Opening for White according to Anand

1.e4

Alexander Khalifman
Opening for White According to Anand 1.e4

Book X

1.e4 c5 2.\(\Delta f3\) \(\Delta c6\) 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\Delta xd4\) \(\Delta f6\) 5.\(\Delta c3\) Chelyabinsk Variation

Alexander Khalifman
14th World Chess Champion
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Preface

Dear readers,

You are holding in your hands book ten of the series “Opening for White According to Anand – 1.e4”. It is devoted mostly to the Sveshnikov system, which is also popularly named as the Chelyabinsk variation. Naturally, it is worth remembering that the move 5...e7-e5 was played for the first time back in the year 1910 by great Lasker and this opening system changed its name numerous times throughout the years. The theory of that variation started developing rapidly during the 70ies of the last century, thanks to the efforts of Evgeny Sveshnikov, Gennadij Timoschenko and Alexander Panchenko (They all lived in the city of Chelyabinsk during those years.) and it seemed that the contemporary name should be most appropriate and logical.

In fact, starting from the seventies of the 20th century, the Chelyabinsk variation has never lost its popularity. The evaluation of that opening system has fluctuated between “100% reliable” to “almost refuted”; nevertheless, its theory has been developing intensely. Recently, the “anti-Chelyabinsk” systems – 3.¥b5 and 3.¥c3 are becoming top fashion and that only proves that the Chelyabinsk variation should be taken quite seriously. Practically all the best chess players of the world have contributed to the theory of that variation and the majority of them for both sides at that.

Well, if we follow strictly the classical principles, it would hardly be possible to classify Black’s set-up as positionally correct. It looks like White’s undisputed dominance over the d5-outpost should provide him with a stable advantage. Still, things are much more complex in practice. Amazingly enough, Black always finds resources for active counterplay based on some already typical strategical maneuvers around White’s basic outpost on d5.
My work with this book was a rather complicated task by itself. My colleagues asked me often (sometimes ironically, sometimes with genuine interest) whether I had managed to refute the Chelyabinsk variation and when that refutation would be published? Here, I must admit: no, I have not refuted the Chelyabinsk variation. Frankly speaking, I have not even tried to do that. As far as my experience and my understanding of chess are concerned, Black’s opening set-up has a sound strategical basis and it can never be refuted outright. Having that in mind, I decided to try something different and that was to systematize the amassed material and knowledge and to point out the most unpleasant lines for Black.

In the first part of our book, we have analyzed some lines, which do not belong exactly to the Chelyabinsk variation (That is some rare tries for Black on move five after 1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)xd4 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)f6 5.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)c3.), as well as some not so popular sidelines of the Sveshnikov variation. All these opening systems have long been outside of the favourable recommendations of theory and quite deservedly so. We did not need to add anything principally new, but still White should play very precisely. I hope that we have pointed out clear-cut and logical ways of obtaining the advantage for White in the opening.

The second part of the book comprises in fact its focus in the aspect of common sense. It deals with positions, which are being tested practically every month at all possible levels of competition. I agree completely with the majority of the grandmasters, who consider that the greatest problems which Black must face nowadays in the Chelyabinsk variation are in the system 5...e5 6.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)db5 d6 7.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)g5 a6 8.\(\text{\textit{a}}\)a3 b5 9.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)d5 \(\text{\textit{e}}\)7 10.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)xf6 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)xf6 11.c3. I have not tried to change radically any theoretical evaluations, but I have managed to discover some new ideas and I have to tell you that Black will need to solve difficult problems after them.

A.Khalifman

14th World Chess Champion
Part 1

1.e4 c5 2.dı3 dıc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.dıxd4 dıf6 5.dıc3

rare 5th moves for Black

5...e5 6.dıdb5 d6 7.dıg5

rare 7th moves for Black

7...a6 8.dıa3 dıe6; 8...b5 9.dıd5

rare 9th moves for Black

9...dıe7 10.dıxf6 gxf6

Black has not made up his mind yet what system of development he will choose. He can still play the Dragon variation or the Scheveningen, but usually he opts for that move order if he plans to continue with the system 5...d6 (We will analyze it in our next volumes.), or with 5...e5 and that is the system this book is devoted to. We deal with some rarely played original lines in chapter 1 and several of them are quite acceptable for Black, despite looking a bit extravagant, like for example 5...dıb8!?

Following 5...e5 6.dıdb5 d6 7.dıg5, there arises the thematic position of the Chelyabinsk variation, which can also be reached via other move orders (for example 5...e6 6.dıdb5 d6 7.dıf4 e5 8.dıg5). White obtains the d5-outpost at a very early stage of the game, but one of his knights after 7...a6 8.dıa3, remains temporarily out of action.

The awkward placement of White's pieces makes the Black
player reach almost automatically for his b-pawn in that position. He has some other possibilities too and we analyze them in Chapters 2 and 3. They are playable too; nevertheless, White does not have too many problems countering them.

In fact, only the move 8...e6 requires certain precision from White. After 9.d4 e8 10.xf6, following 10...xf6 11.eb6, as well as after 10...gxf6 11.d3 and e3, Black comes under a long-term positional bind.

In Chapter 4, we deal with Black’s last attempts to avoid the main “tabia”. The variation 8...b5 9.d5 a5+ 10.d2 d8, often leads to a draw by a repetition of moves (11.g5), but that does not correspond to the objective evaluation of the position. In case of 11.c4!, White seizes the initiative and Black must play very precisely in order to avoid the worst.

As for the variation 9...e7 10.xf6 gxf6, it has been practically closed. Black’s bishop on e7 is deployed much worse than on the long diagonal, so that move order has disappeared from tournament practice lately.
In this chapter, we will discuss some rarely played lines like: a) 5...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}d4}}\), b) 5...\(\text{\texttt{c}7}\), c) 5...\(\text{\texttt{b}8}\) and d) 5...\(\text{\texttt{a}6}\).

The other possibilities for Black usually transpose to positions we have already studied, for example: 5...d5?! 6.\(\text{\texttt{b}5}\) 7.exd5 \(\text{\texttt{xd}4}\) 8.\(\text{\texttt{x}d7+}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) 9.\(\text{\texttt{xd4}}\) – see 4...d5, Book 9, Chapter 1; 5...\(\text{\texttt{a}5}\) 6.\(\text{\texttt{b}3}\) \(\text{\texttt{c}7}\) 7.f4 and 5...\(\text{\texttt{b}6}\) 6.\(\text{\texttt{b}3}\) lead to 4...\(\text{\texttt{b}6}\) – Book 9, Chapter 2.

a) 5...\(\text{\texttt{x}d4}\)

This exchange is somewhat premature and White centralizes immediately his queen after it, forcing his opponent to consider the threat e4-e5.

6.\(\text{\texttt{xd}4}\) \(\text{\texttt{b}6}\)

That move is not so aesthetic and it has not been tested in practice. Still, it is quite consistent in a way with Black’s idea to seek simplifications.

The other possibilities for Black are at least not worse: 6...d6 7.\(\text{\texttt{g}5}\) leads to the Rauzer system, in a favourable situation for White, because his queen has come to the d4-square without losing a tempo for the move \(\text{\texttt{d}2}\) – see 2...d6; It is not good for Black to play 6...e6? 7.e5± Burke – Calton, Flint 1992; after 6...g6?! White can follow with 7.e5 \(\text{\texttt{h}5}\) 8.e6 \(\text{\texttt{g}7}\) 9.exf7+ \(\text{\texttt{xf}7}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{c}4+}\) e6 11.\(\text{\texttt{d}3}\)± Drbohlav – Krupkova, Czech Republic 1999, but it is even stronger for him to continue with 7.\(\text{\texttt{c}4}\)! and if 7...\(\text{\texttt{g}7}\), then 8.e5 \(\text{\texttt{g}8}\), Kraft – Roesner, Germany 1994 (8...\(\text{\texttt{h}5}\)? 9.\textit{g}4++) 9.0-0± White ends up with a great lead in development.

7.\(\text{\texttt{xb}6}\) \(\text{\texttt{xb}6}\) 8.e5 \(\text{\texttt{g}4}\) 9.f4±

(diagram)

White has a great space advantage in the centre, while Black has long-term weaknesses on the queenside and that provides
White with a clear edge in the endgame.

b) 5...\textit{c7}

Black might have planned to transpose to the Paulsen variation in that fashion, but it turns out that the absence of the move e7-e6 would not remain unpunished.

6.\textit{db5}!
White seizes the initiative.

6...\textit{b8}

In case of 6...\textit{d8} 7.\textit{d5} \textit{xd5} 8.\textit{exd5} a6 9.\textit{c3} \textit{e5}, White can afford to continue with 10.\textit{f4} \textit{g6} 11.\textit{e3} d6 12.\textit{d2} \textit{d7} 13.0-0-0± Berger – Badilles, Manila 1968.

7.\textit{d5} \textit{xd5} 8.\textit{exd5} a6
That move restricts White’s possibilities a bit.

After 8...\textit{e5}, besides 9.\textit{e2} a6 10.\textit{c3} – see 8...a6, White has the resource 9.\textit{d6}!? \textit{exd6} 10.\textit{c6} 11.\textit{c4} \textit{e7} 12.0-0† Lisitsyn – Troitsky, Leningrad 1938. There arises an analogous situation after 8...\textit{d8} – White has the pleasant choice between 9.\textit{e3} a6 10.\textit{c3} – see 8...a6 and the more aggressive line: 9.d6!? \textit{e6}, Petrosian – Bakhtadze, Tbilisi 1945, 10.\textit{e3} a6 11.\textit{c3} \textit{xd6} 12.\textit{xd6} \textit{exd6} 13.a4±

9.\textit{c3} \textit{e5}
Black can hardly be happy after the passive move 9...\textit{d8}, Orvenyi – Steiner, Budapest 1932, in view of 10.\textit{e3} e6 11.\textit{d2}±, while after 9...\textit{e5}, there arises a position played for the first time in the game Malmdin – Andersson, Stockholm 1970. White did not act so convincingly later and the same thing happened in some other games subsequently. It is quite easy to find an improvement for White.

10.\textit{e2}!
This flexible move is definitely the best here. White continues the mobilization of his forces, paying
attention to the actions of his opponent.

10...e6

The line 10...g6? 11.f4+- loses a piece for Black. In case of 10...d6 11.f4 \( \text{\text{\text{\text{\text{d7}}}}\) (11...\text{\text{\text{\text{g6}})} 12.\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}}+\) 12.\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}} g6 (12...\text{\text{\text{\text{f6}})} 13.\text{\text{\text{\text{a4}}}}+\) 13.\text{\text{\text{\text{d4}}}} \text{\text{\text{\text{f6}})} 14.\text{\text{\text{\text{a4}}}}+\) the weakness of the b6-square is considerable, while after 10...\text{\text{\text{\text{c7}})}, White has the powerful response 11.\text{\text{\text{\text{d4}}}}+\), after which Black has problems with his development.

11.\text{\text{\text{\text{d4}}}}+\text{\text{\text{\text{g6}}}}

Black’s defence is difficult too after 11...b5 12.0-0 \text{\text{\text{\text{b7}}) 13.\text{\text{\text{\text{d1}}}}+\) 12.\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}} e5

If 12...\text{\text{\text{\text{e5}})}, then White should better avoid the exchange with 13.\text{\text{\text{\text{d2}}}}+\), because Black’s queen is misplaced in the centre and it will soon come under attack by White with tempi.

13.\text{\text{\text{\text{d3}}}} b5

Or 13...\text{\text{\text{\text{e7}})} 14.\text{\text{\text{\text{a4}}}}+\)

14.0-0-0 d6 15.h4+

White has excellent middle game prospects. The advance of his h-pawn will emphasize the unstable placement of his opponent’s knight on g6; meanwhile Black has not completed the development of his pieces yet and he risks coming under attack.

c) 5...\text{\text{\text{\text{b8}}}}

It is not easy to understand that move, but it cannot be refuted either. White’s task is to continue in a way Black’s fifth move might become useless.

6.\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}}

Black would not mind the lines: 6.\text{\text{\text{\text{e2}}) e5 7.\text{\text{\text{\text{d5}}}} d6\), or 6.\text{\text{\text{\text{xc6}}) bxc6 7.e5 \text{\text{d5}}! 8.\text{\text{d5}} cxd5 9.\text{\text{\text{\text{d5}}) b7\)}}\)

6...a6

If 6...e5?!, then 7.\text{\text{\text{\text{d5}}+ and White is threatening to capture on a7 as well as to penetrate with the knight to the d6-square.}}

In the game Apicella – Murey, Paris 1992, Black played 6...e6, but White should have countered that with 7.\text{\text{\text{\text{d5}}! \text{\text{b4}} (In case of 7...\text{\text{\text{\text{a5}}) 8.f3 d5, White has the powerful maneuver 9.\text{\text{\text{\text{f4}}) e5 10.d2+}, with a great advantage.)}}\)

8.a3 \text{\text{\text{\text{xc3)}} 9.\text{\text{\text{\text{xc3}}+ White has an excellent couple of bishops.}}\)
After 6...d6 7.€e2 g6 8.0-0 €g7 9.f4± Raetsch – Fronczek, Bad Segeberg 2002, there arises a position similar to the Dragon variation, in which Black has lost a tempo for the not so useful move €b8.

7.€e2 e5
Black lags in development, so he should better refrain from the line: 7...d5 8.exd5 €xd5 9.€xd5 €xd5 10.0-0±
8.€b3 d6
White should be more than happy after 8...€b4 9.€f3± 9.0-0
In the game Borocz – Meszaros, Szekszard 1995, White played 9.a4, but he did not need to be afraid of the move b7-b5.

9...€e7 10.€d2±

That is a typical Sicilian position, but the purposefulness of the move €b8 is rather questionable. White’s prospects are better.

d) 5...a6
The drawback of that move is that Black does not control the central e5-square and White can exploit that immediately.

6.€xc6!
We will analyze both possible captures: d1) 6...€xc6 and d2) 6...bxc6.

d1) 6...€xc6
In this line, the opponents enter an endgame right after the opening. White is better, because Black’s king impedes the development of his pieces, meanwhile his queenside pawn structure is not without defects.

7.€xd8+ €xd8 8.€f4

8...€e6
It is only a transpostion of moves after 8...€e8 9.0-0-0 and there might follow: 9...€e6 – see 8...€e6; 9...€h5 – see 8...€h5; 9...b5 – see 8...b5; 9...€e6 – see 8...€e6; 9...€d7 – see 8...€d7.

It is too risky for Black to play:
Chapter 1

8... Nh5 9.0-0-0+ Qd7, Seibold – Neukum, Nuernberg 1988 (If 9... Qe8, then 10. c7 Qe6 11. d4 Qe8 12. a5± German – Bertoni, Buenos Aires 1994), because of 10. d4! b5 (or 10... Qxf4 11. b6±; 10... Qe8 11. b6 Qg4 12.f3 Qd8 13. Qxd8+ Qxd8 14. e6± e6 15. Qe4±) 11. b6 Qa7 12. e3±

Black would not solve his problems if he fianchettoes his king’s bishop: 8... Qe6 9.0-0-0+ Qe8 10. e2 g6 11.a4 h5 12.a5 Qh6 13. Qxh6 Qxh6 14.f3 Qd8 15. d4± Socko – Lazar, Bastia 2005.

White is clearly better after 8...b5 9.0-0-0+ Qd7 (If 9... Qe8, as it was played in the game Kononen – Vuorimies, Finland 2003, then White could have chosen 10.e5!? Qg4 11.Qe4 Qf5 12. d3 Qd8 13. Qg3±) 10.e5 e6 11.Qe4 h6 12. e2 Qc7 13. Qd6 Qxd6 14. Qxd6± Navara – Dalecky, Czech Republic 1997.

The best alternative for Black to the main line 8...e6 is the move 8... Qd7, which is aimed at the preparation of the pawn-advance e7-e5. White can refute that plan with the move 9.0-0-0 with the idea to follow with e4-e5. Now after 9...f6, White has 10.e5 and it would be in his favour if Black plays 10...e6 11. c4 Qe7 12.exf6+ gxf6, Semeniuk – Danielian, Vladivostok 1994, 13. Qh1 e5 (or 13... Qb6? 14. Qxe6! Qxe6 15. d6±) 14. Qe3±, as well as 10... Qe8 11. exf6 gxf6 (or 11...exf6 12. Qc4±) 12. e2 e5, Mavrich – Litovicius, Neuen, 1992, 13. Qe3±. It is more precise for Black to opt for 9... Qe8, but then again 10.e5 and if 10...g5!? (or 10...e6 11. Qe2 Qe7 12. Qe4 Qf8 13.h4 Qg6 14. Qg3± Molnar – Kovacev, Kecskemiet 1990) 11. Qxg5 Qxe5, Krebs – Kluss, Germany 1987, then White can maintain his initiative with the help of 12. d4! Qf5 (or 12... Qd7 13. Qe3 b5 14. Qc3±) 13.h3 Qg8 14. Qe3±

It is not logical for Black to play: 9... Qd7 10. a4 b5 11. Qb6 Qa7 12.f3 Qc5 13. Qxd7 Qxd7 14. Qd3± R.Fischer – Kuberczyk, Cleveland 1964 – World Champion obtained the two-bishop advantage and he won the game subsequently.

In the game Kurenkov – Jemelka, Olomouc 2003, Black tried 9... Qd7 10. Qe2 Qc5 11. g3 b5. Here White should have continued with 12.e5!? Qc7 13. Qe4 Qe7 14. Qd6± with a clear advantage.

10. Qe2±

The endgame is better for White. After 10...b5 (otherwise Black must consider the possibility Qa4) 11. Qd3 (The third rank is
an additional field of activity for White's rook.) 11...\( \text{a}7 \) (or 11...\( \text{c}5 \) 12.\( \text{h}d1 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 13.e5 \( \text{d}5 \) 14.\( \text{g}5 \) – and Black has great problems) in the game Janssen – van der Wiel, Netherlands 1978, White chose 12.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 13.\( \text{h}d1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 14.\( \text{d}6 \), but Black could have countered that with 14...\( \text{x}d6 \) 15.\( \text{x}d6 \) \( \text{x}d6 \) 16.\( \text{x}d6 \) e5!=, taking into account the fact that the c6-pawn was protected indirectly (17.\( \text{x}c6 \) \( \text{d}7 \)). It is more precise for White to play 12.e5! \( \text{d}5 \) 13.\( \text{d}2 \)! and despite the fact that the position seems to be relatively simple, Black has difficult problems to solve, for example: 13...\( \text{xc}3 \) (otherwise White deploys his knight to the e4-outpost and he prepares gradually c2-c4) 14.\( \text{x}c3 \) c5 (or 14...\( \text{b}4 \) 15.\( \text{x}c6 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 16.\( \text{e}3 \)±; 14...\( \text{d}7 \) 15.\( \text{x}c6 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 16.\( \text{f}3! \)±) 15.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 16.\( \text{f}3 \) b4 (Black has no other counterplay left – you should not forget that he has lost his castling right already.) 17.\( \text{d}3 \) c4 18.\( \text{b}6! \) cxd3 19.\( \text{x}c7 \) dx2 20.\( \text{xc}2 \)± – White has good winning chances in that endgame.

**d2)** 6...bxc6

Black captures with his pawn towards the centre, but he unavoidably loses tempi and that leads him to a considerable lag in development.

**7.e5 \( \text{g}8 \)**

In the variation 7...\( \text{d}5?! \) 8.\( \text{x}d5 \) cxd5 9.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 10.\( \text{c}4 \) e6 11.\( \text{d}4 \)± Black has no compensation for the pawn whatsoever, Yahkind – Frawley, Plymouth 1984.

**8.\( \text{f}3 \)??**

White plays more often here 8.\( \text{c}4 \), but the move 8.\( \text{f}3 \)?? is also very interesting. In essence, it is a prophylactic move. White is eyeing the c6-pawn in order to prevent the pawn-advance d7-d5.

**8...e6**

Black has nothing better. It is good for him to opt neither for 8...d5?! 9.exd6 \( \text{x}d6 \) 10.\( \text{f}4 \) e5 (or 10...\( \text{d}7 \) 11.\( \text{c}4 \)± A.Potapov – Kazantzis, Korinthos 2000) 11.\( \text{e}4 \) f6 12.\( \text{c}4 \)±, nor for 8...\( \text{c}7 \)??! 9.\( \text{f}4 \) e6 10.\( \text{c}4 \)± Recklingloh – Hisker, Passau 1997.

**9.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{c}7 \)**

Following 9...\( \text{e}7 \) 10.0–0 \( \text{g}6 \)
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11.\textit{\textbf{h}5±} White maintains a stable advantage.

\textbf{10.\textit{\textbf{g}3 \textit{\textbf{e}7}}}

White is clearly better after 10...\textit{d5} 11.\textit{exd6 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{x}}d6} 12.\textit{f4±}}

Martins – Andre, Internet 2001 and he can counter 10...\textit{f6} with the simple move 11.\textit{f4±}

\textbf{11.0–0 \textit{\textbf{g}6 12.\textit{f4±}}} (diagram)

White’s e5-pawn cramps Black \textit{his camp}, therefore the position

and if he pushes d7-d6, he would \textit{should be evaluated in favour of White.}

\textbf{Conclusion}

\textit{The possibilities for Black, which we analyze in this chapter, are played rather seldom in practice; therefore, White manages to obtain a lasting opening advantage almost effortlessly.}

\textit{Black plays a bit more often the move 5...a6, but after his opponent’s concrete reaction 6.\textit{\textbf{x}c6! dxc6} 7.\textit{\textbf{x}d8+ \textit{\textbf{x}d8} 8.\textit{f4 or 6...bxc6 7.e5, we have convinced you that White seizes the initiative for long.}}
This move was discovered by the second World Champion Emmanuel Lasker, who tried it back in the year 1910 against Karl Schlechter in game nine of their match for the world crown. White did not react in the most principled fashion indeed – he played 6.\textit{b}3, but it was a very interesting game and after a lively fight, it ended in a draw. The new idea did not gain popularity outright and for a period of several decades, the variation was out of the tournament practice. It came back triumphantly during the 70ies of the past century, when the system with 5...e5, was often and what is even more important quite successfully played by the grandmasters from Chelyabinsk Evgenij Sveshnikov and Gennady Timoschenko. Nowadays, this is one of the most reliable systems in the Sicilian Defence and its popularity is surpassed only by the Najdorf system.

The move 5...e5 has a solid positional basis – it wins a tempo for development and it does not let White obtain an advantage in the centre. Black weakens the d5-square indeed and that becomes the key-point of the developing fight.

\textbf{6.\textit{d}b5 d6}

The other possibilities for Black – 6...\textit{b}4+, 6...\textit{c}5, 6...h6 and 6...a6 – are clearly worse. In that case, after transposition of moves, it all comes down to variations, which we have analyzed in Chapter 3 of the previous volume (the system with the early 4...e5) – see the notes to Black’s moves 5 and 7.

\textbf{7.\textit{g}5}

We will analyze now \textbf{a) 7...\textit{e}6} and \textbf{b) 7...\textit{a}6}.

The alternatives are evidently weaker:
It is bad for Black to play 7...h6? 8.Qxf6 gxf6 9.Qd5+ Helmreich – Leibold, Germany 1986;
He loses a pawn without any compensation after 7...e7? 8.
Qxf6 gxf6 (8...Qxf6 9.Qxd6+ Qf8 10.Qc4± Krumova – Villar, Buenos Aires 1978) 9.Qd5 0-0
(9...Qa5+ 10.c3± Frank – Gertz, Hessen 1990; 9...Qf8 10.Qh5±
Hartl – Resch, Niederbayern 1995; 9...Qb8 10.Qbc7+ Qf8 11.
Qh5± Gresser – Loeffler, Split 1963) 10.Qxe7+ Qxe7 (10...Qxe7
Qc7± Rigolot – Delivre, France 1999) 11.Qxd6. After 11...Qxd6 (or
11...Qd8 12.Qxe7 Qxe7 13.Qd3± Schmidt – Baier, Strelasund 1997;
11...Qe6 12.Qxe7 Qxe7 13.0-0-0±
fails to create any counterplay, for example: 12.Qe6 13.0-0-0±
Kosmac – Ristov, Kranj 2004;
12...Qd8 13.0-0-0 Qd4 14.Qb5±
Diaz Joaquin – Strube, Hessen 1988;
12...Qd4 13.0-0-0 Qg4 (about 13...Qd8 – see 12...Qd8)
14.Qd3± Zaksaite – Zebelys, Radviliskis 1995; 12...Qb4 13.0-0-0!
(White regains his extra pawn quite favourably.) 13...Qxa2+ 14.Qb1 Qb4 (14...Qe6 15.c3±) 15.
Qc4 Qg7, Papp – Nagy, Szeged
1998 (15...Qc6 16.Qd3± Korniyuk
– Brozhik, Kiev 2005) 16.c3 Qc6
17.Qd3± – and White maintains a
great advantage in all these
variations.

a) 7...e6

This move is a sensible alternative to the main line 7...a6. The
Moldavian master O.Chebanenko practiced it about half a century
ago.

