too is a typical reaction in such situations), which gives White no more than an insignificant plus. At present the weakness of the a4-pawn counts for nothing.

16...♖xa5 17 ♘d2

This move is an essential part of White's manoeuvre directed against a5.

17...♘g4!?

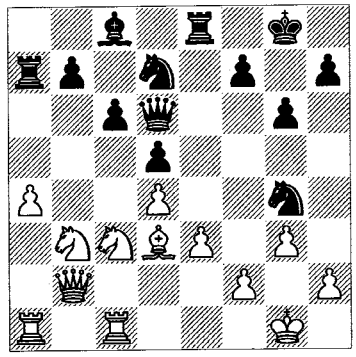
Timman looks for counterplay.

18 ♘b3 ♕d6 19 g3

The rook can't be taken; after 19 ♘xa5? ♕xh2+ 20 ♔f1 ♖xe3! it is Black who wins.

19...♖a7?! *(D)*

Withdrawing to a8 would be more precise, as the further course of events will confirm.



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20 e4!

This break is highly typical of the Queen's Gambit variation with which the game began, but it is not always good for White. It is only good when the resulting increase in the activity of White's pieces lasts for a fairly long time.

20...dxe4 21 ♘xe4 ♕f8 22 ♖e1 b6

Kramnik points out that after 22...♘df6 23 ♘bc5 ♘xe4 24 ♗xe4 ♘f6 25 ♕b6! (see the note to Black's 19th move) 25...♖a8 26 ♗f3 White maintains strong pressure all over the board. However, 22...♘gf6 was worth considering.

23 ♘bd2 ♗a6 24 ♗c2!

To understand the point of this bishop retreat, look at the a2-g8 diagonal and the f7-square in particular.

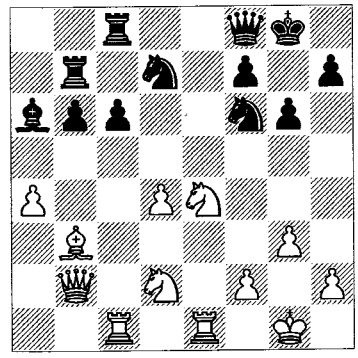
24...♖b7

By way of explaining this move, Kramnik gives the variation 24...c5 25 h3 ♘gf6? (the alternative 25...♘h6 is better but still leaves White with a large plus) 26 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 27 ♕xb6.

25 ♗b3 ♘gf6 26 ♖ac1! ♖c8 *(D)*

27 ♘xf6+!

White had the choice between this move and 27 ♘g5!? ♘d5 28 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 29 ♗xd5 ♖f6 30



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♗xb7 ♗xb7, but then Black would have some hopes of counterplay. Kramnik opts for activity.

27...♘xf6 28 d5!

This breakthrough and its consequences supply the grounds for Kramnik's 27th move.

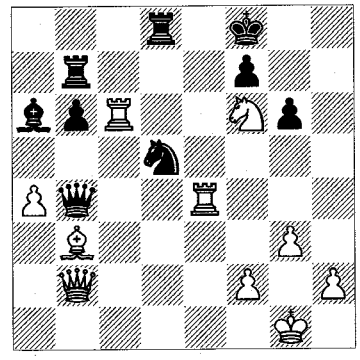
28...♘xd5 29 ♘e4 ♖d8?

In time-trouble, Timman fails to find the sole defence. Kramnik gives 29...♘b4 30 ♘f6+ ♔h8 31 ♘d5+ f6 32 ♘xb4 ♕xb4 33 ♕xf6+ ♖g7 34 ♖c3 ♖f8 35 ♕xc6, after which White has an extra pawn and a positional advantage, but the game still continues – whereas now it is all over.

30 ♖xc6 ♕b4

Black also loses with 30...♕g7 31 ♕d2 ♖bd7 32 ♗xd5.

31 ♘f6+ ♔f8 32 ♘xh7+ ♔g8 33 ♘f6+ ♔f8 34 ♖e4 *(D)*



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Once again the final position illustrates the results of a breakthrough. The activity of White's pieces and the degree of coordination attained by them are impressive.

5 Initiative

Every player has a notion of the initiative in chess, or rather a feeling for it.

Suppose, however, that you ask him to reply as precisely and comprehensibly as possible to the naïve question, "Just what *is* the initiative?" Will the answer be easy? Hardly, I believe.

And yet considerable use may be derived from defining things even when they appear the most self-evident. When some phenomenon, principle or rule is precisely and clearly formulated, it proves much easier to deal with it in everyday life, including chess life; and the circle of people capable of utilizing it is significantly widened. I shall therefore begin by trying to define the subject of this chapter, and then, as we go along, we will elaborate my formulations (I stress that they are *mine*!), test their validity in practice, and introduce corrections if need be. Well, then – possession of *the initiative* means *being able to create threats faster than the opponent*, and the aim of *developing your initiative* is ideally *to use your threats to forestall the opponent's activities, defensive as well as aggressive*. From this it follows that *fighting for the initiative always means trying to be ahead in a race*! Thus we can see already that the concept of *the initiative* is inextricably linked to that of *time and speed.*

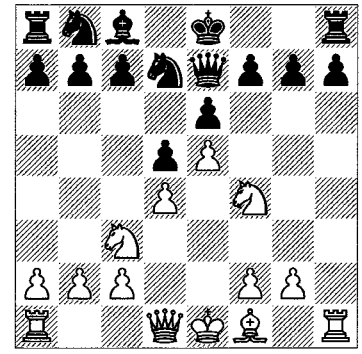
The truth of all the assertions I have made will now be tested against examples. The first is a classic example of a player quickly seizing the initiative and energetically developing it.

Alekhine – Fahrni
Mannheim 1914

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e5 ♘fd7 6 h4

The gambit variation starting with this move was still relatively little-known at the time of this game. White is intent on the rapid deployment of his forces.

6...♗xg5 7 hxg5 ♕xg5 8 ♘h3 ♕e7 9 ♘f4 *(D)*



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The basic position of the variation has arisen. Today it is considered perfectly acceptable for Black, who has a number of quite good continuations to choose from: 9...♘c6, 9...g6, or even 9...c5 which can lead to complications such as 10 ♘b5 cxd4 11 ♘c7+ ♔d8 12 ♘xa8 ♕b4+ 13 ♔e2 ♘xe5, with unclear play; this occurred in Frolov-Matveeva, Tomsk 1998. However, Alekhine's opponent fails to size up the situation and commits what is practically the decisive error – and it is only move nine! But then, we have seen similar things happen more than once in positions where the play has suddenly taken a sharp turn.

9...♘f8? 10 ♕g4 f5 11 exf6 gxf6

Not 11...♕xf6 12 ♘fxd5.

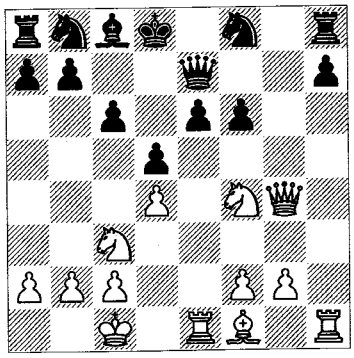
12 0-0-0 c6

An attempt to bring the black pieces into play more quickly, starting with 12...♘c6, would lead to a big advantage for White after 13 ♖e1 ♔d8 (13...e5 14 ♕h4 f5 15 ♕xe7+ ♘xe7 16 ♘fxd5 ♘xd5 17 ♘xd5 gives White a won ending) and now either 14 ♗b5 or 14 ♕h5. What, then, do these variations tell us? They tell us that in this situation Black is compelled to fend off his opponent's threats and hence is already left with no time for other indispensable activities such as development and centralization. This goes to show that White possesses the initiative according to the definition we gave earlier. If he now keeps on stoking the fire, creating one threat after another (which was what

we understood by 'developing your initiative'), then the normal functioning of Black's chess organism will become impossible. Thus in the example we are looking at, the somewhat abstract formulations are beginning to assume concrete, tangible shape.

13 ♖e1 ♔d8 *(D)*

W



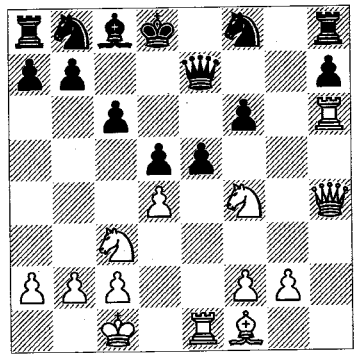
I would repeat that for the player who has seized the initiative, it is very useful – indeed essential – to keep creating new threats to make the opponent's life as hard as possible. This demands inventiveness and quite often boldness too, because *not infrequently the only way to sustain the initiative is by material sacrifices.* All White's subsequent conduct of this game presents a paradigm of energetic and bold play with the initiative.

14 ♖h6 e5

On 14...♗d7, White would play 15 ♗d3 or 15 ♕h4 f5 16 ♕g3.

15 ♕h4 *(D)*

B



15...♘bd7

Once again, an attempt by Black at active play would be refuted: 15...♖g8 16 ♖xf6 ♘bd7 17 ♘fxd5! cxd5 18 ♘xd5 ♘g6 19 ♖xg6! (19 ♘xe7 is also perfectly good; after 19...♘xh4 20 ♘xg8 ♘xf6 21 ♘xf6, the ending is won for White) 19...♕xh4 20 ♖xg8+ with a winning position. We can see that in this variation too, our definition is fully confirmed: possessing the initiative means getting ahead of your opponent in the creation of threats.

16 ♗d3 e4 *(D)*

Another possibility is 16...♖g8, bringing a piece into play. Black probably didn't like this on account of 17 ♗f5, after which 17...♖g5 seems to be well answered by 18 g4. White would have a clear plus in that case too. However, after the move played, the black rook rather unexpectedly turns out to be under constant threat.

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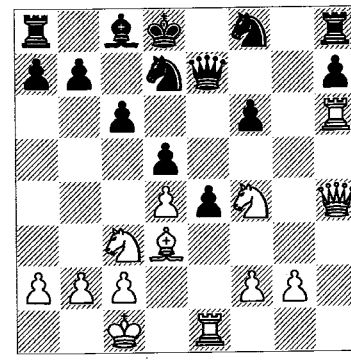

17 ♕g3!

In this situation White has quite a rich choice of possibilities. Such riches often contain a fair amount of danger, as you can easily be lured by something tempting but incorrect, or simply fail to figure out all the options; yet really strong players are generally equal to the task. How does Alekhine arrive at the right decision? We can probably guess: he wants to make ...f5 difficult for his opponent (on 17 f3 f5, this move would prove its value), and therefore hits on the idea of the move with his queen. Finding the right idea is half the battle, but it still needs to be implemented in such a way that the variations come together. We shall have reason to believe that Alekhine foresaw everything correctly.

17...♕f7 *(D)*

The first point is that 17...f5, to fortify Black's central position, no longer works in view of 18 ♘fxd5! cxd5 19 ♘xd5 ♕f7 20 ♕h4+. The second point is that 17...♕d6, Black's other move to

release the pin against the queen, is also bad. White wins with 18 ♘xe4! (Alekhine gives 18 ♗xe4?!, but this is considerably weaker on account of 18...♖g8!), and if now 18...♕e7 (on 18...dxe4 19 ♖xe4, Black has no way to prevent 20 ♕g7; here is the consequence of his failure to play 16...♖g8), there follows 19 ♖hh1! dxe4 20 ♖xe4 ♕f7 21 ♖he1, after which there is no stopping the decisive 22 ♖e7.

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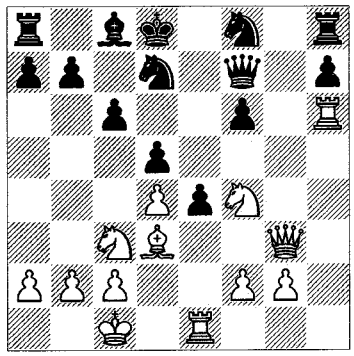


18 ♗xe4!

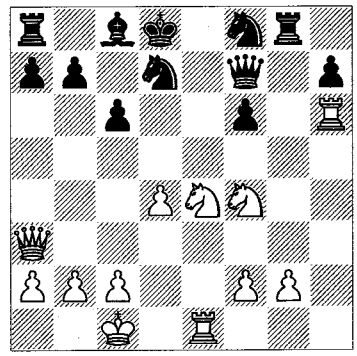
Here again, a bold piece sacrifice opens up lines for other pieces and greatly enhances the coordination of White's entire force. Apart from this, however, it was worth considering the more restrained 18 ♗e2!?. It's quite easy to understand that Alekhine, possessing the initiative, didn't want to spend a single tempo on retreating. Even then, though, Black's position would have been difficult in view of his many weaknesses, his problems of development that are so hard to solve, and on top of it the dangerous situation of his king.

18...dxe4 19 ♘xe4 ♖g8

When pondering the bishop sacrifice, Alekhine would first have had to weigh up the consequences of 19...♕xa2!?. In reply White has the following line, which although perhaps not entirely forced, is highly plausible and significant: 20 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 21 ♕g7 ♕a1+ 22 ♔d2 ♕a5+ 23 c3 ♘6d7 and now 24 ♕e7+ (only not 24 ♕xh8? ♕g5, and Black *wrests the initiative* from his opponent; I presume there is no need to elucidate this term which is very important for our topic) 24...♔c7 25 ♕d6+ ♔b6 (25...♔d8 loses at once to 26 ♖he6!, thus: 26...♘g6 27 ♖xg6! hxg6 28 ♘e6+ ♔e8 29 ♘g5+, or 26...♘xe6 27 ♘xe6+ ♔e8 28 ♘g5+!) 26 ♘d5+, and although Black obtains three pieces for the queen, the sheer impossibility of coordinating his forces makes his position hopeless. The game continuation brings no salvation either.

20 ♕a3! *(D)*

B



20...♕g7

White also has an irresistible attack after 20...c5 21 ♘d6 ♕g7 22 ♕e3!? cxd4 23 ♕xd4. It should be observed that the player developing an initiative is always looking for either material gains or else the eventual transition to a direct attack – which means steering his stream of threats into a precisely defined channel.

21 ♘d6 ♘b6 22 ♘e8! ♕f7

Or 22...♘c4 23 ♕c5 ♕f7 24 ♘d6.

23 ♕d6+ ♕d7 24 ♕xf6+ 1-0

The above game is a good illustration of how possession of the initiative grows into a direct attack – which still involves the consistent creation of threats, but ones that are directed to a more concrete end and are individually more dangerous.

Now, another example on the same lines:

Spassky – Evans

Varna OL 1962

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 c6 6 ♗e3 a6 7 ♕d2 b5 8 0-0-0 bxc4?

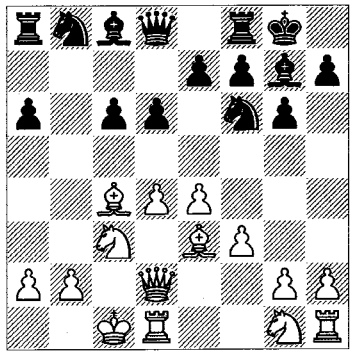
Queenside castling in this variation was first employed in the present game. Its psychological impact on Evans seems to have been considerable, as his reaction is clearly wrong from the positional viewpoint. By exchanging pawns Black is merely giving himself a half-open file that he won't be able to use for a long time, while helping White to bring his bishop to an

active post without any loss of tempo. In addition, White is relieved of worries about the further advance of the black b-pawn. Today the main line in this position is 8...♕a5. Another move sometimes played is 8...♗e6.

9 ♗xc4 0-0 *(D)*

There may have been some point in playing an immediate 9...d5 10 ♗b3 dxe4 11 fxe4 ♗g4 (a good answer to 11...♘g4 is 12 ♗g5).

W



10 h4

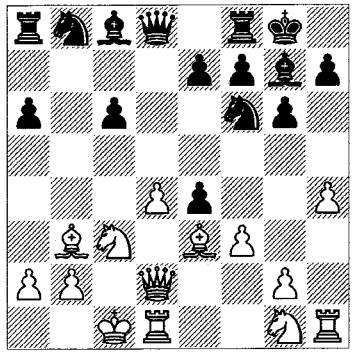
Of course.

10...d5?!

Now this manoeuvre comes too late; 10...h5!? was virtually forced.

11 ♗b3 dxe4 *(D)*

W



12 h5!

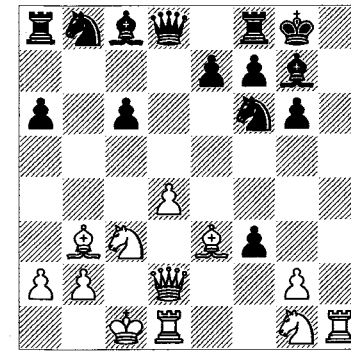
Spassky has decided that his position is strong enough for him to start a direct attack without being sidetracked by 'minor details', and he turns out to be quite right. Of course, this way of playing would have been impossible without Black's error on move 8. In essence, that error has left Black with a very bad version of the Dragon Sicilian. I did a special check and found that Larry Evans played the black side of that opening quite a few times. We can only ask what he was doing landing himself in a position like this.

12...exf3

Basically nothing is altered by 12...♘xh5 13 ♗h6 ♗xh6 14 ♕xh6 ♕c7 15 ♘ge2 exf3 16 gxf3, with a winning position.

13 hxg6 hxg6 *(D)*

W



14 ♗h6!

Splendid! Just go straight ahead without losing a single tempo. The reply is forced, but afterwards all the files against the enemy king will be open for White. Attacking in such comfort is a dream come true!

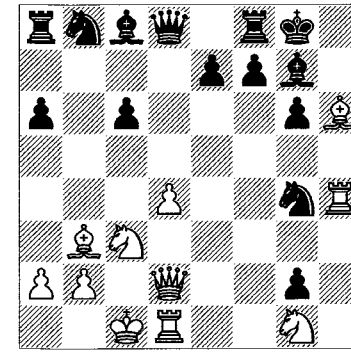
14...fxg2 15 ♖h4

This striking retort is merely the logical and even obligatory consequence of White's previous move.

15...♘g4 *(D)*

Essential. Not 15...♘h5? 16 ♖xh5.

W



16 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 17 ♕xg2 ♘h6

This time Black does have alternatives, but they are scarcely appealing:

a) 17...♘e3 is bad in view of 18 ♕h2 ♖h8 19 ♖xh8 ♕xh8 20 ♕e5+.

b) After 17...f5 18 ♘f3 ♖h8 19 ♖xh8 ♕xh8 20 ♖h1 ♕e8, White wins attractively with 21 ♘g5 ♔f6 22 ♕xg4! fxg4 23 ♘ce4+, etc.

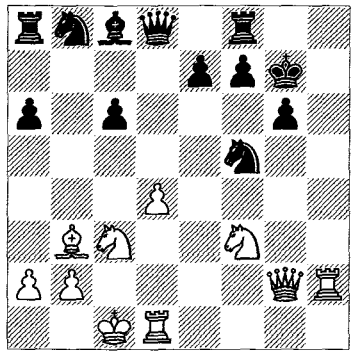
c) The most tenacious line appears to be 17...♕d6 18 ♖xg4 ♗xg4 19 ♕xg4 f5 20 ♕g5 ♕f6, but even then White has the pleasant choice between 21 ♕g2, continuing the attack, and 21 ♘f3!? going into a won ending.

18 ♘f3 ♘f5

If 18...♖h8, then 19 ♖dh1 +–.

19 ♖h2 *(D)*

B



19...♕d6

In Chapter 2 (Development) we repeatedly witnessed similar scenes. An entire wing of the black position is standing idle, while the white pieces harmoniously proceed with the attack. No wonder the analysis bears out the hopelessness of Black's situation:

a) 19...♖h8 20 ♗xf7! ♖xh2 21 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 22 ♘xh2 ♕f8 23 ♘g4 +–.

b) 19...e6 20 ♖dh1 ♖g8 21 ♖h7+ ♔f8 22 ♘e5 (22 ♘g5 and 22 ♘e4 also win) 22...♖a7 (or 22...♘g7 23 ♖f1; 22...♖g7 23 ♖h8+ ♖g8 24 ♖xg8+ ♔xg8 25 ♖h8+!) 23 ♘xg6+! ♖xg6 24 ♕xg6 fxg6 25 ♖h8+ ♔e7 26 ♖1h7+ ♘g7 27 ♖xg7+ ♔f6 28 ♖xd8 ♖xg7 29 ♖xc8.

20 ♘e5! ♘d7

There is no hope in any variation. After 20...♗e6 21 ♘e4 ♕c7 22 ♕h3, Black is mated. The result is similar after 20...e6 21 ♕h3 ♕d8 22 ♕h7+ or 20...♘e3 21 ♕g5. If 20...♘xd4, then 21 ♕g5 ♗f5 22 ♕h6+ ♔f6 23 ♘g4+ ♗xg4 24 ♘e4+ +–.

21 ♘e4 ♕c7 22 ♖dh1 ♖g8

Or 22...♘f6 23 ♗xf7. It was already high time to resign.

23 ♖h7+ ♔f8 24 ♖xf7+ ♔e8 25 ♕xg6 ♘xe5 26 ♖f8+! 1-0

The initiative is most easily acquired as a result of inaccuracies or outright errors by the opponent in the opening. But getting hold of it is not enough; the main thing is knowing how to handle it.

Tolush – Botvinnik

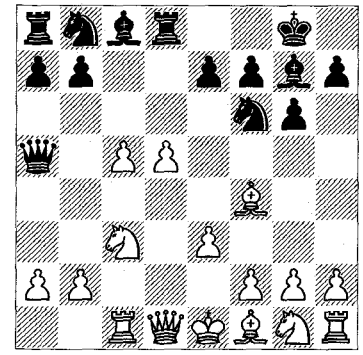
USSR Ch (Leningrad) 1939

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♗f4 ♗g7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♖c1 c5!? 7 dxc5 ♕a5

At that time Botvinnik was gaining successes with this whole variation and the present continuation in particular. Later he decided it was insufficient for equality, and introduced the more precise 7...♗e6! into practice.

8 cxd5 ♖d8 *(D)*

W



9 ♕d2?!