8.Qd5 Qc8

After the hasty 8...Qxd5 9.exd5 Qe7 (9...Qb8, Orozco – Cespedes,
Barranquilla 1995, 10.Qxf6 gxf6
11.Qd3 a6 12.Qc3±) White has
the powerful resource 10.c3! In
view of the threats along the a4-
e8 diagonal, Black loses his castling
dhagnight. In case of 10...Qexd5,
White follows with 11.Qa4 Qe7 (It
is a disaster for Black to try 11...
Qd7? 12.Qxd6+ Qe7 13.Qxd7+ 
Qxd7 14.Qxf7+-, while if 11...Qd7,
then 12.0-0-0 Qb6 13.Qb3→ and
White has a dangerous initiative.)
12.0-0-0 Qb6 (12...Qb3 13.Qb4±)
13.Qxd5axb5, Dutreeuw – Ovezov,
Qxb5±, White is attacking in a
position with equal material. If
Black refrains from capturing his
opponent’s central pawn, he does
not solve his problems either, for
example: 10...Qb8 11.Qxf6 gxf6
12.Qa4 Qd8 13.Qa5+! (This is an
important intermediate move.)
13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} (13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{b6}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{g6}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g3}} a6 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b8}} 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e3}}\textcolor{red}{\textit{+}}) 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c4}} a6 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a4}}+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{d8}} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d3}}\textcolor{red}{\textit{+}}; 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{g6}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{0-0-0}} a6 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d4}}! (White has new tactical motives at his disposal with a black king on e7.)
13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} (Black’s position is not to be envied after 13...exd4?! 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e1}}+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{e5}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd4}}\textcolor{red}{\textit{+-}}) 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b5}}! \textcolor{red}{\textit{c8}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d3}}\textcolor{red}{\textit{+}} Jansa – Kostic, Vrnjacka Banja 1981; 10...a6 (This is Black’s relatively best chance.) 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{x}f6} gxf6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a4}}! \textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}}! (There is nothing else left.) 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a3}}+ b5, Raszka – Mrózek, Katowice 1995 (After 13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}}, it is interesting for White to try 14.0–0–0!? 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g4}}+ f5 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h5}}±

9.c3!

White is not in a hurry to exchange on f6 in order not to allow counterplay on the g-file.

9...a6 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}}

It deserves attention for Black to opt for 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}}?!, but then after 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{x}f6} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} (or 12...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}}± Krajčovic – Kysel, Slovakia 1994) 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{cb6}} (It is also good for White to continue with 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xe7}}?! \textcolor{red}{\textit{xe7}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e3}}\textcolor{red}{\textit{+}} Sipos – Angyalosi, Hungary 2000) 13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{b8}} and there arises by transposition a situation, which we will analyze later in the variation 7...
a6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e6}}.

11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}}!

That is the right time for that exchange, because White needs to capture the enemy bishop on d5 with his queen.

11...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}}

It would not work for Black to try 11...\textcolor{red}{\textit{b6}}? 12.exd5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xb2}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c1}}+– (Jansa), and he loses a piece.

In the game Jansa – Danek, Czechoslovakia 1982, Black chose 11...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{a5}} (or 12...b5 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c2}}± Kosanski – Hüberl, Velika Gorica 2005; 12...\textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d8}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d1}}± Ranieri – Guglielmi, Eporediese 2001) 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xa5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xa5}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{g8}} 16.0–0 f5 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{g5}} 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f6}}! \textcolor{red}{\textit{f5}} 19.b4! \textcolor{red}{\textit{c6}} (White would have countered 19...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc3}}? with 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b1}}+–) 20.b5±, and White started decisive actions in that favourable endgame.

12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2}} 0–0

14.0–0±
White has a clear positional advantage, thanks to his reliable control over the d5-outpost. It was tried later: 14...g6 15.\(\textit{c}\text{c}4 \text{e}6 16.\textit{b}b6 \text{c}7 17.\textit{d}d2\# Mote – Strenzwilk, USA 1982; 14...\textit{g}g6 15.\textit{c}\text{c}4 \textit{d}d8 16.\textit{e}e3 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{d}d3 \textit{e}6 18.\textit{f}f5 \textit{f}f6 19.g3\# Suetin – Sobura, Warsaw 1989; 14...\textit{d}d8 (The transfer of the knight from c6 to f4 is Black’s main idea.) 15.\textit{c}\text{c}4 \textit{e}6, Bors – Heiligermann, Hungary 2002, 16.\textit{e}e3 \textit{f}f4 17.\textit{d}d1! \textit{g}g6 18.\textit{f}f3\# and White keeps the edge in all the variations.

\textbf{b) 7...a6 8.\textit{a}a3}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram.png}
\end{center}

Besides 8...\textit{e}6 (Chapter 3) and the main line 8...b5, Black has also tried in practice \textbf{b1) 8...d5?!}, \textbf{b2) 8...\textit{e}7?!}, \textbf{b3) 8...h6?!}

\textbf{b1) 8...d5?!}

Black plays analogously to the so-called Pelican variation, which arises after the hasty exchange 8.\textit{xf6}?! \textit{gxf6} 9.\textit{a}a3 d5?!\# and presents Black with sufficient counter chances. Here however, White is not obliged to exchange on f6.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram2.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{9.\textit{xd}d5 \textit{xa}a3 10.\textit{bxa}a3 \textit{a}a5+ 11.\textit{d}d2!}

The exchange of queens is unavoidable, White remains with a bishop pair and an extra pawn, and he has a great advantage in that endgame.

\textbf{11...\textit{xd}d2+ 12.\textit{xd}d2 \textit{xd}d5}

Or 12...0–0 13.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{gxf6}, Galdunts – Knoll, Vienna 2006, 14.0–0–0 \textit{e}e6 15.\textit{b}b2 \textit{fd}8 16.\textit{d}d3\#

\textbf{13.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{d}d4 14.0–0–0 \textit{f}f5 15.c3 \textit{c}c8}

Black would not change much with 15...\textit{b}b5 16.\textit{e}e1 \textit{f}6, as it was played in the game Ghinda – T.Horvath, Rimavska Sobota 1975. White should have played the simple line: 17.f4 0–0–0 (or 17...\textit{e}4 18.g4! \textit{xg4} 19.\textit{g}g1\#) 18.\textit{fxe}5 \textit{xd}5 19.\textit{c}c4 \textit{c}c5 20.\textit{b}b2\#, and Black’s position would remain too difficult.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram3.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{16.\textit{b}b2 \textit{b}b5 17.\textit{e}e1! \textit{f}6 18.f4\#}

White’s considerable advantage is doubtless. That evaluation was confirmed in the game Sax – Velimirovic, Rio de Janeiro 1979, which followed with 18...0–0?
19.c4 \texttt{ffe}8 (19...\texttt{exf}4 20.\texttt{b}4+--; 19...\texttt{d}6 20.\texttt{b}4+--) 20.g4+-, and White won a piece. It would have been more resilient for Black to defend with 18...e4 19.c4 \texttt{d}6 20.\texttt{c}1 b6, Preuss – Koch, Moron 2004, 21.\texttt{e}3±, but even then, he would have no reasons to be too optimistic.

\textbf{b2) 8...\texttt{e}7?!}

That is hardly the best decision for Black. He does not prevent the centralization of White's knight on a3 and that contradicts one of the main strategical ideas of the Chelyabinsk variation.

\textbf{9.\texttt{c}4! \texttt{d}4}

About 9...\texttt{e}6 – see 8...\texttt{e}6.

It would not work for Black to opt for 9...\texttt{x}e4? 10.\texttt{x}e4 \texttt{x}g5 11.\texttt{c}xd6+ \texttt{f}8 12.\texttt{h}5+-

The move 10.\texttt{xf}6 is now a positional threat for Black, because after the capture on f6 with the pawn, his bishop is misplaced on the e7-square and that can be illustrated in the following variations: 9...b5 10.\texttt{xf}6 gxf6 11.\texttt{e}3 0–0 (About 11...\texttt{e}6 – see 8...\texttt{e}6; as for 11...\texttt{d}4 – see 9...\texttt{d}4; 11...\texttt{a}5 12.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{e}6 13.0–0± Hirschhorn – van Rooy, Perth 1994.) 12.\texttt{cd}5 \texttt{h}8 13.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{g}8 14.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{f}8 15.\texttt{g}4!± Gabran – Ryzhkov, corr. 1974.

In case of 9...\texttt{g}4 (with the idea to provoke f2-f3), as it was played in the game Hofrichter – Dawid, Freiberg 1999, White's best line seems to be 10.\texttt{d}2! \texttt{d}4 11.\texttt{d}3 h6 12.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6 13.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{g}5 14.\texttt{ce}3± with an advantage for him.

It might be interesting for Black to try the gambit line 9...0–0!? 10.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6! (about 10...gx\texttt{f}6 11.\texttt{d}5 b5 12.\texttt{ce}3 – see 9...b5), but that would not solve his problems either: after 11.\texttt{x}d6 \texttt{x}d6 (If 11...\texttt{d}4, then 12.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{d}7 13.\texttt{d}5± Korneev – Maze, Elgoibar 2005. It is in favour of White if Black tries 11...\texttt{e}6 12.0–0–0 \texttt{x}d6, Popovic – Todoroovic, Novi Sad 2000, 13.\texttt{x}d6±, or 12...\texttt{e}8 13.\texttt{d}5±; 11...\texttt{e}7 12.\texttt{x}d8 \texttt{x}d8 13.\texttt{d}5± Escott – Ellison, corr. 1993.) 12.\texttt{x}d6 \texttt{e}6 (or 12...\texttt{d}8 13.\texttt{xc}8 \texttt{xc}8 14.\texttt{d}3± Tucci – Calgaro, corr. 1998), as it was played in the game Dueball – Roeder, Germany 1981, White can continue with 13.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{b}4 (or 13...\texttt{g}6 14.\texttt{d}5±; 13...\texttt{e}7 14.\texttt{f}5 \texttt{c}5 15.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{fd}8 16.0–0–0 g6 17.\texttt{e}3± 14.0–0–0 b5 (or 14...\texttt{e}7 15.\texttt{xb}7 \texttt{xa}2+ 16.\texttt{xa}2 \texttt{xa}2 17.b3±) 15.\texttt{b}1± – and Black has no compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

10.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6
It is not logical for Black to try 10...gxf6, in view of 11.Qd5. Now, it is too dubious for him to opt for 11...f5?! 12.c3 Qb5 13.Qc6 Qb8 14.Qd4± Kopylov – Kuzminykh, Leningrad 1951, while White obtains a clear advantage after 11...e6 12.Qc6 Qb8 (or 12...Qxd5 13.Qxd5 Qc8 14.c3 Qe6 15.Qe2 0-0 16.Qg4± Segebarth – Szewczyk, DDR 1988) 13.c3 Qc6 14. Qh5± Zapata – Paredes, Merida 1991, the move 11...b5 creates a target for attack on the queenside and the undermining move a2-a4 becomes quite effective: 12.Qcb6 Qb8 13.Qxc8 Qxc8 14.c3 Qc6 (or 14...Qe6 15.a4± Kolendo – Weber, Poland 1992) 15.a4± Armas – Horvath, Budapest 1973.

11.Qd5 Qe6

It is unsatisfactory for Black to follow with 11...Qg4? 12.Qxg4 Qxc2+ 13.Qd2 Qxa1 14.Qcb6 Qb8 15.Qc4 Qg5+ 16.Qc3+– Coleman – Behrmann, corr. 1996 – because White captures two pieces for a rook and he has a winning position.


12.Qxf6+!

This is simple and strong. Black is in a lot of trouble after every possible capture.

12...Qxf6

Or 12...Qxf6 13.c3 Qxc4 (13...Qc8 14.Qe3 Qc6 15.Qc4 Qe7 16.Qd3± Raivio – Jensen, corr. 1997)
14.\texttt{xc}4± with a clear positional advantage for White, T.Horvath – Gladischev, Zalakaros 1995.

13.c3

It is also good for White to try 13.\texttt{xd}6+ \texttt{e}7 14.c3 \texttt{xd}6 15.\texttt{cx}d4 \texttt{ex}d4 16.\texttt{wa}4± Santiago – Ruiz Luis, Asturias 1993, because Black's too extravagant play can hardly be justified.

13...\texttt{xc}4 14.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{c}6 15.0–0± – White has a long-lasting advantage, thanks to his reliable control over the d5-outpost and Black's backward d6-pawn, Zei – Scuderi, corr. 1999. Meanwhile, White can increase his pressure against the f7-square bringing his heavy pieces. Black's defence will be difficult and possibly fruitless.

b3) 8...h6?!

That is a rarely played line, after which there arise typical situations in which the move h7-h6 is not so useful for Black.

9.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6

In case of 9...gxf6, White can choose between 10.\texttt{d}5 f5, Herrmann – Gusseinow, Sebnitz 1998 (After 10...b5 11.c3, it is too risky for Black to continue with 11...f5 12.exf5 \texttt{xf}5, in view of 13.\texttt{xf}3± Farah – Serafim, Mar del Plata 1992, while if 11...\texttt{e}6, then simply 12.\texttt{c}2± Chiburdanidze – Merlini, Buenos Aires 1978 – and the move h7-h6 turns out to be just a loss of time.), 11.exf5 \texttt{xf}5 12.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{e}6 13.c3! (Black can counter 13.\texttt{cb}6 with 13...\texttt{b}4!∞) 13...\texttt{g}7 14.\texttt{cb}6 \texttt{b}8 15.\texttt{e}2± and 10.\texttt{c}4 f5 (or 10...\texttt{e}6 11.\texttt{e}3±) 11.exf5 \texttt{xf}5 12.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{e}6 13.\texttt{c}4!?± Kozakov – Garcia Roman, La Roda 2007 and White has a much superior game in both variations.

10.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{d}8 11.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{e}6

The game Alexopoulos – Katranas, Kallithea 1978, followed with 11...b5 12.\texttt{cb}6 \texttt{b}8 13.\texttt{xc}8 \texttt{xc}8, and here White could have played 14.a4±

12.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{e}7

After 12...b5 13.\texttt{ce}3 \texttt{e}7, White has again the powerful resource 14.a4±

13.\texttt{e}2±

White has a stable edge. In case of 13...0–0 14.\texttt{xe}7+ \texttt{xe}7 15.\texttt{xd}6 \texttt{h}4 16.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{ad}8 17.\texttt{e}3± Black has no compensation for the pawn. In the game Moiseev – Backwinkel, Germany 1995, Black tried 13...b5, but White could have countered that with 14.\texttt{xe}7?! \texttt{xe}7 15.\texttt{e}3±, and Black would have lost his castling rights.
Chapter 3

1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{\&}f3 \) \( \text{\&}c6 \) 3.d4 cxd4 4.\( \text{\&}xd4 \) e6 5.\( \text{\&}c3 \) e5 6.\( \text{\&}db5 \) d6 7.\( \text{\&}g5 \) a6 8.\( \text{\&}a3 \) \( \text{\&}e6 \)

The English master H. Bird first played this ancient line in the 19th century and later, during the sixties of the past century, it was a regular opening weapon of GM B. Larsen. Sometimes the name of that line is connected with these two players.

9.\( \text{\&}c4! \)

White activates his knight, increasing the pressure against the d6-pawn and he thus emphasizes the effect of the possible exchange on f6. Black has a choice here between the outdated move a) 9...\( \text{\&}d4 \) and the contemporary line b) 9...\( \text{\&}c8! \)

At first, we will convince you that White's task is much easier after Black's other possibilities:

White has a clear advantage after the anti-positional move 9...\( \text{\&}xc4?! \) 10.\( \text{\&}xc4 \) \( \text{\&}e7 \) 11.0–0 0–0 12.\( \text{\&}xf6 \) \( \text{\&}xf6 \) 13.\( \text{\&}d5\pm \) Unzicker – Dunphy, Madrid 1957.

The line 9...\( \text{\&}c7?! \) can hardly be recommended (Black's queen is misplaced here.) 10.\( \text{\&}xf6 \) gxf6 11.\( \text{\&}e3 \) \( \text{\&}e7 \) 12.\( \text{\&}d3 \) h5 (or 12...\( \text{\&}h6 \) 13.0–0 \( \text{\&}xe3 \) 14.\( \text{\&}xe3 \pm \) Kosmac – Varga, Bled 1996) 13.\( \text{\&}f3\pm \) Byvshev – Reshko, Leningrad 1957.

The move 9...b5?! looks seemingly active, but it only creates weaknesses for Black, since White can undermine his opponent's queenside pawns with a2-a4 at an opportune moment. There might follow: 10.\( \text{\&}xf6 \) gxf6 (In case of 10...\( \text{\&}xf6 \), White should not play 11.\( \text{\&}xd6+ \) \( \text{\&}xd6 \) 12.\( \text{\&}xd6 \) \( \text{\&}d4 \) 13.\( \text{\&}d3 \) \( \text{\&}g5\square \), since it is much stronger for him to follow with 11.\( \text{\&}e3! \) \( \text{\&}d4 \) 12.\( \text{\&}cd5 \) \( \text{\&}xd5 \) 13.\( \text{\&}xd5 \) \( \text{\&}g6 \), Podlesnik – Starc, Bled 1994, 14.f3\pm or 11...\( \text{\&}d8 \) 12.\( \text{\&}cd5\pm \) with an advantage for White, Bednarski – Kavalek, Krakow 1984.) 11.\( \text{\&}e3. \)
Black has tried numerous possibilities here, but he fails to equalize in any of them:

About 11...\(\text{\&}e7\) – see 9...\(\text{\&}e7\);
The line 11...\(\text{\&}d4\) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(f5\), loses the exchange for Black after 13.exf5 \(\text{\&}xf5\) 14.\(\text{\&}xf5\) \(\text{\&}xf5\) 15.\(\text{\&}f3!\) \(\text{\&}xc2\) 16.\(\text{\&}c7+\) \(\text{\&}xc7\) 17.\(\text{\&}xa8+\) \(\text{\&}e7\) 18.\(\text{\&}xa6\pm\) Casella – Simpson, Long Island 1995;

It is too passive for Black to play 11...\(\text{\&}g7\) 12.\(\text{\&}d3\) 0–0 13.0–0 \(\text{\&}c8\) 14.\(\text{\&}cd5\pm\) Melnikov – Vik. Ivanov, St Petersburg 2006;

If 11...\(\text{\&}e7\), as it was played in the game Brondum – Andersen, Copenhagen 1979, then 12.\(\text{\&}f3\) \(\text{\&}g7\) (12...\(\text{\&}g6\) 13.\(\text{\&}cd5\pm\) 13.\(\text{\&}d3\pm\);

Finally, in case of 11...\(\text{\&}h6\) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}xe3\) 13.\(\text{\&}xe3\) \(\text{\&}e7\) (It is too risky for Black to opt for 13...\(\text{\&}a5+\) 14.c3 0–0–0 15.\(\text{\&}e2\) \(\text{\&}e7\), Opuchaneyj – Jarmoluk, Argentina 1993, 16.a4 b4 17.\(\text{\&}c1\pm\) White counters with the thematic line 14.a4! b4 (Black would not solve his problems with 14...\(bxa4\) 15.\(\text{\&}xa4\) d5, Ellison – Nicholson, Port Erin 2000, because of 16.\(\text{\&}f3\pm\) 15.\(\text{\&}f3\pm\) Honfi – Piket, Wijk aan Zee 1970 and he obtains a clear advantage.

After 9...\(\text{\&}e7\)! White plays 10.\(\text{\&}xf6\) \(gxf6\) 11.\(\text{\&}e3\). That position has been tested numerous times in practice, but the results were terrible for Black.

Here are some of the possible developments:

About 11...\(\text{\&}d7\) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}d8\) 13.\(\text{\&}h5\) \(\text{\&}xd5\) 14.\(\text{\&}xd5\) \(\text{\&}d4\) 15.\(\text{\&}d3\) – see 11...\(\text{\&}d4\);

11...\(\text{\&}b6\)! (That is a loss of time.) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}a5+\) (or 12...\(\text{\&}xb2\) 13.\(\text{\&}b1\) \(\text{\&}xa2\) 14.\(\text{\&}c7+\) \(\text{\&}d7\) 15.\(\text{\&}xa8\) \(\text{\&}xa8\) 16.\(\text{\&}xb7\pm\) 13.\(\text{\&}c3\pm\) Esplana – Alosilla, Peru 1999;

11...0–0 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}h8\) 13.\(\text{\&}e2\) \(\text{\&}g8\) 14.0–0\pm\) Leiros Vila – Lucas, corr. 1985;

11...\(\text{\&}c8\) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}xd5\), Suetin – Olbrich, Moscow 1991 (about 12...b5 – see 11...b5; 12...\(f5\) 13.exf5 \(\text{\&}xd5\), Nunn – Cox, Norway 1972, 14.\(\text{\&}xd5\pm\) 13.exd5 \(\text{\&}b8\) 14.\(\text{\&}d3\pm\);

11...\(b5\) 12.\(\text{\&}cd5\) \(\text{\&}a5+\) (or 12...\(\text{\&}c8\) 13.c3 \(\text{\&}a5\) 14.a4\pm\) Wasnetsky – Nosal, Mannheim 1990; 12...\(\text{\&}b8\) 13.\(\text{\&}e2\) \(\text{\&}d7\) 14.\(\text{\&}g4\pm\) Maucci – Plazaola, Buenos Aires 2002) 13.\(\text{\&}c3\pm\) Dolgener – Gierden, Dortmund 1988;
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11...\(\text{\textbackslash d}4\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash d}3\) \(\text{\textbackslash d}7\) (or 12...h5 13.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\)\(\text{\textbackslash d}7\) Kotronias – Taksrud, Gausdal 1991; 12...\(\text{\textbackslash a}5\) 13.0–0± Westermeier – Hacker, Germany 1979; 12...\(\text{\textbackslash e}8\) 13.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\) 0–0 14.c3± Melnikov – Spanoche, Eforie Nord 1999) 13.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\) \(\text{\textbackslash d}d5\) (or 13...\(\text{\textbackslash d}8\) 14.c3 \(\text{\textbackslash c}6\) 15.\(\text{\textbackslash f}3\)± Pitkanen – Rantanen, Naantali 1997) 14.\(\text{\textbackslash x}d5\) \(\text{\textbackslash d}8\) (or 14...\(\text{\textbackslash c}6\) 15.c3 \(\text{\textbackslash e}6\) 16.\(\text{\textbackslash f}3\) \(\text{\textbackslash c}5\) 17.\(\text{\textbackslash c}2\) \(\text{\textbackslash d}7\) 18.\(\text{\textbackslash b}3\)± Music – Segovic, Pula 2002) 15.\(\text{\textbackslash h}5\) \(\text{\textbackslash c}8\) (or 15...0–0 16.c3 \(\text{\textbackslash c}6\) 17.\(\text{\textbackslash e}2\)± Gazik – Matejov, Slovakia 2001) 16.c3 \(\text{\textbackslash e}6\) 17.\(\text{\textbackslash e}2\)± Blau – Plater, Hilversum 1947;

11...\(\text{\textbackslash a}5\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash d}3\) \(\text{\textbackslash b}4\) (12...0–0–0 13.0–0 h5 14.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\)± Wang – Mai, Wuxi 2005) 13.a3 \(\text{\textbackslash x}d3\)± 14.\(\text{\textbackslash x}d3\) (White's control over the d5 and f5-outposts emphasizes the superiority of his couple of knights over Black's bishop pair.) 14...\(\text{\textbackslash c}8\) (14...0–0–0 15.0–0± Ferreira – Romao, Portugal 1993) 15.0–0 \(\text{\textbackslash g}8\) 16.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\) \(\text{\textbackslash c}5\) 17.c3± Winterstein – Schwarz, Giessen 1991. All these variations confirm that after Black captures on f6 with a pawn, his bishop is misplaced on e7.

The game Hove – Graham, Minnesota 1996, followed with the move 9...\(\text{\textbackslash b}8\) with the idea to remove the rook from an eventual threat on the b6-square. In that case, White's best line seems to be 10.\(\text{\textbackslash d}5!\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}d5\) 11.\(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) (or 11...\(\text{\textbackslash g}xf6\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash x}d5\pm\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash x}d5\pm\) and he occupies the central outpost.

Meanwhile, Black's rook is misplaced on b8.

After the not so well analyzed variation 9...h6 10.\(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) (It is illogical for Black to play 10...\(\text{\textbackslash g}xf6?!\) 11.\(\text{\textbackslash e}3\)± Tarnowski – Fabian, Glucholazy 1963 and White remains with a clear advantage.) 11.\(\text{\textbackslash b}6\) \(\text{\textbackslash b}8\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\)± Ribli – Zinn, Zalaegerszeg 1969, there arises a situation quite similar to the one we will analyze later after 9...\(\text{\textbackslash c}8\) 10.\(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) 11.\(\text{\textbackslash b}6\) \(\text{\textbackslash b}8\) 12.\(\text{\textbackslash c}d5\) – see variation b1. The difference is only that Black's pawn is on h6 and that is much rather in favour of White, because Black's counterplay is connected with the pawn-advance f7-f5 and it would lead to an additional weakening of his light squares on the kingside.

\textbf{a) 9...\(\text{\textbackslash d}4\)}

This move used to be popular. Presently it has almost disappeared from practice and the reason is that Black's centralized knight will be repelled later with the move c2–c3 and he can hardly prevent that.

10.\(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\) \(\text{\textbackslash x}f6\)
Black has problems after 10... gxf6 11.\textit{\textbf{d}e3} f5 (about 11...\textit{\textbf{e}}c8 12.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3 – see 9...\textit{\textbf{c}}c8; 11...\textit{\textbf{h}}6 12.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3 \textit{\textbf{e}xe}3 13.\textit{\textbf{f}xe}3 \textit{\textbf{c}}c6 14.\textit{\textbf{f}f}3± Wolff – Shhtern, USA 1986) 12.\textit{\textbf{e}xf}5 \textit{\textbf{g}xf}5 13.\textit{\textbf{g}xf}5 \textit{\textbf{g}xf}5, because of 14.\textit{\textbf{f}f}3 \textit{\textbf{c}}c8, Trautz – Adamczyk, corr. 2003 (Black loses immediately after 14...\textit{\textbf{d}}7? 15.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5–, White is clearly better too following 14...\textit{\textbf{x}e}2 15.\textit{\textbf{e}c}1 \textit{\textbf{g}}g6 16.\textit{\textbf{x}b}7†) 15.\textit{\textbf{e}e}2! \textit{\textbf{e}e}7 (It is too dangerous for Black to try 15...\textit{\textbf{x}e}2 16.\textit{\textbf{e}c}1 \textit{\textbf{a}a}4 17.0–0 \textit{\textbf{c}}c6 18.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5±, or 16...\textit{\textbf{g}}g6 17.0–0±) 16.0–0± with initiative for White.

11.\textit{\textbf{b}b}6 \textit{\textbf{b}b}8

It is insufficient for Black to try the active line: 11...\textit{\textbf{b}b}8 12.\textit{\textbf{c}d}5 \textit{\textbf{d}xd}5 13.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5 \textit{\textbf{w}g}6 14.f3 \textit{\textbf{e}e}7 (or 14...\textit{\textbf{c}}c6 15.\textit{\textbf{c}c}7+ \textit{\textbf{d}d}7 16.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5– Eiben – Kovari, Slovakia 1997) 15.\textit{\textbf{c}c}3 \textit{\textbf{h}h}4+ (It is not advisable for Black to opt for 15...\textit{\textbf{e}e}6 16.\textit{\textbf{a}a}4+ \textit{\textbf{d}d}7 17.b4±) 16.g3 \textit{\textbf{g}g}3+ 17.hxg3 \textit{\textbf{w}x}g3+ 18.\textit{\textbf{x}d}2 \textit{\textbf{f}xf}3+ 19.\textit{\textbf{c}c}2± Husted – F. Hansen, Denmark 1991 and Black’s threats have been neutralized.

12.\textit{\textbf{c}d}5 \textit{\textbf{w}d}8

Black would lose his castling rights after 12...\textit{\textbf{w}g}6 13.\textit{\textbf{c}c}7+ \textit{\textbf{d}d}8 14.\textit{\textbf{x}e}6+ fxe6 15.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3± Daurelle – Fanghui Feng, corr. 1998, or 12...\textit{\textbf{h}h}4 13.\textit{\textbf{c}c}7+ \textit{\textbf{d}d}8 14.\textit{\textbf{x}e}6+ fxe6 15.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3± Kraujunas – Lindberg, corr. 1997.

13.\textit{\textbf{c}c}3 \textit{\textbf{d}xd}5

White can counter 13...\textit{\textbf{c}c}6 with the powerful argument 14.\textit{\textbf{a}a}4!, while in case of 14...\textit{\textbf{e}e}7? (about 14...\textit{\textbf{xd}x}d5 15.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5 – see 13...\textit{\textbf{xd}x}d5) he has the strong response 15.\textit{\textbf{x}a}6! \textit{\textbf{d}x}d5 16.\textit{\textbf{d}d}5 \textit{\textbf{a}a}8 17.\textit{\textbf{b}b}5+ Mueller – Zunker, Oberursel 1972.

14.\textit{\textbf{d}xd}5 \textit{\textbf{a}a}6

The endgame is worse for Black after 14...\textit{\textbf{c}c}6 15.\textit{\textbf{a}a}4 \textit{\textbf{a}a}5 (or 15...\textit{\textbf{e}e}7 16.g3?! 0–0 17.\textit{\textbf{h}h}3± Cygon – Budt, Detmold 1976; 15...\textit{\textbf{c}c}8 16.\textit{\textbf{e}e}2 \textit{\textbf{e}e}7 17.\textit{\textbf{g}g}4 \textit{\textbf{b}b}8 18.0–0± Cravero – Grosse Kloen, corr. 2000) 16.\textit{\textbf{x}a}5 \textit{\textbf{x}a}5 17.\textit{\textbf{e}e}2 \textit{\textbf{e}e}7 18.0–0 \textit{\textbf{c}c}8 19.\textit{\textbf{f}f}d1± Telleria – Braso, Uruguay 1988.

15.g3 \textit{\textbf{e}e}7 16.\textit{\textbf{a}a}4!? 0–0 17.\textit{\textbf{h}h}3 \textit{\textbf{e}e}8 18.0–0±

This position was reached in the game Tal – Wade, Reykjavik 1964. The eighth World Champion obtained a great positional advantage and he won the game promptly, with some assistance from his opponent, indeed – 18...\textit{\textbf{f}f}8 19.a5 \textit{\textbf{g}g}5 20.\textit{\textbf{f}f}5 g6? (Black blundered the exchange here.) 21.\textit{\textbf{d}d}7! \textit{\textbf{e}e}6 22.\textit{\textbf{e}e}6 fxe6 23.\textit{\textbf{b}b}6 h5 24.\textit{\textbf{e}e}2 \textit{\textbf{a}a}7 25.f4 \textit{\textbf{f}f}7 26.f5 1–0.
b) 9...\(\texttt{Ec8!}\)

This is an idea of GM Larsen. Black completes the development of his queenside and he takes the c-file under control.

10.\(\texttt{Exf6}\)

We will analyze b1) 10...\(\texttt{Exf6}\) and b2) 10...\(\texttt{gxg6}\).

b1) 10...\(\texttt{Exf6}\)

Black does not allow doubling of his pawns, but he enables his opponent to deploy his knights on the important b6 and d5-outposts with tempo.

11.\(\texttt{b6}\)

White should better refrain from winning a pawn, because after 11.\(\texttt{Exd6+ Exd6}\) 12.\(\texttt{Exd6 Ebd8}\), followed by \(\texttt{Ed4}\), Black obtains an excellent counterplay.

11...\(\texttt{b8}\)

Black should better keep the d8-square for his queen, therefore it is dubious for him to try 11...\(\texttt{bd8}\)?! 12.\(\texttt{cd5 g6}\) 13.\(\texttt{c7+ e7}\) 14.\(\texttt{cd5+ e8}\) 15.\(\texttt{d3 e7}\) 16.0-0-0\(\pm\) Eitel – Ennenbach, Goch 1997.

12.\(\texttt{cd5 d8}\)

If 12...\(\texttt{g6?!}\), then 13.\(\texttt{d3 e7}\)

(or 13...\(\texttt{Exd5}\) 14.\(\texttt{Exd5 e7} \) Jabot – Felber, corr. 1995, 15.\(\texttt{c7+ d7}\) 16.\(\texttt{d5+}\) 14.\(\texttt{c7+} \) 15.\(\texttt{cd5}\) and Black loses his castling rights. White is better after 15...\(\texttt{e8}\) 16.\(\texttt{g3} \) h5 17.0-0-0\(\pm\) Bindrich – Roid, Budapest 2004, as well as following 15...\(\texttt{f5}\) 16.0-0-0 \(\texttt{fxe4}\) 17.\(\texttt{c3! Ebd5}\) (or 17...\(\texttt{f8}\) 18.\(\texttt{xa6! Exf2}\) 19.\(\texttt{xb7 Exb7}\) 20.\(\texttt{xc6 a7}\) 21.\(\texttt{a4 g4}\) 22.\(\texttt{c4+}\) 18.\(\texttt{xd5 Ec8}\) 19.\(\texttt{b1}\) \(\texttt{f8}\) 20.\(\texttt{b3! b5}\) 21.\(\texttt{a3 b8}\) (It is even worse for Black to play 21...\(\texttt{xf2}\) 22.\(\texttt{xa6 xc2}\) 23.\(\texttt{b6+ e8}\) 24.\(\texttt{xc2 b4+}\) 25.\(\texttt{b1e3+}\) 26.\(\texttt{d3 xd3}\) 27.\(\texttt{xb5+}\) –) 22.\(\texttt{a5+ e8}\) 23.\(\texttt{b6}\) – and Black had great problems in the game Herrera – Merino Garcia, Spain 1996.

13.\(\texttt{c3}\)

White takes control over the d4-square and he is threatening \(\texttt{a4}\) in some variations.

13...\(\texttt{e7}\)

After the careless line 13...\(\texttt{g6?!}\) 14.\(\texttt{a4!}\), the temporary weakening of the f6-square does not allow Black to retreat with his bishop to d7, otherwise White has a tactical strike on the a6-square: 14...\(\texttt{g7}\) 15.\(\texttt{xa6! Ebd5}\) 16.\(\texttt{xd5 Eb8}\) 17.\(\texttt{b5 xa6}\) 18.\(\texttt{xb7+}\) Cifuentes Parada; 14...\(\texttt{h6}\) 15.\(\texttt{xa6! 0-0}\) 16.\(\texttt{b5 f5}\) 17.0-0 \(\texttt{h8}\) 18.\(\texttt{ad1±}\) Joecks – Chekhov, Germany 1997.

It is not so popular for Black to play 13...\(\texttt{e7}\), because White can choose between the calm line: 14.\(\texttt{c4 xd5}\) 15.\(\texttt{a4+ d7}\) 16.\(\texttt{xd7 xd7}\) 17.\(\texttt{xd7+ xd7}\) 18.
\( \text{\textit{xd5\pm}} \) and the more ambitious 14. \( \text{\textit{a4\pm}} \) \( \text{\textit{d7}} \), Zesch – Priebe, Berlin 2002, 15.\textit{b4!} \( \text{\textit{xd5}} \) 16.\textit{xd5\pm} with superior prospects.

14.\textit{c4} 0–0

About 14...\textit{g5} 15.0–0 – see 14...0–0.

15.0–0 \( \text{\textit{g5}} \)

About 15...\textit{h8} 16.\textit{e2 \textit{g5}} (or 16...\textit{g6}, Salm – Henri, corr. 1985, 17.a4 f5 18.\textit{exf5 gxf5} 19.f4\pm) 17.a4 – see 15...\textit{g5}.

White is clearly better after 15...\textit{xd5} 16.\textit{xd5 b5} 17.\textit{b3 \textit{g5}} 18.\textit{d3 \textit{h8}} 19.\textit{ad1 \textit{a5}} 20.\textit{xb4 \textit{b6}} 21.\textit{d5\pm} Palevich – Schlosser, corr. 1986.

16.a4!

White has completed his development and he consolidates his achievements on the queenside.

16...\textit{h8}

Black has no other counterplay except the pawn-advance \textit{f7–f5}, but he has tried some other lines too.

It is only a transposition of moves after 16...\textit{a5} 17.\textit{e2 \textit{g6}} 18.\textit{ad1 \textit{h8}} – see 16...\textit{h8}, or 16...\textit{g6} 17.\textit{e2 \textit{h8}} – see 16...\textit{h8}.

It is insufficient for Black to try 16...\textit{xd5} 17.\textit{xd5 \textit{c7}} 18.\textit{b3 \textit{xd5}} 19.\textit{xd5 b6} 20.\textit{fd1 \textit{g6}} 21.\textit{d3\pm} Schmidt Schaeffer – Brau- meyer, Germany 2002.

After 16...\textit{e7}, Ciolac – San Marco, Bethune 1992, White can play simply 17.a5\pm

It deserves attention for Black to opt for 16...\textit{e8!}?, White’s most principled reaction seems to be 17.\textit{c7 \textit{e7}} 18.\textit{xe6 \textit{fxe6}} 19.\textit{g4}, threatening Black’s \textit{e6}-pawn. The move 19...\textit{be8} can be countered by White with the line 20.\textit{xe6+ \textit{xe6}} 21.\textit{xg5\pm}, while in case of 19...\textit{d8}, White maintains his initiative with 20.g3 \textit{h6} 21.\textit{ad1 \textit{f6}} 22.\textit{d3\pm} Tong – Lim, Singapore 1990.

17.\textit{e2 \textit{g6}}

Black has numerous possibilities here, but neither of them is sufficient for equality.

He can try to redeploy his knight to the kingside with 17...\textit{e7} 18.a5 \textit{g6}, but that enables White to attack successfully his opponent’s backward \textit{d6}-pawn 19.\textit{fd1 \textit{h6}} 20.\textit{e3 \textit{f4}} 21.\textit{f3 \textit{g6}} 22.\textit{xe6 \textit{fxe6}} 23.\textit{ec4\pm} Wise – Leveille, corr. 1992.

The prophylactic move 17...\textit{a5} has its drawbacks as well. In case of 18.\textit{ad1}, White is better after 18...\textit{g6} 19.\textit{a2!} \textit{f5} (or 19...\textit{e7} 20.\textit{b5\pm}; 19...\textit{h6} 20.\textit{c4 \textit{f5}} 21.\textit{exf5 \textit{gxf5}} 22.\textit{db6\pm}) 20.\textit{exf5 \textit{gxf5}}, Friedman – Hausrath, Groningen 1996, 21.\textit{c4 \textit{f4}} 22.\textit{f3\pm}, as well as following 18...\textit{h6} 19.\textit{h1\pm}.
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g6 (if 19...\(\text{\texttt{f}}7\)!, then 20.\(\text{\texttt{xe7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe7}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{xe6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{fxe6}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{c4}}\)± or 
20...\(\text{\texttt{xb6}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{xf5}}\)± Nunn – Manor, London 1987) 20.\(\text{\texttt{a2}}\)± and 
White’s queenside initiative increases.

The move 17...\(\text{\texttt{e8}}\)!? is interesting here, just like on the previous move, and it was played in 
the game Janovsky – Sveshnikov, Moscow 1987. White can increase 
the pressure against the d6-square with 18.\(\text{\texttt{xa2}}\)± \(\text{\texttt{d8}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{c4}}\) 
\(\text{\texttt{wd7}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{ad1}}\)±

If Black plays 17...f5 without 
preparation, then after 18.exf5 
\(\text{\texttt{xf5}}\) 19.a5 e4, White has the 
powerful maneuver 20.\(\text{\texttt{b3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{e8}}\) (It is 
not any better for Black to try 20... 
\(\text{\texttt{e5}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d3}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{f4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{exf3}}\) 23. 
\(\text{\texttt{xf3}}\)±, or 20...\(\text{\texttt{e7}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g6}}\) 
22.\(\text{\texttt{e6}}\)! \(\text{\texttt{xf6}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{wg4}}\)±, while in 
case of 20...\(\text{\texttt{e8}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{ac2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d8}}\), it is 
good for White to continue with 
22.\(\text{\texttt{ae1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xa5}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) 24. 
\(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xb6}}\) 25.\(\text{\texttt{xb6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{wb5}}\) 26. 
\(\text{\texttt{wb4}}\)± Perz – Necula, corr. 2001, 
or 22.\(\text{\texttt{a4}}\)!± 21.\(\text{\texttt{a4}}\)! – It be-
comes clear that Black is incapab-
le of protecting his queenside. 
There might follow 21...\(\text{\texttt{h6}}\) 22. 
\(\text{\texttt{xc6}}\) bxc6 23.\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\)±, or 21...\(\text{\texttt{e5}}\) 
22.\(\text{\texttt{xc6}}\) bxc6 23.\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{e8}}\) 24.\(\text{\texttt{c4}}\) 
\(\text{\texttt{e6}}\) 25.\(\text{\texttt{xa6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xb7}}\) 26.\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\)± and 
Black has no compensation for his 
material losses.

18.\(\text{\texttt{ad1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{h6}}\)

About 18...a5 – see 17...a5.

In case of the immediate move 
18...f5, Travi – Henri, corr. 1979, 
19.exf5 \(\text{\texttt{xf5}}\) (After 19...\(\text{\texttt{xf5}}\)?)

19.\(\text{\texttt{h1}}\) f5 20.\(\text{\texttt{exf5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{gxf5}}\)

In case of 20...\(\text{\texttt{xf5}}\), Reinaldo 
– M.Garcia, Nigran 1997, White 
can follow with 21.\(\text{\texttt{d3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{e6}}\) 22. 
\(\text{\texttt{e4}}\)±

21.\(\text{\texttt{f4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g7}}\)

In the game Isupov – Che-
khov, Orel 1996, Black chose 
the less precise response 21... 
\(\text{\texttt{g8}}\). White could have put that 
drive under doubt with the line:
22.\(\text{\texttt{fxe5}}\) dxe5 (after 22...\(\text{\texttt{xe5}}\), it 
is very good for White to follow 
with 23.\(\text{\texttt{d3}}\)!±) 23.\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\) ! \(\text{\texttt{xb6}}\) 
(23...\(\text{\texttt{xc4}}\) 24.\(\text{\texttt{xc4}}\)!±) 24.\(\text{\texttt{xe6}}\) 
\(\text{\texttt{d4}}\) 25.\(\text{\texttt{xd4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe6}}\) 26.dxe5± with 
a great advantage for White.

22.\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\)!±

(diagram)

That position was reached in 
the game Herrera – Cifuentes 
Parada, Cienfuegos 1996. After 
22...\(\text{\texttt{e7}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{exe7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe7}}\) 24.\(\text{\texttt{xe6}}\)
5.\text{c}3 e5 6.\text{d}b5 d6 7.\text{g}5 a6 8.\text{a}3 \text{e}6 9.\text{c}4

\text{\textcopyright xe6 25.a5} \text{\textcopyright be8 26.\text{d}5} White obtained a stable positional edge. Black would not have solved his problems with 22...\text{\textcopyright xd5} 23.\text{\textcopyright xd5} e4. White has the undermining move 24.g4! and after 24...fxg4 25.\text{\textcopyright xg4} \text{\textcopyright c8} (or 25...\text{\textcopyright g8} 26.\text{\textcopyright g1}±; 25...b5 26.axb5 axb5 27.\text{\textcopyright b3}±; 25...\text{\textcopyright e7} 26.\text{\textcopyright g1} \text{\textcopyright f5} 27.\text{\textcopyright de1} b5 28.axb5 axb5 29.\text{\textcopyright b3}±) 26.\text{\textcopyright e2} \text{\textcopyright f5} 27.\text{\textcopyright g1} \text{\textcopyright h6} 28.\text{\textcopyright g4}± – Black has problems in all the variations.

\text{b2) 10...gxf6}

This move is much more popular. Black opens the g-file and he plans to deploy his king's bishop to h6.

11.\text{\textcopyright d3}!

That is the precise move order. White is not in a hurry to place his knight on e3, because Black can counter that with 11...\text{\textcopyright h6}. After 11.\text{\textcopyright d3}, we will analyze b2a) 11...\text{\textcopyright g8} and b2b) 11...\text{\textcopyright e7}.

About 11...\text{\textcopyright g7} 12.0–0 0–0 13.\text{\textcopyright e3} \text{\textcopyright e7} – see 11...\text{\textcopyright e7}.

It is premature for Black to play 11...\text{\textcopyright h6}?! in view of 12.\text{\textcopyright h5}. The game Stevanovic – Schinis, Yerevan 1996, followed with 12...\text{\textcopyright g7} 13.0–0 \text{\textcopyright e7} 14.\text{\textcopyright e3} \text{\textcopyright b6} 15.\text{\textcopyright cd5} \text{\textcopyright xd5} 16.\text{\textcopyright exd5}±. It would be interesting for Black, but still not quite correct if he tries 12...\text{\textcopyright f4}!? 13.g3 \text{\textcopyright d4} 14.\text{\textcopyright xf4} \text{\textcopyright xc4} 15.0–0–0 \text{\textcopyright a5} (or 15...b5 16.\text{\textcopyright b1} b4 17.\text{\textcopyright xc4} \text{\textcopyright xc4} 18.\text{\textcopyright d5}±) 16.\text{\textcopyright xc4} \text{\textcopyright xc4} 17.\text{\textcopyright d3}± with an advantage for White.

The move 11...\text{\textcopyright d4}?! is not justifiable for Black, just like on move 9. The position after White's natural move 12.\text{\textcopyright e3} has been tested numerous times. His plan is simple – he must complete his development and then occupy the d5-outpost and push c2-c3. Black has nothing real to counter that plan with, for example:

12...\text{\textcopyright h6} 13.0–0 0–0 (about 13...\text{\textcopyright g8}, see 12...\text{\textcopyright g8}) 14.\text{\textcopyright cd5}± Dely – Flesch, Hungary 1965;

12...h5 13.0–0 h4 (or 13...\text{\textcopyright e7} 14.\text{\textcopyright cd5}± Guerrero – Regue, Catalonia 1997) 14.\text{\textcopyright cd5} \text{\textcopyright g7} 15.c3 \text{\textcopyright c6} 16.\text{\textcopyright f3}! \text{\textcopyright h6} 17.\text{\textcopyright f5} \text{\textcopyright xf5} 18.\text{\textcopyright xf5} \text{\textcopyright e7} 19.\text{\textcopyright e4}± Bronstein – Pilnik, Moscow 1956;

12...\text{\textcopyright b6} 13.\text{\textcopyright cd5} \text{\textcopyright xb2} 14.\text{\textcopyright xf6}+ \text{\textcopyright d8} 15.0–0± Hjartarson – Frijiofonsson, Iceland 1980;
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12...a5 13.0-0 Cxc3 (or 13...h5 14.Ccd5± Vehi – Riera, Man­resia 1997) 14.bxc3 Cxc3 15.Ch5 Ag7 16.a4 0-0 17.Cab1 Cc7, Royd – I.Ivanov, North Bay 1994, 18. Cd5 Bd7 19.c3 Cd6 20.Ce1±;


Black tries sometimes to con­trol the d5-square with the move 11...Cb4, but after 12.Ce3 Ah6 (The line 12...d5 13.exd5 Cxd5, leads to a transposition of moves – see 11...Ce7; after 12...Cxd3+ 13. Cxd3 Cb6, Szalai – Klausen, corr. 1991, it is promising for White to try 14.0-0 0-0± and if 12...Cb6 13.0-0 Ah6 14.Ced5 Cxd5, as it was played in the game Alava – Tahkavuori, Jyvaskyla 1993, then 15.Cxd5 Cxd5 16.exd5± and White has the initiative in a position with opposite-coloured bish­ops.) 13.0-0 Ag8 (about 13...Cb6 – see 12...Cb6; 13...Ce3 14.fxe3 Ag8 15.Cf2 Cb6 16.Cd2± Blosze – Oechslein, corr. 1996; 13...Cxd3 14.Cxd3 Cxe3 15.Cxe3±) 14.Ccd5 Cxe3 15.Cxe3± Nielsen – Hald, Farum 1993, Black fails to equal­ize despite the simplifications.

b2a) 11...Ag8
That is the most popular alter­native for Black to the frequently played line 11...Ce7.

12.0-0

[Diagram]

12...Ah6
About 12...Ce7 13.Ce3 – see 11...Ce7.

It would be in favour of White if Black tries 12...b5 13.Ce3 Cb4, Fossan – Qvortrup, Namso 1995, 14.Ccd5±

Black would not solve his problems with the aggressive line: 12...Ag4 13.Ce2 Ah3 (if 13...f5, then 14.Ag4 fxg4 15.Ce3 Ag5 16.Ccd5± Servat – Sakurai, Nequen 1986; White maintains a stable edge after 13...Cxe2 14. Cxe2 Cd4 15.Cd3± Luecke – Bon­nmann, Cologne 1989) 14.Ce3 Cd4 (It is dubious for Black to try 14...f5?! 15.Cxf5 Ah6 16.Cf3± Ped-
5. 0.c3 e5 6.0 db5 d6 7.0.g5 a6 8.0.a3 0.e6 9.0.c4

ersen – Nilssen, Aarhus 2005.)
in view of the accurate response
by White 15.0.h1 0.e6 16.0.d3 0.h6
17.0.cd5± Kindermann – Ahmels,
Germany 1982, with a better game
for him.