Tolush had thought up a new idea based on an interesting tactical resource, but unfortunately he hadn't thought it all through from the positional standpoint. Today White's best line is well known to be 9 ♗c4! ♕xc5 10 ♗b3 ♘c6 11 ♘f3. Then, for example, after 11...♘a5 12 0-0 ♗g4 13 e4 ♕b4 14 ♗c7! ♗xf3 15 ♗xa5 ♕xa5 16 ♕xf3, White gained the initiative in Lalić-J.Polgar, Erevan OL 1996.

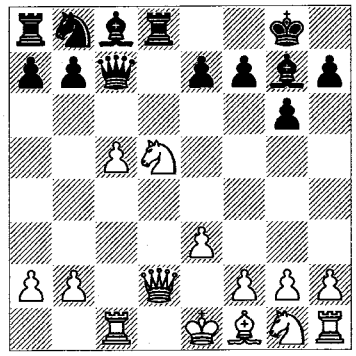
9...♘xd5 10 ♗c7!?

This is the point of Tolush's conception. Not, of course, 10 ♘xd5 ♕xd2+ 11 ♔xd2 ♖xd5+ with a definite advantage to Black.

10...♕xc7 11 ♘xd5 *(D)*

Now after 11...♕d7 12 ♖d1 ♘c6 (but not 12...e6? 13 ♘c7!) 13 ♕c1 ♔h8 14 ♘e2, there would be unclear play with White having an extra pawn. Botvinnik, however, has perceived the illogicality of White's actions. White has already fallen behind in development, his king is

B



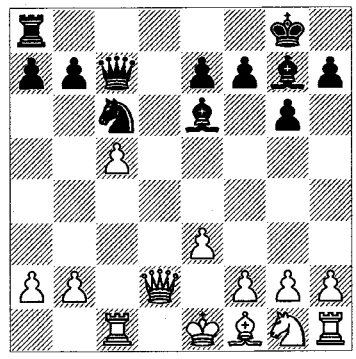
stuck in the centre, and his queenside is obviously weak. At the same time the position is of a fairly open type. The conclusion is self-evident: Black must organize an attack on his opponent's position as quickly as he can, without shrinking from giving up material if required. In concrete terms, this reasoning led to Black's next move:

11...♖xd5! 12 ♕xd5 ♗e6

It would go against the logic of the position to play 12...♗xb2? 13 ♖c2 ♗e6 14 ♕d2, but Botvinnik regards a different sequence of moves as worthy of attention: 12...♘c6!? 13 ♕d2, and now 13...♗f5!?. Later we shall consider whether this recommendation makes sense.

13 ♕d2 ♘c6 *(D)*

W

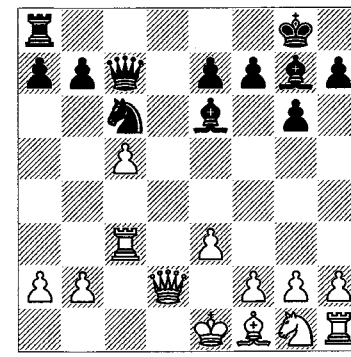


14 ♖d1?

As we shall see on several more occasions, the initiative can affect the play not only objectively, but subjectively too. When faced with his opponent's initiative, a player gets worked up; by no means everyone is able to keep cool before the daunting spectacle of threats assailing him constantly and often from the most varied of quarters. It's only natural that in such conditions you make more frequent mistakes; you tend to mistake imaginary threats for real ones, while underrating the genuine danger. In this position, for instance, White had to see his way through a fair number of unpleasant variations: 14 ♗c4? ♖d8 15 ♕c2 ♕a5+ 16 ♔f1 ♖d2 is hopeless for him, while after 14 ♗d3?! ♖d8 15 ♕e2 ♘e5 16 ♗b1 ♕a5+ 17 ♔f1 ♖d2 the game should again end in a quick win for Black.

The best chance is 14 ♖c3! *(D)*, with these possible continuations:

B



a) 14...♗xc3 15 ♕xc3 ♗xa2 16 ♘f3, and White has good chances to obtain equality.

b) 14...♗f5!? 15 a3 ♖d8 16 ♕c1 ♕a5 17 ♘e2 ♗xc3+ 18 ♕xc3 ♕a4 19 ♕c1 ♘e5, and although Black still retains some initiative, White can hope for a favourable outcome after, e.g., 20 ♘d4 ♗d3 21 ♕c3.

c) Botvinnik tells us he was intending to play 14...♘b4!? 15 ♘f3 ♖d8 16 ♘d4 ♗xa2, but after either 17 b3 e5 18 ♘b5, or 17 ♗c4 e5 18 ♖a3, I don't see that Black can do anything serious.

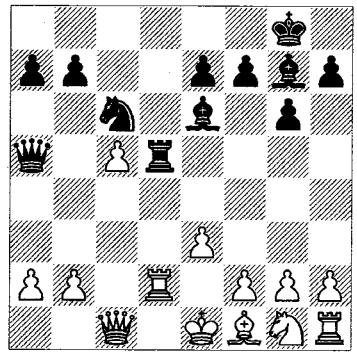
Therefore, considering that in variation 'b' Black is seeking a solution by moving his bishop from e6 to f5, we must recall Botvinnik's recommendation on move 12 and conclude that that would indeed have been most accurate, whereas in the game White missed a saving chance.

14...♖d8 15 ♕c1 ♕a5+ 16 ♖d2

An attempt to leave the rook free to move is unrealistic. After 16 ♔e2 ♕b5+ 17 ♔e1 ♕b4+, etc., White can't save himself.

16...♖d5! *(D)*

Compare this position with the situation before Black's crucial decision on move 11. This will help you to imagine how such decisions



enter a player's head. All the black pieces without exception have now occupied ideal posts, while the only difference in White's position, apart from the disappearance of his knight, is that his queen and rook have changed places! A more successful illustration of the 'development' and 'initiative' themes would be difficult to devise. Small wonder that Black now wins in all variations.

17 ♘e2

White would lose more quickly with 17 ♘f3 ♖xc5 18 ♕b1 ♗xa2 19 ♕a1 ♘b4!.

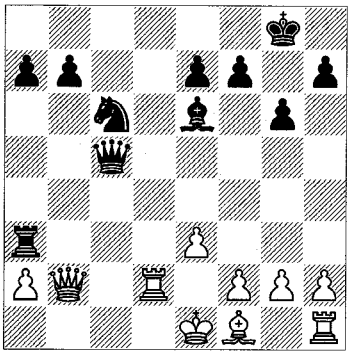
17...♖xc5 18 ♘c3 ♗xc3

As Botvinnik says, this is much more precise than 18...♖xc3?! 19 bxc3 ♗xc3 20 ♗d3 ♗xa2 21 ♔e2, when there is still plenty of play ahead.

19 bxc3 ♖xc3 20 ♕b2 ♖a3 21 ♕b5 ♕c3 22 ♕b2

White does even worse with 22 ♕d3 ♕c1+ 23 ♖d1 ♕c5.

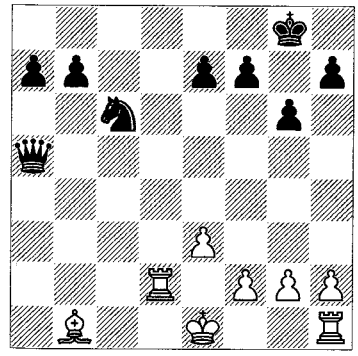
22...♕c5 *(D)*



23 ♕b1

Black wins beautifully in the event of 23 ♕xb7 ♕c1+ 24 ♔e2 ♗c4+ 25 ♔f3 ♕xd2 26 ♗xc4 ♘e5+ 27 ♔g3 ♖xe3+! 28 f3 ♘xc4 29 ♕c8+ ♔g7 30 ♕xc4 ♖e2, but then finding such variations against an exposed king is not difficult. Now Black carries out a different strike:

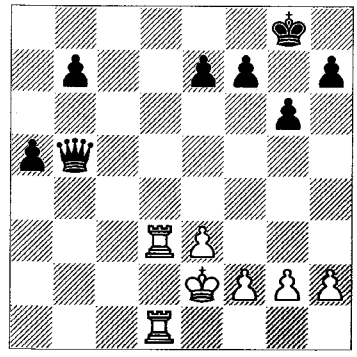
23...♗xa2! 24 ♖xa2 ♕a5+ 25 ♖d2 ♖a1 26 ♗d3 ♖xb1+ 27 ♗xb1 *(D)*



27...♘e5

Botvinnik suggests that pushing his pawns at once and retaining the minor pieces would have been more precise; for instance, 27...♕b4 28 ♗a2 a5 29 h4 a4 30 h5 b5. However, considering that his win in the actual game is so easy and problem-free, it makes no difference to speak of.

28 ♔e2 ♕b5+ 29 ♗d3 ♘xd3 30 ♖xd3 a5 31 ♖d1 *(D)*



31...♕c4!

To the attentive reader who is keen to improve, another quotation from Botvinnik is extremely useful: "'Technique' requires that the pawns shouldn't lose contact with each other."

32 ♔f3 b5 33 ♖d7 b4 34 ♖a7

There is no variation in which White succeeds in uniting his rooks for effective concerted action; e.g., **34 ♖xe7** b3 35 ♖d8+ ♔g7 36 ♖b8 a4 37 **♖a7 ♕c6+** 38 ♔e2 ♕c2+.

34...a4 35 ♖d8+ ♔g7 36 ♖da8 a3 37 g3 ♕b5! 0-1

White resigned in view of 38 ♖a5 ♕b7+ 39 ♔e2 b3.

In the following game too, the initial stage of seizing the initiative is greatly facilitated by the opponent's opening errors. The next phase, in which this initiative is developed further, is very interesting and instructive.

Stoltz – Botvinnik
Groningen 1946

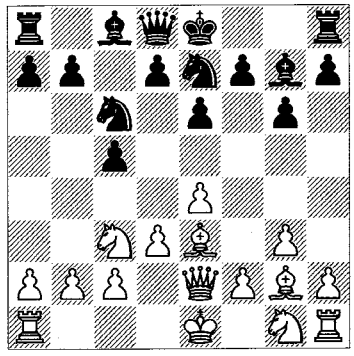
1 e4 e6 2 ♕e2 c5 3 g3 ♘c6 4 ♗g2 ♘ge7 5 ♘c3?!

In Botvinnik's view, this is an inaccuracy. He recommends developing the white forces on the King's Indian pattern with 5 ♘f3 d5 6 d3 g6 7 0-0 ♗g7 8 ♘bd2.

5...g6 6 d3 ♗g7 7 ♗e3?! *(D)*

This move proves to be a further inaccuracy, as it can't hinder Black's development while White is being sluggish about developing his own kingside. He should have brought his other knight out with 7 ♘f3 or 7 ♘h3.

B



7...d5! 8 exd5

Taking the c5-pawn, of course, is bad: 8 ♗xc5? ♕a5!.

8...♘d4! 9 ♕d2

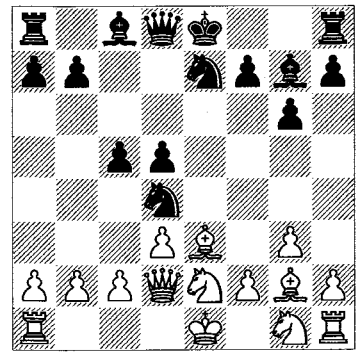
After 9 ♗xd4 cxd4 10 ♘e4 ♘xd5, Black is left with an obvious and lasting advantage.

9...exd5 10 ♘ce2 *(D)*

10...h6!

The result of White's inept handling of the opening stage is obvious. He is already behind in development and losing space. You might think this must be just the right time for Black

B



to go into action and increase his initiative further. Yet quite unexpectedly he makes a move with his h-pawn, which develops nothing and seems to serve no comprehensible purpose – and this move is furnished with an exclamation mark! How is this to be squared with the principles of speed, activity and the like, which have been enunciated before? Here is how. With his last move White set up a threat of exchanging knights on d4. If he succeeded in this, Black's advantage would be greatly diminished, as, for example, in the variation 10...♘ef5 11 ♘xd4 cxd4 12 ♗f4 0-0 13 ♘e2. There is also too little promise for Black in 10...♘xe2 11 ♘xe2 ♗xb2 12 ♖b1 ♗g7 13 ♗xc5. He mustn't allow his opponent to catch up, which would mean losing all or part of the initiative according to the definition given at the start of the chapter. That explains Black's very strong and important 10th move. Now answer this in all honesty: if the 'self-evident' concept of the initiative had not been given a clear-cut formulation, would it have been easy for me to explain the sense of this 'unobtrusive' pawn move (to use an expression I am very fond of), or for you to understand it?

11 ♕c1

Already it proves difficult for White to find good moves. After 11 c3 ♘xe2 12 ♕xe2 (not 12 ♘xe2? d4 –+) 12...0-0 Black clearly has a significant plus, while 11 ♘xd4? loses to 11...cxd4 12 ♗f4 g5.

11...♗f5 12 c3?!

Another inaccuracy. That makes three, and this one incurs the sign for a dubious move. It reminds me of a rule in the back-yard football matches of my childhood: "Three corners – penalty!" The eleven-metre kick, 'earned' as the result of his opponent's inaccuracies, is

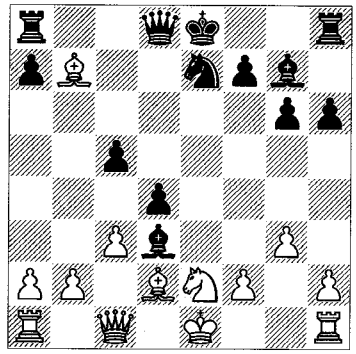
carried out by Botvinnik in exemplary fashion in the further course of the game.

As White's best line, Botvinnik himself advises 12 ♘xd4 cxd4 13 ♗d2 ♖c8 14 ♕d1, although it must be said that even then, after 14...♕b6 15 ♖b1 0-0 16 ♘e2 ♖c6 17 0-0 ♖fc8, Black exerts unpleasant pressure. Anyway it was not easy for White to anticipate the following brilliant play by his opponent.

12...♘xe2 13 ♘xe2 d4!

Not allowing White even the small amount of freedom that he would have after 13...♗xd3 14 ♗xc5.

14 ♗d2 ♗xd3 15 ♗xb7 *(D)*



Black's gains are plain to see, but the game still needs to be won, and as yet this is not at all a simple matter. Botvinnik gives the important variation 15...♖b8 16 ♗f3 0-0 17 0-0 g5 18 ♖e1 ♘g6 19 ♗g2 ♘e5. For the moment let's just make a note of this, and continue looking at the game.

15...0-0!

Losing no time, Black offers the exchange. But it cannot be taken.

16 ♗f3

This retreat is compulsory. White would lose at once with 16 ♗xa8? ♕xa8 17 ♖g1 ♖e8, or 16 ♗xh6? ♗xh6 17 ♕xh6 ♘f5! 18 ♕d2 (18 ♕f4 ♖e8 also wins for Black) 18...♗xe2. From these variations we can see that White's light-squared bishop is his most important defensive piece.

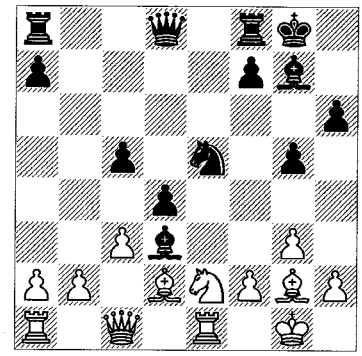
16...g5!

Clearing a route for the knight to reach e5, from where it will start pursuing the bishop. After 16...♖e8 17 0-0 ♘f5 18 ♖e1, Black's advantage wouldn't be very great.

17 0-0 ♘g6! 18 ♖e1

As before, the white bishop is more important than the enemy rook; after 18 ♗xa8 ♕xa8 19 ♖e1 ♘e5, White is helpless.

18...♘e5 19 ♗g2 *(D)*



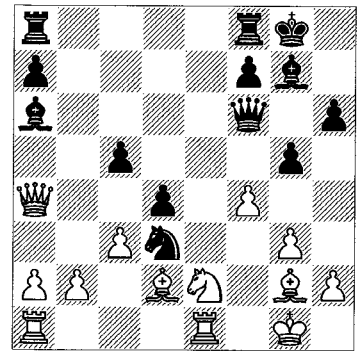
Now let's compare this position with the variation in the note to White's 15th move. Everything is the same except that the rook hasn't left a8 and it is therefore Black to play. He now makes much more effective use of this move; the tempo he has gained for active operations decides the game quickly. This splendidly illustrates the importance of the time factor when developing an initiative.

19...♗a6! 20 ♕d1 ♘d3 21 ♕a4

Again it would be bad to take the rook. After 21 ♗xa8 ♕xa8 22 ♕a4 (or 22 ♖f1 ♘xb2 23 ♕c1 ♕f3! −+) 22...♗c8, White can resign.

21...♕f6 22 f4 *(D)*

Here too 22 ♗xa8 is unplayable: 22...♕xf2+ 23 ♔h1 ♘xe1 24 ♕xa6 ♕f1+.



22...♖ae8

White could very well resign already, but with Black in time-trouble, the game carries on.

23 ♗c6 ♘xe1 24 ♗xe8 ♘f3+ 25 ♔f2 ♘xd2 26 ♗c6 ♗xe2 27 ♔xe2 dxc3 28 bxc3 ♕xc3 29

♖d1 ♖d8 30 ♗e4 gxf4 31 gxf4 ♕h3 32 ♖g1 ♕h5+ 33 ♔e3 ♕h3+ 34 ♔e2 ♕xh2+ 35 ♖g2 ♕h5+ 36 ♔e3 ♕h3+ 37 ♔e2 ♕e6 0-1

In the following game, the danger of passive play is revealed in a most graphic manner. Handing over the initiative unconditionally, without even trying to fight for it, is a sure way of heading for defeat.

Tarrasch – Alekhine
Bad Pistyan 1922

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 c5 4 d5 b5

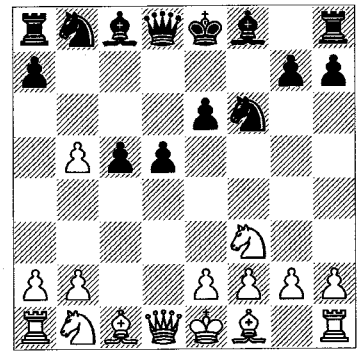
Black offers a pawn sacrifice, counting on the initiative in return. In the present game, this works ideally.

5 dxe6

In this position the most usual move is 5 ♗g5, but acceptance of the sacrifice is also perfectly playable.

5...fxe6 6 cxb5 d5 *(D)*

W



7 e3

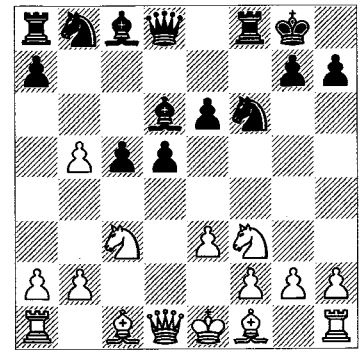
Having accepted the pawn, White needs to fight boldly for the initiative rather than cling to the pawn with might and main. For instance, the game Ehlvest-Rogers, Tallinn 1985 continued 7 ♘c3!? (a cunning though risky move), and after the incautious 7...♗b7?! (7...d4?! 8 ♘a4 leaves Black in trouble) White played 8 e4!, obeying a well-known rule: "The best way to refute a gambit is to accept it and then return the material at the right moment." After 8...dxe4 9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10 ♘e5! ♔e8 11 ♗f4, White acquired a big advantage.

The other method of development with g3 also seems promising.

7...♗d6 8 ♘c3 0-0 *(D)*

On 8...♗b7, the counter-stroke 9 e4!?, which we know about already, looks good. Then after 9...dxe4?! (9...♘bd7!? appears better, giving unclear play after 10 exd5 exd5 11 ♗e2 0-0) 10 ♘g5 ♗d5 11 ♕c2 ♘bd7 12 ♘gxe4, White obtained the better position in Browne-Quinteros, Buenos Aires 1980.

W



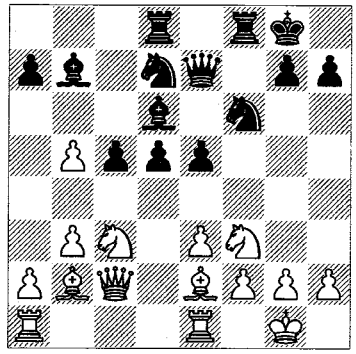
9 ♗e2?

From this moment on, White meekly consents to swim along with his opponent's plans, and his position deteriorates with every move. He had a good opportunity here to go over to the counter-attack with 9 e4!? ♘xe4 (in O'Connell-Reynolds, Ireland 1988, White stood better after 9...d4 10 e5 dxc3 11 exd6 ♘d5 12 ♗e2 cxb2 13 ♗xb2 ♕xd6 14 0-0 ♘d7 15 ♖c1) 10 ♘xe4 dxe4 11 ♘g5, when Black has plenty of weaknesses while it isn't clear how he is to create active play.

9...♗b7 10 b3 ♘bd7 11 ♗b2 ♕e7 12 0-0 ♖ad8 13 ♕c2 e5 14 ♖fe1?! *(D)*

By now the prospects for both sides look fairly clear, and it must be said that White has no reason to be pleased with them. At present his extra pawn isn't playing the slightest role, whereas Black's mighty pawn-centre looks very dangerous; if it advances further, the consequences may be dire. Hence White was more or less obliged to try disrupting the natural progress of events, even if this appeared extremely risky. The method is very familiar to us: 14 e4, and then after 14...d4 (14...♘xe4? 15 ♘xe4 dxe4 16 ♘d2 e3 17 fxe3 ♕g5 18 ♗c4+ ♔h8 19 e4 is obviously in White's favour) 15 ♗c4+ ♔h8 16 ♘d5 ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 18 exd5, Black has the promising sacrifice 18...♖xf3 (18...e4!? isn't bad either; after 19 ♘d2 ♘f6 Black has somewhat the better chances) 19 gxf3 ♕g5+ 20 ♔h1 ♕h5. White must then play

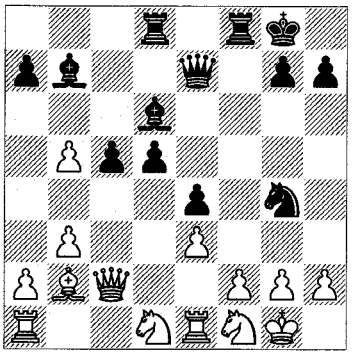
21 ♖g1 ♕xf3+ 22 ♖g2 ♘f6, when Black's chances are superior but the whole contest still lies ahead. Having missed this chance, White will be unable to alter anything in the way the play develops. We are going to witness an extraordinarily one-sided game.