13.0.d5 0.g4!?
The other possibility for Black
is also in favour of his opponent
13...0.b4 14.0.xb4 0.xc4 15.0.xc4
0.xc4, Andersen – Heim, corr.
1994, 16.0.d5! f5 (16...0xe4? 17.
0.f3++) 17.exf5 0.g5 18.0.e3±

After 13...f5, White has the re­
source 14.0.h5! 0.f8 15.0.cb6 f4!
(Black has no choice – 15...0.b8?
16.exf5++) 16.0.xc8 0.g4 17.0.xh7
0.g7 18.0.xg7? (but not 18.0.h8
0.xc8++) 18...0.xg7 19.0.cb6± Matu­
lovic – Arnason, Zemun 1983 –
and White has a clear advantage
with two rooks for a queen.

In case of 13...0xd5 14.exd5
0.e7, it is also good for White to
try 15.0.h5 0.f4 (or 15...0.g5, Her­
brechtsmeier – Steiger, Germany
1992, 16.h4 0.f4 17.0.xh7±) 16.
0.xh7 0.f8, Owczarzak – Stryjecki,
Poraj 1997 and here 17.0.e3! 0.b6
(It is too risky for Black to open
the f-file: 17...0xe3 18.fxe3 0.xd5
19.0.e4+) 18.0.f5 0.xd5 19.0.ad1±
and he ends up in a very difficult
position.

14.0.e2 0.h3 15.0.ce3 0.b4!?
Black has an original possibi­
ity to deflect his opponent from
protecting the g2-square, but it
has not been tested in practice yet.
In the game Klundt – Oechslein,
Germany 1982, he chose 15...f5,
but White could have countered
that by transferring into a fa­
vourable endgame with the line:
16.0.h1! 0.xe3 17.0.xe3 f4 18.gxh3
fxe3 19.fxe3 0.g5 20.0.g1 0.xg1+
21.0.xg1 0.xg1+ 22.0.xg1 0.e7 23.
c3±

16.0.f3!
The principled line: 16.0.xb4
0.xe3 17.fxe3 0.g2 18.0.f2 0.xe4+
19.0.f1 0.d7 20.0.d3 0.h3+ 21.0.e2
0.g6! leads to a rather unclear
position.

16...0.xd5 17.0.xd5±
Black’s temporary activity has
been neutralized and White’s
prospects are superior.

b2b) 11...0.e7

Black forces his opponent’s
knight to retreat to the e3-square
Chapter 3

(the resource $\diamond h_6$ becomes even more effective then) and he increases his control over the vital squares $d_5$ and $f_5$.

12...$\diamond e_3$

White fails with the straightforward line: 12...$\diamond x d_6$? $\mathcal{W}xd_6$ 13.$\diamond b_5+$, because of 13...$\diamond c_6$.

12...$\diamond h_6$

Opening of the centre with 12...$d_5$?! 13.ex$d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 14.$\diamond cxd_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ is too risky for Black. There might follow 15.0-0 $\mathcal{W}e_6$ (Black has also tried here 15...$h_5$, Priborský - Birklbauer, Aschach 2005, 16.$\diamond f_5$ $\mathcal{W}e_6$ 17.$\diamond f_3$, as well as 15...$\diamond c_6$ 16.$\mathcal{W}h_5$ $\mathcal{C}c_5$ 17.$\mathcal{C}c_4$ $\mathcal{W}e_7$, Parkanyi - Rovid, Hungary 1998, 18.$\diamond f_5$ $\mathcal{W}f_8$ 19.$\mathcal{A}d_1$ $\mathcal{G}g_8$ 20.$\mathcal{A}d_5+$) 16.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{W}e_7$ 17.$\mathcal{A}d_1$ $\mathcal{G}g_7$ 18.$\mathcal{A}e_4$ $\mathcal{E}c_7$ 19.$\mathcal{A}d_3+$ Konguvel - George, Chennai 2000 and Black has rather weak light squares.

Black has tested in practice some other dubious lines like: 12...$\mathcal{W}d_7$?! 13.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{G}g_7$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 15.ex$d_5$ $\mathcal{W}a_4$ 16.0-0 $\pm$ Ciric - Eisinger, Oberhausen 1961, or 12...$h_5$?! 13.0-0 $\mathcal{W}b_6$ 14.$\diamond c d_5+$ Kudrin - Fitzpatrick, Columbus 1987, or 12...$c_5$?! 13.0-0 $\mathcal{H}h_5$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$! $\diamond x d_5$ 15.$\diamond x d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 16.ex$d_5+$ Gligoric - Littlewood, Hastings 1964.

In case of 12...$\mathcal{G}g_8$ 13.0-0, it would be more prudent for Black to choose the move 13...$\diamond h_6$, which we will analyze later - see 12...$\diamond h_6$, since after his other attempts White obtains the advantage much easier, for example: 13...$\mathcal{G}g_5$? 14.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{G}g_6$ 15.$\diamond h_1$ $h_5$ (or 15...$\diamond h_4$ 16.$\mathcal{W}e_2$) 16.$\diamond c d_5+$ Dely - Szilagyi, Budapest 1974.

White maintains a clear edge after the rather modest line for Black: 12...$\mathcal{G}g_7$ 13.0-0 0-0 (about 13...$\mathcal{W}b_6$ - see 12...$\mathcal{W}b_6$; 13...$\mathcal{G}g_6$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 15.$\diamond x d_5$ $h_5$, Kroener - Eiselt, DDR 1974, 16.$\mathcal{W}f_3+$) 14.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{E}e_8$ 15.$\diamond c d_5$ $\diamond g_6$ 16.$g_3+$ Almasi - Rovid, Budapest 1993.

It is more principled for Black to try 12...$\mathcal{W}b_6$ and White must sacrifice a pawn in answer to that 13.0-0! $\mathcal{W}x b_2$ (about 13...$\diamond h_6$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$ - see 12...$\diamond h_6$; it is inconsistent for Black to play 13...$\mathcal{G}g_7$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 15.ex$d_5$ 0-0 16.$\mathcal{W}h_5$ $\diamond g_6$ 17.$\mathcal{G}f_5+$ Borngaesser - Gelzenleichter, Dortmund 1987, or 13...$\mathcal{G}g_8$ 14.$\diamond c d_5$ $\diamond x d_5$ 15.$\diamond x d_5$ $\diamond d_5$ 16.ex$d_5$ $h_6$ 17.$a_4+$ Fishbein - Agdestein, Stavanger 1989 and he ends up in a difficult position.) 14.$\diamond c d_5$. After 14...$\diamond x d_5$, both captures seem to be reasonable for White, but still it looks better for him to opt for 15.$\diamond x d_5$? $\diamond x d_5$ 16.ex$d_5$. White’s bishop is much stronger than its counterpart is, while Black’s doubled extra pawn is completely immaterial. There might follow 16...$\mathcal{W}d_4$ (about 16...$\mathcal{E}c_7$ 17.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{E}e_7$ 18.$a_4+$ $\mathcal{W}d_4$ - see 16...$\mathcal{W}d_4$) 17.$\mathcal{W}f_3$ $\mathcal{E}e_7$ (It is not better for Black to try 17...$\mathcal{G}g_7$ 18.$a_4$ $\mathcal{E}c_7$ 19.$\mathcal{F}d_1$ $\mathcal{W}c_5$ 20.$\mathcal{A}b_1+$ Coleman - R.Thomas, Internet 1997; in case of 17...$\mathcal{W}h_4$ 18.$\mathcal{A}b_1$ $b_5$, White has the resource 19.$a_4+$ Wit-
it is only slightly better for Black to continue with 17...h5!? 18.\texttt{xa}1 \texttt{b}5, but even then the endgame is better for White after 19.a4! \texttt{xa}4 20.\texttt{xa}1 \texttt{g}4 21.\texttt{xd}x4 h\texttt{x}g4 22.\texttt{ex}xa6±, or 19...\texttt{g}4 20.\texttt{xd}x4 h\texttt{x}g4 21.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{xb}5 22.\texttt{xb}5± Lako­

13.0-0!

White would not mind the ex­change on e3, since he would ex­ert powerful pressure along the opened f-file.

13...\texttt{xe}3

White maintains his advan­tage effortlessly in case of 13...\texttt{xc}5 14.\texttt{ff}3 \texttt{g}5 15.\texttt{cd}5± Lau – Enz­

mann, Dresden 1997, or 13...\texttt{g}6 14.g3 \texttt{xe}3 15.fxe3 \texttt{h}5 (or 15...\texttt{b}6 16.\texttt{ff}3±) 16.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{xd}5 17.exd5 \texttt{h}4 18.\texttt{g}4± Kozamernik – Mlacni­

k, Bled 2000, or 13...\texttt{b}6 14.\texttt{ed}5 \texttt{xd}5 15.exd5 \texttt{g}7 (but not 15...\texttt{xb}2? 16.\texttt{e}4+-) 16.\texttt{g}4 0-0 17.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{h}8 18.\texttt{g}3± Alves – Li­


It looks more logical for Black to play 13...\texttt{g}8. After 14.\texttt{ff}3, the following line is clearly in his fa­vour: 14...\texttt{g}6?! 15.\texttt{cd}5 \texttt{d}6 16.c3 \texttt{f}8 17.\texttt{wh}5 \texttt{g}8 18.\texttt{ff}5± Bre­

sciani – Agnelli, Bratto 1997.

Therefore Black must choose between 14...\texttt{g}6 15.g3 \texttt{f}4!?, Kosten – Ammann, London 1988 and here White could have main­
tained his positional pres­sure with the line: 16.\texttt{cd}5 \texttt{f}8 (or 16...\texttt{xd}5?! 17.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xd}5 18.exd5±) 17.\texttt{fd}1 \texttt{xd}3 18.\texttt{xd}3 \texttt{xe}3 19.\texttt{xe}3±;

or 14...\texttt{xe}3 15.fxe3 \texttt{b}6 (If 15...\texttt{g}6, then 16.\texttt{d}5 and Black has serious problems in all the variations: 16...\texttt{xd}5 17.exd5 \texttt{g}4 18.\texttt{ff}2±; 16...\texttt{xd}5 17.exd5 \texttt{h}6 18.c4 \texttt{b}6 19.\texttt{f}2± Becker – Krege, Ditzingen 2003; 16...\texttt{g}8 17.h3 \texttt{f}8 18.a4± Hamil­

ton – Goldsmith, Adelaide 1980) 16.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{xd}5 17.exd5 f5 (Black fails to protect his pawn any­
more: 17...\texttt{c}7 18.\texttt{ae}1±; 17...\texttt{g}6 18.\texttt{h}1± Suresh – Mahesh, Co­

chin 2000.) 18.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xf}5 19.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xe}3+ 20.\texttt{h}1 \texttt{c}7 21.\texttt{hx}7 \texttt{g}5
22.\textit{f}2 \textit{g}7 (The king and rook endgame after 22...\textit{g}6 23.\textit{x}g6 \textit{d}xg6 24.\textit{a}f1\textit{b}+ Oliveira – Vitor, Lisbon 1994, seems to be hopeless for Black, since he is a pawn down.) 23.\textit{h}8+ \textit{g}8 24.\textit{h}3\textit{b}+ Konguvel – Bhattacharyya, Calcutta 1994 and White remains with a material advantage.

\textbf{14.\textit{x}e}3 \textit{b}6

Here after 14...\textit{g}8?! 15.\textit{x}f6 \textit{b}6 16.\textit{c}1 \textit{g}6 17.\textit{f}2\textit{b}+ Barnsley – Surroca, corr. 2000, Black is simply left with a pawn down. It is hardly advisable for him to try 14...\textit{d}g8?! 15.\textit{d}5 \textit{h}5 16.\textit{c}3 \textit{f}5 17.\textit{b}3\textit{b}+ Pujols – Elissalt, Cuba 1999.

\textbf{15.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}5!}

Black wishes to acquire the \textit{h}6-square for his rook.

About 15...\textit{d}g8 – see 13...\textit{d}g8.

It is hardly advisable for Black to continue with 15...\textit{d}xb2?! 16.\textit{d}5 \textit{a}d5 17.\textit{e}x\textit{d}5 \textit{f}5 (or 17...\textit{e}4 18.\textit{e}x\textit{e}4 \textit{d}e5 19.\textit{f}6 Tseshkovsky; 17...\textit{d}b6 18.\textit{d}b1 \textit{c}7 19.\textit{f}6 \textit{f}8 20.\textit{c}4 \textit{b}5 21.\textit{c}xb5 \textit{d}x\textit{d}5 22.\textit{f}3\textit{f} Fantin – Terrieux, France 2006) 18.\textit{f}5 \textit{f}5 19.\textit{f}5\textit{f} Holmes – Shutler, Swansea 1987 – White is threatening to capture on \textit{f}7 as well as the double attack – 20.\textit{f}6.

If 15...\textit{c}7, then 16.\textit{d}1 \textit{d}g8 17.\textit{f}6 \textit{g}6, Mittermeier – Jansen, corr. 2001, 18.\textit{h}4\textit{b}+ and White remains with an extra pawn.

\textbf{16.\textit{d}5 \textit{a}d5 17.\textit{e}x\textit{d}5 \textit{h}6 18.\textit{ab}1 \textit{a}5}

In the game Tseshkovsky – Chandler, Minsk 1982, there followed 18...\textit{e}c7 19.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}5 and White countered that with 20.\textit{b}3 (It was also good for him to play 20.\textit{f}1?\textit{b}+, preventing \textit{f}5-\textit{f}4.) 20...\textit{f}4 (it is even worse for Black to play 20...\textit{e}4?! 21.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}6 22.\textit{e}2\textit{b}+ 21.\textit{be}1 \textit{d}g8 (or 21...\textit{f}5 22.\textit{h}1\textit{b}+ 22.\textit{h}1 \textit{f}e3 23.\textit{g}3\textit{b}! (White is not in a hurry to capture the \textit{e}3-pawn and he is trying to provoke at first the weakening move \textit{f}7-\textit{f}6.) 23...\textit{f}8 24.\textit{g}5\textit{g} f6 25.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}7 26.\textit{f}5 \textit{g}5 (The exchange of queens would not change the evaluation of the position 26...\textit{d}4 27.\textit{d}4 \textit{d}4 28.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}5 29.\textit{h}3 \textit{d}3 30.\textit{d}4\textit{f} 27.\textit{e}6\textit{b} White obtained a great advantage.

\textbf{19.\textit{e}4\textit{b}}

Black has too many weaknesses and his pieces lack coordination. White’s advantage is indisputable because of that.

It is too dangerous for Black to opt for 19...\textit{xa}2? 20.\textit{e}3 \textit{h}8 21.\textit{b}6\textit{f} (de Firmian).

His best chance is 19...\textit{f}5 and after 20.a3 \textit{f}4 (after 20...\textit{f}8, de
Firmian – Matulovic, Vrnjachka Banja 1983, White's simplest reaction would be 21.c4± 21.b4! 22.h1, White preserves his edge after 22...g6 23.c4 h4 (23...e3 24.xe3 fxe3 25.g3±) 24.h3 d8 25.c5! dxc5 26.bxc5 xc5, Hess – Zdziubany, DDR 1987, 27.g3! g6 (but not 27...xd5? 28.exd5 xd5+ 29.g1 d4+ 30.f2 xd3 31.c8++) 28.xb7, while in case of 22...h4, White follows with 23.c4 a7 24.fcl b6 (24...h3 25.g3±) 25.b3±. White prepares gradually the pawn-advance c4-c5 and Black would be forced to defend passively.

**Conclusion about Chapters 2 and 3**

The lines we analyze in these chapters are characterized by the fact that Black postpones the move b7-b5 and that enables White to improve quickly the placement of his knight on a3.

Among the numerous possibilities for Black to avoid entering the main line of the Chelyabinsk variation (8...b5), only the move 8...e6 can be considered as a serious alternative for him with chances of obtaining counterplay. In case of 9.c4! c8! 10.xf6 xf6, there arises a situation in which White has the possibility of deploying his knight on b6 and then of fortifying it there with the pawn-march a2-a4-a5, preserving a considerable space advantage on the queenside.

In case Black plays 10...gx6, White places his knight on e3 and he impedes the pawn advances d6-d5 and f6-f5 for Black. Therefore, his active counterplay is reduced only to h6 and b6. White maintains superior prospects too, but he must play precisely. It is also important that if Black captures on e3, White recaptures there with his f2-pawn and his pressure along the open f-file becomes rather unpleasant for Black. White's unprotected b2-pawn proves to be poisoned in numerous lines.
Chapter 4
1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xd4 e6 5.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)c3 e5 6.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)db5 d6 7.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)g5 a6 8.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)a3 b5 9.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)d5

We can see on the diagram the basic position of the Chelyabinsk variation. In this chapter we will analyze all Black’s sensible moves as well as after the most logical and popular move for him 9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e7 and White’s obligatory move 10.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf6 – the dubious line for Black 10...gx\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f6?! – variation c). He has also tried among the rarely played moves a) 9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e6?! and b) 9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)a5+.

The other possibilities for Black seem to be even weaker:
9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)d7?! Popovic – Erkan, Tallinn 1997, 10.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf6 gx\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f6 11.c3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)g7 12.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)c2 f5 13.ex\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f5 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf5 14.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)ce3 – see 9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e6;

9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)d4?! – Black helps his opponent to centralize his knight with tempi. 10.c3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)e6 11.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf6 gx\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f6, Trefny – Inneman, Czech Republic 1992, 12.c3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)c5 13.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f3± Black’s central pawns are immobile and they restrict the scope of action of his dark-squared bishop;

9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)b7?! – The absence of Black’s bishop from the c8-h3 diagonal helps White to control the f5-square. 10.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf6 gx\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f6 11.c3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)g7 (It is terrible for Black to play 11...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)c8?, Balz – Sickert, Verden 1999, since he loses two crucial tempi and after White’s most energetic reaction 12.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xb5! axb5 13.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xb5→, Black comes under a crushing attack.) 12.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)c2 0–0 (It is hardly any better for Black to try 12...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e7 13.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)g4 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)g8 14.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xe7 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)xe7 15.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e3±) 13.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)d3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)e7, Brandstetter – Eberhard, Austria 1995 and here after 14.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xe7+ \(\text{\textit{L}}\)xe7 15.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e3± White controls the d5 and f5-squares and he has good attacking prospects against Black’s compromised kingside;

9...h6?! – That is an obvious loss of time. 10.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)xf6 gx\(\text{\textit{L}}\)f6 11.c3 \(\text{\textit{L}}\)e6 12.\(\text{\textit{L}}\)c2 – see 9...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)e6; in answer to 11...\(\text{\textit{L}}\)g7, Dhar Barua – Aguedo, Santiago 1990, White is totally dominant in the
centre after 12.\texttt{Wf3} 0-0 13.\texttt{dxc2} \texttt{ex6} 14.\texttt{dce3\pm}; 11...\texttt{g8} – That is an attempt to organize some counterplay along the g-file. 12.\texttt{Wf3} \texttt{g6} 13.h3 \texttt{e8} 14.\texttt{dxc2} a5, Kroeger – A.Mueller, Germany 1991 and here after 15.\texttt{dce3\pm} it becomes obvious that the rook on g6 has no good scope of action, while Black’s positional defects are evident.) 12.exf5 \texttt{xf5} 13.\texttt{Wf3} \texttt{d7} (It is a disaster for Black to opt for 13...\texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{dxb5} axb5 15.\texttt{dxb5} c8 16.\texttt{b4}+ Farah – Serafin, Mar del Plata 1992 and now even after his most tenacious defence 16...\texttt{e4} 17.\texttt{Wxe4} d5 18.\texttt{Wd4} \texttt{xb4} 19.\texttt{Wxh8}+ \texttt{f8} 20.0-0+- White’s rook with pawns is much stronger than Black’s passive couple of light pieces.) 14.\texttt{d6}+ \texttt{e7}, Firnhaber – Kirmse, Rostock 2002 and here after 15.\texttt{d3} \texttt{e6} (It is even worse for Black to play 15...\texttt{c8} 16.\texttt{dxd7\+-}, or 15...\texttt{g7} 16.\texttt{d7} \texttt{xd7} 17.\texttt{e4}+-) 16.\texttt{d5}+ \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{d2} \texttt{b8} 18.0-0\pm Black’s king remains stranded in the centre an he is in for a big trouble;

9...\texttt{b8}?! – Black determines the placement of his rook a bit too early. 10.\texttt{xf6} gxf6 11.c3 f5 12.exf5 \texttt{xf5}, Mohr – Peterwagner, Austria 1995, 13.\texttt{Wf3} \texttt{c8} (It is not preferable for Black to try 13...\texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{d6}+ \texttt{e7} 15.\texttt{c2} \texttt{h6} 16.\texttt{d1\pm} and White dominates in the centre.) 14.\texttt{f6}+ \texttt{d8} 15.g4 \texttt{e6} (15...\texttt{e7} 16.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{xf6} 17.0-0-0 \texttt{d7} 18.\texttt{c2\pm}) 16.\texttt{c2} \texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{g2\pm} Black has no active prospects due to the vulnerable position of his king.

\textbf{a) 9...\textit{e6}?!}

Black allows his pawns to be doubled on the f-file in the hope of advancing \texttt{f6-f5} at some moment, but in that case his light-squared bishop comes to \texttt{f5} in two moves – \texttt{c8-e6xf5}, therefore White wins a tempo in comparison to the line 9.\texttt{xf6} gxf6 10.\texttt{d5}.

\textbf{10.\texttt{xf6} gxf6 11.c3}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Diagram 1}
\end{center}

We will see now the moves \textbf{a1)} \texttt{11...f5} and \textbf{a2)} \texttt{11...g7}.