14...e4 15 ♘d2 ♘e5 16 ♘d1 ♘fg4 17 ♗xg4

It goes against the grain for White to part with this bishop, but his position is so cramped that his pieces are positively treading on each other's toes. On 17 h3 ♘h6, this knight will soon come back into the game via the convenient square f5 (see below), while after 17 ♘f1 ♕h4 White has to take on g4 anyway. It's amazing how quickly White has become totally helpless. In the subsequent play, Black won't encounter any serious resistance whatever.

17...♘xg4 18 ♘f1 *(D)*



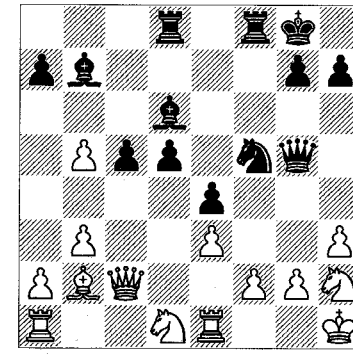
18...♕g5!

It's completely obvious that Black is close to having a won game. All he has to do is bring up his reserves and slightly weaken the enemy king position. However, since 18...♖f5?!, a useful move in many respects, would be favourably answered by 19 f4, the queen move is played instead, covering the f5-square among other things.

19 h3

White has to drive the knight back at once. After 19 a4 ♖f5!? 20 a5 (on 20 ♖e2 Black wins with 20...♘xh2! 21 ♘xh2 ♗xh2+ 22 ♔xh2 ♕h4+ 23 ♔g1 ♖h5 –+, while 20 ♘g3 ♖f7 21 ♘f1 ♖df8 is also hopeless for White) 20...♖df8, it would be all over.

19...♘h6 20 ♔h1 ♘f5 21 ♘h2 *(D)*



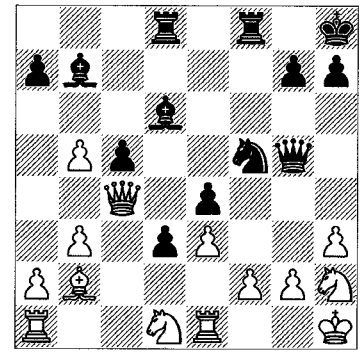
21...d4!

A measure that we know about – a breakthrough. It occurs in ideal conditions for Black. In general it must be said that this game calls to mind a kind of training fight in which an experienced boxer reels off his entire stock of attacks and punches against a junior sparring partner.

22 ♗c1

White can't stem the avalanche: 22 exd4 cxd4 23 ♗c1 (or 23 ♖xe4 ♗xe4 24 ♕xe4 ♘g3+! 25 fxg3 ♕xg3, mating) 23...e3 wins easily for Black.

22...d3 23 ♕c4+ ♔h8 24 ♗b2 *(D)*



24...♘g3+!

Precision right to the end! This check is necessary, not for show or because of what would happen if White took the knight, but in order to keep White's queen out of touch with his other pieces. A different move-order would not achieve this, for after 24...♗d5 25 ♕c3 ♘g3+ the knight can be taken: 26 fxg3 ♕xg3 27 ♘g4.

25 ♔g1

Now, of course, the same thing doesn't work.

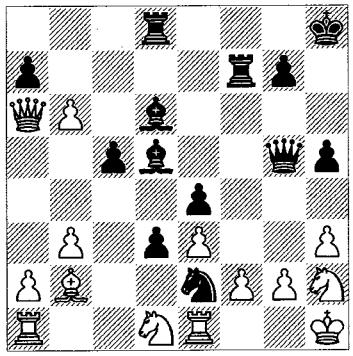
25...♗d5 26 ♕a4

At this stage 26 ♕c3 is also unplayable.

26...♘e2+ 27 ♔h1 ♖f7 28 ♕a6 h5

Black isn't in a hurry. He marshals all his resources before commencing the decisive action.

29 b6 *(D)*



B

29...♘g3+!

Once again this knight check is useful to Black, as it quashes White's hopes of reducing the pressure in the variation 29...axb6 30 ♖xe2 dxe2 31 ♕xe2.

30 ♔g1 axb6 31 ♕xb6 d2 32 ♖f1 ♘xf1 33 ♘xf1 ♗e6!

The bishop has come across to sacrifice itself; against this, there is no defence.

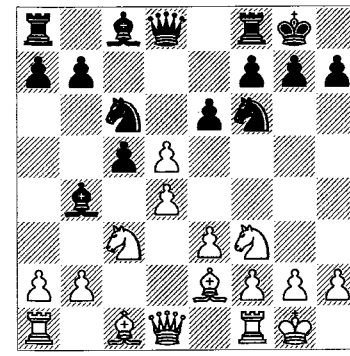
34 ♔h1 ♗xh3! 35 gxh3 ♖f3 36 ♘g3 h4 37 ♗f6 ♕xf6 38 ♘xe4 ♖xh3+ 0-1

When an opportunity to seize the initiative arises, it's very important not to miss it.

Bronstein – Szabo
Zurich Ct 1953

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 ♘f3 c5 5 e3 0-0 6 ♗e2 d5 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 cxd5 *(D)*

8...cxd4?!



B

This move is imprecise; in the ensuing play White immediately gains the better chances. Theory recommends 8...exd5.

9 dxc6 dxc3

The pawns on c3 and c6 create tension in the position, and a lot now depends on whose move it is.

10 ♕b3

The player to move needs to act resolutely in an effort to seize the initiative.

10...♕e7?!

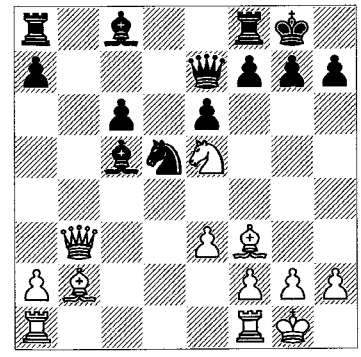
In Bronstein's opinion, 10...♕b6!? is more precise.

Relying on some fine details of the position, White now succeeds in working up a noticeable initiative.

11 ♘e5! ♗d6

In the game Pachman-Zita, Marianske Lazne 1956, White obtained a clear advantage after 11...♘d5 12 ♗f3 ♗d6 13 ♘c4 bxc6 14 ♘xd6 ♕xd6 15 bxc3.

12 ♘c4 cxb2 13 ♗xb2 ♗c5 14 ♗f3 ♘d5 15 ♘e5 bxc6 *(D)*



W

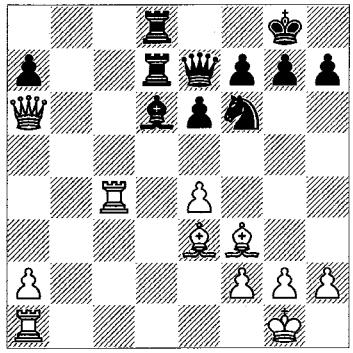
With his enterprising pawn sacrifice for the initiative, White has made obvious progress over the last five moves, and now, according to

Bronstein, he could have acquired a distinct advantage by 16 ♘xc6! ♕d6 (16...♕c7? 17 ♗xd5 exd5 18 ♕c3 is wholly bad for Black; he would also lose after 16...♕g5? 17 h4! ♕xh4 18 ♗xd5 exd5 19 ♕c3) 17 e4!. Alas, he played imprecisely:

16 e4?!

And there followed:

16...♘f6 17 ♖fc1 ♗d7 18 ♕c3 ♗b4 19 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 20 ♕xc6 ♖ad8 21 ♖c4 ♖d2 22 ♗c1 ♖d7 23 ♗e3 ♗d6 24 ♕a6 ♖fd8 *(D)*



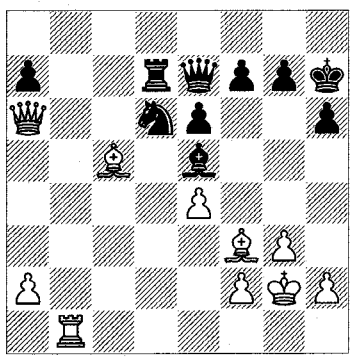
W

All that White has left is a very slight, more or less nominal advantage, seeing that Black has mobilized and deployed his pieces effectively. White's only hope of keeping up the fight lies in the black a7-pawn, but at present it is well shielded against attacks.

25 ♖b1 ♘e8 26 g3 ♗e5 27 ♔g2 h6 28 ♖cb4 ♔h7

At all events Black needs to be careful. He could lose by attempting to force exchanges with 28...♗d4? 29 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 30 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 31 ♖b7 ♖d7 32 e5! ♖xb7 33 ♗xb7 ♕c5 34 ♗c6, even though in principle an exchange of dark-squared bishops is useful to him.

29 ♖b7 ♘d6 30 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 31 ♗c5 *(D)*



B

31...♖c7

Here Black commits his first almost imperceptible inaccuracy. According to Bronstein it was better to play 31...♕d8!? 32 ♖d1 ♕c7, and it's hard to see how White could breach this formation. But in what way is Black's move inaccurate, and what ideas can White have for improving his position here?

32 ♗a3

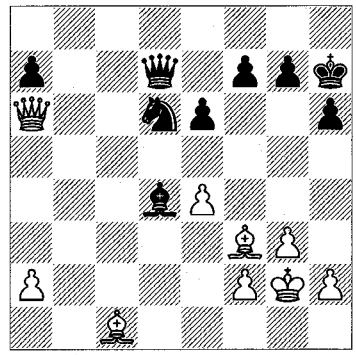
In Bronstein's view, 32 ♕a3!? would have been even stronger.

32...♕d7 33 ♖c1

Here is the answer to the first part of the question. Since the black rook is defending the only real weakness and the white one can't attack it, a rook exchange can only increase White's chances.

33...♖xc1 34 ♗xc1 ♗d4?! *(D)*

An obvious move – and evidently inaccurate! An improvement seems to be 34...♘b5 35 ♕a4 ♕c6 36 ♗e3 a6.



W

35 e5!

Unexpected, and very soundly based! White gives up a pawn to remove the black bishop from the crucial diagonal. Now at last his own bishops will have the opportunity to show their worth.

35...♗xe5

Declining the offer with 35...♘f5!? seems better, but after 36 ♗c6 ♕c7 37 f4 the white e5-pawn would be cramping the enemy position and the struggle would continue. Here it must be said that in chess you very rarely succeed in demonstrating an outright win even after mistakes by your opponent, but it's important to be able to strengthen your position and create the preconditions for his further errors.

36 ♗e3 ♘c8

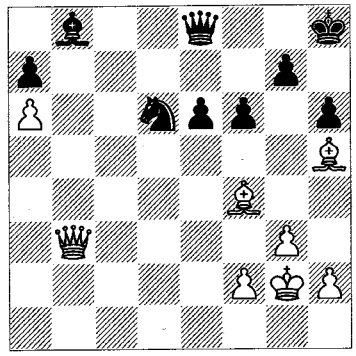
If 36...♘f5 37 ♗xa7 ♘d4, White has the strong rejoinder 38 ♕b7!.

37 a4

Now the point of White's pawn sacrifice is revealed. The black a-pawn is fixed on a vulnerable square, and by advancing his own pawn as far as he can, White hopes to turn this into a dangerous passed pawn sooner or later. The two bishops in this situation prove to be a tremendous force. Black's defence is not easy.

37...♗b8 38 a5 ♘d6 39 ♗f4 f6 40 ♕d3+ ♔g8 41 a6 ♔h8 42 ♕b3 ♕e8 43 ♗h5 *(D)*

B



43...♕g8?

The losing error. A much more stubborn line was 43...♕c8 44 ♗g4 f5 45 ♗f3 ♗c7, with chances of defence.

Now White strikes the decisive blow, showing what constitutes the power of the bishop-pair in an open position.

44 ♗f7! ♕xf7

Black also loses with 44...♘xf7 45 ♕xb8 e5 (nothing is altered by 45...g5 46 ♕xg8+ ♔xg8 47 ♗b8) 46 ♕xg8+ ♔xg8 47 ♗e3 ♘d6 48 ♗xa7 ♔f7 49 ♗c5 ♘b5 50 ♗b6.

45 ♕xb8+ ♘e8 46 ♕b7 ♕h5 47 h3 ♔h7 48 ♕xa7 e5 49 ♗e3 e4 50 ♕e7 1-0

The value of this game undoubtedly lies in White's pawn sacrifice on move 35 and his subsequent actions in developing his initiative.

In the following game, the play is based on similar strategic motifs.

Stein – Keres

Moscow 1967

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 f5 12 ♘b3 ♗b6 13 ♘fd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♕d7

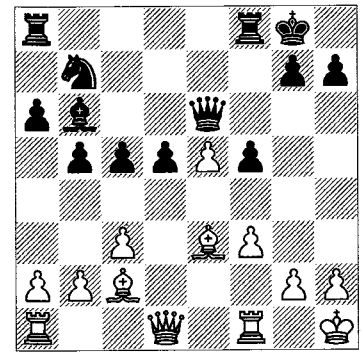
Keres avoids a theoretical dispute over the once-fashionable variation 14...♗xd4 15 cxd4 f4 16 f3 ♘g3! 17 hxg3 fxg3 18 ♕d3 ♗f5 19 ♕xf5 ♖xf5 20 ♗xf5 ♕h4 21 ♗h3 ♕xd4+ 22 ♔h1 ♕xe5 23 ♗d2 ♕xb2. Instead he chooses a rarer line, but one that allows White the advantage of the bishop-pair. Black therefore needs to be careful.

15 f3 ♘c5 16 ♔h1 ♘b7?!

This move looks unfortunate. All Black's favourable results in this extremely rare variation have involved 16...♖ae8.

17 ♗e3 c5 18 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 *(D)*

W



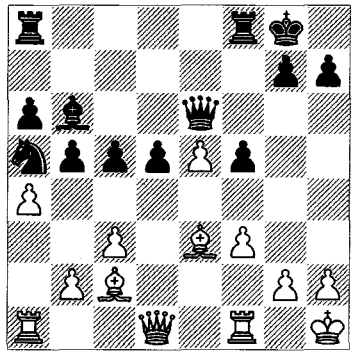
19 a4!!

The most interesting and important part of this game now begins. Instead of playing the obvious 19 f4, White gives up his e-pawn! In the endgame, a protected passed pawn often amounts to a decisive plus. The point, however, is that after 19...♘a5!? 20 b3 ♖ad8 the endgame would be a long way off, while Black would obtain realistic chances of advancing a passed pawn of his own and seizing the central squares. Furthermore a blocked type of position would arise, and this is unwelcome to bishops. Stein therefore strives to achieve the opposite – to make the position as open as possible, so that his bishops can have their momentous say. In other words, both players are fighting for the initiative, which each of them hopes to develop in his own manner.

19...♘a5 *(D)*

White's ambitions are backed up by analysis; it appears that taking the pawn would be bad for Black. Dolmatov gives 19...♕xe5 20 ♖e1 ♗c7 21 ♗g1 ♕d6 22 axb5 axb5 23 ♖xa8

♖xa8 24 ♗xf5, with an obvious advantage for White.



20 ♗f2!

Another subtle and deep move, based on the following considerations: (a) to avoid blocking the position, White must refrain from playing f4, and (b) since Black's main counter-chance consists in ...♘c4, White anticipates this by removing his bishop from attack.

20...♔h8

Of course, all general considerations need calculation to support them. Once again, the variations show that 20...♕xe5? fails: 21 axb5 axb5 22 b4 ♘c4?! (even after the superior 22...♘b7 23 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 24 ♖e1 ♕d6 25 ♗xf5, White is clearly better) 23 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 24 bxc5 ♗c7 25 ♗g3 f4 26 ♗xf4 and wins.

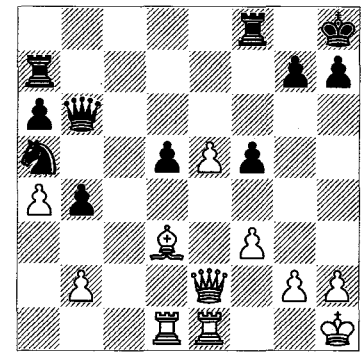
On the other hand 20...♘c4 is met by 21 b3 ♘xe5 22 axb5 axb5 23 ♗xf5! ♕f7 24 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 25 ♖e1, again with the better chances for White. Still, this line was probably Black's best option in the circumstances. Keres prefers to keep the game closed. White is endeavouring to open it up. I repeat that a struggle for the initiative is going on, and the better chances in this struggle are on White's side.

21 ♖e1 ♖a7 22 ♕e2 b4?

This move proves to be the decisive mistake, after which Black's position falls apart. Instead 22...c4!? appears compulsory, though White would still have an undoubted plus after 23 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 24 ♖ed1.

23 cxb4 cxb4 24 ♗xb6 ♕xb6 25 ♖ad1 ♕c5 26 ♗d3! ♕b6 *(D)*

The position speaks for itself, but unfortunately it won't win itself! White needs to play well to the very end. Stein copes with the task splendidly.

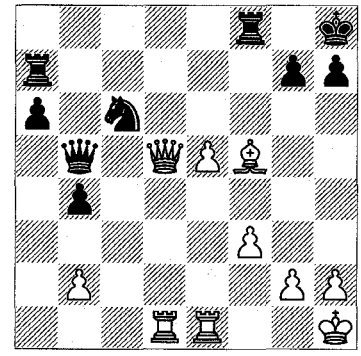


27 ♗b1!

Clearing a file for the major pieces. Now Black won't succeed in holding his weaknesses.

27...♕c6 28 ♕d2 ♕xa4 29 ♕xd5 ♘c6 30 ♗xf5 ♕b5 *(D)*

Black loses with either 30...♖xf5 31 ♕d8+ ♘xd8 32 ♖xd8+ or 30...♘e7 31 ♕c5.



31 ♕d6

There was an easy win with 31 ♕xb5 axb5 32 ♗d7, but Stein has decided to keep on increasing his activity to the last. It's a matter of taste. The rest is simple and comprehensible.

31...♕b8 32 ♕xc6 ♖xf5 33 e6 ♖e7 34 ♖d7 ♖e8 35 ♖b7 ♕c8 36 ♖c7 ♕b8 37 ♕d7 ♖g5 38 f4 ♖g6 39 f5 ♖g5 40 f6 1-0

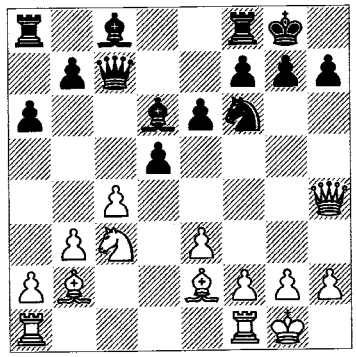
The next game reveals some interesting psychological details connected with the problems of fighting for the initiative.

Bisguier – Stein
Stockholm IZ 1962

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 c5 3 c4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e6 5 e3 d5 6 ♘c3 ♘c6 7 ♗e2 ♗d6

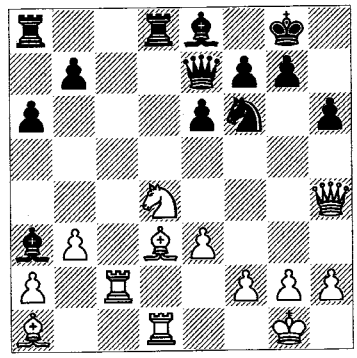
An alternative is 7...♗c5.

8 0-0 0-0 9 b3 a6 10 ♗b2 ♘xd4 11 ♕xd4 ♕c7 12 ♕h4 *(D)*



Given the situation in the tournament, it was imperative for Stein to win this game. However, after the way the opening has gone, we can see that playing for the win is by no means simple. Playing this sort of position might have been to the taste of Akiba Rubinstein. The following exchange is necessary so as to keep the c-file temporarily obstructed while Black completes his development.

12...dxc4 13 ♗xc4 ♖d8 14 ♖fd1 ♗d7 15 ♖ac1 ♗c6 16 ♗d3 ♕e7 17 ♘e2 h6 18 ♘d4 ♗e8 19 ♖c2 ♗a3 20 ♗a1 *(D)*



Although, in general terms, exchanges are unwelcome to Black, the trade of dark-squared bishops might have increased his chances. The most important enemy piece would have disappeared from the board, and Black could have hoped to exploit White's dark-square weaknesses.

20...♖d7!?

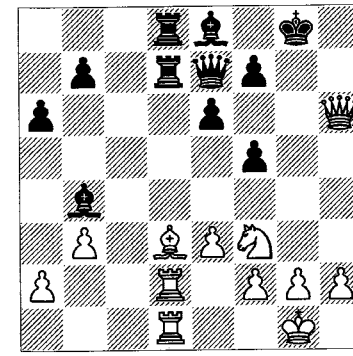
The right way; not 20...♖ac8. It's absolutely essential for Black to introduce tension into the position. Almost certainly, he has already seen the following positional and psychological trap.

21 ♘f3 ♖ad8 22 ♖cd2

Now on 22 ♘e5 ♖d5, complications would set in, which would play into Black's hands. The move White makes looks logical. He plans to bring about mass-exchanges.

Black's next move looks unplayable, but...

22...♗b4! 23 ♗xf6 gxf6 24 ♕xh6 f5 *(D)*



25 ♘g5

The natural move. Instead, the tempting 25 ♘e5? would fail against 25...♗xd2 26 ♖xd2 (26 ♘xd7 loses to 26...♗xd7 27 ♖xd2 ♗b5) 26...♖d5 27 ♘g4 (or 27 f4 f6 28 ♘g6 ♕g7) 27...♖xd3, and wins.

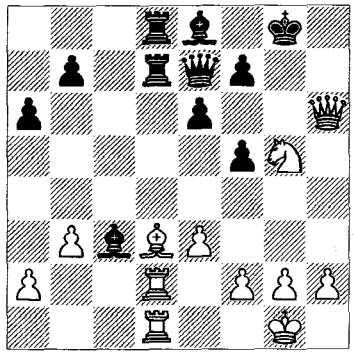
25...♗c3! *(D)*

One puzzle remains: what exactly has White overlooked? Perhaps he didn't see this last move, and was counting on 25...f6? 26 ♗c4! ♖xd2 27 ♗xe6+ ♗f7 (or 27...♕xe6 28 ♕h7+) 28 ♕h7+ ♔f8 29 ♕h8+ with mate to follow. However that may be, the abrupt change in the situation, with the sudden need to calculate a multitude of sharp lines, had knocked Bisguier off the rails. Thus, having lured his opponent into a trap with his 20th move, Black had first and foremost seized the *psychological* initiative. (It goes to show that there is such a thing!) But then Black also holds the initiative on the board, as White now needs to parry the threats and make a difficult choice between several variations.

26 h4?

White fails to cope. Objectively there *was* a way to save himself, namely with 26 ♕h7+ ♔f8 27 ♕h6+ ♗g7 28 ♕h4!, and now if Black tries 28...♕c5!?, a good answer is 29 ♕h5 (or 29 ♕g3 ♖xd3 30 ♘h7+ ♔g8 31 ♘f6+ ♔f8 32

W



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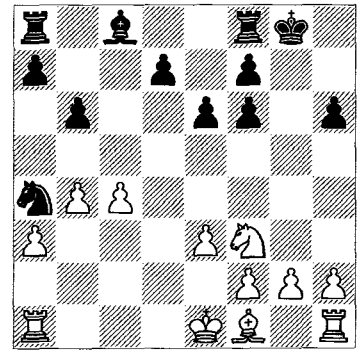


♘h7+, which also leads to repetition) 29...♕b4 30 ♕e2 e5 31 e4 ♗h6 32 ♕h5 ♗xg5 33 ♕h8+ ♔e7 34 ♕xe5+ ♔f8 35 ♕h8+ with perpetual check.

26...♕f6!

Now it's all over.

27 ♕h7+ ♔f8 28 ♕h5 ♕h8

Other moves would also win: 28...♔e7 29 ♘h7 ♕g6 –+ or 28...♕g7 29 ♘h7+ ♔g8 –+.

29 ♘h7+ ♔g8 30 ♕g5+ ♕g7 31 ♖c2 ♕xg5 32 ♘xg5 ♖xd3 0-1

As we have just seen, the initiative in your opponent's hands is dangerous both objectively and subjectively. A computer doesn't mind whether you are threatening it or not. It has nerves of steel and takes a strictly objective view of everything. Human beings are different. They are endowed with emotions, and if they land in a situation where they are incessantly threatened (which, as we know, is what holding and developing the initiative is all about), they are quite capable of going to pieces, losing their composure and making what at first sight you would call the most incredible blunders. In the game we have just examined, we came across an example of this. We will now look at another one.

Kožul – Kasparov
Belgrade 1989

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 ♕c2 0-0 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗h4 c5 7 dxc5 ♘a6 8 a3 ♗xc3+ 9 ♕xc3 ♘xc5 10 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 11 ♕xf6 gxf6 12 b4 ♘a4 13 e3

Perhaps 13 g3!? is better.

13...b6 14 ♘f3 *(D)*

White has played the opening without the slightest pretensions to an advantage; his sole aim has been to reach a simple and harmless position. Already, however, he has made some definite concessions. He is somewhat behind in development and is not even attempting to limit his opponent's scope. Furthermore the c-pawn, and with it the whole of the c-file, is liable to be a problem. Even though all this doesn't look dangerous as yet, and White's position is fairly sound, the fact remains that he has already handed his opponent the initiative, however slight it may be at present. In this connection I would like to say that when facing a stronger opponent, it is rather short-sighted to strive for safety above all else at the price of relieving him of any worries whatever. After all, if he *is* stronger, then once he feels secure he will harass you hard and persistently without risking anything.

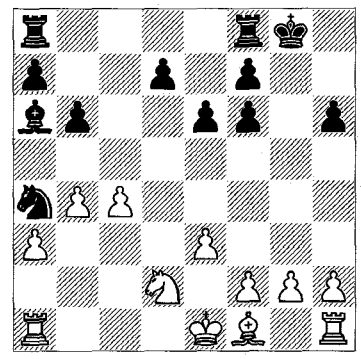
14...♗a6!?

Kasparov straight away fastens onto the weak white pawn. The moment when variations will need to be calculated is approaching fast.

15 ♘d2 *(D)*

After 15 0-0-0 ♖fc8 16 ♖xd7 ♗xc4 17 ♗xc4 ♖xc4+ 18 ♔d2 ♖ac8, Black would retain some pressure.

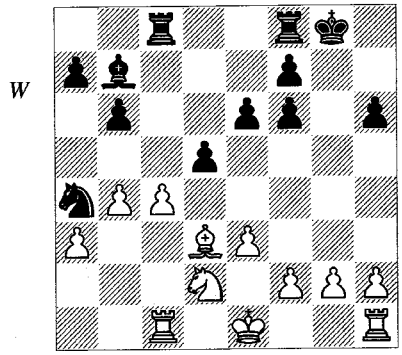
B



15...♗b7 16 ♗d3 ♖ac8 17 ♖c1?!

This is already a significant though inconspicuous inaccuracy – perhaps even a downright error, after which White's problems are going to grow. A better move is 17 0-0, and then in the event of 17...♘b2 18 ♗e2 d5 19 ♖fc1 ♘xc4 20 ♘xc4 dxc4 21 ♗xc4! ♖fd8 22 ♗e2! White would obtain completely equal chances.

17...d5 *(D)*



18 ♔e2?!

Another unfortunate move. This kind of thing occurs very often. When faced with even minor difficulties, you only have to make one slight mistake, and you find that your problems have suddenly increased in number and complexity. With them, the likelihood of new errors, usually more serious ones, increases too. Such is the mechanism by which the initiative exerts its psychological pressure.

White's troubles are illustrated by these variations:

a) 18 ♖c2 dxc4 19 ♗xc4 (or 19 ♖xc4 ♘b2) 19...♖fd8, and by now Black's pressure is not easy to withstand.

b) 18 ♗c2 ♘b2 19 c5 bxc5 20 ♖b1 ♘c4 21 ♘xc4, and now Black has 21...cxb4! 22 ♘d6 ♖xc2 23 ♘xb7 bxa3 with a winning advantage.

c) It seems to me that White's only acceptable try is 18 0-0. Then after 18...♖fd8 19 cxd5 ♖xd5 20 ♗e4 ♖xd2 21 ♗xb7 ♖c3, he has the important resource 22 ♗f3, to create counterplay against the f7-pawn.

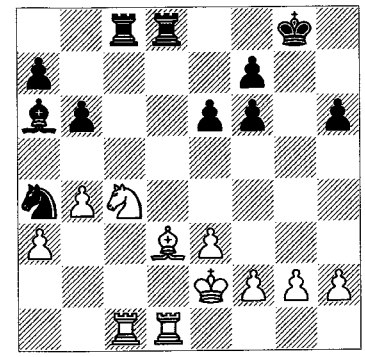
18...dxc4! 19 ♘xc4

White is a good deal worse off after 19 ♖xc4?! ♘c3+ 20 ♔e1 ♖fd8. Things are also unpleasant in the event of 19 ♗xc4 b5 20 ♗b3 ♘c3+, but this may have been better than the move actually played.

19...♖fd8 20 ♖hd1

White has plenty of problems. After, for instance, 20 f3 ♗a6 21 ♘b2 ♖xd3! 22 ♘xd3 (not 22 ♖xc8+ ♖d8+!) 22...♖d8, he is in a bad way. If 20 b5, then 20...a6 is strong.

20...♗a6 *(D)*



21 ♖d2

This move is a gross blunder, but there is still no need to attach any sign to it. The point is that White is lost in any case; e.g., 21 ♘b2 ♗xd3+ 22 ♘xd3 ♘c3+ –+, 21 e4 ♗xc4 22 ♗xc4 ♖xd1 –+ or 21 ♖c2 b5 (or 21...♗xc4) 22 ♘a5 ♖xc2+ 23 ♗xc2 ♘c3+. This is precisely what explains his elementary oversight.

21...b5 0-1

Of course, seizing the initiative is not always easy. Against a strong and well-prepared opponent, the initiative has to be fought for. The methods are already familiar to us: a constant focus on activity, and a readiness for material or positional sacrifices when necessary.

Spassky – Tukmakov
USSR Ch (Moscow) 1973

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♗g5 e6 7 f4 ♘bd7 8 ♕f3 ♕c7 9 0-0-0 b5 10 ♗d3 ♗b7 11 ♖he1 ♕b6 12 ♘b3 b4 13 ♘a4

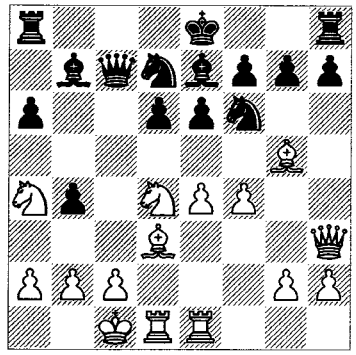
At one time this variation was quite popular. The knight move to a4 is the main line, although it leads to sharp play in which White has to be prepared to take radical measures. The retreat to b1 is also of interest.

13...♕c7 14 ♘d4 ♗e7 15 ♕h3 *(D)*

15...♘c5

After this move, which at first sight looks tempting, the play becomes a good deal sharper. In subsequent games, no one else played this

B



way; Black invariably castled queenside. Tukmakov's move may, however, be perfectly acceptable.

16 ♘xc5

White hasn't much choice, since in the event of 16 e5 ♘xd3+ 17 ♖xd3 dxe5 18 fxe5 ♘d5 19 ♗xe7 ♘xe7!? it is Black who has the advantage.

16...dxc5

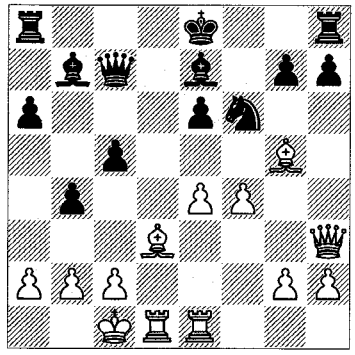
The variations after 16...♕xc5 17 e5 dxe5 18 ♖xe5 work out in White's favour:

a) 18...♗d5 19 ♘f5! ♗f8 (19...exf5 20 ♕xf5 ♖d8 21 ♗xf6 is bad for Black: 21...gxf6 22 ♕xf6 and now 22...♖f8 23 ♕xa6! or 22...♖g8 23 ♗xh7) 20 ♘e3 ♗d6 21 ♗xf6 gxf6 22 ♖xd5 exd5 23 ♕f3.

b) 18...♕c7 19 ♗xf6 gxf6 20 ♖xe6! ♕xf4+ (or 20...fxe6 21 ♘xe6 ♕a5 22 ♘g7+ ♔f8 23 ♕h6 and White wins) 21 ♕e3 with advantage.

17 ♘xe6 fxe6 *(D)*

W



White has given up a piece for only one pawn, and now he makes a quiet move:

18 ♗c4!

Of course Spassky will have had to foresee and assess this turn of events when selecting the square for his knight on move 13. Now the black king is stuck in the centre for a long period, and White will have an enduring initiative – but it's hard to say how strong it will be, and what defensive resources there are in the black position. In chess such a state of affairs arises quite often; if a player steers clear of such unforced sacrifices through lack of confidence in the initiative, he is severely narrowing his chess horizon and depleting his arsenal.

18...♖d8?

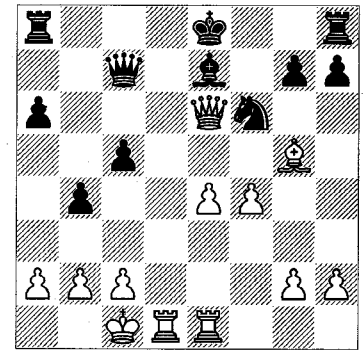
Confronted with something unexpected (but then, what other variations *should* he have expected?), Black at once commits an error – perhaps even the decisive one! We have already analysed this kind of psychological reaction.

The most logical move seems to be 18...♗c8, trying to reduce White's attacking forces. Then on 19 ♗xe6, Black needs to study two possible replies:

a) 19...♕c6?! looks natural, but is met by the immensely strong 20 e5!! ♘g8 (after 20...♗xe6 21 exf6 ♗xh3 22 ♖xe7+ ♔f8 23 fxg7+ ♔g8 24 gxh3 h6 25 gxh8♕+ ♔xh8 26 ♗h4 White has the advantage, though admittedly it's hard to say how big it is) 21 ♖d6! ♗xd6 (Black also does badly with 21...♕b7 22 ♕h5+ g6 23 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 24 ♖xg6, or with 21...♕c7 22 ♕f3 ♗b7 23 ♕d3), and now White wins by 22 exd6 ♔f8 23 ♕f5+.

b) 19...♗xe6! is therefore much better. After 20 ♕xe6 *(D)*, there are these options:

B



b1) 20...♕c8 21 ♕c4, and White maintains unpleasant pressure.

b2) A line prompted by Fritz is also in White's favour: 20...c4?! 21 ♗xf6!? gxf6 22 e5 fxe5 (22...b3 23 exf6 bxa2 24 ♔d2!! ♖d8+ 25 ♔e2 ♖xd1 26 ♖xd1 is clearly better for White; without an electronic friend, you can scarcely

hope to foresee a move like White's 24th) 23 ♖xe5 ♖d8 24 ♖de1 ♖d7 25 f5 with a decisive advantage for White.

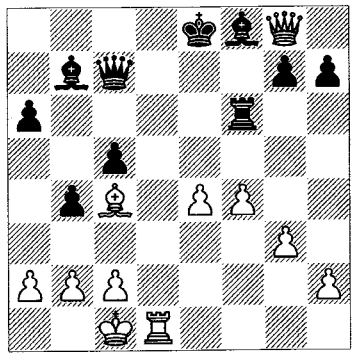
b3) 20...♖f8!?, and to me the consequences seem unclear.

19 ♕xe6 ♖xd1+ 20 ♖xd1 ♖f8 21 ♗xf6

Only not 21 e5? ♗c8.

21...♖xf6 22 ♕g8+ ♗f8 23 g3 *(D)*

B



23...♗c8

By now the position is easy to evaluate. White's advantage is obvious and Black's defence is very difficult. White holds an initiative which essentially will persist until the end of the game. All that is now required of him is to proceed accurately. As it happens, he has a whole range of threats at his disposal. Thus, on 23...g6, he would gain a decisive plus by 24 e5 ♖b6 25 ♗b3!, when Black has no good defence against the murderous check 26 ♗a4+.

24 e5 ♖b6

Another of White's threats emerges from 24...♖h6 25 ♖d8+!.

25 ♕xh7?

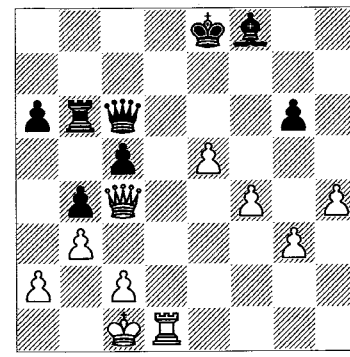
Alas, White does *not* show the necessary precision in exploiting his advantage. Tempted by the pawn, he comes close to letting the initiative slip, and the whole of his advantage with it. Here again the winning move is 25 ♖d8+!, though this time it isn't so elementary: 25...♔xd8 26 ♕xf8+ ♔d7 27 ♕xg7+ ♔d8 28 ♕g8+ ♔d7 29 ♕xh7+ ♔d8 30 ♕g8+ ♔d7 31 ♕d5+! ♔e8 32 f5! ♕h7 (or 32...♗xf5 33 ♕g8+ ♔d7 34 ♕f7+ ♔c8 35 ♕xf5+) 33 f6, and you can quite easily verify that Black is helpless.

25...♗e6?

But Black lets his opponent get away with it! All he had to do was find the simple move 25...♗g4! to bring disorder into the white ranks; after 26 ♖d2 ♕c6 27 b3 ♕g6 28 ♕h4 ♗e7 29 ♕h8+ ♗f8 there would seem to be no way for White to improve his position. Thus by playing the right move, Black could very well have neutralized his opponent's initiative though not perhaps have seized it for himself. Now he stands virtually no chance.

26 ♕g6+ ♕f7 27 ♕e4 ♕c7 28 h4 ♗xc4 29 ♕xc4 ♕c6 30 b3 g6 *(D)*

W



31 ♕e2! ♕e6

It was essential to try 31...c4, so as to resuscitate his bishop and perhaps his rook too; though even then, Black's chances of salvation would be slim. Now they are non-existent.

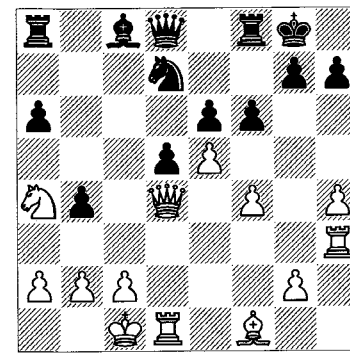
32 h5 ♖b7 33 ♕e4 ♖g7 34 hxg6 ♕xg6 35 f5 1-0

Kasparov – Short
Amsterdam 1994

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7 5 f4 c5 6 ♘f3 ♘c6 7 ♗e3 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 ♗c5 9 ♕d2 0-0 10 0-0-0 a6 11 h4 ♘xd4 12 ♗xd4 b5 13 ♖h3 b4 14 ♘a4 ♗xd4 15 ♕xd4 f6 *(D)*

Apparently, Black's last move was a novelty of Short's, but Kasparov came prepared for it!

W



16 ♕xb4 fxe5 17 ♕d6 ♕f6

Now the most interesting part of the game begins (especially for Short, to whom the following events, judging from the game score, must have come as a complete surprise). Immediately afterwards, the whole variation up to and including White's 19th move was incorporated into theory.

18 f5!

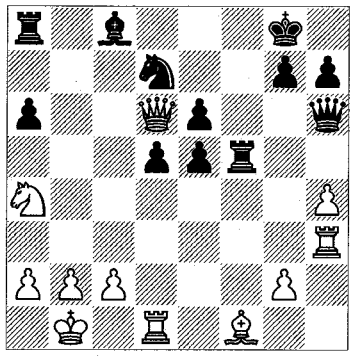
The point of White's whole manoeuvre, culminating in this striking sacrifice, is to break into Black's weakened queenside with his pieces. The pawn sacrifices itself to stop the black pieces from coming quickly into the game.

18...♕h6+

Not 18...♕xf5? 19 ♖f3 ♕g4 20 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8 21 ♘b6 and White wins.

19 ♔b1 ♖xf5? *(D)*

In this position Black has only two candidate moves: the one he plays, and 19...♘f6. Today the latter has become the main line. For example, Wedberg-Brynell, Swedish Ch (Linköping) 2001 continued 20 ♘b6 ♘e4 21 ♕c7 ♖f7 22 ♕d8+ ♖f8 23 ♕c7 ♖f7 and, after declining to repeat moves with 24 ♕xe5, White eventually lost. Instead it would be worth considering 20 ♕xe5, but not Knaak's 'refutation' which continues: 20 fxe6'!' ♘e4 21 ♕xd5 ♘d2+ 22 ♖xd2'!' (up to here the exclamation marks are his), and now after the elementary 22...♗xe6! (Berg-Brynell, Örebro 2001) it is Black who wins.



20 ♖f3!

The positional sense of White's entire manoeuvre lies in this very continuation. Exchanging your opponent's most active piece is always a useful thing to do, and in the present case it basically decides the result of the game.

From the standpoint of the 'theory' of the initiative which I have put forward, the explanation is simple. If sustaining the initiative means preserving (or better still, increasing) the disparity in activity between our forces and those of our opponent, then the exchange of his most active unit increases this disparity in our favour. But there is another interesting point. If the computer is asked for its opinion of the diagram position, then in a flash it indicates the rook move to f3! But of course it doesn't do so from general considerations; its concrete aim is to remove the piece which is stopping White from striking at the d5-pawn.

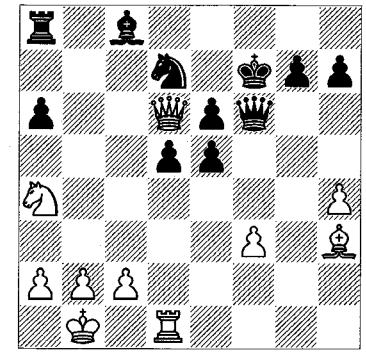
20...♖xf3

The other plausible reply 20...♕f6 loses by force: 21 ♖xf5 ♕xf5, and now a brilliant stroke clarifies everything: 22 ♘b6!! ♘xb6 23 ♗d3! e4 (the main combinative motif is seen in the variation 23...♘c4 24 ♕d8+ ♕f8 25 ♗xh7+) 24 ♖f1 exd3 25 ♖xf5 exf5 26 ♕xb6 and wins.

21 gxf3 ♕f6

Ftačnik gives the variation 21...♔f7 22 ♗h3 a5!?, with the assessment 'slight advantage to White'. As a matter of fact, if we take this analysis further, we find that after 23 ♕c7! ♔f8 (or 23...♕xh4 24 ♘b6 ♕xh3 25 ♘xa8 ♕xf3 26 ♖c1 +–) 24 ♕c6 ♖b8 25 ♗xe6 ♔e7 26 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 27 ♕xd5, White wins.

22 ♗h3 ♔f7 *(D)*



White has achieved everything he was aiming for when he began the lengthy manoeuvre at move 16. Even Black's most active piece – his queen – is tied to the defence of a weakness. All White needs to do now is bring his rook into play and break up his opponent's centre. The logical way to attain both these ends appears to be...

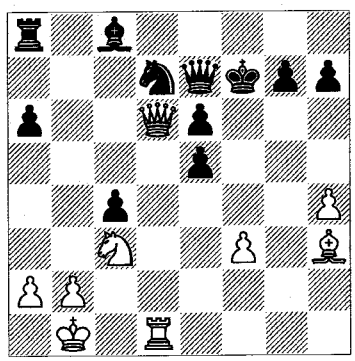
23 c4! dxc4

A strong answer to 23...d4 is 24 f4. Then after 24...exf4 (or 24...♕e7 25 fxe5 ♕xd6 26 exd6 e5 27 ♖e1, with a big endgame advantage to White) 25 ♖e1!, Black is in a bad way.