Black has also tried in practice:

\texttt{11...e7?! 12.c2} – see 9...\texttt{e7} 10.\texttt{xf6} gxf6 11.c3 \texttt{e6} 12.c2, variation \textbf{c};

\texttt{11...h5?} – That move does not contribute to the development of Black’s pieces. 12.\texttt{c2} \texttt{xd5}, Zorko – Serdt, Ptuj 2005 and here White’s most aggressive reaction seems to be 13.\texttt{exd5} \texttt{e7} (or 13...\texttt{xa5} 14.b4 \texttt{b7} 15.a4\pm) 14.a4 bxa4 15.\texttt{b4} \texttt{d7} 16.\texttt{xa6\pm} and White remains with an extra pawn and a superior development;
11...h6? – Black loses time without any reason. 12...c2 f5 (or 12...g7, Nekula – Kocab, Moravia 2003, 13.a4 bxa4 14...c3 0–0 15...xa4 ...e7 16...d3±) 13.exf5 ...xf5 14...c3 ...g6 (In answer to 14...e6, Chiburdanidze – Merlini, Buenos Aires 1978, it looks strong for White to follow with 15.a4! ...b8 16.axb5 axb5 17...a6 ...d7 18...d3 and Black has no satisfactory defence against 19...f5 with the unavoidable exchange of the light-squared bishops.) 15.a4 ...b8 (or 15...b4 16.a5 ...b8, Toth – Sebe Vodislav, Paks 1998 and after 17...a4+ ...d7 18...xb4 ...c5 19...xa6+- Black loses plenty of material.) 16.axb5 axb5 17...a6 ...c8 18...b3± Akhigbe – Liwat, Saint Paul 2000;

11...h6 – Black’s bishop is not useful on that square. 12...c2 ...xd5 13...xd5 ...e7 14...d3 ...d7, Jimenez Alvarez – Llaneza Vega, Gijon 2000 and here after 15...d1 f5 (or 15...e8 16...b4 ...b7 17...f3 0–0 18...d3± White is in total control of the light squares in the centre.) 16.exf5 ...xf5 (Black should better refrain from 16...xf5 17...b4 ...f8 18.g3±, because he fails to dis-coordinate White’s pieces after 18...b7? 19...xf5! ...xh1 20...d6++-) 17...xf5 ...xf5 18.g3 ...e7 19...b4± Black’s central pawns are weak and his pieces are too passive;

11...b8?! – This development of the rook is premature. 12...c2 ...xd5, Stertenbrink – Dornieden, Germany 1984 and here after 13.exd5 ...e7 14.a4 ...h6 15...b4± Black has problems with the protection of his queenside pawns;

11...g8 – Black’s rook has no good scope of action on the g-file, because White can play g2–g3 at any moment. 12...c2 ...xd5 (12...f5 – That pawn-advance is premature too. 13.exf5 ...xf5, Ciampi – Antonischki, Italy 1998, 14...f3! ...g5 15...f6+ ...e7 16.h4+ and White wins material; 12...e8?! – This move compromises Black’s queenside, Blimke – Korp, Rimasvka Sobota 1992, 13.a4±; 12...g4 – Black simply loses time, since the trade of the light-squared bishops is of course favourable for White. 13...e2 ...c8?! 14...c3 ...h6 15.0–0 ...f8, Petters – Sanchez Carol, corr. 2004, 16...g4 ...xe3 17...xc8 ...xc8 18.fxe3± Black is incapable of defending his weaknesses on the f-file. After 12...h6 13...c3 ...xe3 14...xe3 ...a5 15...h5± he has no compensation for his numerous weak pawns, Bentel – Hildenbrandt, Email 1997.) 13...xd5 ...e7 (The move 13...c8 – compromises Black’s queenside and after 14.a4 ...b6 15.axb5 ...e7 16...b3 ...a8 17.g3± he remained a pawn down without any counterplay, Butze – Matjusjinskij, corr. 1984.) 14...d3 ...d7, Huber – Reuschl, Nuremberg 2005 and here after 15...d1 ...b7 (The endgame is difficult for Black in case of 15...f5 16.exf5 ...xf5 17...xf5 ...xf5 18...d3±) 16.g3 f5 17...g2± and
White is much better prepared for opening of the centre;

11...Ec8 12.£c2 f5 (About 12...£g7 13.£ce3 – see 11...£g7 12.£c2 £c8 13.£ce3; 12...£xd5?! – Black has problems protecting his queenside pawns after that exchange. 13.exd5 £e7 14.a4 £c5 15.axb5 axb5, Baumegee – Herzog, Austria 1996, 16.£a3 £h6 17.£xb5+ £f8 18.0–0± White's pieces are much more active and he has an extra pawn. It would be very dangerous for Black to recapture it: 18...£xd5 19.£h5 £g7 20.£c4+–, or 18...£xd5 19.b4 £xc3 20.£h5+–; The move 12...£b8 – enables White to play actively on the queenside, Botterill – Littlewood, Coventry 1970, 13.a4 bxa4 14.£ce3±, or 13...£f5 14.axb5 axb5 15.exf5 £xf5 16.£ce3±) 13.exf5 £xf5 14.£ce3 £g6 (after 14...£e6 15.a4 £xd5?! 16.£xd5 £h4 17.axb5+-, Black falls behind in development considerably and he loses at least a pawn, Marduhaiev – Wendland, Germany 1998) 15.a4 £g7 (It is not better for Black to opt for 15...£b8 16.axb5 axb5, Reppen – Steinskog, Copenhagen 2006, after 17.£a6 £c8 18.£f3+- he has hardly any appropriate defence against 19.£xc6, for example 18...£e4 19.£f6 £g8 20.£e2 h5 21.0–0+– and Black is practically stalemate completely.) 16.axb5 axb5 17.h4!± It is quite useful for White to include that move and Black failed to find successful de-
fence. 17...h5 18.£xb5 £f8 19.£a6 £b8 20.£e7 £c6 21.£xc6 £xc6 22.£a4 £c8 23.£e7 1–0 Gallagher – Hannaske, Eupen 1993;

11...£xd5 12.exd5 £e7 (After 12...£b8 13.£d3 £d7 14.0–0± White has a total control over the light squares. Black cannot activate his pieces with the line: 14...£f5 15.£xf5 £g5, Jones – Schmuggerow, Chicago 1989, because after the simple reaction 16.£xd7+ £xd7 17.£c4 £g8 18.g3+– he has no compensation for the pawn. Black would not fare any better if he fights for the f5-square with 12...£a7 13.£d3 h5 14.£c2 £h6 15.0–0± Tsyvarev – Korovin, St Petersburg 1997. Black is in trouble too following 12...£a5 13.£d3 £c8 14.0–0 h5 15.£f5±, his main problems is his bad dark-squared bishop and the lag in development. After 15...£c5? 16.£b4 £xc3 17.£b1 £c4 18.£xa5 £xa5 19.£d2+– Black has lost a piece and he has not solved any problems at all, Sharma – Islam, Chennai 2004.) 13.£a3 £b8 (It is too risky for Black to try to regain his pawn with 13...£b6 14.£a3 £xb2 15.£a4+ £d8 16.£a5+ £d7 17.£b1 £xa2 18.£b7+ 1–0 Perez Diaz – Mateo Lopez, Malaga 2000. His compensation for the pawn is rather dubious after 13...£g7 14.£a3 0–0 15.£e2 £f5 16.0–0± Castelfranchi – Corvi, Rome 1991.) 14.£a3 £a5 (Black loses following 14...£xb2 15.£a4+ £d7 16.£xa6 £d8 17.£b5 £c7,
Kosc – Formage, Debrecen 1992, and here White’s simplest solution is 18...c4+-) 15...c4± Fressinet – Bienvenu, Montlucon 1997.

a1) 11...f5

Black accomplishes that thematic advance, but White is well prepared for it.

12.exf5 exf5

After 12...exd5 13...xd5 c7 (It is evidently worse for Black to opt for 13...c8 14...c2 and here it is bad for him to try 14...g8 15.a4 dxa5 16.axb5+- Abejon – Rivas, Madrid 2004, as well as 14...g5 15. e3 e7 16.a4 0-0 17.axb5 axb5 18...xb5 d8 19.h4+- Hammond – De Roo, Germany 1989. It is more resilient for Black to defend with 14...e7 15...f3 d7 16. e3 c6 17...xc6+ bxc6, Kammer – Leiser, Regensburg 1997, 18.a4 bxa4 19...xa4±, but even then he can hardly prove any sufficient compensation for the pawn, or 14...b6 15.e3 h5, Manninen – Rauramaa, Finland 1998, and here after 16.f6 h6 17...f3± Black has problems with his development and his king stranded in the centre, while he remains a pawn down anyway.) 14...f3 d5 (The other possibilities for Black do not seem natural: 14...b8? 15.f6 g6 16...c6+ 1-0 Coelho – Jacob, Brazil 2004; 14...h6, Wallace – Tulevski, Penrith 2003, 15.f6 g6 16...c6+ f8 17...d1+-; 14...c8 15.f6 g6 16.d3 a7 17.c2 c7 18.b4+– Schutt – Dini, Brazil 2003; 14...c8, James – Taylor, Telford 2004, 15.f6 c6 16...c2 d5 17.0-0-0± and Black has no compensation for the pawn, because his centre is vulnerable.) 15...c2 h6 (15...b6, Chovanec – Hamarat, Internet 2004, 16...e3 e4 17...f4 d8 18.f6 g8 19.a4± – Black’s compensation for the pawn is evidently insufficient) 16...d1 e4 17...h5 d6 18...e2 g8 19...h3 d8 20.0-0± Del Rio Angelis – Castaldo, Bratto 2003.

13...f3

13...e6

It is a disaster for Black to play 13...g5? 14...c7+ d7 15...xa8+– Buttnner – Coronel, Buenos Aires 2003. He would not save the game either with the line: 13...d7? 14...f6+ e7 15...d3 g7 (or
15...\texttt{a}7 16.\texttt{e}4+–) 16.\texttt{xd}7 \texttt{xd}7
17.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{ac}8 18.\texttt{f}5+– Sadykov – De Silva, Doha 2003.

After 13...g6 14.\texttt{f}6+ \texttt{e}7 15.\texttt{d}5+ \texttt{e}8 16.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{g}7 17.0–0\texttt{f}8 18.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{g}5, Schemmann – Karppa, Internet 2004, White obtains a total control over the light squares in the centre with 19.\texttt{c}7\texttt{e}7! 20.\texttt{x}g6 \texttt{xc}7 21.\texttt{e}4±

14.\texttt{f}6+ \texttt{e}7 15.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{h}6

The move 15...d5?! – is too optimistic. Here, Black has problems protecting his central pawns. 16.\texttt{d}1 e4 17.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{b}8?! (This move loses, but even after the more tenacious line: 17...\texttt{g}7 18.\texttt{x}d5+ \texttt{x}d5 19.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{d}4 20.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{f}8 21.\texttt{x}d5± White preserves his extra pawn and superior development.) 18.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{e}5 19.\texttt{x}d5+ \texttt{d}6 20.\texttt{x}e4 f5 21.\texttt{c}7+ 1–0 Johannsen – Papenkordt, Bad Sooden 2003.

It is hardly better for Black to try 15...\texttt{c}8 16.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{g}7, Pflichthofer – Trefzer, Wuerttemberg 1998, and here after 17.\texttt{fd}5+ \texttt{f}8 18.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{e}7 19.\texttt{x}e7 \texttt{xe}7 20.0–0±, Black's defence is difficult, because of the vulnerable placement of his king.

16.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{f}8 (16...\texttt{c}8? 17.\texttt{e}4 f5 18.\texttt{x}d6+– Olives – Serrano, Palma de Mallorca 2002) 17.\texttt{d}5+ \texttt{x}d5 18.\texttt{x}d5 \texttt{d}7 19.\texttt{d}3+ – The light squares in Black's camp are catastrophically weak and his king is unsafe, moreover that the coordination of his pieces is not to be envied. The game ended very quickly: 19...\texttt{e}7 20.\texttt{xb}5+ \texttt{xb}5 21.\texttt{x}d6+ \texttt{c}8 22.\texttt{d}7+ \texttt{b}8 23.\texttt{xb}5+ \texttt{c}8 24.\texttt{c}5+ \texttt{b}8 25.\texttt{d}7 1–0 Isonzo – Bonaccorsi, Letojanni 2001.

a2) 11...\texttt{g}7

This move looks the most natural – Black is preparing to castle.

12.\texttt{c}2

\begin{center}
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12...\texttt{f}5
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About 12...\texttt{b}8 13.\texttt{ce}3 \texttt{e}7 14.\texttt{d}3 – see 12...\texttt{e}7 13.\texttt{ce}3 \texttt{b}8 14.\texttt{d}3.

12...\texttt{c}8?! – This rook is not useful on that square. 13.\texttt{ce}3 \texttt{e}7 14.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{x}d5 15.\texttt{ex}d5 \texttt{d}7 16.\texttt{f}3± Z.Almasi – Bigonnet, Bastia 2005.

12...\texttt{e}7 – Black fights for the d5-square with that logical move. 13.\texttt{ce}3 \texttt{b}8 (About 13...0–0...
14.\textit{d}d3 – see 12...0–0; in answer to 13.\textit{f}5, Gasik – Gramcow, Laczka 2002, it seems logical for White to continue with 14.\textit{c}xe7 \textit{w}xe7 15.\textit{e}f5 \textit{d}d7 16.\textit{d}5 \textit{w}d8 17.\textit{d}d3± and he remains with a solid extra pawn. It is not better for Black to try 13...\textit{x}d5 14.\textit{exd}5 \textit{d}d7 15.\textit{d}d3 \textit{h}5 16.\textit{w}f3 \textit{h}4 17.\textit{f}5± and his dark-squared bishop has no active scope whatsoever, Hardarson – S.Farago, Budapest 2005.) 14.\textit{d}d3 \textit{h}5 15.0–0 \textit{w}c8 16.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}6 17.\textit{h}3± White has prevailed in the fight for the central d5 and f5-squares and after 17...\textit{f}8 18.\textit{w}f1 \textit{g}6 19.c4 b4 20.\textit{c}xe7 \textit{w}xe7 21.\textit{f}5+ \textit{f}5 22.\textit{e}f5 \textit{h}6 23.c5± the presence of opposite-coloured bishops on the board enhances White’s attack, Mus – Gaida, Poland 1991.

12...0–0 – This is a natural move. 13.\textit{c}e3 \textit{c}7 (About 13...\textit{b}8 14.\textit{d}d3 \textit{e}7 15.0–0 – see 13...\textit{c}7 14.\textit{d}d3 \textit{b}8; in answer to 13...\textit{h}8, Alaverdyan – Ruzicka, Volyne 2003, it is logical for White to deploy at first his pieces according to the correct scheme and to start then active actions on the queenside with 14.\textit{d}d3 \textit{g}8 15.0–0 \textit{h}6 16.a4±; 13...\textit{a}5?! Roberts – Sanchez Carol, corr. 2004, Black’s queen is misplaced here, the only idea of the move is to push b5-b4, but White can parry that simply with 14.a3!? \textit{fe}8 15.\textit{d}d3 \textit{e}7 16.0–0±) 14.\textit{d}d3 \textit{xd}5 (After 14...\textit{xd}5 15.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{d}d7 16.\textit{w}h5 \textit{h}6, Luchko – Dikinov, Krasnodar 2001, White’s considerable advantage can be best emphasized with the accurate move 17.\textit{f}5±; it is not preferable for Black to try 14...\textit{b}8 15.0–0 \textit{h}8, Zacik – Kovarik, Slovakia 2002, after 16.\textit{w}f3 \textit{xd}5 17.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{g}6 18.g3± Black’s pieces are deprived of any active prospects; 14...\textit{h}8 15.\textit{w}f3 \textit{g}6 16.\textit{h}4 \textit{xd}5 17.\textit{ex}d5± Black’s central pawns have been blocked and his knight has no reliable squares, his bishop is a sorry sight and it resembles a pawn. His attempt to free his position led him to a swift demise after 17...\textit{f}5 18.\textit{w}f5 \textit{f}6 19.h5 \textit{f}4 20.h6-- Suarez Real – Barrio Garcia, Spain 1996. Black has problems too following 15...\textit{g}8, Beltre – Saez, Balagué 2001, after 16.0–0 \textit{b}8 17.\textit{fd}1± his pieces are tied up with the protection of the f6-pawn and they have no active prospects.) 15.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{d}7 (It is possibly best for Black to try 15...\textit{f}5 16.\textit{w}f5 \textit{f}5 17.\textit{xf}5 \textit{g}5 18.\textit{w}f3 e4 19.\textit{h}3±, although even then he can hardly claim any compensation for the pawn, Fever – Domotor, Zalakaros 1998.) 16.0–0 f5? – This move blunders a pawn, but after 16...\textit{g}6 17.\textit{h}5± Black’s defence is problematic anyway – 17.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 18.\textit{w}g4 \textit{h}8 19.\textit{w}f5-- Garcia Martinez – Rodriguez Bachiller, Alcalá de Henares 2006.

12...\textit{xd}5 13.\textit{w}xd5 (After 13.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{e}7, Black has more chances to advance his f6-pawn, in
comparison to the case when he postpones the exchange on d5.) 13...\(\text{\texttt{e7}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{d3}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d5}}\) (The move 14...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{b6}}}?!\) – looks strange, because his queen does not participate in the preparation of the pawn-advances \(\text{\texttt{d6}}\)-\(\text{\texttt{d5}}\) and \(\text{\texttt{f6}}\)-\(\text{\texttt{f5}}\), C. Mamedov – Davidov, Baku 2001, 15.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}\) 0–0 16.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}}\); after 14...f5 15.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{exf5}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d5}}\), van den Doel – Darnstaedt, Berlin 1993, White’s most reliable line seems to be 16.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}\) 0–0 17.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d7}}}18.\text{\texttt{\texttt{g4}}}±\) and Black will have problems proving that his centre compensates fully the pawn deficit. After 14...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{d7}}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h6}}}}\), Duda – Kucera, Liberec 2005, White must calmly complete his development, without being afraid of the trade of the passive bishop of his opponent. 16.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{xe3}}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{fxe3!}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e6}}}18.0–0±\). He must act in an analogous fashion in the variation: 14...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{a7}}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{h6}}}\), Baze – Manohar, Kalamazoo 2003, 16.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{b6}}}\) 17.0–0± and White’s doubled e-pawns will impede Black to protect his weaknesses successfully.) 15.0–0–0 \(\text{\texttt{dxe4}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{d5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{0–0}}\)±\) White regains his piece, remaining either with a huge lead in development, or with an extra pawn, Todorovic – Rodic, Obrenovac 2004) 16.a4 \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{bxa}}} \!\! \texttt{4}}\) (It is better for Black to follow with 16...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{b8}}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{axb5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{AXB}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{a6}}}\), or even 16...b4!? 17.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{c6}}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{d4}}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}\), although it would be too hard for him to prove that his compensation for the pawn is sufficient.) 17.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{a4}}} \!\! \texttt{1–0}}\) Firt – Adamcik, Moravia 1996.

15.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{d3}}}\)

\[15...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e7}}}\)\]

15...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d5}}}16.\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}} \!\! \texttt{d5}0–0?!\) (Black’s king comes now right under the gun, but even after 16...\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e7}}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{e4}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{c8}}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{\texttt{xe7}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xe7}}}19.\text{\texttt{\texttt{d3}}}±\)
Chapter 4

White maintains a stable edge thanks to his superior bishop. 17.\texttt{W}h5 f5? (After 17...h6 18.\texttt{W}f5 \texttt{E}e8 19.\texttt{W}e4± White cannot checkmate outright, but his pressure on the light squares is tremendously unpleasant for Black.) 18.\texttt{A}xf5 h6 19.\texttt{W}g6+– J.Kozel – Vyboch, Banska Stiavnica 2006.

15...0–0 16.\texttt{W}h5 h6 (The move 17...f5 looks attractive, but it is not the best. 17.\texttt{A}xf5 \texttt{E}xf5 18.\texttt{A}xf5 \texttt{A}xd5, Bonafede – Pechy, Venice 2003, and here after 19.\texttt{A}d1! \texttt{A}f7 20.\texttt{A}xh7+ \texttt{W}f8 21.\texttt{W}f3 d5 22.\texttt{W}g6 \texttt{W}f6 23.\texttt{A}xf6 \texttt{A}xf6 24.\texttt{W}xf7 \texttt{A}xf7 25.\texttt{B}xd5± White has excellent winning chances thanks to his kingside pawns.) 17.\texttt{A}e4 \texttt{E}c8 (It is worse for Black to play 17...\texttt{A}a7 18.\texttt{A}d1 \texttt{A}e7 19.0–0 \texttt{A}xd5 20.\texttt{A}xd5 \texttt{E}e8, Wilhelm – Rudolph, Hessen 1996, because White’s advantage is obvious after 21.\texttt{A}xe6 \texttt{W}xe6 22.\texttt{E}d5±. Black’s d6-pawn is weak and White’s knight is considerably stronger than Black’s bishop. It is a disaster for Black to opt for 21...fxe6? 22.\texttt{A}xd6+– and he remains a pawn down with a destroyed pawn-structure.) 18.\texttt{A}f5 \texttt{A}xd5 19.\texttt{A}xd5 \texttt{W}f6, Diviak – Macko, Slovakia 2003, after the natural reaction 20.0–0 \texttt{A}e7 21.\texttt{A}xe7+ \texttt{W}xe7 22.\texttt{W}f5 \texttt{E}c5 23.\texttt{A}ad1± White’s prospects are clearly superior, because of his domination over the light squares and Black’s compromised king’s position.

16.\texttt{A}e4 \texttt{E}c8

16...\texttt{B}b8?! – Black’s king is bound to remain in the centre after that move. 17.\texttt{A}xe7 \texttt{W}xe7 18.\texttt{W}c6+ \texttt{A}f8 19.0–0 f5 20.\texttt{A}d5 f4 21.\texttt{A}xe6 \texttt{W}xe6 22.\texttt{A}d5 \texttt{E}c8 23.\texttt{W}f3 h5 24.a4± and despite the fact that Black has managed to advance f7-f5, his position remains difficult, due to his passive bishop and the unsafe king, Zaragatski – Schalk, Cologne 2004.

Following 16...\texttt{A}xd5 17.\texttt{A}xd5 \texttt{A}xd5 18.\texttt{W}xd5 0–0, Hitzgerova – Werner, Crailsheim 2000, it seems attractive for White to continue with 19.\texttt{E}d1± winning Black’s d6-pawn.

17.0–0 \texttt{A}xd5

Or 17...\texttt{E}c5 18.a4 \texttt{A}xd5 19.\texttt{A}xd5 \texttt{A}xd5 20.\texttt{A}xd5 0–0 21.axb5 axb5 22.\texttt{W}b3 \texttt{W}g5 23.\texttt{A}a6± and Black has problems protecting his vulnerable pawns. 23...e4 24.\texttt{E}xd6 \texttt{A}e5 25.\texttt{A}d7 \texttt{A}h8 26.\texttt{W}b4+– Struik – van Kerkhof, Dieren 2003.

18.\texttt{A}xd5 \texttt{A}xd5 19.\texttt{W}xd5 \texttt{E}c5 20.\texttt{W}d3±

White maintains a stable edge due to his better development and the domination over the light squares in the centre, Yegiazarian – Al Ghasra, Yerevan 1996.
5. \( \text{c3 e5} \) 6. \( \text{d b5 d6} \) 7. \( \text{g5 a6} \) 8. \( \text{a3 b5} \) 9. \( \text{d5} \)

b) 9... \( \text{a5} \+)

The grandmaster from Chelyabinsk G. Timoschenko, who is living presently in Slovakia, made a great contribution to the theory of this variation. Sometimes Kasparov and Radjabov tried that line...

10. \( \text{d2 d8} \)

Numerous games have ended here with a repetition of moves – 11, \( \text{g5 a5}+ 12. \text{d2 d8} 13. \text{g5} \). This result however does not seem logical, because White has occupied the central d5-square and he has a slight lead in development.

11. \( \text{c4} \)

This is the most principled line, but it is also a bit risky. White is trying to exploit his temporary lead in development and he starts active actions on the queenside. Unfortunately, he has no advantage after the calm line: 11, \( \text{xf6}+ 12. \text{d2 g6} 13.0-0 \text{e7} \) 14. \( \text{c4} \), in view of 14... \( \text{g4} \)! 15. \( \text{e2 x e2} \!+ 16. \text{xe2 0-0}! \). Black enjoys an excellent game thanks to the unfavourable placement of his opponent’s knight and White’s attempt to centralize it turns out to be just a loss of time: 17. \( \text{c2 f8} \) 18. \( \text{cxb5 axb5} \) 19. \( \text{f3 d5} \) Black has no weaknesses at all and his pieces are much more active, Chekmasov – Krohalev, corr. 2000.

Black has two main possibilities here – the most popular b1) 11... \( \text{x e4} \), and the most reliable b2) 11... \( \text{b4} \).