24 ♘c3!

Kasparov rightly declines to win material with 24 ♕c6 ♖b8 25 ♖xd7+ ♗xd7 26 ♕xd7+ ♔g6. That would mean exchanging White's rook, a piece with fine prospects, for two black pieces that were only half alive anyway; it would leave Black with genuine chances of resistance. Instead White continues in the typical 'Kasparov' manner that is very familiar to us from the foregoing chapters – he plays for the maximum coordination of his forces. This is guaranteed to demolish his opponent's defences.

24...♕e7 *(D)*



It's hard to suggest anything else.

25 ♕c6 ♖b8 26 ♘e4 ♘b6

In answer to 26...♔f8 (26...♕b4 27 ♗xe6+ ♔f8 is equivalent) 27 ♗xe6 ♕b4, Kasparov gives 28 ♕d6+ ♕xd6 29 ♘xd6 ♔e7 30 ♘xc8+ ♔xe6 31 ♖d6+ ♔f5 32 ♘e7+ ♔f4 33 ♖xd7 and wins.

On 26...♘f8, the winning line indicated by Ftačnik is 27 ♘d6+ ♔g8 28 ♘xc8 ♕b4 29 ♕xe6+! ♔h8 30 ♕xe5.

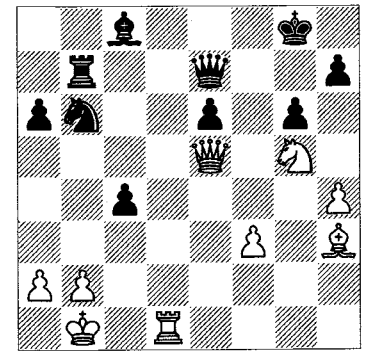
27 ♘g5+ ♔g8 28 ♕e4 g6 29 ♕xe5 ♖b7 *(D)*

White's pieces are now fully coordinated. Black's are not, but he is nonetheless preparing to create counterplay on the b-file. According to all the laws of development of the initiative, White gets there first:

30 ♖d6! c3

Black also loses after 30...♘a4 31 ♖xe6 ♖xb2+ 32 ♕xb2.

31 ♗xe6+ ♗xe6 32 ♖xe6 1-0



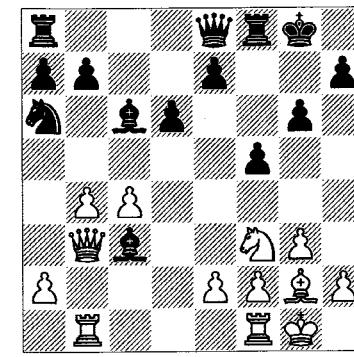
32...♘c4 33 ♕xc3! ♘a3+ 34 ♔c1 ♕f8 35 ♕xa3 is hopeless for Black.

Kramnik – Malaniuk
Moscow OL 1994

1 ♘f3 f5 2 g3 ♘f6 3 ♗g2 d6 4 d4 g6 5 0-0 ♗g7 6 c4 0-0 7 ♘c3 ♕e8 8 d5 ♘a6 9 ♖b1 ♗d7 10 b4 c5 11 dxc6 ♗xc6 12 ♕b3 ♘e4 13 ♗b2 ♘xc3?!

An inaccurate move-order, although that never even occurred to anyone until the present game. If Black wants to exchange on c3, he does better to play 13...♗xc3 14 ♗xc3 ♘xc3, when White has no intermediate check. Black can also refrain from exchanging, as in Lukacs-Beim, Budapest 1994, which went 13...♖c8 14 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 15 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 16 ♖bc1 ♖f6 with an acceptable game.

14 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 *(D)*



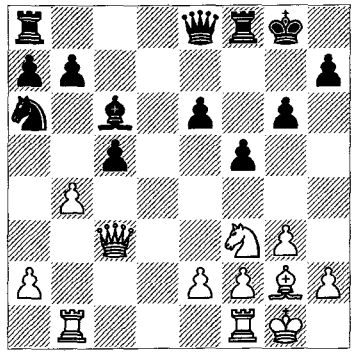
15 c5+!?

In earlier games everyone recaptured on c3 at once, and as a rule Black managed to hold the position. As the further course of this game clearly proves, it would have been more sensible for Black to limit his opponent's options by paying careful attention to the move-order.

15...e6

Black hasn't much choice; 15...d5?! would be downright senseless, but 15...♕f7?! is also inferior, seeing that on 16 ♕xc3 Black can't play 16...dxc5?? 17 b5, while after 16...♕xa2 17 cxd6 exd6 18 ♖a1 ♕f7 19 ♘g5 Kramnik considers that White has an obvious plus.

16 ♕xc3 dxc5 *(D)*



17 b5

This of course is a very important moment in the game, and the annotators with one accord have cried 'intuitive sacrifice!' and given this move an exclamation mark. For my own part I have no wish to be stingy with the odd exclamation mark, especially for Vladimir Kramnik whom I greatly esteem. However, for the sake of objectivity and the interests of my readers, I am bound to say that at this point White had no choice. This incidentally is confirmed by Kramnik himself: "Of course White didn't play 15 c5+!? in order to think about how to defend his c-pawn after 17 bxc5 ♖c8." In other words White was committing himself to the sacrifice of two pawns when he gave check on move 15, and this was done in full awareness that there was no forced continuation! His sole concern was to fight for the initiative.

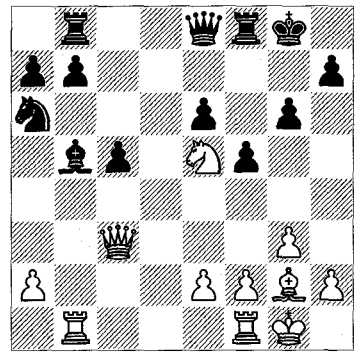
This kind of sacrifice naturally requires boldness, faith in the correctness of your judgement, and an intuitive feel for the possibilities of your position. In this game we are going to acquaint ourselves with a form of initiative that is new to us: an initiative based not only on the difference in quantity between the developed forces, but also on a long-term complex of weaknesses in the enemy camp – in this case, dark-square weaknesses. Both these elements will play an important role, but while the first is familiar to us already, the second will call for special attention. It isn't surprising that the presence of static defects can also be the cause of long-term passivity. If you succeed in creating persistent pressure against them, your opponent is forced onto the defensive whether he likes it or not.

17...♗xb5 18 ♘e5

As Kramnik indicates, the other method of attack doesn't work: 18 ♘g5 ♗c6 19 ♖xb7 ♗xb7 20 ♗xb7 ♕e7!.

18...♖b8 *(D)*

Being greedy is no good at all: 18...♗xe2? 19 ♖xb7! ♗xf1 20 ♘g4 e5 21 ♗d5+ ♔h8 22 ♘xe5, with a quick mate.



19 ♖fe1!

Kramnik tells us that at this point he thought for ages trying to find a forced solution, but concluded that there wasn't one. For instance 19 ♕a5?! ♗xe2 20 ♖fe1 b6 21 ♕a3 ♗b5 22 ♖xb5? ♕xb5 23 ♗f1 ♕b4 or 19 g4?! ♗xe2 20 ♖fe1 ♗xg4 21 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 22 ♗xb7 ♘c7 23 ♕xc5 ♕d8. White therefore needs to bring up his reserves. Note that the player with the initiative isn't always obliged to keep attacking directly. He just needs to keep the opponent constantly in his sights! When the enemy position is weighed down by weaknesses or other problems, there will be time to mobilize our reserves while of course giving due attention to the opponent's possibilities.

19...b6

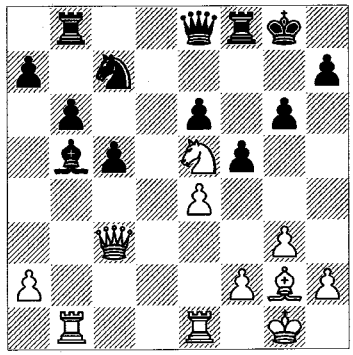
A characteristic variation is indicated by Kramnik: 19...♗c6?! 20 ♘xc6 bxc6 21 ♕a5 ♖xb1 (White's advantage is also obvious after 21...♘b4 22 ♕xc5 ♘d5 23 ♖xb8 ♕xb8 24 ♕xc6) 22 ♖xb1 ♕c8 23 e3, and Black's queenside pawns are doomed. It's worth pointing out

that the positions in this variation are reminiscent of the Catalan System, except that Black's kingside weaknesses make things a good deal worse for him.

20 e4 ♘c7 *(D)*

The standard 'Leningrad' continuation 20...f4 is unplayable here in view of 21 ♘g4 e5 22 ♘xe5, after which the knight returns to g4. Kramnik considers Black's best reply to be 20...♘b4!. He gives a large number of variations, but I will confine myself to the main ones: 21 exf5 gxf5 22 a3 (if 22 ♕d2, then 22...♕d8!) 22...♘d5! 23 ♕d2! ♘f6 24 ♕g5+ (or 24 ♖bd1!?) 24...♔h8 25 ♕h6 ♗a4, and in this position White can play either 26 ♗f3!? ♖d8 27 ♖e3, followed by doubling rooks on the e-file, or else 26 ♖bc1 with the idea of bringing this rook to h4; on 26...♕h5, White maintains the initiative with 27 ♕f4.

W



After the move in the game, Black's position is extremely passive.

21 exf5 gxf5

Black loses his queen after 21...exf5 22 ♘g4 fxg4 23 ♖xe8 ♗xe8 24 ♕e5 ♖f7 25 ♗d5, while in the event of 21...♖xf5 22 ♗h3 ♖h5 23 ♘g4! ♘d5 24 ♘f6+ ♘xf6 25 ♗xe6+! ♔g7 26 ♗g4! White has a huge plus.

22 ♕e3! *(D)*

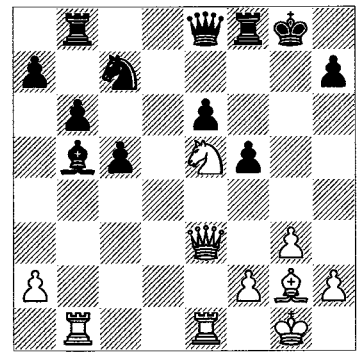
22...a6?!

The position looks clearer now than it was, shall we say, four moves ago; White's compensation for the two pawns is obvious. That Black has serious problems can be seen from the following:

a) 22...♕h5 23 ♗f3! f4 24 ♕a3 followed by ♕xa7.

b) 22...♘d5 23 ♗xd5 exd5 24 ♕g5+ ♔h8 25 ♘f3! and Black is in trouble.

B



c) 22...♕e7 23 ♗c6! and White wins material (23...♗a6 24 ♘d7 +– or 23...a6 24 ♗xb5 axb5 25 ♘c6 +–).

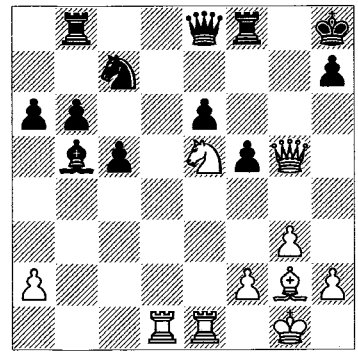
d) In Kramnik's view the best continuation is 22...♗a4!?, so as not to allow a rook onto d1. In reply he suggests 23 ♖bc1, aiming to transfer the rook to h4 – a manoeuvre we have seen before. As alternatives, he gives 23 h4!?, 23 ♕f4!? and even 23 ♗f3. In the game Black does worse, thanks to White's 24th move.

23 ♕g5+ ♔h8

The next move is simple but important.

24 ♖bd1 *(D)*

B



24...♖g8

Black already has no good answers; for example, 24...♖d8? 25 ♖xd8 ♕xd8 26 ♘f7+ +– or 24...♘d5 25 ♖xd5! exd5 26 ♗xd5 ♕d8? 27 ♘g6+ ♔g7 28 ♖e7+ +–.

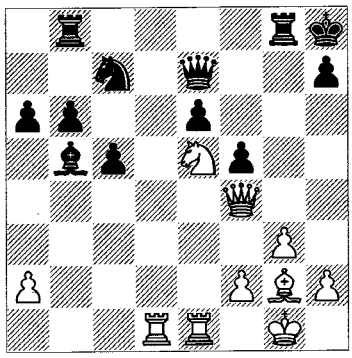
25 ♕f4!

With this strong move White gains control of the squares c7 and a4. It turns out that Black can't cope with all the threats.

25...♕e7 *(D)*

On 25...♖g7, Kramnik gives 26 ♖d6, when Black has no useful moves. On a board full of pieces, he is close to zugzwang!

W



26 ♗c6!

We came across this blow in a previous variation. Here too it is decisive.

26...♖g4

What you might call a despairing throw. The reason is simple: 26...♖bd8 27 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 28 ♗xb5 axb5 29 ♘c6 ♕d7 30 ♘xd8 ♕xd8.

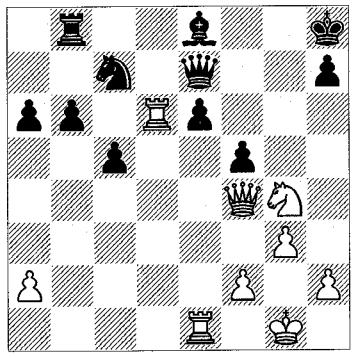
27 ♘xg4 ♗xc6 28 ♖d6!

This powerful move quashes Black's hopes of somehow holding on after 28 ♘e5 ♗d5.

28...♗e8 *(D)*

By now everything is bad; e.g., 28...♗d5 29 ♖xd5 ♘xd5 30 ♕xb8+ or 28...fxg4 29 ♖xc6.

W



29 ♘h6?!

Short of time, Kramnik commits an inaccuracy. As he himself points out, the strongest line is 29 ♖dxe6! ♘xe6 30 ♕e5+! ♕g7 31 ♕xb8 ♘c7 32 ♖xe8+ ♘xe8 33 ♕xe8+.

29...♖c8!

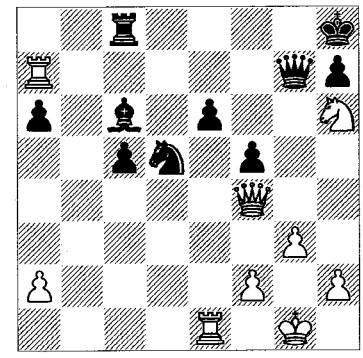
Now the struggle continues, though admittedly not for long.

30 ♖xb6 ♕g7 31 ♖b7 ♗c6 32 ♖a7 ♘d5 *(D)*

33 ♕e5!

Discovered in time-trouble, this excellent move brings everything under control. Black's last hopes disappear.

W



33...♕xe5 34 ♘f7+! ♔g8 35 ♘xe5 ♗b5

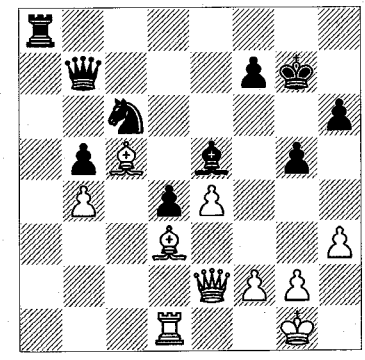
Apparently, in its day Fritz3 suggested the sly trick 35...♘c3!?, hoping for 36 ♖xa6 ♘e2+ 37 ♖xe2 ♗b5 38 ♖xe6 ♗xe2, when the c-pawn will still give White some bother. However, if you ask its descendant Fritz8 for its opinion, it answers in a trice with 36 a4! ♗xa4 37 ♖xa6 ♘e2+ 38 ♖xe2 ♗b5 39 ♖aa2 +–.

36 a4 ♗xa4 37 ♖xa6 ♗b5 38 ♖xe6 c4 39 ♖d6 ♘b4 40 ♖b6 ♘c2 41 ♖b1! 1-0

After this accurate move, any remaining hopes vanish for good: 41...♘a3 (or 41...♗a4 42 ♖b8!) 42 ♖1xb5 ♘xb5 43 ♖xb5 c3 44 ♖b1.

It is not only in complex middlegame positions that the initiative plays an important role. It permeates all phases of the game. A player will frequently rely on a preponderance of activity – the factor from which the initiative grows – in order to realize a material advantage.

B



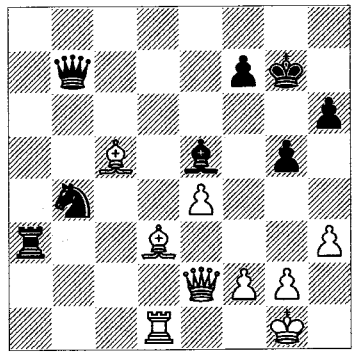
Smyslov – Timman
Amsterdam (IBM) 1971

White has acquired an obvious positional plus. The only way Black can keep some hope of salvation is by creating active counterplay.

40...♖a3!? 41 ♗xb5 d3!

Only thus! In the event of 41...♘xb4 42 ♗xb4 ♖b3, Smyslov gives 43 ♕c4 as the winning move. Let us continue the variation until things become clearer: 43...♖b2 44 ♕c5 ♕b8 45 g3 ♗xg3 (this is compulsory; White was threatening 46 ♖d2 +–) 46 ♕xd4+ ♗e5 47 ♕c5 ♗h2+ 48 ♔f1, and White wins easily.

42 ♗xd3 ♘xb4 *(D)*



At the cost of a pawn, Black has noticeably increased his activity and set his opponent some awkward problems for the exploitation of the material advantage. Black's defence also rests on the important tactical refinement 43 ♖b1 ♘xd3!. Breaking down this defence by purely technical means would be very difficult, but tactics come to White's aid:

43 ♗d6!!

This attractive stroke compels Black to start retreating from strategically important points.

43...♖a5

Black has no choice. He can play neither 43...♘xd3? 44 ♗xa3 nor 43...♗xd6? 44 ♕b2+. After 43...♗c3 44 ♗c4, White retains the bishop-pair and aims to make the e5 advance.

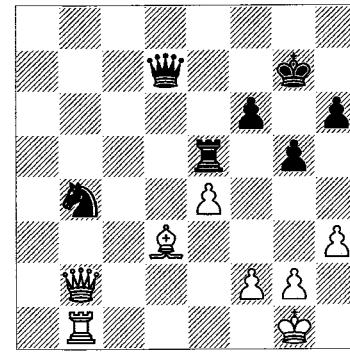
44 ♗xe5+ ♖xe5 45 ♕b2

Now the whole edifice of Black's defence, which was held together by his proud centralized bishop, has crumbled, and the retreat begins.

45...f6

As Smyslov points out, in reply to 45...♕e7 White has the strong move 46 ♗b5!. The following possible continuation is my own analysis: 46...♔g6 (the end would come at once after 46...♕c5? 47 ♖d5! +–) 47 ♖d7 ♕c5 48 ♗c4!? ♖e7 49 ♕c3! ♔h7 50 ♖d8 ♖e5 51 ♖f8! ♕xf8 52 ♕xe5 ♔g6 53 ♕c7, and White wins.

46 ♖b1 ♕d7 *(D)*

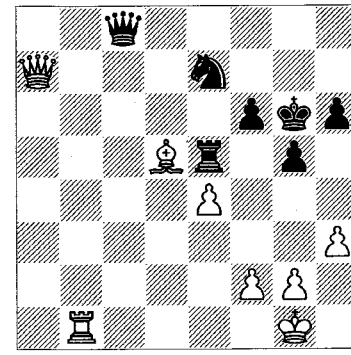


Now White marches relentlessly forward, consistently developing his initiative. He realizes his advantage, which is not so much a material one as a preponderance in activity.

47 ♗c4! ♘c6 48 ♗d5 ♘e7 49 ♕b8! ♕c8

White has a won position in the event of 49...♘xd5 50 ♖b7 ♕xb7 51 ♕xb7+ ♘e7 52 f3.

50 ♕a7! ♔g6 *(D)*



Of course, constant precise calculation is required on White's part, so as not to allow his opponent any counter-stroke or defensive resource. For a long time Smyslov handles this task superbly.

51 ♖b7! ♕f8

Black can't play 51...♕c1+ 52 ♔h2 ♕f4+ 53 g3. Nor can the bishop be taken: 51...♘xd5 52 ♖g7+ ♔h5 53 ♕f7+ ♔h4 54 g3+ ♔xh3 55 ♕h5#.

52 ♖b8 ♕g7 53 ♕a8 ♔h7 54 ♗c4?!

Here, however, Smyslov chooses an imprecise plan which could have led to a prolongation of the fight. There was an immediate win with 54 ♗b3! f5 55 ♖f8 ♖a5 56 ♕e8.

54...♖c5 55 ♗d3?!

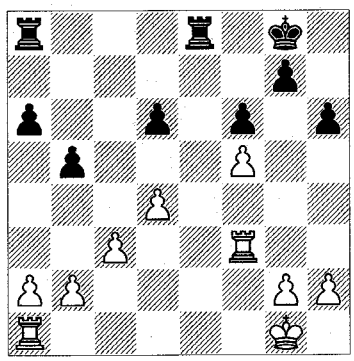
Again 55 ♗b3 would have been very strong: 55...f5 56 ♖f8 ♖c1+ 57 ♔h2 ♕e5+ 58 g3, and Black is defenceless.

55...♖e5 56 g3 h5 57 ♔f1 h4 58 g4 ♕f7?

This move loses out of hand. A much more tenacious line is 58...♘g6 59 ♗c4 ♔h6, although even then, after 60 ♗d5 ♕d7, White attacks the f6-pawn by 61 ♖b6, and defending it will be difficult.

59 ♖f8 ♕g7 60 ♗c4 1-0

Possession of the initiative plays a role even in positions that are far advanced into the endgame. We have examined plenty of examples already, in this book and others. Let's look at one more piece of play on the same lines, by a supreme endgame expert.



Smyslov – Konstantinopolsky
Leningrad 1939

The winner here was a mere 18 years old, yet he displays endgame mastery of the highest class.

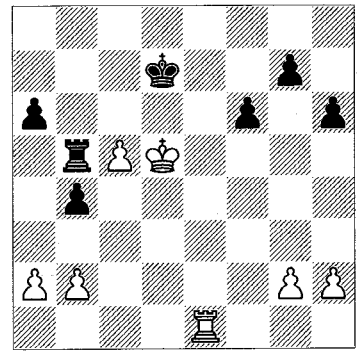
26 ♔f2 b4! 27 ♖c1!

We have here a rook ending, and the extra pawn by itself doesn't yet guarantee anything. If White were to take a second pawn, his opponent would obtain counterplay: 27 cxb4 ♖e4 28 ♖d1 ♖b8 29 a3 a5 30 bxa5 ♖xb2+ 31 ♔g3 ♖b5. It's hard to say just how strong this counterplay would be, but even assuming that White would retain winning chances, such a turn of events is better avoided if possible. In support of this view, it's enough to recall even the purely psychological effect of playing against the initiative, as in some of the examples we have seen. And then there are other factors too. It always pays to retain the initiative rather than lose it.

27...♖ab8 28 c4!

Not content with refusing to pick up a second pawn last move, Smyslov actually gives his own extra pawn away. He is prepared to play an endgame with equal material, as long as he can take the initiative firmly into his own hands! Of course he isn't keen on a variation like 28 ♖e3?! ♖xe3 29 ♔xe3 bxc3 30 bxc3 ♖b2 31 c4 ♔f7 32 c5 dxc5 33 dxc5 ♔e7.

28...♖e4 29 ♖d3 ♖f4+ 30 ♔e2 ♖xf5 31 c5 dxc5 32 dxc5 ♖e5+ 33 ♖e3 ♖xe3+ 34 ♔xe3 ♔f7 35 ♔d4 ♔e6 36 ♖e1+ ♔d7 37 ♔d5 ♖b5 *(D)*



In return for surrendering his extra material, White has obtained maximum activity for his pieces and created a strong passed pawn. The black forces meanwhile remain disunited.

38 ♖e4! g6

Black's pieces have little mobility: 38...♖a5 39 ♖xb4 ♖xa2 40 ♖b7+ is clearly not in his favour. With the following series of moves White induces a blockade of the kingside pawns, so that Black's extra pawn on that part of the board ceases to play any role.

39 h4! f5 40 ♖f4 h5 41 ♖d4 ♔c7 42 b3!

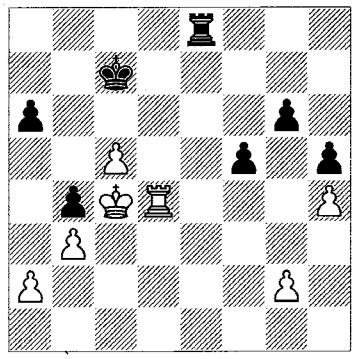
This move doesn't seem to tie in very well with what we have said about the constant need to create threats when you hold the initiative. In actual fact, the move is entirely appropriate. The point is that according to our definition, the task for the player with the initiative lies in *constantly keeping ahead* of his opponent. Accordingly, the prophylactic move that White has just made deprives Black of his one real possibility for attack; and in this way *the difference in activity between the two sides* is, at the very least, maintained.

42...♖b8

Better than 42...♖a5 43 ♖d2 ♖b5 44 ♔c4 ♖b8 45 ♖d6.

43 ♔c4 ♖e8 *(D)*

W



44 ♖d6

This is perhaps the one point where Smyslov's play can be called into question. There was evidently an even quicker win with 44 ♔xb4 ♖e2 45 ♖d6 ♖xg2 46 ♖xa6. All the same, White is playing consistently to develop his initiative, and prefers to place his king more actively rather than win a pawn.

44...♖e4+ 45 ♔d5 ♖xh4

The alternative rook move wouldn't save him either: 45...♖g4 46 ♖xa6 ♖xg2 47 ♖a7+ ♔b8 48 ♖g7 ♖xa2 49 ♔c6 ♖a6+ 50 ♔b5 ♖f6 51 c6, and White wins.

46 ♖xg6 ♖g4 47 ♖xa6 ♖xg2 48 ♖a7+ ♔b8 49 ♖h7 ♖xa2 50 ♖xh5 *(D)*

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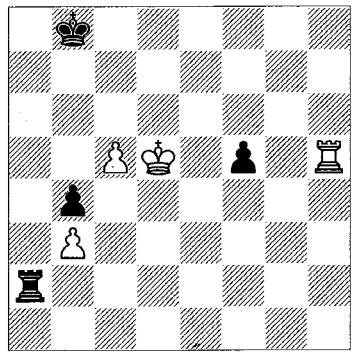


50...♖c2

There is very little material left on the board, but White's win is not in doubt. In fact, didn't we see something very similar quite recently? Indeed; in Chapter 2 (Development) we examined an extract from Geller-Smyslov, Palma de Mallorca IZ 1970, in which White played in a similar manner and was most probably influenced by the very game we are looking at now.

51 ♔c6! ♔a7 52 ♔b5! ♖e2 53 ♖h7+ ♔b8 54 ♔b6 ♖e8 55 c6 f4 56 ♖b7+! ♔c8 57 ♖a7 1-0

From the last two examples it is quite easy to conclude that limiting the opponent's activity is also one of the elements of the mechanism which we call 'the initiative'. We have briefly touched on the reason; now let's consider it more closely. In the most general sense, the concept of the initiative means keeping ahead of your opponent. It follows that this concept embraces everything which increases, or at least maintains, the disparity between your own and your opponent's capacity for active play. So *measures for reducing or wholly forestalling your opponent's activity* are also a contribution to the initiative. Thus it is in the following game:

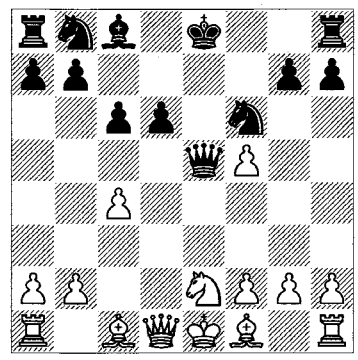
Kasparov – Shirov
Novgorod 1994

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♗b4 3 ♘d5 ♗e7 4 d4 d6 5 e4 c6 6 ♘xe7 ♕xe7 7 ♘e2 f5

Even in appearance this move is dubious, as Kasparov precisely demonstrates. The natural 7...♘f6 8 f3 d5 9 dxe5 ♕xe5 looks better, and was successfully employed by Black in Smirin-Stisis, Israeli Cht 1999.

8 dxe5 ♕xe5 9 exf5 ♘f6 *(D)*

W



10 ♕d4!

By this time we know very well how useful it is to exchange your opponent's best piece. This move is also based on another widely known principle, which states that the bishop-pair tends to be especially powerful in the ending.

10...♗xf5 11 ♗f4 ♕a5+ 12 ♕c3 ♕xc3+ 13 ♘xc3 0-0 14 0-0-0!

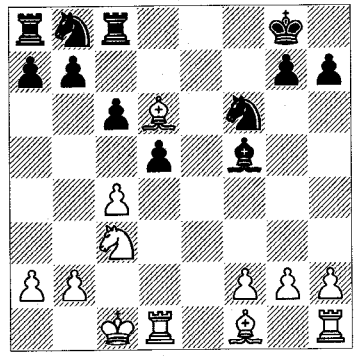
White has acquired an obvious advantage, based on the bishop-pair and the weakness of the d6-pawn, but exploiting it is not at all simple, seeing that Black is well developed and ready to create active counterplay at any moment. This is illustrated by a variation given by Ribli: 14 ♗xd6 ♖e8+ 15 ♗e2 ♗d3 16 ♔f1 ♗xe2+ 17 ♘xe2 ♘a6.

14...d5 15 ♗d6!

White is still not ready to win a pawn, as Ribli again demonstrates: 15 cxd5 cxd5 16 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♗e6 18 ♖d4 ♘c6 19 ♖a4 ♗xa2, with about equal chances. Kasparov therefore removes his bishop from its vulnerable position with tempo, while at the same time driving the black rook off the important f-file.

15...♖c8 *(D)*

W



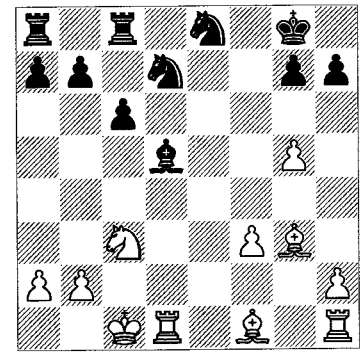
Now there are no white pieces hanging, while the black ones aren't yet cooperating all that well. White therefore has time for a very useful move which deprives his opponent of control of the key e4-square. The same move simultaneously prepares an assault on that wing where White is stronger.

16 f3! ♘bd7 17 g4! ♗e6 18 g5 ♘e8 19 cxd5!

A remarkable move! The bishop retreat 19 ♗g3 would leave White with no more than a slight but persistent advantage after 19...♘b6 (or possibly 19...dxc4). Kasparov, as is well known, sets great store by the initiative, and endeavours to maintain and develop it as far as he can. Here too, then, he opts for a sharp variation to retain his initiative, without shrinking from effort or from complex calculation – which demands precision, as we shall soon see.

19...♗xd5 20 ♗g3 *(D)*

B

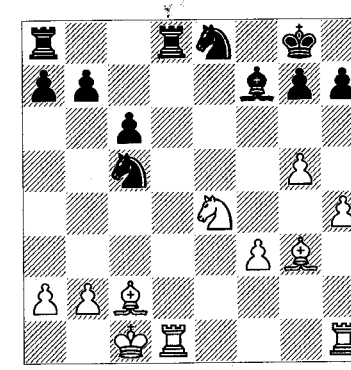


20...♗e6

It can't have been easy for Shirov to renounce 20...♗xf3 and submit to this retreat, but analysis shows that the complications would work out in White's favour: 21 ♗c4+ ♔h8 (21...♗d5 22 ♖xd5 cxd5 23 ♗xd5+ ♔h8 24 ♗xb7 is wholly bad for Black) 22 ♖xd7 ♗xh1 23 ♖f7 h6 (if 23...h5, then after 24 ♖f8+ ♔h7 25 ♗f7 h4 26 ♗f4 g6 27 ♗e6 ♘d6 28 ♗xc8 ♘xc8 29 ♗e5 ♘b6 30 ♖f7+ White has a big advantage) 24 ♖f8+ ♔h7 25 ♗d3+ g6 26 ♗e5 ♘g7 (26...♘d6 27 ♖f6 ♘f5 is the same thing) 27 ♖f6 ♘f5 28 ♗xf5 gxf5 29 ♖xh6+ ♔g8 30 g6 ♔f8 31 ♗f6 ♔e8 32 ♖h7, with an easily won position; e.g., 32...♗d5 33 h4 f4 34 h5, etc.

21 ♗d3 ♘c5 22 ♗c2 ♖d8 23 h4 ♗f7 24 ♘e4! *(D)*

B

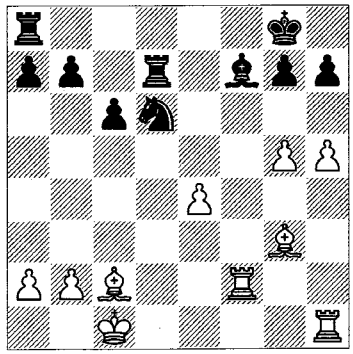


Another strong and convincing move. Its rationale is already familiar to us. A useful black piece departs from the board, while the bad knight on e8 remains. This means that the disparity in activity is increased in White's favour. At the same time the f-file is opened up for the white rooks, which will soon find a use for it.

24...♘xe4 25 fxe4 ♔f8?!

An unfortunate move perhaps, but it's difficult to find a good one. In the event of 25...g6 26 ♗e5 ♘g7 27 ♗f6, White's advantage increases; but then I doubt if it can be stopped from increasing anyway.

26 ♖df1! ♔g8 27 h5 ♖d7 28 ♖f2 ♘d6 *(D)*

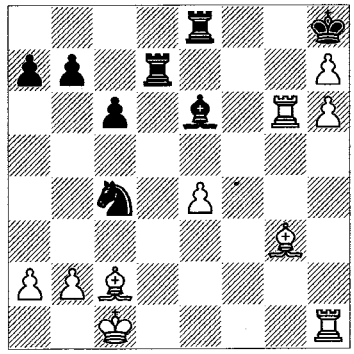


You only have to look at the position to notice White's gains. The time for a breakthrough has come.

29 g6! ♗e6

Capturing is impossible: 29...hxg6 30 hxg6 ♗xg6 31 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 32 ♗b3+; but Black is badly off in any case.

30 gxh7+ ♔h8 31 h6! g6 32 ♖f6 ♖e8 33 ♖xg6 ♘c4 *(D)*



The long diagonal is simply calling out for the dark-squared bishop. Therefore:

34 ♗e1! ♔xh7 35 ♖g3 ♘e5

A rather more stubborn line was 35...♖g8 36 ♖xg8 ♔xg8, but Black still wouldn't be able to hold out for long.

36 ♗c3 ♗c4 37 ♖g7+! 1-0

Black loses a piece: 37...♖xg7 38 hxg7+ ♔xg7 39 ♖h5 ♔f6 40 ♖f5+.

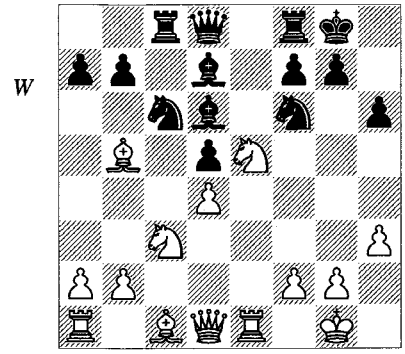
As we saw, White's swift offensive in the first part of the game procured him a lasting advantage in activity, although in the next phase the fight somewhat abated in intensity. But since we know that the initiative is defined as a disparity in the activity of the forces, it follows that sharp and rapidly changing conditions are by no means the only ones in which it may exist. In certain circumstances there can be fairly quiet methods of contending for the initiative and relatively placid means of developing it. We shall now see this illustrated.

Karpov – Morović
Las Palmas (1) 1994

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 e3 c5 5 ♘c3 ♘c6 6 cxd5 exd5 7 ♗b5 ♗d6 8 0-0 0-0 9 h3 cxd4 10 exd4 h6

Karpov is a connoisseur of this variation with a symmetrical pawn-structure. In *Lessons in Chess Strategy*, I examined the problems of playing this type of position in more detail, but the main conclusion is that the activity of the pieces plays a paramount role. Even a single extra tempo may prove important. In other words, the problems are the very ones we are studying in the present chapter. At this point, utilizing his extra tempo, White goes into action in the centre.

11 ♖e1 ♗d7 12 ♘e5 ♖c8 *(D)*



13 a3

For someone unacquainted with the play in such positions, this move will appear incomprehensible. Its point is that White's plans include lining up his queen and bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal. Hence he needs to take measures against a sortie by the black knight to b4.

13...a6 14 ♗a4 b5 15 ♗b3!

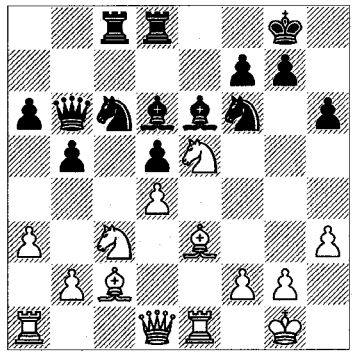
A surprising move. White forces his opponent's bishop to leave the d7-square where it was under attack from the knight. Why? Because in this way Black is being forced to block the e-file, making the white knight's position on e5 more secure. Karpov indicates that after an immediate 15 ♗c2 ♖e8 16 ♗f4, Black would obtain equal chances with 16...♕c7.

15...♗e6 16 ♗c2!

Now this is good. In any case White is simply obliged to act energetically, so as not to forfeit his small advantages. On 16 ♗f4 ♘a5 17 ♗c2 ♘c4, Black obtains his full share of the play.

16...♕b6 17 ♗e3 ♖fd8 *(D)*

W



18 ♘g4

Black was threatening to take on e5 and play ...d4. This has to be forestalled.

18...♗xg4?!

Taking on g4 with the knight is better. After 18...♘xg4 19 hxg4 ♗e7 20 ♕d3 g6, Karpov suggests 21 f3! ♗f6 22 ♖ad1, maintaining some initiative. It must be said that up until Black's 18th move, nothing in particular had occurred to enable White to count on more. It has just been an ordinary manoeuvring game with a minimal edge for White. It is only Black's last move that has increased his opponent's chances.

19 hxg4 ♗b8

Karpov considers this move to be another inaccuracy, and recommends 19...♖e8!?. Then after 20 ♕d3 g6 21 ♗b3 White has an enduring plus, though not a very large one. Now his advantage is going to grow.

20 ♗f5 ♖c7 *(D)*

White controls a number of important points as well as the light-square diagonals, but this is

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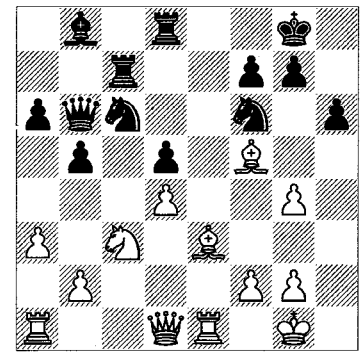

not yet sufficient. Black's position is still intact; it is essential to create some new weaknesses in it. White's next excellent manoeuvre pursues this aim.

21 a4! b4

White has forced his opponent to weaken his queenside structure.

22 a5!

Next he sacrifices a pawn to clear lines on that part of the board and make it possible to attack all Black's weaknesses. In this way White brings his own position to life, and his initiative becomes truly dangerous. It is these last two moves, together with the 15th and 16th, that give this game its special quality.

22...♘xa5

If Black declines to capture, Karpov gives 22...♕b7 23 ♘a4 ♗a7 24 ♘c5 ♗xc5 25 dxc5 ♘e7 26 ♗d4 ♘xf5 27 gxf5, and in this position White's bishop guarantees him a lasting advantage.

23 ♘a4 ♕d6 24 g3 ♖a7 *(D)*

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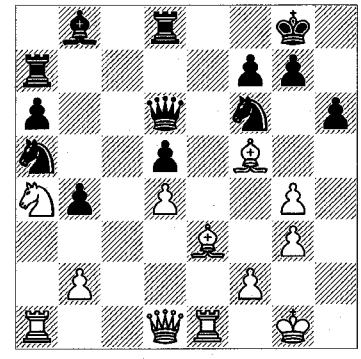

Now there is no time to be lost.

25 g5! hxg5 26 ♗xg5 ♘c6 27 ♖c1! ♘a5

Alas, the knight can't join in the defence of the kingside: 27...♘e7?? 28 ♗f4.

28 ♖c5 ♘c4 29 b3 ♘a3 *(D)*
Not 29...♘b6? 30 ♗f4 +–.

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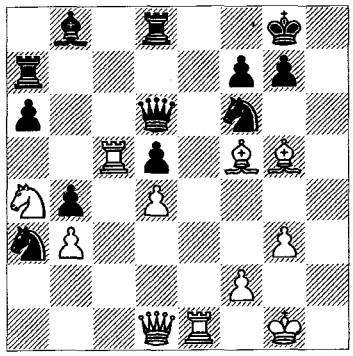

In a manner entirely characteristic of him, Karpov has thoroughly outplayed his opponent and now proceeds to an attack on the king.

30 ♔g2! ♖e7?

Black commits the decisive error. He had to play 30...♘b5, though even then White would have an undoubted plus after 31 ♖h1 g6 32 ♗d3!.

31 ♖h1 ♖de8

Black has no good moves left; e.g., 31...g6 32 ♗f4 +– or 31...♖ee8 32 ♖h4 g6 33 ♕h1 +–. Now White finishes the game with a fairly simple but attractive combination:

32 ♖h8+! ♔xh8 33 ♕h1+ ♔g8 34 ♗xf6 ♕xg3+ 35 fxg3 ♖e2+ 36 ♔h3 gxf6 37 ♔g4 1-0

We know by now that the initiative can exist in the most varied guises. It isn't always a dramatic affair, calling for immediate, resolute and sacrificial deeds. Its effect may be of the long-term kind; the disparity in activity between the two sides, from which the initiative springs, may be dictated principally by a pawn-structure that is fixed for quite a long period.

According to the definition I gave in *Lessons in Chess Strategy*, the pawn-structure comes squarely under the heading of chess statics. However, who says that statics and dynamics have to exclude each other? Of course they do not! As the realm of chess is a unified whole, all its elements are interwoven and in a state of constant interaction.

Thus a long-term initiative is a possibility, and indeed we have encountered it before. We will now look at some more examples of it.

Pillsbury – Showalter
Nuremberg 1896

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 c6 4 ♘f3 f5 5 ♗f4 ♗d6?!

Let's not judge Black's opening strategy too harshly from our present-day standpoint, but it's common knowledge that an exchange of dark-squared bishops in such situations is favourable to White. Hence 5...♗e7 is more sensible.

6 e3 ♘f6 7 ♗d3 0-0 8 0-0 *(D)*

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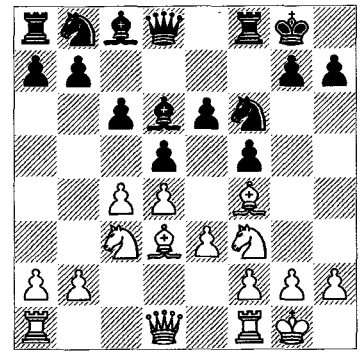


8...♕c7?

Another mistake, and this time a more serious one. If Black *is* consenting to a bishop exchange, it's clearly not in his interest that it should take place on f4. It therefore makes no sense to place himself in a pin, both on the diagonal and on the file. A better square for the queen is e7; for instance, 8...♕e7 9 ♖c1 ♘bd7 10 ♕e2 ♘e4, and if 11 c5, then 11...♗b8.

9 g3 ♘e4 10 ♖c1 ♗xf4?!

Another move that isn't good, but the idea behind it is even worse. Seeing that the queen needs to leave the c-file, it was better to do it at once with 10...♕e7 11 c5 ♗xf4 12 exf4, and now 12...♗d7 13 ♘e5 ♗e8. Transferring the bishop from c8 to h5 is an essential part of this opening system.