His alternatives do not look convincing:

About 11... \( \text{d4} \) 12. \( \text{cxb5 d5} \) 13. \( \text{exd5} \) – see 11... \( \text{x d5} \) !? 12. \( \text{exd5} \) 13. \( \text{cxb5} \);

11... \( \text{g4} ?? \) Radchenko – Rzakuliev, Russia 2004, this grave blunder is punished after 12. \( \text{xf6}+ \text{xf6} 13. \text{g4}+-; \)

11... \( \text{bxc4} ?! \) – That exchange is favourable for White, because it enables him to bring into action his knight on a3. 12. \( \text{xc4 d4} \) (After 12... \( \text{d5} \) 13. \( \text{exd5} \) 14. \( \text{d3 b8} 15.0-0 \text{f5} 16. \text{f4} \) Black falls behind considerably in development and his centre is unstable, Reschun – Erlbeck, Finkenstein 1994. It is not any better for Black to opt for 12... \( \text{b8} \) 13. \( \text{g5 d4} \) 14. \( \text{xf6 gxf6} \) 15. \( \text{d3 d7} 16.0-0 \text{g7} ? \) – the least of evils for Black
would have been the line: 16...\( \text{s}c6 \) 17.f4 \( \text{s}g7 \) 18.\( \text{g}g4\pm \) with a difficult position for him, but with equal material – 17.\( \text{b}x\text{d6+} \) \( \text{f}f8 \) 18.\( \text{c}c4\pm \) Black has remained a pawn down without any compensation in sight, Rahal – Cebada Benitez, Sanlucar 2001.) 13.\( \text{c}b6 \) \( \text{b}8 \) (The move 13...\( \text{x}d2? \) – loses quickly after 14.\( \text{g}a8 \) \( \text{xf}1 \) 15.\( \text{ac}7+ \) \( \text{d}d7 \) 16.\( \text{g}4+ \) 1–0 Peraza Zalingen – Exposito Alfonso, Tenerife 2006. The move 13...\( \text{h}4? \) – only looks active, but in fact it leads to material losses. 14.\( \text{e}e3 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 15.\( \text{w}a4 \) \( \text{d}7 \), Krayushkin – Whitfield, Belfort 2005, and here after 16.\( \text{x}d7 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 17.\( \text{c}1\pm \) Black is incapable of protecting his pinned knight.) 14.\( \text{e}3! \) \( \text{b}7 \) (It is also bad for Black to follow with 14...\( \text{f}5? \) 15.\( \text{c}c1 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 16.\( \text{xa}6 \) \( \text{a}6 \) 17.\( \text{xc}6\rightarrow \) and White's attack is decisive. It is not to be recommended to Black to play 14...\( \text{c}5 \) 15.\( \text{xc}8 \) \( \text{xc}8 \) 16.\( \text{b}4\pm \) and he loses the important a6-pawn, or 15...\( \text{wc}8 \) 16.\( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 17.\( \text{xb}4 \) \( \text{xb}4 \) 18.\( \text{a}3 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 19.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 20.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 21.\( \text{c}1\), Black's a6-pawn is weak and White's pieces are much more active. In case of 16...\( \text{e}6 \) 17.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 18.0–0 0–0 0–0 19.\( \text{w}a4\pm \) White restores the material balance and he obtains superior prospects thanks to his couple of powerful bishops and his dangerous passed pawns on the queenside.) 15.\( \text{w}a4 \) \( \text{c}5 \) (Black would not change much with 15...\( \text{f}5 \) 16.\( \text{xc}1 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 17.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 18.\( \text{xa}6\pm \) 19.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \), Ramirez – Glimmerveen, Dos Hermanas 2004, and here after White's natural reaction 17.\( \text{xa}6 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 18.\( \text{b}5\pm \) Black has problems completing his development, because he loses after the natural line: 18...\( \text{e}7? \) 19.\( \text{d}1 \) 0–0 20.\( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{xc}6 \) 21.\( \text{xe}7\rightarrow \) 22.\( \text{xc}6\rightarrow \); 11...\( \text{xd}5? \!) – White obtains dangerous queenside passed pawns after that move. 12.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{d}4 \) (The other possibilities for Black are hardly any better: 12...\( \text{a}7? \!) – This knight is too passive here. 13.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 14.\( \text{xa}6 \) \( \text{xb}2 \) 15.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 16.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \), Limonnikov – Mirthouk, corr. 1995, and here after 17.\( \text{b}1! \) \( \text{c}7 \) 18.\( \text{xb}8 \) \( \text{xb}8 \) 19.\( \text{b}3\pm \) Black's passive knight is lost unavoidably; 12...\( \text{e}7? \!) – Black maintains the material balance after that move, but he falls behind in development. 13.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 14.\( \text{xf}3! \) \( \text{e}6 \) 15.\( \text{b}a6 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 16.\( \text{b}5\pm \) \( \text{d}7 \) 17.\( \text{xd}7\pm \) \( \text{xd}7 \) 18.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{c}8? \!) 19.a7\pm – Riabtsev – Ekdyshman, Nizhnij Novgorod 1999. It would be more tenacious for him to opt for 18...\( \text{xa}6 \) 19.\( \text{e}2\!) \( \text{c}5 \) 20.0–0 \( \text{e}7 \) 21.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 22.a4\pm although here White's queenside pawns seem to be much more dangerous than Black's central pawns.) 13.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{e}7 \) (The move 13...\( \text{h}4 \) – looks very aggressive, but Black's other pieces are not well prepared to support any premature active actions. 14.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 15.0–0 0–0 16.\( \text{b}a6 \) \( f5 \), Plotek – Michel, Nachod
5. \( \text{Cc3 e5} \), 6. \( \text{Db5 d6} \) 7. \( \text{g5 a6} \) 8. \( \text{a3 b5} \) 9. \( \text{d5} \)

1999, and here after 17. \( \text{Je3} \), Black seems to be beyond salvation, for example: 17... \( \text{xa6} \) 18. \( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 19. \( \text{xd4 exd4} \) 20. \( \text{We2} \), or 17... \( f4 \) 18. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 19. \( \text{Je1} \) and Black has no compensation for the pawn in both these variations.) 14. \( \text{c3} \) 0-0 15. \( \text{bxa6} \) \( f5 \) (It deserves attention for Black to try 15... \( \text{b6} \)!

16. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{c5} \) 17. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 18. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 19. \( \text{c1} \) \( d5 \), Oeller – Bletz, corr. 1993, White must exploit his extra pawn on the queenside with a maximal effect and after 20. \( a4! \) Black can hardly prove that he has any compensation for it, for example: 20... \( \text{d6} \) 21. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{e6} \) 22. \( \text{d3±} \) White’s pawns are ready to advance at any moment, while Black’s powerful knight on \( d4 \) can be captured at ease. Or 20... \( \text{h6} \) 21. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{a3} \) 22. \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{c5} \) 23. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{d8} \) 24. \( \text{a5±} \) and the activity of Black’s pieces is insufficient to equalize, while after 21... \( \text{c5} \) 22. \( \text{xd4} \) ! \( \text{xd4} \) 23. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e6} \) 24. \( \text{e2±} \) White’s pawns are ready to continue with the offensive.) 16. \( \text{d3} \) \( f4 \) 17. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 18.0-0 \( f3 \) 19. \( g3± \). Black has problems proving that the vulnerable position of White’s king is a sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawns. 19... \( \text{g4} \) (The move 19... \( \text{xa6?!} \) – is too greedy and it only leads to favourable simplifications for White. 20. \( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 21. \( \text{b5±} \) Black loses unavoidably his \( d4 \)-pawn and later he would have problems with the protection of his \( f3 \)-pawn, for example:

21... \( \text{e8} \) 22. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{h5} \) 23. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 24. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{b6} \) 25. \( \text{xf3} \) ––; 19... \( \text{d7} \) – This move is an attempt by Black to checkmate immediately. 20. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 21. \( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 22. \( \text{e6} \) \( \text{a5} \) 23. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 24. \( \text{e4±} \) Black has no chances of equalizing, because of his weak pawns on \( d4 \), \( d6 \) and \( f3 \).) 20. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{f6} \) (It is essential that Black’s checkmating attempt does not work after 20... \( \text{f6} \) 21. \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{h6} \) 22. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{e8} \) 23. \( \text{c6} \) \( \text{h5} \) 24. \( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{h8} \) 25. \( \text{h4} \) ––) 21. \( \text{c2} \) \( h5 \) 22. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{c8} \) (It seems more resilient for Black to defend with 22... \( \text{h4} \) 23. \( \text{c7} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 24. \( \text{xd8} \) \( \text{xd8} \) 25. \( a4 \), although even then it is far from clear how he can fight against White’s passed pawns.) 23. \( \text{a4} \) \( h4 \) 24. \( \text{xd4} \), Black is already three pawns down and he has no attacking chances in sight, Schneider – Varela, Buenos Aires 2003.

b1) 11... \( \text{xe4} \)
This response by Black seems to be the most natural – he captures White’s central pawn.

12. \( \text{xb5} \)

12... \( \text{e6} \)
Some other moves have been rarely tried here too:

12...@e7?! 13.¥e3! ¥b8 14.¥c4 ¥a5+ (about 14...¥e6 – see 12...¥e6 13.¥c4 ¥e7 14.¥e3 ¥b8?!) 15.b4! ¥xa3 16.¥c1 ¥c3 17.¥d2 ¥a4 18.¥b3 ¥exd5 19.¥xa4 ¥xa4 20.¥xd5+- Black’s two light pieces cannot compensate sufficiently the absence of the queen, because of Black’s lag in development, Mikhalchishin – Timoschenko, Tbilisi 1974;

The move 12...¥xd2? Pereira – Midugno, Caxias do Sul 1975, enables White to obtain a far-advanced passed pawn – 13.bxc6! ¥xf1 (It is not any better for Black to play “the active line”: 13...¥e4 14.c7 ¥h4 15.g3 ¥xg3 16.fxg3 ¥e4+ 17.¥f2 ¥xh1 18.¥b5+–) 14.c7 ¥d7 (After 14...¥h4 15.¥xf1 ¥a7 16.¥c2 ¥g4 17.¥c4 ¥e7 18.¥cb6+- White wins easily, because of his passed c7-pawn and his powerful knight on d5.) 15.¥c4 ¥c6 16.¥cb6+– and Black loses unavoidably plenty of material;

12...¥d4 – This aggressive move has brought to Black until now only disappointing results, despite the fact that it is not worse than the main line: 13.b6! ¥e7! This strong move has not been tried in practice yet, but it is the only one, which enables Black to hold the position. (In all other cases, Black’s situation is tremendously difficult: 13...¥e6?? 14.¥a4+ ¥d7 15.¥xe4+– and he loses a piece, Grabics – Schroter, Hungary 2002; 13...¥b8? 14.¥e3 ¥b7 15.¥c7+ ¥e7 16.¥xd4 exd4 17.¥xd4+- Black is without a pawn and his king is stranded in the centre, Halas – Kasiourea, Piraeus 1999; 13...¥b7?! 14.¥c7+ ¥d7 15.¥e3 ¥f5 16.¥g4 g6 17.¥xa8 h5 18.¥h3 ¥xa8 19.¥d3± Black’s compensation for the exchange is evidently insufficient, Dervishi – Avdic, Halle 1995; 13...¥h4?! – This move only looks aggressive. After the forced move 14.¥e3, Black loses quickly by playing 14...¥e7 15.¥xd4 ¥g5 16.¥g3 ¥xg3 17.¥fxg3 ¥e4+ 18.¥f2 ¥xd5 19.¥g2 e4 20.¥xe4 1–0 Pacher – Balko, Tatranske Zruby 2006. It was somewhat better for him to try 14...¥b7 15.¥c7+ ¥d8 16.¥xd4 exd4 17.¥xd4±, but even then his compensation for the pawn would be rather dubious, due to his centralized king, Kjartansson – Skrondal, Espoo 2006; 13...¥xd2?! 14.¥e3+ ¥e7 15.¥xd2 ¥b8 16.¥c1 ¥e6 17.¥a5± White has a clear advantage thanks to his powerful passed pawn and Black’s unsafe king, Ilievski – Ognjanovic, Yugoslavia 1994.) 14.¥e3! (It is too risky for White to capture the rook as you can see in the following variation: 14.¥c7+ ¥f8 15.¥xa8 ¥h4 16.¥e3 ¥f6 17.g3 ¥f3+ 18.¥e2 ¥d4+ and if White wishes to play for a win, he must begin a march with his king: 19.¥d3 ¥f5 20.¥c4 d5+ 21.¥b4 ¥e7+ 22.¥a5 ¥c6+ 23.¥a4 d4–, or he must try to prove he has
some compensation for the queen in the line: 19.\(\texttt{hxd4 \texttt{g4+ 20.\texttt{e1 \texttt{xd1 21.b7 \texttt{e7f})}
14...0-0 15.\texttt{c4 \texttt{f6 16.0-0 \texttt{b8 17.\texttt{xd4 \texttt{exd4 18.\texttt{xe7+ \texttt{xe7 19.\texttt{xd4\texttt{e}\texttt{7}}} \texttt{10.\texttt{xd2}\texttt{e}\texttt{7}}} \texttt{21.\texttt{b7+ \texttt{e7}}} \texttt{22.\texttt{e1 \texttt{b6 23.e2 \texttt{d6 24.\texttt{xc2 \texttt{b8 25.b2+ and he is faced with an unpleasant}

13...\texttt{e4}

\texttt{13...\texttt{d4?! - This aggressive move is in the spirit of the variation, but that is insufficient for it to be considered as strong. 14.b6! \texttt{c8 15.\texttt{c7+ \texttt{c7} (Black should better give up the exchange immediately; otherwise his king would remain in the centre and he would be forced to give up the exchange after 15...\texttt{e7 16.\texttt{c1\texttt{f}) 16.\texttt{xc7 \texttt{xc7 17.\texttt{xe6 fxe6 18.0-0 \texttt{xd2 19.\texttt{xd2 d5, Maas – Schulz, Internet 2003, and here White obtains a considerable advantage following 20.\texttt{ac1 \texttt{b6 21.\texttt{c2 \texttt{xb2 22.\texttt{e3! \texttt{xc2 (It looks too passive for Black to play 22...\texttt{c6 23.\texttt{e1 \texttt{d8 24.\texttt{d3\texttt{f}) 23.\texttt{e2 \texttt{d6 24.\texttt{xc2 \texttt{b8 25.b2+ and he is faced with an unpleasant}

choice – to give up his a6-pawn, or to leave his king in the centre, where after \texttt{h5+ it will come under the attack of opponent's heavy pieces.

13...\texttt{a5} – Black captures White's light-squared bishop and he wins a pawn, but his king remains in the centre for long. 14.\texttt{e3 \texttt{xc4 (The move 14...\texttt{b8? – is a loss of time and it would lead to Black's swift demise, Rupprecht – Hertel, Bayern 2000, 15.bxa6! \texttt{xc4 16.\texttt{a4+ Here, no matter how Black interposes against that check, he loses material: 16...\texttt{d7 17.a7 \texttt{a8 18.\texttt{c7+ \texttt{d8 19.\texttt{xd7+ \texttt{xd7 20.\texttt{xaxa8+-- White has already an extra exchange and he has goos chances of collecting another piece for his a7-pawn, or 16...\texttt{d7 17.\texttt{xc4 \texttt{a5+ 18.b4 \texttt{xa3 19.\texttt{xe4 f5 20.\texttt{a7-- White is threatening not only axb8\texttt{, but also \texttt{c4 with an attack, or a8\texttt{, followed by a fork on the c7-square.) 15.\texttt{xc4 axb5 (It is worse for Black to play 15...\texttt{c5?! 16.b6 \texttt{xd5 17.\texttt{xd5 \texttt{c8 18.0-0\texttt{and White ends up with a huge lead in development and a powerful passed pawn, while after 18...\texttt{d7? , Suran – Buchar, Nymburk 1997, White wins immediately with the line: 19.\texttt{xc5 \texttt{c5 20.\texttt{a8+ \texttt{e7 21.b7+- with decisive material gains, or 19...\texttt{xc5 20.b7+-) 16.\texttt{b6! \texttt{g5, Marjanovic – Nathanail, Korinthos 1999 (In answer to 16...\texttt{b8, Calzetta Monica – Hernando Inmaculada,
Spain 1998, it is also very strong for White to follow with 17.\texttt{c}c7+! \texttt{e}7 18.\texttt{d}e3 \texttt{f}6 19.\texttt{d}xa8 \texttt{xa}8 20.0–0±, or 18...\texttt{a}4?! 19.\texttt{d}e5+ \texttt{d}7 20.b3+- and after 20...\texttt{a}3 21.\texttt{d}3, White not only restores the material balance, but he obtains a crushing attack against his opponent's king.) 17.\texttt{c}c7+! \texttt{d}7 (After 17...\texttt{e}7 18.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{b}8 19.0–0± White has excellent attacking prospects against Black's king, stranded in the centre.) 18.0–0 bxc4 (The other possibilities are hardly any better for Black: 18...\texttt{c}xc4 19.\texttt{d}xa8 \texttt{xf}1 20.\texttt{xf}1± and Black's king will become an easy prey of White's attack; or 18...\texttt{b}8 19.\texttt{d}xe6 \texttt{fx}e6 20.\texttt{b}3! bxc4 21.\texttt{a}4+ \texttt{e}7 22.\texttt{a}7+ \texttt{f}6 23.\texttt{b}8 \texttt{f}5 24.a4± and it is inconceivable how Black can fight against White's passed a-pawn.) 19.\texttt{d}xa8 \texttt{h}3 20.g3 \texttt{xf}1 21.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{f}5 22.\texttt{b}6+ \texttt{e}6 23.\texttt{d}5+ \texttt{f}6 24.\texttt{xf}1± White resores unavoidably the material balance and he leads in development. His king is much safer and his queenside passed pawns are tremendously dangerous.

13...axb5 – That line used to be considered as insufficient for Black, but things are far from simple. 14.\texttt{d}xb5 \texttt{c}8! (The move 14...\texttt{h}4? – leads to a lost position for Black by force. 15.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{xf}2 16.\texttt{bc}7+ \texttt{d}8 17.\texttt{xe}6+ \texttt{fx}e6 18.\texttt{b}6+ \texttt{e}8 19.\texttt{c}7+ \texttt{e}7 20.\texttt{xf}2 \texttt{xc}4 21.\texttt{xa}8 \texttt{b}4 22.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{d}3+, Beliavsky – van der Wiel, Moscow 1982, the sequence of forced move has ended and the accurate move 23.\texttt{f}1+– enables White to realize easily his extra rook.) 15.0–0 \texttt{e}7! (After 15...\texttt{xd}2 16.\texttt{xd}2 \texttt{d}4 17.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{xc}4 18.\texttt{b}5± White's queenside pawns are much more mobile than Black's central pawns.) 16.\texttt{e}3 0–0, Fatalibekova – Semenova, Poland 1976, and here after GM Sveshnikov's recommendation 17.\texttt{a}4!?± White's prospects seem to be superior; nevertheless the position remains quite complicated and Black's defensive resources should not be underestimated. 14.\texttt{e}3

![Diagram](image_url)

14...\texttt{a}5+
14...\texttt{xd}5? – This is a blunder. 15.\texttt{xa}5 + (It looks more tenacious for Black to continue with 15...\texttt{xd}5 16.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{d}6 17.\texttt{c}6+ \texttt{d}7 18.\texttt{e}1+–, although even then he is catastrophically behind in development.) 16.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{d}8 17.\texttt{c}6+ \texttt{e}7 18.\texttt{xe}4+– Madl – Gladisheva, Sibenik 2006.

14...\texttt{c}5?! – This move is too passive. 15.0–0 \texttt{c}8? 16.b4 axb5 17.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{a}6 18.\texttt{a}4 1–0
14...\textit{b}8?! – That is not the most active position for Black's rook. 15.0–0 axb5 16.\textit{xb}5 \textit{xd}5 (It is not to be recommended to Black to try 16...\textit{xd}5 17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xb}5 18.\textit{a}4 \&d7 19.\textit{xe}4 f5 20.\textit{c}4 f4 21.\textit{d}2! \textit{xb}2 22.\textit{f}7+ \textit{e}7 23.\textit{xf}4!±, because not only White's pawn-structure is superior, but he has better development and good attacking prospects.) 17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{xd}5 \textit{f}6 19.\textit{c}4 \textit{e}7 20.\textit{c}7+ \textit{f}8 21.\textit{fd}1 h5, Petrushin – Timoschenko, Tbilisi 1974 (After the "greedy" line: 21...\textit{xb}2 22.a4 \textit{c}8 23.a5 \textit{e}8 24.\textit{dc}1+– Black seems helpless to cope with White's passed a5-pawn.), but here Black will need to stop his opponent’s connected passed pawns, which is tremendously difficult: 22.b4! \textit{d}7 23.a4 \textit{c}8 24.\textit{ac}1 \textit{g}8 25.b5+–

14...\textit{c}8?! – G. Kasparov played like that, as early as 1987 and he had fantastic results then, so that move was even more popular than 14...\textit{a}5+, but it created less problems for White. 15.\textit{b}6!? \textit{d}7 16.bxa6!! – This capturing obviously refutes the entire variation, but White still needs to play very precisely. 16...\textit{xc}4 (The move 16...\textit{xd}5 – is without any sting – 17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{xd}5 \textit{f}6 19.\textit{a}5!± White follows all that by castling and later he occupies the c-file and realizes his extra passed a6-pawn.) 17.a7! \textit{xd}5 (After 17...\textit{xd}5 18.a8\textit{+ \textit{c}8 19.\textit{aa}4 \textit{xb}6 20.\textit{xe}4± Black's two light pieces are not sufficient to compensate the missing queen.) 18.\textit{xc}4! (But not 18.\textit{xd}5? \textit{xd}5 19.a8\textit{+ \textit{c}8 20.\textit{xd}5 \textit{f}6!± and Black's centre advances ominously.) 18...\textit{a}8! (The move 18...\textit{c}6? – loses in view of 19.\textit{c}1!+–; 18...\textit{b}5 19.\textit{b}3!± White's a7-pawn is very dangerous, so his rook is stronger than his opponent's two light pieces; moreover that Black lags in development. 18...\textit{b}7 – This square is not so suitable for the retreat of the bishop. 19.f3! \textit{c}8 20.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 21.0–0 \textit{xb}6 22.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xa}7 23.\textit{b}3 f5 24.\textit{ae}1± and because of the threat 25.\textit{xe}4! with a checkmating attack, Black fails to complete his development, while in the line: 19...d5 20.\textit{xe}5 \textit{b}5 21.\textit{b}3± White not only remains with a material advantage and a passed pawn, but he leads considerably in development as well.) 19.f3 d5 (It is not better for Black to play 19...\textit{c}8 20.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 21.0–0 \textit{e}7 22.\textit{e}3± – since he has no compensation for the exchange.) 20.\textit{xe}5 \textit{e}6 (In answer to 20...\textit{b}5, Bergsson – Ageirsson, Reykjavik 2005, White should better transfer into an endgame with the line: 21.\textit{b}3! \textit{d}6 22.\textit{xb}5+ \textit{xb}5 23.a4 \textit{d}6 24.b4± and Black will have great problems to fight against his opponent’s queenside passed pawns.) 21.\textit{c}7! \textit{c}5 (The move 21...\textit{c}6?! – enables White to or-
ganize a dangerous attack 22.fxe4 \( \mathcal{Q} \)xe5 23.\( \mathcal{Q} \)xe5 \( \mathcal{Q} \)xe5 24.\( \mathcal{W} \)a4+ – and here, depending on which side Black's king goes, White castles on the same side: 24...\( \mathcal{D} \)e7 25.0-0–, 24...\( \mathcal{B} \)d8 25.0-0– with a very dangerous attack for White in both cases. After 22...\( \mathcal{B} \)b4+ 23.\( \mathcal{D} \)e2± White parries all the threats, preserving the extra exchange and his a7-pawn.) 22.\( \mathcal{W} \)e2!? White's main threat here is 23.\( \mathcal{D} \)b5+, and Black has great problems, because of his undeveloped kingside and the unsafe placement of his king. 22...\( \mathcal{D} \)c6 23.\( \mathcal{W} \)b5 f6 24.\( \mathcal{W} \)b8+ \( \mathcal{D} \)e7 25.\( \mathcal{W} \)x8 fxe5 26.\( \mathcal{D} \)c1! – After that strong move, Black has problems with his king and with the development of his kingside. In addition, White has a dangerous passed a7-pawn and the following variations confirm Black's difficulties: 26...\( \mathcal{B} \)f7 27.0-0 \( \mathcal{W} \)d7 28.\( \mathcal{D} \)b6 \( \mathcal{D} \)b7 29.\( \mathcal{D} \)h1 \( \mathcal{G} \)g8 30.b4+– and Black loses plenty of material; 26...\( \mathcal{B} \)f6 27.0-0 \( \mathcal{G} \)g8 28.\( \mathcal{W} \)b8 \( \mathcal{D} \)e7 29.\( \mathcal{B} \)b6+– Black will capture the a7-pawn indeed, but only at the price of a piece; 26...\( \mathcal{B} \)d3+ 27.\( \mathcal{D} \)d2 \( \mathcal{D} \)xc1 28.\( \mathcal{D} \)xc1 \( \mathcal{D} \)xa7 (In answer to 28...\( \mathcal{B} \)d7, it is good for White to follow with 29.\( \mathcal{D} \)d1! \( \mathcal{G} \)g6 30.\( \mathcal{D} \)xc6+ \( \mathcal{G} \)xc6 31.\( \mathcal{D} \)xc6+– and his pawn promotes.) 29.\( \mathcal{D} \)xa7 \( \mathcal{B} \)f6 30.\( \mathcal{W} \)b7+– White has an extra pawn and a crushing attack against his opponent's king.

15.\( \mathcal{B} \)f1

15.\( \mathcal{B} \)e2 – That move used to be considered as the best for a long time, but after 15...\( \mathcal{B} \)c8 16.\( \mathcal{W} \)d3 \( \mathcal{D} \)c5!± Black's prospects would be at least equal, Kozirev – Somkin, Chelyabinsk 2000.