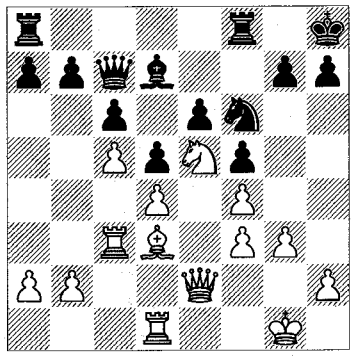
11 exf4 ♕b6?!

There's nothing for the queen to do on this square. Moving it to e7 was more natural and would also have defended the e-pawn.

12 ♕e2 ♘d7

Again forgetting about the bishop, instead of playing 12...♗d7!?.

13 ♖fd1 ♘df6 14 ♘e5 ♔h8 15 c5 ♕c7 16 f3 ♘xc3 17 ♖xc3 ♗d7 *(D)*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I had a reason for dwelling on Black's strategic errors, as they have resulted in this position which is so cheerless for him. The main thing about it is that its character cannot be altered for a long time to come. White's most important piece seems to be his proud knight on e5 – yet all of a sudden Pillsbury exchanges it for the enemy bishop, a sorry piece to all appearances.

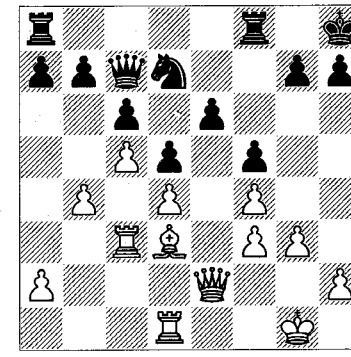
18 ♘xd7!?

As they say, if an ordinary amateur did this, you could only shake your head condescendingly, but when Pillsbury does it, you surely do well to stop and think. You then realize that White is envisaging a pawn offensive on the queenside, leading quickly to the opening of files there for his major pieces. Since the black pawns as well as White's potential breakthrough points are located on light squares, White considered it useful to exchange off the defender of these weaknesses. Moreover Black's remaining knight will be weaker than the white bishop, which in the absence of an opposite number will be able to attack the black pawns unhindered. All this sounds rather surprising, but it does contain logic. Many people are likely to recall another very similar and famous exchange of a superb knight for an equally unimpressive bishop on d7. It occurred in Fischer-Petrosian, Buenos Aires Ct (7) 1971. Well I remember the sensation it created in the chess world. It's a pity Fischer didn't say anything about it himself, but once being acquainted with the Pillsbury game, I have hardly any doubt that Fischer will have recalled it when taking his famous decision.

18...♘xd7 19 b4 *(D)*

Not, of course, 19 ♕xe6?? ♖ae8 20 ♕d6 ♕c8, and the white queen is trapped.

19...♖f6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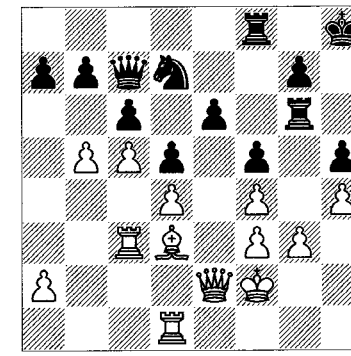
An important moment for assessing White's decision on move 18. It isn't hard to see that a lone black rook on g6 won't present any real danger to the white position. It therefore seems more logical to open the file with ...g5. First, however, Black needs to play 19...♖ae8. Then after 20 b5 ♖g8, White can strike a powerful blow with 21 ♖a3! g5 (White has a won position in the event of 21...a6 22 bxa6 b6 23 cxb6 ♕xb6 24 ♕f2) 22 ♖xa7 gxf4 (on 22...♕b8 23 bxc6! ♕xa7 24 cxd7, White again has a decisive plus) 23 bxc6 ♕xc6 (23...fxg3 gives Black nothing after 24 cxd7 gxh2+ 25 ♔h1 +–) 24 ♗b5 ♕c8 25 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 26 ♕e5+ ♕g7 27 ♕xf4 ♖a8 28 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 29 ♖e1, with a winning advantage. It's quite possible that Pillsbury saw something like this. He was perfectly capable of such things!

20 b5 ♖g6 21 ♔f2 h5 22 h4

White of course blocks the position and Black is left without counterplay, though he still retains some hopes.

22...♖f8 *(D)*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23 ♖b3

With the white king on f2, 23 ♖a3 wouldn't be so strong, because White couldn't answer

23...cxb5 with 24 ♖xa7? ♘xc5 25 dxc5? (25 ♖c1? ♘xd3+) 25...♕xc5+ 26 ♕e3 d4.

23...♖f7

After 23...b6!? 24 bxc6 ♕xc6 25 ♗b5 ♕c7 26 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 27 cxb6 axb6 28 ♖xb6 White has a large plus, but that might still have been better for Black than the game continuation.

24 ♖db1 ♕d8 25 bxc6 bxc6 26 ♖b7 ♕a5 27 ♖1b3 ♖gf6 28 ♕b2 ♔h7 *(D)*

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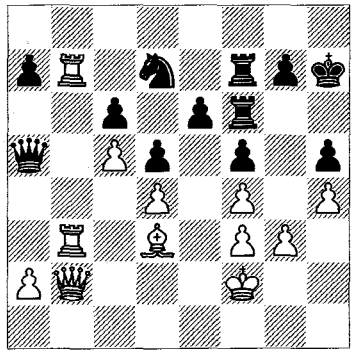

29 ♗e2

You can't afford to be careless in any situation. The 'obvious' 29 ♖a3? would be bad on account of 29...♘xc5!.

29...♘f8 30 ♖b8 ♘g6 31 ♖c8!

An important link in the attack.

31...♖c7 32 ♖a8 ♖cf7

We now see that exchanging White's strong rook would be bad: 32...♖f8 33 ♖xf8 ♘xf8 34 ♖a3 ♖b7 35 ♖xa5 ♖xb2 36 ♖xa7. This was the point of White's 31st move.

33 ♖a3 ♕c7 34 ♖a6 ♖e7 *(D)*

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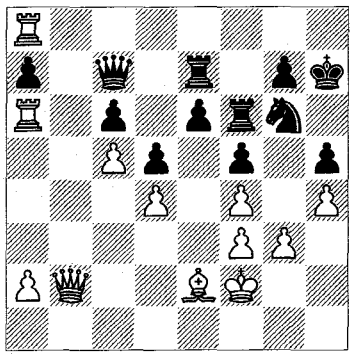

35 ♕a3

Another possible plan begins with 35 a4!?. The pawn then goes to a5, the white rooks capture on a7 and exchange themselves for the black queen, and the white queen penetrates into the enemy camp via b6. An important point is that a knight sacrifice gives Black nothing: 35...♘xf4 36 ♖6xa7 ♘h3+ 37 ♔g2 ♘f4+ 38 ♔f1, and White wins easily.

35...♖ff7 36 ♕b3

Black was threatening 36...♕b7.

36...♘xf4

This sacrifice is Black's last chance (otherwise White carries out the plan in the note to move 35), so he goes in for it, even though it isn't adequate to save him.

37 ♖6xa7 ♕xa7 38 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 39 gxf4 ♖fb7 *(D)*

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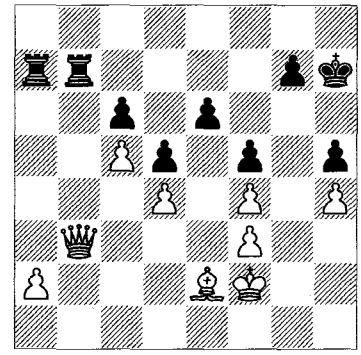

40 ♕e3?

Suddenly White stumbles, so to speak, on level ground, and commits an error which might have made the win much more difficult. Instead he could have won with 40 ♕c2 ♖a3 (the outcome isn't altered by 40...♖b4 41 ♕c3 ♖aa4 42 ♔g3! ♖xd4 43 ♕e3) 41 ♕d2 ♖ba7 42 ♕b2 ♖xa2 43 ♕b6.

40...♖xa2 41 ♕xe6

It turns out that 41 ♔g3?! is not good in view of 41...♖bb2 42 ♗f1 ♖b1 43 ♕xe6 ♖xf1 44 ♕xf5+ ♔g8 45 ♕c8+ ♔h7 46 f5 ♖af2, when White can't win.

41...♖bb2 42 ♕xf5+ g6?

Ah! This isn't the first time we've come across such an incident. No sooner does one player go wrong while trying to realize his advantage, than his opponent makes a mistake in return! A much better reply is 42...♔g8 43 ♕c8+ ♔h7. Then after the forced variation 44 f5! ♖xe2+ 45 ♔g3 ♖ad2! 46 ♕xc6 ♖g2+ 47 ♔f4 ♖xd4+ 48 ♔e5 ♖xh4 49 ♕xd5 ♖c2 50 f6, we reach a position which White can *probably* win – but I can't guarantee it for certain.

In the game, the end comes very simply. Perhaps the players were in a mutual time-scramble, but in that case what was the time-control? I'm afraid I just don't know.

43 ♕f7+ ♔h6 44 f5 ♖xe2+ 45 ♔g3 ♖g2+ 46 ♔f4 gxf5 47 ♕f6+ ♔h7 48 ♕xc6 ♖g6 49 ♕xd5 ♖aa6 50 ♕d7+ ♖g7 51 ♕xf5+ ♔h6 52 d5 ♖a4+ 53 ♔e5 1-0

Now, another game containing a similar pattern of ideas. In the notes I shall draw on the judgements and recommendations of B.Macieja.

Anand – Markowski

Bundesliga 2003/4

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 a6 5 ♗d3 ♗c5 6 ♘b3 ♗e7 7 ♗e3 d6 8 ♘1d2!?

In this variation it is very rare for White to develop the knight to this square.

8...♘f6 9 f4 b6 10 ♕e2 ♗b7 11 0-0-0 ♕c7 12 g4 ♘fd7 13 ♔b1 ♘c6 14 c3 b5

Here 14...♘c5!? looks more logical.

15 ♖hf1 e5?

A strange mistake for a player of such class. Now the white pawns can mount an attack unhindered, while the black pieces are deprived of the e5-square. Again, the recommended move 15...♘a5 would seem logical.

16 f5 h6 *(D)*

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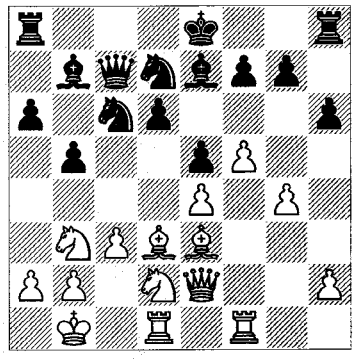

17 ♕f2!

An excellent move which serves many purposes. It takes control of the extremely important squares c5 and h4, after which Black's active possibilities are severely curtailed while White can advance on the kingside.

17...♖c8?!

Once again Macieja recommends 17...♘a5!?.

18 h4 b4 19 ♖c1! bxc3 20 ♖xc3 ♕d8

Now comes a blow which is quite simple, but no less strong for that.

21 f6! gxf6

After this, a cluster of black pieces will be locked up inside their own camp. The general mobility of Black's position is sharply reduced; the difference in activity between his forces and White's increases drastically.

22 a3!

And now this move strictly limits Black's possibilities on the other half of the board. Thus, with just two simple pawn moves Anand has reduced his opponent to a state of extreme passivity.

22...♘c5 23 ♘xc5 dxc5 *(D)*

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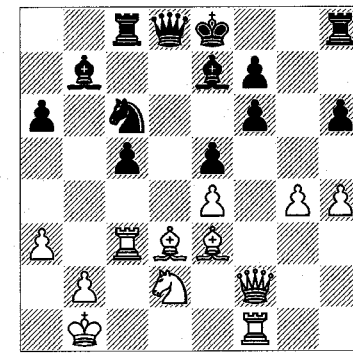

24 g5! hxg5 25 hxg5 ♘d4 26 gxf6 ♗f8 27 ♕g3 ♖h5 28 ♗xd4!!

In a strategic sense, this is the conclusive stroke. Anand's incredible mastery in handling the pawn-structure is something we have seen before. In almost any situation he possesses a striking ability to secure the pawn formation that suits him. In many cases the opponent won't start to realize what is happening until he is already in serious trouble. Then Anand's excellent technique and brilliant tactical prowess will easily enable him to finish the job.

In this case, after the straightforward exchange, which at first sight doesn't seem dangerous for Black, it turns out that 28...cxd4 is bad on account of 29 ♖b3 ♕c7 30 ♗e2! ♖h6 31 ♖xb7! with an easy win. Another dismal prospect is 28...♕xd4 29 ♘b3 ♕d6 30 ♘a5 ♕c7 31 ♘xb7 ♕xb7 32 ♖c2 ♗d6 33 ♗c4, and White's attack will quickly be decisive. There only remains:

28...exd4

Now, however, the f8-bishop is permanently 'dead' and the black king won't find shelter anywhere. Black's position is passive and weak.

29 ♖b3 ♕c7 30 e5! ♗d5 31 ♗c4 ♖xe5 *(D)*

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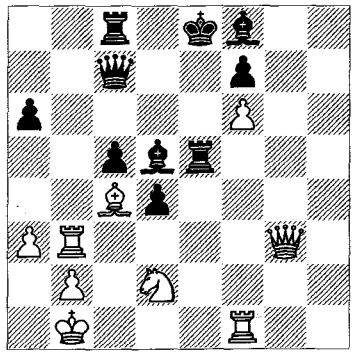


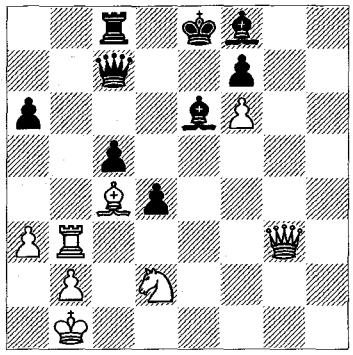
32 ♖e1?

But now, when the game is almost decided and White merely needs to display some precision and accuracy, he suddenly goes wrong. He could have won without any problems by 32 ♗xd5! ♖xd5 33 ♖e1+ ♔d7, whereupon Macieja gives 34 ♕g4+ ♔c6 35 ♘c4 ♖b8 36 ♖xb8 ♕xb8 37 ♕f3, and the black rook perishes.

32...♖e6! 33 ♖xe6+ ♗xe6? *(D)*

Yet Black returns the favour! After 33...fxe6!? White's advantage would only be slight.

W



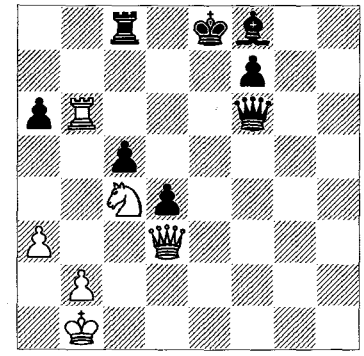
34 ♕d3?

Another unfortunate move. Instead, 34 ♕e1!? would keep the black queen away from the centre. Then after 34...♕c6 35 ♘f3! ♔d8 36 ♘e5, White would have a significant advantage as before.

34...♕e5 35 ♗xe6 ♕xe6 36 ♘c4 ♕xf6 37 ♖b6 *(D)*

37...♕h4?

B



So after all it's Markowski who makes the final mistake, and it costs him the game. Macieja suggests 37...♕f4! 38 ♕e2+ ♔d8 39 ♖xa6 ♕f5+ 40 ♔a2 ♕d5, after which Black's saving chances are very good. However, there is one thing I would like to bring to your attention: White has still retained the initiative, even after two significant inaccuracies. The reason lies in the particular nature of this initiative – it has been based on long-term features of the position; that is, on White's static advantages. That is why, in a whole range of variations, White kept the upper hand with a deficit of one or sometimes two pawns. So it is here – White is a couple of pawns down, but the win is simple.

38 ♕e2+ ♔d8 39 ♕e5 ♕h3

He would also lose with 39...♕e7 40 ♕d5+ ♕d7 41 ♘d6.

40 ♘d6 ♕e3 41 ♘xf7+ ♔d7 42 ♕d5+ ♔e7 43 ♕b7+ 1-0

This is fully adequate, though 43 ♘e5! is even more precise.

And now at last, a most important question which we have so far only alluded to: what happens if, for some reason or other, the player holding the initiative squanders some tempi that could have been used to develop it, or if he simply forgets about the need for resolute measures? Let's look at some examples which will give clear and convincing answers.

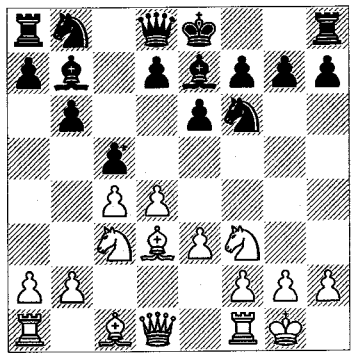
Kotov – Botvinnik

USSR Ch (Moscow) 1944

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 b6 3 e3 c5 4 ♗d3 ♗b7 5 c4 e6 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 ♘c3 *(D)*

7...d5?!

B



A rare case of poor opening play by Botvinnik. White also comes off better from 7...0-0?! 8 d5!. A preliminary exchange on d4 is essential; after 7...cxd4 8 exd4, Botvinnik gives 8...d5 (by far the most usual moves today are 8...d6 and 8...0-0) 9 cxd5 ♘xd5, and if now 10 ♗b5+, then 10...♗c6 seems a good reply.

8 cxd5 exd5?!

This too is bad. A much better choice is 8...♘xd5 9 e4 ♘xc3.

9 ♗b5+ ♔f8

As Botvinnik says, "The decision Black takes is forced. At least after this a complex struggle will continue." To give him his due, it must be said that after making two mistakes in a row at a very early stage of the opening, he pulls himself together and carries on the fight with maximum self-possession under adverse conditions – as we shall see from what follows. Such things are not in everyone's power.

Other replies turn out clearly in White's favour: 9...♗c6 10 ♕a4! ♗xb5 11 ♕xb5+ ♕d7 (another grim prospect is 11...♘bd7 12 dxc5 a6 13 ♕c6 ♖c8 14 ♕a4 bxc5 15 ♖d1, Dizdar-Grosar, Bled 1994) 12 ♘e5 ♕xb5 13 ♘xb5 ♘a6 14 ♖d1 0-0 15 ♘c6 with a big advantage, as in Petrosian-Keres, USSR Ch (Moscow) 1951; or 9...♘bd7 10 dxc5 bxc5 11 ♘e5, and Black loses the d5-pawn.

10 b3 a6 11 ♗e2 ♘c6 12 ♗b2 ♖c8 13 ♘e5 ♗d6 14 ♘xc6

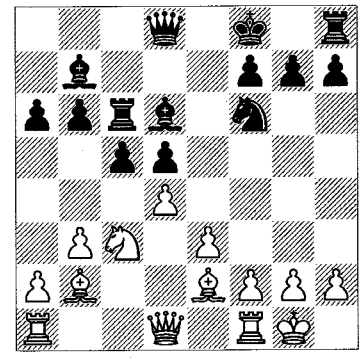
14 f4? is a mistake due to 14...cxd4 15 ♘xc6 (15 exd4? ♘xd4) 15...♖xc6.

14...♖xc6 *(D)*

15 ♗f3?!

Up to here White's play has been logical and strong. He has achieved a definite advantage. With the black king stranded in the centre and hindering the development of the kingside at the same time, it would be logical for White to open the position. After 15 dxc5 bxc5 16 ♗f3, he would have excellent opportunities to realize his advantage. Exploiting White's omission, Black plays:

W



15...c4!

After this, it won't be easy for White to open up the game.

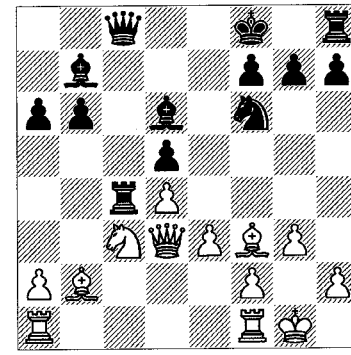
16 g3

Not, of course, 16 ♘xd5? ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♗xh2+, which would be in Black's favour.

16...♖c8 17 bxc4 ♖xc4 18 ♕d3 ♕c8! *(D)*

As Botvinnik explains, this move is obligatory. He can't play 18...b5? 19 a4 b4 20 ♘xd5!.

W



Another critical moment in the game. In the course of the past few moves Black has noticeably improved his affairs, making use of White's error at move 15. White is on the verge of losing his advantage, which consists purely in his possession of the initiative. He now misses his second and final chance to profit from it.

19 ♖ac1?!

White has to play 19 e4!. If the game then opens up with 19...dxe4 20 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 21 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 22 ♕xe4, this definitely favours White – his opponent's development problems

at once begin to tell. It seems therefore that Black would have to sacrifice the exchange with 19...♖xc3. After 20 ♕xc3 ♕xc3 21 ♗xc3 dxe4 22 ♗e2 White would be left with a minimal plus, but Black would still have cause to be thankful for White's slowness to act earlier in the game. From White's viewpoint, this would have been much better than what actually happens.

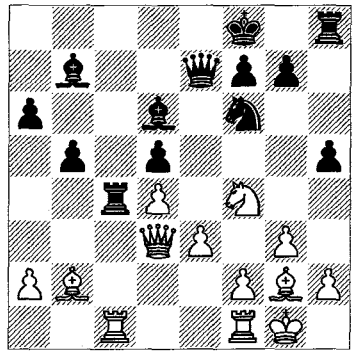
With his next move Botvinnik immediately stabilizes the position in the centre, and White's chances of a breakthrough disappear.

19...♕e6! 20 ♗g2 h5!

"Since White is basically undertaking nothing in the way of active operations, Black is able to assume the initiative" – Botvinnik.

21 ♘e2 b5 22 ♘f4 ♕e7 *(D)*

W



23 ♕d1?!

Sensing that his opponent has seized the initiative, White loses the thread. We have come across similar cases before. If your opponent holds the initiative, this makes a psychological impact, but when he has just wrested it from your own hands the effect is naturally all the stronger. White had to play 23 h4.