15...\( \mathcal{B} \)c8

After 15...\( \mathcal{B} \)b8 16.\( \mathcal{B} \)c1, Black can choose between two equally strong possibilities:

16.\( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 – This is the first. (It is obviously worse for Black to play 16.\( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 17.\( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 \( \mathcal{D} \)f6 18.\( \mathcal{B} \)b3 d5, Kacheishvili – Stajkov, Stockerau 1993, and he can hardly protect the vulnerable light squares in his camp and his unsafe king in the centre. After 19.b6!±, Black loses, for example in the line: 19...d4 20.\( \mathcal{B} \)a4+ \( \mathcal{D} \)d7 21.\( \mathcal{B} \)c7 \( \mathcal{W} \)d8 22.\( \mathcal{D} \)c4–) 17.\( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 \( \mathcal{D} \)f6 18.\( \mathcal{A} \)c6+ \( \mathcal{D} \)d7, Nevednichy – Croenne, La Fere 2003, and here White's most aggressive continuation seems to be 19.\( \mathcal{D} \)c4 \( \mathcal{C} \)c7 (Following 19...\( \mathcal{D} \)xc4+ 20.\( \mathcal{B} \)xc4 axb5 21.\( \mathcal{W} \)d5 \( \mathcal{D} \)e7 22.\( \mathcal{D} \)c3!± Black's king remains in the centre, he has a weakness on b5 and his pieces are disordinated. White has an excellent compensation for the pawn.) 20.\( \mathcal{W} \)a4 axb5 (In case of 20...
\textit{x4c}+ 21.\textit{Exc}4 axb5 22.\textit{Exb}5 \textit{Wd}8 23.\textit{d}d2!+- White's huge lead in development should be decisive.) 21.\textit{Exb}5 \textit{Wd}8 (The move 21...\textit{d}5-- is less resilient. 22.\textit{Da}5 \textit{Wd}6 23.\textit{Ec}6 \textit{Wb}4 24.\textit{Exe}6+ \textit{fxe}6 25.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{Af}7 26.\textit{Exb}4 \textit{Exb}4 27.\textit{b}3+- White's two light pieces together with his queenside passed pawns are doubtlessly stronger that Black's rook. It is even worse for Black to opt for 23...\textit{We}7 24.\textit{Ba}6 \textit{Wf}6 25.\textit{Cc}6+- and he would need to give up the exchange.) 22.\textit{Da}5 \textit{Ea}8 23.\textit{Cc}6 \textit{Exa}4 (or 23...\textit{Wc}8 24.\textit{Wd}1 \textit{Wb}7 25.\textit{a}4+?) 24.\textit{Exd}8 \textit{Exa}2 25.\textit{Exe}6 \textit{fxe}6 26.\textit{Cc}7 \textit{Ea}1+ 27.\textit{Cc}1± Black's central pawns are potentiall strong indeed, but they would not be sufficient to compensate the exchange, which he would unavoidably lose.

The move 16...\textit{Df}5 -- is the second possibility for Black. 17.\textit{Wd}3 \textit{Da}5 18.\textit{Exc}5 dxc5, Peschlow – Guthrie, Biel 2005, and here White obtains a huge advantage after 19.b6 \textit{Ed}8 20.\textit{Cc}7+! (It is essential for White to deprive his opponent of casting; therefore he should refrain from 20.g4?! \textit{Exd}5 21.\textit{Exd}5 \textit{Dd}4 22.b7 \textit{Ee}7 23.\textit{Cc}4 \textit{Wc}7 24.\textit{We}4 0–0??, or 22.\textit{Cc}4 \textit{Wb}5 23.\textit{We}4 \textit{Ee}7 24.\textit{Wg}2 0–0?? and in both cases, Black is at least not worse.) 20...\textit{Ee}7 21.\textit{Dd}5+ \textit{Ee}8 (After 21...\textit{Exd}5 22.\textit{Wxd}5 \textit{Wxb}6 23.\textit{Wxe}5+ \textit{Wxe}6 24.\textit{Cc}3± Black's king is weak and he lags in development.) 22.g4 \textit{Dd}4 (It is not better for Black to try 22...\textit{Exd}5 23.\textit{Wxd}5 \textit{Dd}4 24.\textit{Cc}4 \textit{Wb}5 25.\textit{We}4 \textit{Ee}7 26.\textit{Wg}2±, because his powerful knight on d4 does not compensate his lag in development and White's dangerous passed pawn.) 23.\textit{Cc}7+ \textit{Ee}7 24.\textit{Exe}6 \textit{fxe}6 (After 24...\textit{Exe}6 25.\textit{Wxa}6 \textit{Wd}2 26.\textit{Ee}1+- Black can hardly counter his opponent's powerful passed pawn.) 25.\textit{Cc}4 \textit{Wxa}2 26. \textit{Gg}2 g6 27.\textit{Exe}5± White's huge lead in development will soon turn into a decisive attack.

It is hardly any better for Black to opt for 17...\textit{Dxe}3+ (instead of 17...\textit{Cc}5) 18.\textit{Wxe}3 \textit{Ee}6 19.b4 \textit{Exd}5 (After 19...\textit{Wd}8 20.\textit{Wxf}6+ \textit{gx}f6 21.\textit{bxa}6± Black has a hard task coping with White's a6-pawn.) 20.\textit{Exd}5 \textit{Wb}6 (Now, the line: 20...\textit{Wd}8 21.\textit{Cc}6+ \textit{Ed}7 22.\textit{bxa}6 looks even worse for Black, than in the previous comment.) 21.\textit{Exb}6 \textit{Exb}6 22.\textit{Cc}6 \textit{Exc}6 23.\textit{Exc}6+ \textit{Ed}7 24.\textit{Exd}7+ \textit{Exd}7 25.\textit{bxa}6 d5 26.\textit{Cc}2 \textit{Ed}6 27.\textit{Ee}2± White has consolidated his position and his pawns would gradually advance. After 18...\textit{Dd}2+ 19.\textit{Eg}1 \textit{Ec}8 (Or 19...\textit{xc}4 20.\textit{xc}4 \textit{Wxa}2? 21.\textit{Wxa}7+), alternatively 20...\textit{Wd}8 21.\textit{Cc}6 \textit{Exd}5 22.\textit{Exd}5 \textit{axb}5 23.\textit{Cc}7+ \textit{Ee}7 24.f4-- and White has a dangerous attack on the weakened light squares.) 20.b4 \textit{Exc}4 21.\textit{Exc}4 \textit{Wxa}4 22.\textit{Exc}8+ \textit{Exc}8 23.\textit{Ec}1 \textit{Eb}7 24.\textit{Cc}7+ \textit{Ed}8 25.\textit{bxa}6 \textit{Exa}6 26. \textit{Exa}6 \textit{Wxa}6 27.h4± White's rook enters the actions first and it should decide the outcome of the game.
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16.\textit{b6} \textit{xc4+}

Black would not fare any better after 16...\textit{b}8 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}6 18.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 19.\textit{bc}4 \textit{c}7 (In case of 19...\textit{b}4 20.\textit{d}2 \textit{c}5 21.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}7 22.bxa6 White preserves a solid extra pawn and good attacking prospects.) 20.bxa6 \textit{ed}5 21.\textit{a}4+ \textit{d}7 (The move 21...\textit{f}7 loses by force after 22.\textit{b}5 \textit{xe}3+ 23.fxe3 \textit{c}5 24.a7 \textit{a}8 25.\textit{c}1 \textit{g}8 26.b4 \textit{c}6 27.a5+-) 22.a7 \textit{a}8 23.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 24.\textit{b}5 \textit{c}6 25.a4 \textit{xe}3+ 26.fxe3+- White is totally dominant on the queenside.

17.\textit{bxc4} \textit{b}4


Here, the most energetic line for White seems to be: 18.bxa6! \textit{xc}4 19.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4+ 20.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}4 21.a7 \textit{d}5 22.\textit{c}1± and his passed a7-pawn should be sufficient to win the game.

In our work with this variation, we have used analyses by the grandmasters from Chelyabinsk E.Sveshnikov and R.Sherbakov as well as by the famous theoretician from Brazil – Luis Roberto Da Costa Junior.

b2) 11...b4

This line was considered unsatisfactory for Black for a long time, but things were far from clear; moreover, it looked like White had greatest difficulties to obtain a considerable advantage just there.

12.\textit{c}2

Naturally, White should not fall into the trap – 12.\textit{a}4? \textit{d}7 13.\textit{b}5 \textit{xd}5+-

It is not good for White to play 12.\textit{xb}4? \textit{xb}4 13.\textit{xb}4 \textit{xe}4+ and Black dominates in the centre and White’s attempt to make a double attack leads to a quick punishment for him after: 14.\textit{d}5? \textit{b}6! 15.\textit{xa}8 \textit{xb}4+ 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}2+ 17.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}5+ 18.\textit{g}3 \textit{f}4#

12...\textit{xe}4

This sharp move is the most principled for Black, but he has tried in practice some calmer moves:

12...\textit{b}8?! – This move is a loss of time. 13.\textit{d}3 a5 14.0–0 \textit{e}7 15.f4!? \textit{d}7 (It is too dangerous for Black to opt for the line: 15...0–0 16.f5±) 16.\textit{ce}3 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{b}1 exf4 (after 17...0–0 18.f5±
White’s kingside initiative may turn into a powerful attack) 18.\(\texttt{c5}\) \(\texttt{xf5}\) (In the line: 18...\(\texttt{f6}\) 19.\(\texttt{xf4}\) \(\texttt{xf5}\) 20.\(\texttt{xf6+}\) \(\texttt{xf6}\) 21.\(\texttt{exf5}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 22.\(\texttt{c2}\)± White’s bishop should be much more powerful than Black’s knight.) 19.\(\texttt{exf5}\) 0–0? (It is better for Black to play 19...\(\texttt{f6}\) 20.\(\texttt{xf6+}\) – see 18...\(\texttt{f6}\) 19.\(\texttt{xf4}\) \(\texttt{xf5}\) 20.\(\texttt{xf6+}\) 20.\(\texttt{xf4}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 21.\(\texttt{xe5}\)! Now, White has a crushing attack and at the end, he wins material, which is more than sufficient to win the game. 21...\(\texttt{dxex5}\) 22.f6 \(\texttt{xf6}\) 23.\(\texttt{xf6}\)! \(\texttt{gxf6}\) 24.\(\texttt{f5}\)! h6 25.\(\texttt{wg4}\) \(\texttt{h8}\) 26.\(\texttt{wh4}\) \(\texttt{g7}\) 27.\(\texttt{wg3}\) \(\texttt{h8}\) 28.\(\texttt{e3}\)+– White has two pieces for a rook and Black’s king position remains quite unsafe, Kunte – Rahman, Sri Lanka 2001;

12...\(\texttt{a5}\) – This is a solid move. 13.\(\texttt{g5}\) \(\texttt{e7}\) 14.\(\texttt{xe7}\) \(\texttt{xe7}\) (In answer to 14...\(\texttt{xe7}\) 15.\(\texttt{d3}\) \(\texttt{e6}\), Andres Gonzalez – Lopez del Alamo, Aviles 1999, it seems logical for White to play 16.\(\texttt{d5}\) \(\texttt{xd5}\) 17.\(\texttt{xd5}\) \(\texttt{d3}\) 18.\(\texttt{d3}\) 0–0 19.0–0 h6 – it is too risky for Black to continue with 19...\(\texttt{a4}\) 20.f4↑, since the pawn-shelter of his king will soon be compromised – 20.\(\texttt{e3}\) \(\texttt{xc8}\) 21.f3± Black’s position seems solid, but White’s bishops look quite capable of destroying it in the future.) 15.\(\texttt{wd3}\) \(\texttt{b7}\) 16.\(\texttt{f3}\) \(\texttt{c7}\), Gavrikov – Ziegler, Gothenburg 2000, 17.\(\texttt{e3}\) 0–0 18.\(\texttt{wd2}\) \(\texttt{h8}\) 19.\(\texttt{e2}\)+– Black has no counterplay, despite the fact that his situation looks stable enough. Meanwhile, White has an evident dominance in space and the two-bishop advantage.

13.\(\texttt{xcxb4}\)

13...\(\texttt{b7}\) About 13...\(\texttt{d7}\) 14.\(\texttt{xcxc6}\) \(\texttt{xc6}\) 15.\(\texttt{e3}\) – see 13...\(\texttt{b7}\) 14.\(\texttt{xcxc6}\) \(\texttt{xc6}\) 15.\(\texttt{e3}\).

13...\(\texttt{xb4}\) 14.\(\texttt{xbxb4}\) \(\texttt{f6}\) (It is worse for Black to play 14...\(\texttt{a5}\)! 15.\(\texttt{a3}\) \(\texttt{c5}\) 16.\(\texttt{we2}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 17.\(\texttt{d1}\) \(\texttt{b8}\) 18.\(\texttt{g3}\)+, since his d6-pawn is weak and the coordination of his pieces has been disrupted. 18...\(\texttt{c7}\) 19.\(\texttt{c5}\)!? \(\texttt{b5}\)! – The least of evils for Black would have been the line: 19...\(\texttt{xd5}\) 20.\(\texttt{xd5}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 21.\(\texttt{ed2}\) f6 22.\(\texttt{cxd6}\)+, although even then he would have no compensation for the sacrificed pawn – 20.\(\texttt{xb5+}\) \(\texttt{xb5}\) 21.\(\texttt{xbxb5}\)+ \(\texttt{d7}\) 22.\(\texttt{c6}\) 1–0 O.Rubtsova – M.Milovanovic, corr. 1979. The entire variation was considered dubious for Black, based on that game.) 15.\(\texttt{xf6+}\) \(\texttt{gxf6}\)!, Muharemagic – Cardelli, Internet 2003 (After the natural move 15...\(\texttt{xf6}\) 16.\(\texttt{d3}\) \(\texttt{e7}\) 17.0–0, Black’s pawns are weak; nevertheless, his position looks rather solid.), and here White obtain an obvious edge.
after 16.\textit{d}d2!? \textit{g}g8 (or 16...\textit{b}b7
17.0–0–0 \textit{g}g8 18.f3 f5 19.\textit{xd}6±)
17.0–0–0 \textit{g}g4 18.f3 \textit{xe}6 19.b3
a5 20.\textit{xd}6± and White remains
with a solid extra pawn in both
variations.

14.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 15.\textit{e}3 \textit{b}8
16.b4 \textit{e}7

This position was reached in
the game Bardason – Tritschler,
Email 1999. White's most logi­
cal reaction seems to be the move
helping the quickest possible de­
development of his pieces. 17.\textit{d}3
\textit{f}6 (After 17...\textit{xd}5 18.cxd5 f5
19.a3±, or 17...f5 18.a3 0–0 19.
0–0 \textit{xd}5 20.cxd5 \textit{d}7 21.\textit{c}1±
Black has serious problems with
the protection of his a6-pawn.)
18.\textit{b}3 e4 (It is hardly any bet­
ter for Black to enter an endgame,
because after 18...\textit{xd}5 19.cxd5
\textit{b}5 20.a4 \textit{xd}3 21.\textit{xd}3 \textit{xb}4
22.\textit{xa}6 0–0 23.0–0 \textit{wb}8 24.a5±
White's powerful passed a5-pawn
provides him with superior pros­
pects.) 19.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xe}7 20.\textit{e}2±.
White enjoys a couple of strong
bishops in a calm position and he
has excellent chances of creating
a powerful queenside pressure.

c) 9...\textit{e}7

10.\textit{xf}6!

This is a standard method of
the fight for the d5-outpost.
10...\textit{g}xf6?!

That is an unfavourable line
for Black, because in the variation
9.\textit{xf}6 \textit{g}xf6 10.\textit{d}5, he usually
develops his bishop to the long
diagonal. It is too passively placed
on the e7-square.
11.c3

This is a calm and reliable
move. In answer to 11.c4, Black
can at least try the untested move
11...\textit{e}6?!, with the following
eventual developments: 12.b5
\textit{d}4 13.\textit{c}1 0–0 14.bxa6 f5
– Black is clearly ahead in
development and he is dominant
in the centre. This might turn
out to be a good compensation
for the couple of pawns, because
White fails to simplify the posi­
tion with the line: 15.\textit{xe}7+
\textit{xe}7 16.\textit{b}5 \textit{xb}5 17.\textit{xb}5 fxe4
and Black is already only a pawn
down.
11...f5

That move is necessary now;
otherwise, he might not be able to
accomplish that thematic move at all.

About 11...h5?! 12.\(c2\) \(e6\)
13.\(ce3\) – see 11...\(e6\) 12.\(c2\) h5
13.\(ce3\).

After 11...0–0?! 12.\(d3\) \(e6\)
13.\(f3\) \(h8\) 14.\(c2\) \(g8\) 15.\(ce3\)
\(b8\) 16.\(a4\)\(±\) Black’s pawn-mass
in the centre is static and weak,
he has no counterplay and he has
problems on the queenside, Sigu­
rjonsson – Lombardy, Jerusalem
1967.

11...\(e6\)?! 12.\(c2\) f5 (It is ter­
rible for Black to play 12...\(xd5\)?
13.\(xd5\) \(c8\), Hidegh – Rakaczki,
Hungary 1997, because after
14.\(a4\)\(±\) Black is incapable of pro­
tecting his queenside. It looks also
bad for him to opt for 12...\(b8\)?!
13.\(ce3\) \(d7\) 14.\(d3\) h5, J.Lukacs
– Borgely, Kobanya 1996, after
15.\(f3\)\(±\) Black can hardly protect
his kingside pawns. It is not to be
recommended to Black to try 12...
h5?! 13.\(ce3\) \(b8\), M.Dizdarevic
– Djejaj, Adelaide 2003, 14.\(a4\)\(±\);
12...0–0 13.\(a4\) bxa4, Karbovnik
– Rost, France 1997, and here af­
ther 14.\(ce3\) \(b8\) 15.\(xa4\)\(±\) Black
will hardly save his a6-pawn and
he has no counterplay at all.)
13.\(x5\) 14.\(ce3\) \(g6\) (It is
not better for Black to continue
with 14...\(e6\) 15.\(d3\) \(g5\), Foglar
– Vrnata, Nachod 1999, and now
after 16.\(e4\) 0–0 17.\(f5\)\(±\) Black
is likely to lose material fighting
against White’s knights, while af­
ter 16...\(xe3\) 17.\(xe3\) \(c8\) 18.0–0
\(h4\) 19.\(f4\)\(±\) Black misses badly his
dark-squared bishop.) 15.\(d3\) e4
(In answer to 15...\(g5\), Breslavs­
kaya – Pastushenko, Kramatorsk
2001, White can immediately
occupy the f5-outpost. 16.\(f5\)
\(xf5\) 17.\(xf5\) \(e7\) 18.\(h4!\) and here
following 18...\(xd5\) 19.\(xd5\) \(e7\)
20.0–0\(±\) White dominates
over the light squares and in case
Black accepts the pawn-sacrifice
18...\(xh4\) 19.\(xh4\) \(xf5\) 20.\(h3\)\(±\) he
has problems fighting against
White’s active pieces, for example:
20...\(e7\) 21.\(f6+\) \(f8\) 22.\(d2\) h5
23.\(d3\) d5 24.0–0\(±\) and White regains unavoidable
his pawn, maintaining obviously
more activity.) 16.\(c2\) \(g5\) 17.0–0
0–0 18.\(f4\) \(xf3\) 19.\(xf3\)\(±\) Korneev

12.\(d3\)

12...\(e6\)
12...\(b7\)?! – Black loses a pawn
and he has no compensation for it
in sight. 13.\(xf5\) \(d7\) 14.\(b6\)–
12...\(g8\) – Black’s rook is
thus activated, but he loses the
f5-pawn, Stepanovic – Sazhina,
Trencin 1995, 13.\(xf5\) \(g5\) (Black
fails to regain his pawn after 13...
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14.g5 15.hg7+–

14...f4 – This move is premature, although it seems quite logical, since it deprives White’s knight of a good square. 13.wh5 0–0 (Or 13...h6, Cukier – Lucena, Brazil 1994, this is a strange move and after the simple reaction 14.g3! Black is faced with the unpleasant choice between 14...ef6 15.hxf4 exf4 16.xf4±, remaining a pawn down, without any compensation for it, or 14...fxg3 15.hxg3± and the pawns are equal indeed, but Black has plenty of weaknesses to worry about.) 14.g3 vh8, van Dommelen – Beekhuis, Leiden 1997, it is sensible for White to capture the pawn, because Black would have no compensation for it: 15.gxf4 vg8 (It is a disaster for Black to opt for 15...exf4? 16.xf6! xf6 17.e5+- and the checkmate is unavoidable.) 16.f5±

13.wh5 f4

13...yg5?! – Black continues to lose steam and he fails to complete his development. 14.h4 yg6 15.wh6 xd5 16.exd5 e4 17.dxc6+– Dizio – Andreescu, Bucharest 1993.

After 13...yc8 14.cc2 f4 15.g3 yg6, Galego – Berend, Groningen 1982, White can win a pawn, without being afraid of his opponent’s temporary activity – 16.gxf4 exf4 17.xf4± and Black cannot centralize his knight with 17...cd5, due to 18.xb5+! axb5 19. xe6 ye7 20.yf4+- with quite favourable simplifications for White.

After the move 13...b4 – the b-file is opened, but Black’s task does not become any easier. 14.cc4 bxc3 15.bxc3 vb8 (It is even worse for Black to play 15...xd5 16.exd5 ya5 17.de3 wc7 18.0–0 f4 19.df5 h6 20.cc2+–, because the light squares in his camp are catastrophically weak and White will exploit the b-file, Firt – Karlik, Karvina 1987.) 16.0–0 fxe4 17.de4 ya5 18.ce3 vb5 19.ad1± White has reliably occupied the important outposts on d5 and f5, Sakic – Smith, corr. 2004.

13...yg8 – Black transfers his bishop to a more active position with that move, but he loses valuable time in doing that and his opponent occupies the d5 and f5 squares in the meantime. 14.cc2 yg7 15.ceb f4 16.gf5± Luzikov – Zuttis, Vladivostok 1995.

14.0–0 0–0

The diagrammed position was reached in the game Sandipan – Lalic, Ubeda 2001. White must immediately organize ac-
tive actions on the queenside, taking advantage of the fact that Black's light pieces are presently misplaced. 15.\(\text{d}c2\) \(f5\) (The other moves are not any better for Black: 15...\(\text{h}8\)?! 16.\(\text{x}f4\) \(\text{exf}4\)? 17.e5++; 15...\(\text{b}8\) 16.a4 \(\text{bxa}4\) 17.\(\text{x}a4\) \(\text{xb}2\) 18.\(\text{x}a6\) \(\text{b}8\) 19.\(\text{a}7\); 15...\(\text{a}7\) 16.a4 \(\text{bxa}4\) 17.\(\text{xa}4\); 16.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{bxa}4\) 17.\(\text{xa}4\))

17.\(\text{xa}4\)++ – Black has managed to advance his f-pawn indeed, but his position is considerably worse. His pieces are passive, he has no counterplay and his queenside is endangered, while his king is unsafe as well.

Conclusion

We have analyzed in this chapter all weak option for Black against 9.\(\text{d}5\), as well as the line 9...\(\text{e}7\) 10.\(\text{x}f6\) \(\text{gx}f6\). The main drawback of the last variation is that after 10.\(\text{x}f6\), Black does not respond with the necessary move 10...\(\text{x}f6\), and he plays 10...\(\text{gx}f6\), analogously to the variation a). Accordingly, similarly to variation a, he has problems, connected with his inferior pawn-structure and the unfavourable placement of his dark-squared bishop, which requires plenty of valuable time to be activated. In all these variations, White often manages to establish his knights on the d5 and f5-squares and that deprives completely Black of any counterplay. White's plan also includes the undermining move a2-a4, with the idea to create objects for attack on the queenside. Black has great problems to undouble his pawns with \(f6-f5\), but even if he manages to do that, White maintains his advantage, since he succeeds in organizing active actions during that time on the queenside.

Variation b) is often played with the idea to make a quick draw. White however, can try to obtain the advantage, quite deservedly so, with the help of the sharp line – 11.c4.

In variation b1), Black captures the e4-pawn indeed, but he falls behind in development and he is completely unprepared for opening of the game on the queenside. Still, White needs to play very accurately, for example the move 15.\(\text{e}2\), which used to be considered as the best, would not provide any advantage for him. Meanwhile, he is clearly better after 15.\(\text{f}1\).

In variation b2), Black plays 11...b4 and he does not allow his opponent to open the c-file, therefore his position looks more solid, although he has certain problems to organize counterplay. White maintains a slight, but stable advantage practically in all the variations.
The development of the theory of the Chelyabinsk variation follows in fact two main schemes for White. He tries from time to time to break Black's defence in the system 9.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{gxf6} 10.\texttt{d5}. For a while, it looked like that the entire variation might become history, but it proved to be quite solid, coming back from oblivion, so then White returned to the more solid set-up, which this book was devoted to.

We will try to summarize for you what is essential in this system at the level of common sense. Black's main trump cards are his bishop pair and some lead in development. White relies on his space advantage and the key factor is his construction - pawn e4+\texttt{d5}, which has a vital blocking function. It is of paramount importance for Black to break that blockade in order to activate his pieces. He attacks the d5 and e4-squares, while White tries to hold on to them at least until he completes the mobilization of his forces.

Generally speaking, in that variation Black as a rule makes almost always the same moves - 0-0, \texttt{g5}, \texttt{e7}, \texttt{b8}, \texttt{h8}, \texttt{f5} etc. The order of moves might be different and there are important nuances in practically each different case. Sometimes however, it may all come to a transposition of moves.