23...h4 24 ♕f3 ♔g8

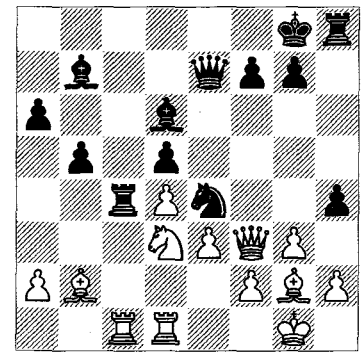
Preparing the following important invasion of the centre. Not at once 24...♘e4?? 25 ♘g6+.

25 ♖fd1 ♘e4 26 ♘d3 *(D)*

Now let's compare this position with the one after Black's 18th move. On White's side, during these past eight moves, nothing has basically changed. His rooks have merely stationed themselves on c1 and d1, where neither of them is actually doing much. Black's gains are plain to see. All this results from White's mishandling of the initiative.

26...♖h6!

B



After this move, it can be said that "all Black's pieces are ideally placed for the decisive assault on the kingside" – Botvinnik.

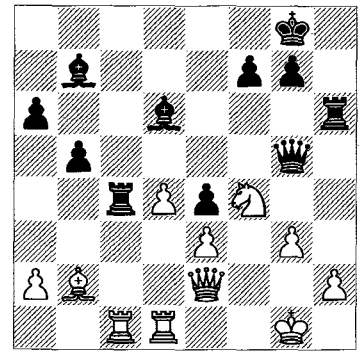
27 ♕e2 hxg3 28 fxg3

Not much is altered by 28 hxg3.

28...♕g5 29 ♗xe4 dxe4 30 ♘f4 *(D)*

White can no longer do anything active; 30 ♘e5 would be thoroughly bad due to 30...♖xc1 31 ♖xc1 f6 32 ♘g4 ♖g6 33 ♘f2 ♗xg3 and Black wins.

B



30...♗xf4!

This transaction is in Black's interest. An active white piece disappears from the board, while for Black a lethal diagonal is opened against the enemy king. Note the similarity between the idea of this move and that of White's exchange on move 28 in the previous game.

31 exf4 ♕d5 32 ♕g2

After 32 ♕e3 ♖xc1 33 ♖xc1 ♕xa2 34 ♕a3 ♕xa3 35 ♗xa3 a5, Black wins by advancing his pawns.

32...♖hc6 33 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 34 h3 b4!

Black's pawn-majority will help him deflect the white forces from the defence of their king.

35 ♔h2?!

This hastens defeat, but after 35 ♖d2 a5 White couldn't have held out anyway.

35...e3! 36 ♕xd5 ♖c2+ 37 ♔g1 ♗xd5 0-1

Both the game we have just examined and the preceding one by Anand allow us to formulate one more conclusion that is important, although generally fairly obvious: the fight for the initiative can be conducted by the most varied of methods and can assume a multitude of forms. But once the initiative is in your hands, one strict rule applies: it is essential to sustain your initiative and endeavour to develop it. If you don't, it will pass to your opponent, and you will be in for a hard time.

The following encounter confirms this. The player with an active game goes astray, and the initiative is wrested from him by his opponent. The game is very well known, but that doesn't make it any less instructive or relevant to our subject. It is interesting as an example of both sides struggling for the initiative by methods that differ widely but are always intensive and resolute.

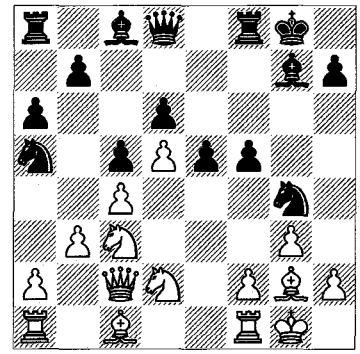
Petrosian – Spassky

Moscow Wch (10) 1966

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 c4 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 0-0 ♘c6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 d4 a6 8 d5 ♘a5 9 ♘d2 c5 10 ♕c2 e5 11 b3

Theory considers 11 a3 followed by 12 b4 to be strongest, but Petrosian always had his own perspective on the problems of the opening. The line he chooses looks unassuming; it's as if Black is being invited to play actively, which he can only do by advancing his kingside pawns. Then White will have an opportunity to play against the weaknesses Black will be creating. Such an approach was highly characteristic of Tigran Petrosian. Spassky accepts the challenge.

11...♘g4 12 e4 f5 13 exf5 gxf5 *(D)*



W

14 ♘d1!?

After the present game, no one played this way again. They generally brought the bishop out to b2.

14...b5 15 f3

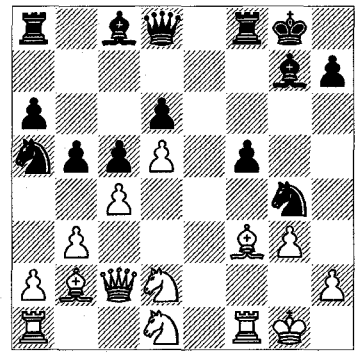
White follows the line of action begun by his previous move. As we have said, his plans involve provoking his opponent into activity. I would like to point out to you that this doesn't at all mean Petrosian is prepared to hand over the initiative submissively. It means that he wishes, so to speak, to be second on stage with his performance – to operate counter-aggressively, meeting his opponent's actions with counter-strokes. The conflict is coming to a head.

15...e4!?

On this particular day Spassky too was in a fighting mood and went straight ahead at the first opportunity. Mikhail Tal considered this decision to be too impulsive and suggested 15...♘h6, so as to muster Black's forces before proceeding with the attack. His opinion is supported by the way the game goes.

16 ♗b2 exf3 17 ♗xf3 *(D)*

17 ♘xf3 would lose a pawn to 17...♗xb2 18 ♕xb2 bxc4.



B

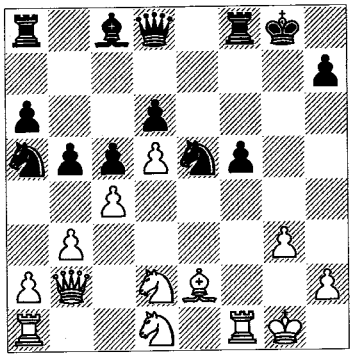
17...♗xb2

Tal suggests 17...♘e5!? to keep the bishops on, with the same aim as before: to gather more pieces together. It must be said that behind Tal's recommendations lay his understanding of the frame of mind of both players. Among the numerous contemporary annotators of this game, he was the only one to state the opinion that Petrosian was actively striving for victory by

his own methods which were unlike anyone else's.

18 ♕xb2 ♘e5 19 ♗e2 *(D)*

B



This position can hardly be assessed unequivocally. You are immediately struck by Black's spatial plus and his splendid knight on e5, yet his other knight is stuck on the edge of the board and there is no telling when it will come into play – though admittedly, by attacking the c4-pawn, it is hampering some of White's forces. On the other hand the black rook can easily be brought across from a8 to the kingside. White's chances are bound up with the weaknesses in his opponent's pawn-structure, but his communications – like Black's – are none too good. Mobilizing his queen's rook may become a problem.

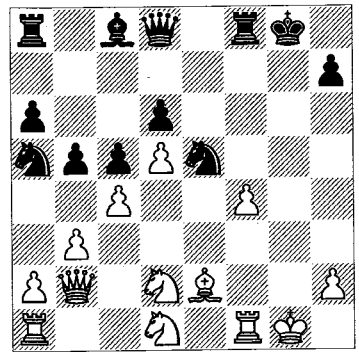
19...f4?!

Again Tal advises Black not to rush into sharp advances but to bring up his forces first with 19...♖a7!? 20 ♘e3 ♕f6 21 ♕c2 ♖g7 22 ♘g2 ♘g6. Then Black's chances would indeed seem a little better, and all because of White's undeveloped rook. The text-move must therefore be considered dubious.

20 gxf4?! *(D)*

But now it is White's move that deserves the same sign, for after 20 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 21 gxf4 ♘g6 he could obtain somewhat the better ending with a line indicated by Tal: 22 ♘e4 ♘xf4 23 ♘e3 ♖a7 (White's chances are also slightly better after 23...♕e7 24 ♗f3 ♘d3 25 ♕d2 ♘e5 26 ♗g2) 24 ♘f6+ ♔f7 25 ♖f1 ♕xf6 26 ♕xf6+ ♔xf6 27 ♖xf4+. True, Black's saving chances would be considerable, and a draw looks the most likely result. Tal supposes that Petrosian was taking a conscious risk, setting a trap for his opponent and this way fighting for victory. Once again I would repeat that the struggle for the initiative can sometimes assume highly unconventional forms. However that may be, there is no denying the fighting spirit of the players in this game.

B



20...♗h3?!

Spassky continues in the same vein in which he has conducted the entire game. He evidently thinks he is gaining an important tempo, when in fact he is losing one! After the natural 20...♖xf4 21 ♘e3 ♕g5+ 22 ♔h1 ♖xf1+ 23 ♘exf1 ♖a7 the position would be unclear, but it is perfectly possible that the chances would remain equal.

Now White seizes the initiative with an exchange sacrifice, which incidentally is forced:

21 ♘e3!

The positional rationale behind such a turnaround was examined in Chapter 2 (Development). The a1-rook was temporarily out of play, but now it simply disappears from the board together with Black's active bishop. In other words, for a short period of time and on a restricted part of the board (the kingside), White acquires a preponderance of forces (he overtakes his opponent there). That is exactly what is meant by seizing the initiative or wresting it from the enemy.

21...♗xf1?

I think this very move is Spassky's decisive mistake. Of course he has already committed a number of inaccuracies, but it seems to me that he could still have saved himself with 21...♖xf4. Then after 22 ♖xf4 ♕g5+ 23 ♖g4 ♗xg4 24 ♘xg4 ♘xg4 25 ♗xg4 ♕xg4+ 26 ♔h1 ♕d4 (only move) 27 ♖g1+ ♔h8 28 ♕xd4+ cxd4, we reach an endgame that has been assessed by various annotators as clearly favourable to White. Tal thought it was quite hopeless for Black, but he didn't give any variations. As a

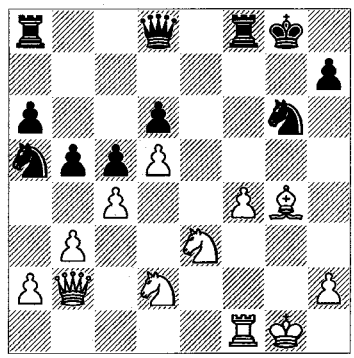
matter of fact, I have failed to find anything concrete. For instance, 29 ♖g4 bxc4 30 bxc4 (or 30 ♘xc4 ♘xc4 31 bxc4 d3 32 ♔g2 d2 33 ♖d4 ♖c8 =) 30...♖e8 31 ♖xd4 ♖e1+ 32 ♔g2 ♖d1 33 ♘b3 (or 33 ♔f3 ♘xc4 34 ♔e2 ♖xd2+ 35 ♖xd2 ♘xd2 36 ♔xd2 ♔g7 37 ♔e3 ♔f6 38 ♔f4 ♔g6 =) 33...♖xd4 34 ♘xd4 ♘xc4, with a draw.

22 ♖xf1 ♘g6

The other retreat doesn't improve matters; after 22...♘d7 23 ♘e4 ♕e7 24 ♗d3, the continuation could be something like this: 24...bxc4 25 ♔h1! ♖f7 26 ♘f5 ♖xf5 27 ♖g1+ ♔f7 28 ♖g7+ ♔e8 29 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 30 ♕g7+ ♖f7 31 ♕g5+ ♘f6 32 bxc4, with a winning position for White.

23 ♗g4 *(D)*

B



23...♘xf4?!

This hastens the end, but at least it lets us watch a spectacular finale. Black also loses with 23...♖xf4? 24 ♗e6+ ♔f8 25 ♖xf4+ ♘xf4 26 ♕h8+. The most stubborn defence is 23...♕f6, but even then, after 24 ♗e6+ ♔h8 25 ♕xf6+ ♖xf6 26 f5 ♘e5 27 ♘e4, White would have a technically won position. Now he concludes the game with a beautiful attack.

24 ♖xf4! ♖xf4 25 ♗e6+ ♖f7

Or 25...♔f8 26 ♕h8+ ♔e7 27 ♕xh7+ ♔e8 28 ♕g6+ ♔e7 29 ♕g5+.

26 ♘e4 ♕h4

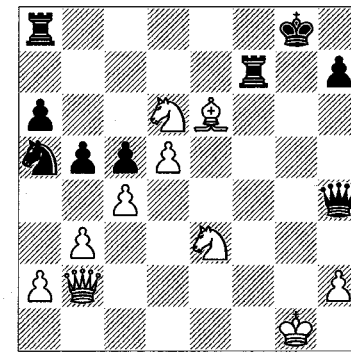
The variation 26...♖a7 27 ♘f5 ♕f8 28 ♕f6 makes a striking effect.

27 ♘xd6 *(D)*

27...♕g5+

With White's king exposed and both his knights unsupported, it's easy to imagine that when Spassky foresaw this position some moves back, he must have thought that something

B



would 'turn up'. But analysis shows that he has nothing:

a) 27...♕e1+ 28 ♔g2 ♕xe3 29 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 30 ♕h8+ ♔e7 31 ♘f5+ ♔xf7 32 ♕g7+.

b) 27...♖aa7 28 ♘ef5 ♕g4+ 29 ♔f2 ♕h4+ (or 29...♕f4+ 30 ♔e1 +–) 30 ♔f1 ♕g4 (or 30...♕h3+ 31 ♔e1) 31 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7, and now White plays the thematic 32 ♕h8+! ♔xh8 33 ♘xf7+ ♔g8 34 ♘7h6+.

28 ♔h1!

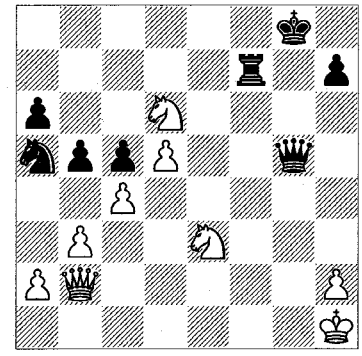
White can also win by 28 ♕g2 ♕xg2+ 29 ♔xg2 ♖a7 30 ♔g3 ♔f8 31 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 32 ♗xf7 ♔xf7 33 ♔f4, but Petrosian was in a resolute mood.

28...♖a7

Or 28...♕xe3 29 ♗xf7+ ♔f8 30 ♕h8+, as in the note to Black's previous move.

29 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 *(D)*

W



30 ♕h8+! 1-0

Finally I would like to show you a game which, although not free from errors, is full of fight and very interesting. It gives a good demonstration of an uncompromising struggle for the initiative between two players renowned for their pugnacity. As the game was part of an

elimination contest, they were both intent only on winning.

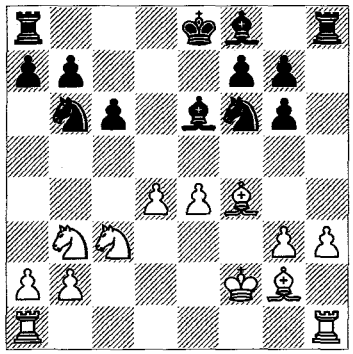
Larsen – Korchnoi
Leningrad IZ 1973

1 c4 e5 2 g3 c6 3 ♘f3 e4 4 ♘d4 d5 5 cxd5 ♕xd5 6 ♘b3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 ♕h5 8 h3 ♕g6 9 ♘c3 ♘bd7

A line that looks even more appealing is 9...♘a6!? 10 ♕c2 ♘b4 11 ♕b1 e3 12 ♕xg6 hxg6 13 ♔f1 exf2, as in Přibyl-Saidy, Dečin 1974, but the move played also gives Black a fully viable game.

10 ♕c2 e3 11 ♕xg6 exf2+ 12 ♔xf2 hxg6 13 d4 ♘b6 14 e4 ♗e6 15 ♗f4 *(D)*

B



15...♗b4

An important moment in the game. Black has to make a decision. He seems to do badly with 15...0-0-0?! 16 d5! cxd5 17 ♖ac1, but 15...♘h5!? is perfectly good. The text-move fixes the character of the game for quite a long time.

16 ♘c5

On 16 ♖ac1, Black can play 16...♘h5, catching the white bishop.

16...0-0-0

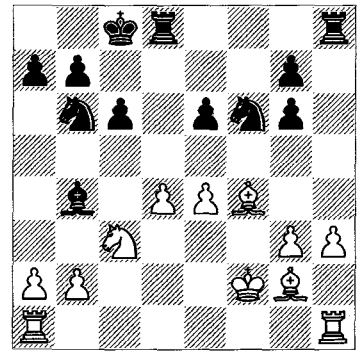
Taking the knight isn't good; after 16...♗xc5 17 dxc5 ♘bd7 18 b4, White has the advantage. Instead Black carries on with the policy he started last move, and boldly accepts weaknesses in his own position. In return he obtains active play.

17 ♘xe6 fxe6 *(D)*

18 a3

Now it is White's turn to decide on his plan. He chooses to go in for active play, not wishing to surrender the initiative to his opponent. All

W



the same I prefer 18 ♘e2!?, and if 18...♖hf8 then 19 ♔g1 (only not 19 ♗f3? g5). White would then have chances to exploit the weaknesses in his opponent's position. But Larsen, like Korchnoi, is in the mood to fight for the initiative. The struggle promises to be sharp.

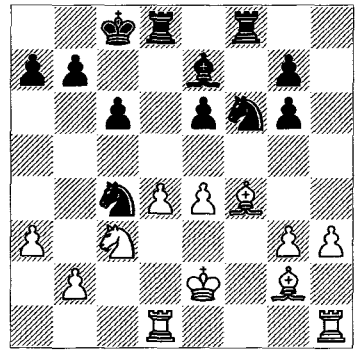
18...♗e7 19 ♖ad1

This time 19 ♘e2 can be met by 19...♘c4 with counterplay.

19...♖hf8 20 ♔e2 ♘c4!? *(D)*

Well played! White could answer 20...♘h5 with 21 ♗f3 ♘xf4+ 22 gxf4 ♖xf4 (22...♔d7 23 ♗g4 comes to the same thing) 23 ♗g4 ♔d7, and now 24 ♖hf1!. For the moment his advantage would be slight, but he would still hold the initiative, so that Black couldn't hope for more than a draw. Korchnoi wasn't interested in that.

W



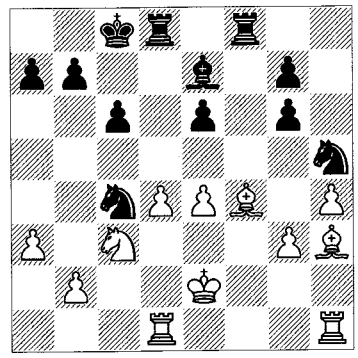
21 h4

It's hard to give a mark of disapproval to a move like this, but White is underrating his opponent's resources. The pawn sacrifice 21 b3!? ♘xa3 22 ♗e5, temporarily holding the black forces down, is interesting, and objectively White's best decision. Larsen, however, goes ahead optimistically, and comes up against a powerful counter-stroke:

21...♘h5!

This now works; Black has seized the initiative. Observe how, in sharp positions, the situation is transformed from one move to the next.

22 ♗h3 *(D)*



22...♖xf4!

Black's entire line of play is based on this move.

23 ♗xe6+

The other capture leads to an undoubted plus for Black: 23 gxf4 ♘xf4+ 24 ♔f3 ♘xh3 25 ♖xh3 ♘xb2 26 ♖d2 (or 26 ♖g1 ♖xd4 ∓) 26...♘c4 27 ♖d1 ♗xa3.

23...♔c7 24 ♗xc4 ♘xg3+ 25 ♔e3 ♖df8 26 ♖hg1?

A familiar scenario; one player has wrested the initiative from his opponent, and in dismay the latter fails to resist tenaciously. Of course 26 ♖h3?? loses to 26...♖f3+ 27 ♔d2 ♘xe4+. Instead 26 ♖h2!? ♗xh4 27 ♔d3 is necessary, forestalling the events which ensued in the game.

26...♗xh4 27 ♔d3 ♖f2 28 ♖d2 *(D)*

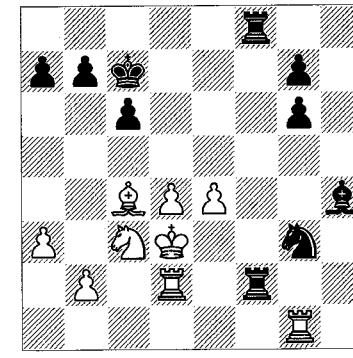
28...♗g5!

After this strong move White can't avoid losing a second pawn and his position becomes critical, although there are still defensive chances.

29 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 30 ♘e2

This is better than 30 ♗g8 ♖d2+ (not 30...b5? 31 ♘xb5+ cxb5 32 ♖xg3) 31 ♔c4 ♗f4, and one of the pawns is lost.

30...♖f3+ 31 ♔c2 ♘xe4 32 ♗d3 ♖e3 33 ♘c3 ♘g3! 34 d5



White has a difficult position after 34 ♗xg6 ♗f6 35 ♖d1 ♖f3.

34...♗f6 35 ♘d1 ♖f3 36 dxc6 ♔xc6

Possibly 36...bxc6!? 37 ♗xg6 ♘e2 is better, to activate the knight.

37 ♗xg6 ♔d6 38 ♖e1 ♘f5 39 ♖e8 ♘d4+ 40 ♔d2 ♗g5+ 41 ♔e1 ♗h4+ 42 ♔d2 ♖g3 43 ♗e4?

The decisive blunder. Even now White could continue to defend with 43 ♗d3 ♗g5+ 44 ♔c3 ♗f6 45 ♔d2, though Black would still preserve realistic winning chances.

43...♗g5+ 0-1

White loses his knight.

I wish to conclude with a proposition that isn't easy to substantiate but seems to me to be interesting. The initiative, as we maintain, arises from a difference in activity between the two sides. Doesn't this bring to mind the physical phenomenon of an electric current generated by the potential difference between two points? Or the transfer of heat between two bodies at different temperatures? The initiative in chess can likewise be represented as a certain flow of activity directed from one side to the other. If the disparity in activity decreases or disappears, the initiative will be reduced or extinguished.

If that is so, doesn't this analogy serve as further indirect confirmation of the validity of the definition that was given at the start of this chapter?

Index of Players

Numbers refer to pages. When a player's name appears in **bold**, that player had White. Otherwise the FIRST-NAMED PLAYER had White.