In Chapter 5, we analyze some rarely played lines for Black on move 11. Original positions may arise only after 11...\texttt{b7}, followed by \texttt{b8-d7}, so that Black's set-up resembles a bit the Najdorf variation. This is all connected however with a certain loss of time and he fails to accomplish that plan.
successfully, because White can reach a superior endgame with precise play.

Chapter 6 deals with the move 11...\(\text{\&}e7\). That is a quite purposeful line for Black. White cannot keep the light pieces blockade of the d5-outpost, since his knight on a3 has not entered the actions yet. There are some drawbacks of that line for Black too. After 12.\(\text{\&}xf6+\), he loses his two-bishop advantage and his pawn-structure is compromised. White obtains a lead in development, his king is safer and he seizes the initiative with accurate play.

The variation 11...\(\text{\&}g5\) 12.\(\text{\&}c2\) \(\text{\&}e7\), which we analyze in Chapter 7, used to be quite popular once – it was like an improved version of the idea 11...\(\text{\&}e7\). Still, after the correct reaction for White 13.h4! \(\text{\&}h6\) 14.a4 bxa4 15.\(\text{\&}cb4\), Black fails to obtain an effective counterplay. White's strategy is based on two main ideas. The first is that he can sacrifice the exchange for Black's light-squared bishop. In that case, his knight on d5 becomes practically the master of the board and that in connection with the possibility to create a passed pawn on the queenside provides White with more than sufficient compensation for the exchange (variations a and c). The second important point is that tournament practice has shown that the total exchanges do not guarantee for Black any easy draw, because in particular the position with bishops of opposite colours (white bishop on d5) is rather unpleasant for Black to defend (variation b).

11...0–0 12.\(\text{\&}c2\)

This is the main line of the entire system. In Chapter 8, we analyze some of the not so popular lines for Black and just like in Chapter 5, White should pay attention to the idea for Black to transfer his knight along the route c6-b8-d7, followed by \(\text{\&}c5\) or \(\text{\&}b6\).

The move 12...\(\text{\&}b8\), has been dealt with in Chapter 9 and it is a tough nut to crack. It was played numerous times by E.Sveshnikov and M.Dvoretzkij at the dawn of the development of the system. White's queenside actions, connected with the break a2-a4 are impeded, because his b2-pawn is hanging. Black used to solve all his problems for a while. Only later White managed to find the right path. If Black does not activate his bishop – then White should prevent that radically – 13.h4! According to the database, that move was played for
the first time in the game Nunn – Wirthensohn, Cleveland 1979, and it was considered until today to be the most unpleasant counter measure against Black’s move order.

12...â5 13.a4 bxa4 14.âxa4

14...a5

That is the most popular line for Black, but it is not the only one. His other possibilities are analyzed in Chapter 10 and I recommend to you to pay a close attention to the alternative 14...ãb7. Black succeeded in obtaining satisfactory game until recently, but in the game Ôotronias – Timoshenko, Thessaloniki 2007, that variation was dealt a mortal blow. After a series of precise moves, among which we must mention 18.h4!, and that of course combined with the “know-how” of Vasilios Ôotronias – 21.h5!, White seized the initiative and pressed his advantage home convincingly.

15.ãc4 ãb8

In Chapters 11-12, we have seen Black’s attempts to avoid entering the main line. We must pay attention to the move 15...ãd7 (Chapter 12) – because recently Teimour Radjabov played it several times. The theory of that line continues to develop, but in general, it becomes clear, in the variations we analyze, that White’s chances of obtaining the advantage are quite real.

16.b3 ãh8

That is the main “tabia” of the variation and our final Chapter 13 is devoted to it. The lines after 17.0–0 f5, have been analyzed quite thoroughly before and they do not promise White any real advantage. Still, he has a good alternative to castling in the move

17.ãc3!? In that case, White manages to preserve his blocking construction in the centre and that is essential for him to prevent Black’s piece counterplay. Later White can take care of Black’s weak a5-pawn.
1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{d}e6 \) 3.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{cxd4} \) 4.\( \text{d}xd4 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 5.\( \text{d}c3 \) e5 6.\( \text{d}b5 \) d6 7.\( \text{g}5 \) a6 8.\( \text{a}3 \) b5 9.\( \text{d}5 \) e7 10.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \)

**Chapter 5**

1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{d}e6 \) 3.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{cxd4} \) 4.\( \text{d}xd4 \) 

**11.c3**

This is the most natural move. White prepares to centralize his knight via the c2-square and to follow that with the undermining move a2-a4.

In this chapter, we will deal with all responses for Black, besides the main lines 11...0-0 and 11...\( \text{d}e7 \) – Chapter 6, as well as 11...\( \text{g}5 \) – Chapter 7.

**11...\( \text{b}7 \)**

11...g6?! – That move is played with the idea to redeploy the bishop from one passive square to another. 12.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{g}7 \) 13.a4 bxa4 14.\( \text{c}b4 \) \( \text{b}7 \)? (It is better for Black to play 14...\( \text{d}7 \) 15.\( \text{xa4} \) \( \text{e}7 \) 16.\( \text{a5} \), although even then he loses unavoidably his a6-pawn. White can capture it under most favourable circumstances.) 15.\( \text{x}a4 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 16.\( \text{x}a6 \) \( \text{xa6} \) 17.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{d}7 \) 18.\( \text{a7}+ \) – Black loses plenty of material, Robson – Navarro Guerrero, Brazil 2005.

11...\( \text{h}4 \) – It would be too difficult for Black to organize real pressure against the f2-pawn. 12.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{b}8 \), S.Fernandez – Newton, corr. 2002, and here after 13.g3 \( \text{g}5 \) 14.\( \text{g}2 \) 0-0 15.0-0 \( \text{e}7 \) 16.\( \text{xe7}+ \) \( \text{xe7} \) 17.\( \text{b}4 \) White has a clear-cut plan for actions on the queenside, while Black has no active prospects.

11...\( \text{e}7 \)?! – That is a typical loss of time, since Black’s bishop is passively placed here and its transfer to a more active position would need tempi. 12.\( \text{c}2 \) 0-0 (Black’s options are not any better: in answer to 12...\( \text{g}5 \), Tormo – Linares Quero, Oropesa del Mar 1999, White’s most active move seems to be 13.a4 and if 13...\( \text{b}8 \), then 14.axb5 axb5 15.\( \text{d}3 \) 0-0 16.\( \text{e}2 \)± and Black will have problems protecting his b5-pawn, while if 13...bxa4 – then after 14.\( \text{cb4} \) \( \text{d}7 \) 15.\( \text{xa4} \) \( \text{e}7 \) 16.\( \text{a5} \), or 15...\( \text{d}4 \) 16.\( \text{d}1 \)± he will lose for sure his a6-pawn; 12...
Chapter 5

f5 – This seemingly active move enables White to have excellent game on the light squares in the centre, Klundt – Ostermeier, Bad Homburg 2004, 13.a4! – This move is again the most energetic for White and Black is in great trouble. It is terrible for him to try 13...fxe4? 14.axb5 axb5 15.bxa6+, and White’s advantage is evident, thanks to his domination over the d5 and e4-outposts, in the line: 13...bxa4 14.d xe3 a3 15.bxa3 fxe4 16.a4, or 14...f4 15.d4± and Black has no counterplay and he has great problems protecting his queenside. After 13...b8 14.axb5 axb5 15.f5 fxf5 16.d e3 d6 17.d3± White occupies the light squares in the centre and Black is incapable of protecting his b5-pawn. 12...e6, A.Tikhonov – Rogov, Kazan 2004, 13.a4 b8 14.axb5 axb5 15.d3± Black’s queenside is vulnerable and his b5-pawn is weak, while White dominates on the a-file and his centralized knights are very powerful.) 13.a4 bxa4 (After 13...b8 14.axb5, M.Andersen – Agustsson, Gausdal 2006, following 14...axb5 15.d3 g5 16.e2± Black not only loses his b5-pawn, but White can even choose the appropriate moment to capture it.) 14.bxa4 a5, Gara – Moshina, Balatonlelle 2000, and here after 15.c4 b8 16.b3± there arise positions different from the main line, which is dealt with in Chapter 8, with the fact that Black’s dark-squared bishop is on g5 and not on e7. It is much more passive there and if Black places it on the most active position – g5, then White would have an extra tempo in comparison to the similar lines.

11...b8 – Black loses his control over the d4-square and that enables White to play aggressively: 12.c4?! a5+?! (It is not any better for Black to opt for 12...0–0 13.cxb5 d7 14.d4 b6 15.0–0?!± and he either remains without a pawn, or he must enter the variation: 15...d c4 16.d c4 axb5 17.c b6 b8 18.xc8 xc8 19.e2±. White’s advantage of a centralized knight against Black’s passive dark-squared bishop is evident. It looks like Black’s best line is to centralize his knight too, although it has not been tried in practice yet 12...c6 13.cxb5 d4 14.b6 0–0 15.d4± and he will still have problems to prove that his compensation for the pawn is sufficient.) 13.d2 b4, Grazinys – Scholbach, Email 2000, after 13...xd2+? 14.xd2 g5+ 15.d1± Black’s queenside is in ruins. White’s most aggressive line seems to be: 14.c5!? e6 (But not 14...dxc5 15.c4 d8 16.db6± and Black loses at least the exchange.) 15.xf6+ gxf6 16.cxd6 c6 17.c4 c5 18.c1 d4 19.e3± White has an extra pawn and he forces unavoidably the trade of queens on the e3-square. Later he captures there
with his pawn and Black would be deprived of the counterplay connected with the weakened d4-square.

11...\(\text{xe6}\) 12.\(\text{xc2}\)

12...\(\text{xd5}\) (Black’s other lines are less purposeful, or they do not lead to any original positions. About 12...\(\text{xe7}\) 13.\(\text{xf6}\)\(+\) gxf6 14.a4 – see 11...\(\text{xe7}\) 12.\(\text{xf6}\) gxf6 13.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{e6}\) 14.\(\text{a4}\), Chapter 6; about 12...\(\text{g5}\) – see 11...\(\text{g5}\), Chapter 7; as for 12...0–0 – see 11...0–0; The move 12...\(\text{b8}\)? Zandeisakhani – Majul, Santa Cruz de Tenerife 2001, leads to the disruption of Black’s pawn-structure after 13.\(\text{xe6}\)+ gxf6 – in case of 13...\(\text{xe6}\)? 14.\(\text{xd6}\)+ – Black has no compensation for the lost pawn – 14.\(\text{e3}\) 0–0 15.\(\text{d3}\)?; 12...\(\text{a7}\) – That method of activating the rook seems a bit awkward. 13.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{b7}\)?! 14.axb5 axb5 15.\(\text{a6}\)? Krajcovic – Kouba, Trenčianske Teplice 2005; it is slightly better for Black to play 13...\(\text{bxa4}\) 14.\(\text{ce3}\) 0–0 15.\(\text{b8}\)\(=\) \(\text{c4}\), or even 15...\(\text{e7}\) 16.\(\text{xf6}\)+ gxf6 17.\(\text{c4}\) although in these lines Black’s a6 and d6-pawns are obviously weak and he has no real counterplay; 12...\(\text{h4}\) – This looks like the strongest move, leading to original lines. 13.a4 0–0 14.g3 \(\text{g5}\) 15.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{h6}\) 16.axb5 \(\text{xd5}\) 17.exd5 \(\text{e7}\) 18.bxa6\(=\). Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn indeed, but White must play very precisely, because of his somewhat compromised kingside, Schaezt – Adaszewski, Leutersdorf 2006. After the best line for Black: 13...\(\text{b8}\) 14.axb5 axb5 15.\(\text{d3}\) 0–0 16.\(\text{b3}\) 0–0± his b5-pawn is weak and his counterplay is nowhere in sight.)

13.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{e7}\) (But not 13...\(\text{c8}\)?!, Cipolli – Zdanowski, Sao Caetano do Sul 1999, in view of the aggressive line: 14.a4! \(\text{e7}\) 15.\(\text{b3}\) 0–0 16.axb5 axb5 17.\(\text{xb5}\)? and Black has no compensation whatsoever.) 14.\(\text{b3}\) 0–0 15.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{b6}\) (After 15...g6 16.0–0 \(\text{g7}\) 17.a4 \(\text{bxa4}\) 18.\(\text{xa4}\) a5 19.\(\text{e3}\) Black’s queenside pawns are weak and his light pieces are more passive than their counterparts, Gonczi – Kiss, Hungary 1996. Black does not achieve much after the break in the centre 15...d5 16.\(\text{d1}\) d4, Nogga – Steinhart, Mainz 1989, since after 17.cxd4 exd4 18.f4 \(\text{d6}\) 19.0–0± the d4-pawn not only needs protection, but it impedes the activation of Black’s pieces, while White has active prospects in the centre and on both sides of the board.) 16.0–0 \(\text{ab8}\) 17.\(\text{fd1}\) \(\text{fd8}\) 18.\(\text{b4}\) White occupies the d5-square and he has a slight, but stable edge thanks to his more
active bishop. The development of the game illustrates how that advantage can be increased. 18...\texttt{Wb7} 19.\texttt{Qd5} \texttt{Qxd5} 20.\texttt{Qxd5} \texttt{Bc8} 21.\texttt{Qad1} \texttt{Qa8} 22.a4!± White opens unavoidably files on the queenside for his rooks and his light-squared bishop will soon dominate on the a2-g8-diagonal, its most aggressive possible placement. 22...\texttt{bxa4} 23.\texttt{Wxa4} \texttt{Ec6} 24.\texttt{Aa5} \texttt{Ab6} 25.\texttt{b3} \texttt{Ec8} 26.\texttt{Qxa6} \texttt{Exc3} 27.\texttt{Qc4} \texttt{Wf8} 28.\texttt{Qa7}+- Black loses unavoidably his f7-pawn and White's position is winning after that, although he must still play accurately, Bures – Radusinovic, Budva 2003.

11...\texttt{Eb8} 12.\texttt{Cc2} a5, Savon – Lutikov, Odessa 1976 (Or 12...\texttt{Qb7} 13.\texttt{Qce3} – 11...\texttt{Qb7} 12.\texttt{Cc2} \texttt{Eb8} 13.\texttt{Qce3}; about 12...\texttt{Qe7} 13.\texttt{Qxf6+} gxf6 14.\texttt{Qd3} – see 11...\texttt{Qe7} 12.\texttt{Qxf6+} gxf6 13.\texttt{Cc2} \texttt{Eb8} 14.\texttt{Qd3}, Chapter 6; 12...\texttt{Qg5} – 11...\texttt{Qg5}, Chapter 7; 12...0–0 – 11...0–0;

The move 12...g6, Antoniewski – Stankova, Pardubice 1996, looks too passive and White's most energetic reaction seems to be the standard 13.a4! 0–0 14.a\texttt{xb5} axb5 15.\texttt{Qd3}± and Black has considerable difficulties with the protection of his b5-pawn. It is hardly any better for Black to play 13...\texttt{bxa4} 14.\texttt{Qce3} \texttt{Eb2}?! 15.\texttt{Wxa4} \texttt{Qd7} 16.\texttt{Wa3} \texttt{Bb8} 17.\texttt{Qxf6+} \texttt{Wxf6} 18.\texttt{Qd5} \texttt{Wh4} 19.\texttt{Qxd6}+- and White wins. It is too passive for Black to try 14...\texttt{Qd7}?! 15.\texttt{Wxa4} 0–0 16.b4± and he has problems with his vulnerable a6-pawn. Black would not equalize with 14...\texttt{Qg5} 15.\texttt{Qxa4} \texttt{Qd7} 16.\texttt{Qxa6} 0–0 17.b4 \texttt{Qxe3} 18.\texttt{Qxe3} \texttt{Bb6} 19.\texttt{Qd3}±, or 16...\texttt{Qxb2} 17.\texttt{Qc4} \texttt{Qb8} 18.\texttt{Qxd6+} \texttt{Qf8} 19.\texttt{Qc4}± and in both cases White has a solid extra pawn and more active pieces.), here the weakening of Black’s queenside can be best exploited with the sudden retreat – 13.\texttt{Qa3}!? \texttt{Qa7} (It is not preferable for Black to try 13...\texttt{b4} 14.\texttt{Cc4} \texttt{Qg5} – after 14...0–0 15.\texttt{Qxf6+} \texttt{Wxf6} 16.\texttt{Qxd6}± he can hardly prove sufficient compensation for the pawn – 15.h4! and here after 15...\texttt{Qxh4}? 16.\texttt{Qxh4} \texttt{Qxh4} 17.\texttt{Qc7}+ \texttt{Qd8} 18.\texttt{Qxd6}+ \texttt{Qd7} 19.\texttt{Qd1}+- White wins, while in the variation 15...\texttt{Qh6} 16.\texttt{Qa4} \texttt{Qb7} 17.\texttt{Qd1} 0–0 18.\texttt{Qdb6}± Black loses his d6-pawn. It looks like the most accurate defence for him is 15...\texttt{Qe7} 16.\texttt{Qxe7} \texttt{Qxe7} 17.\texttt{Qe3}±, but it leads to a position in which Black's queenside pawns are obviously weak and he will need to spend some tempi to evacuate his king away from the centre.) and now White should consider the aggressive line 14.c4?! \texttt{bxc4} (After 14...\texttt{b4} 15.\texttt{Qa4+} \texttt{Qd7} 16.\texttt{Qb5} 0–0 17.\texttt{Qd3} \texttt{Qxb5} 18.cx\texttt{b5} \texttt{Qe6} 19.\texttt{Qxf6+} \texttt{Wxf6} 20.0–0± White has a passed pawn on b5, while Black's a5 and d6-pawns are weak.) 15.\texttt{Qxc4}?! \texttt{Qxb2}! (It is worse for Black to play 15...0–0 16.b3 \texttt{Qg5} 17.0–0 \texttt{Qe6} 18.\texttt{Qd3}± and White's prospects are better, because of Black's vulnerable queenside pawns.) 16.\texttt{Qb3} \texttt{Qa6}
17.\( \text{d}4 \text{c}4 \text{xc}4 \text{18.xc}4 0-0 \text{19.0-0 g}5 \text{20.\text{a}4\text{a}5} \) Black's extra pawn seems immaterial. Meanwhile, it would not be so easy for White to prove that his compensation is good enough not only for equality, but also for more. He must attack the \text{f}7-pawn in order to engage his opponent's forces with its protection and he may eye the weak \text{a}5-pawn as well.

12.\( \text{c}2 \)

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\end{center}

12...\( \text{b}8 \)

About 12...\( \text{e}7 \) 13.\( \text{xf}6+ \text{xf}6 \) 14.\( \text{d}3 \) – see 11...\( \text{e}7 \) 12.\( \text{xf}6+ \text{xf}6 \) 13.\( \text{c}2 \text{b}7 \) 14.\( \text{d}3 \), Chapter 6; 12...\( \text{g}5 \) – see 11...\( \text{g}5 \), Chapter 7; as for 12...0-0 – see 11...0-0.

12...\( \text{g}6 \), Mittermayr – Bittner, Aschach 1995, Black is planning to deploy his bishop passively on the \text{g}7-square with that move, 13.a4 \( \text{xa}4 \) 14.\( \text{x}a4 \) 0-0 15.\( \text{c}4 \).

12...\( \text{c}8 \), Just – Grunau, Duisburg 2004, and here White's standard pawn-break on the queenside is even more effective 13.a4 \( \text{bxa}4 \) (After 13...\( \text{b}4 \) 14.\( \text{cxb}4 \text{xb}4 \) 15.\( \text{xb}4 \text{xe}4 \) 16.\( \text{xa}6 \text{e}5 \) 17.\( \text{b}5+ \text{f}8 \) 18.0-0\( \pm \) White's passed pawn might be advanced far ahead, while the opponent would strive to complete his development.) 14.\( \text{xa}4 \) a5 15.\( \text{ce}3 \text{g}5 \) 16.\( \text{c}4 \pm \) White's pieces are perfectly deployed on the queenside and in the centre.

12...\( \text{b}8 \) 13.\( \text{ce}3 \) \( \text{a}5 \)! – This move enables White to begin a queenside offensive with tempi, Skorobogaty – Turecki, Augustow 1996, 14.b4! \( \text{xd}5 \) (After 14...\( \text{c}6 \) 15.a4 \( \text{a}7 \) 16.\( \text{d}3 \pm \) Black can hardly coordinate his pieces without losing some queenside pawn.) 15.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 16.a4\( \pm \) and White has a stable advantage, thanks to his powerful centralized knight and his queenside initiative.

13.\( \text{ce}3 \)

That is a quiet move. White improves the placement of his knight and he postpones the pawn-break a2-a4.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

13...\( \text{d}7 \)

The move 13...\( \text{g}6 \)! – presents White with tempi for the assault. 14.a4 \( \text{bxa}4 \) 15.\( \text{xa}4 \text{c}6 \) 16.\( \text{a}5 \) 0-0 17.\( \text{d}3 \pm \) and White has powerful pressure on the queenside and in the centre, Murariu – Gogin, Budva 2003.
13...\textit{g}5?! – That activation of the bishop is already too late, because White can develop powerful initiative after 14.\textit{f}5 \textit{g}6 (It is hardly any better for Black to opt for 14...0–0 15.h4 \textit{f}6, J.Smith – Ver Nooy, Email 1998, since White has a clear advantage after the logical move 16.g4!, for example after 16...\textit{c}6 17.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}7 18.0–0–0 \textit{c}8 19.\textit{b}4± White dominates in the centre and he has excellent attacking chances, while in the variation: 16...\textit{d}7 17.\textit{g}5 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{gx}6 \textit{xe}4 19.\textit{g}4 \textit{xf}6 20.\textit{xe}4± Black’s two pawns cannot compensate fully his missing bishop.) 15.h4 \textit{f}4 (it cannot be recommended for Black to try 15...\textit{xf}5 16.hxg5 \textit{xf}6 17.\textit{f}6+ \textit{e}7, V.Kalinina – Zatonskikh, Bucharest 1998, since after 18.\textit{h}6!, he has great problems, for example in the line: 18...d5 19.a4 d4 20.\textit{b}3 \textit{a}5 21.\textit{c}4±. White ends up with a huge lead in development and excellent chances to finish the game off with a checkmating attack, while after 18...\textit{d}7 19.\textit{d}5+ \textit{xd}5 20.\textit{xd}5± he regains unavoidably his sacrificed pawn and he has good attacking prospects against his opponent’s king stranded in the centre.) 16.\textit{f}6+ \textit{xf}6 17.\textit{xd}6+ \textit{e}7 18.\textit{xb}7 \textit{a}7 (After 18...\textit{d}7 19.g3 \textit{b}6 – it seems terrible for Black to try 19...\textit{h}6 20.\textit{h}3± – 20.\textit{d}5 \textit{f}6 21.\textit{c}5+ \textit{xc}5 22.\textit{xc}5 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{d}3± Black has failed to trap the knight on b7 and he has no compensation for the pawn in that endgame. It is hardly any better for him to continue with 18...\textit{b}6 19.\textit{d}5 \textit{a}7 20.\textit{c}5+ \textit{xc}5 21.\textit{xc}5 \textit{d}8 22.\textit{d}1±) 19.\textit{d}5 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{c}5+ \textit{xc}5 21.\textit{xc}5 \textit{d}7 22.\textit{d}3 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}8 24.a4± and he remains a pawn down with a vulnerable queenside, Vasquez – Dominguez Garcia, Seville 1994.

The move 13...0–0 – enables White to organize an offensive on the kingside. 14.\textit{f}3!? \textit{g}5 15.\textit{d}1 \textit{g}6 (After 15...\textit{d}7 16.\textit{f}5 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{h}4±, Black’s bishop has no good square to retreat to.) 16.h4 \textit{xe}3 17.\textit{xe}3 \textit{d}7 (In case of 17...\textit{xd}5 18.\textit{xd}5 \textit{c}7 19.\textit{h}5 \textit{d}7 20.\textit{e}2± White’s bishop is stronger than Black’s knight, since there will be fight on both sides of the board.) 18.\textit{h}5 \textit{f}6 (Or 18...\textit{xd}5 19.\textit{xd}5 \textit{f}6 20.\textit{d}3 and here after 20...\textit{hx}h5 21.\textit{h}6 \textit{f}6 22.\textit{g}4 \textit{c}7 23.\textit{e}2 White has a crushing kingside attack, while in the line 23...\textit{c}7 21.\textit{e}2 \textit{ad}8 22.\textit{d}1± White’s king is much safer than its counterpart.) 19.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6, Stanojaski – Todorovic, Pancevo 2003 and now after 20.hxg6 \textit{fx}g6 (Or 20...hxg6? 21.\textit{xd}6!± and White remains with a solid extra pawn, because Black cannot capture the rook 21...\textit{xd}6? 22.\textit{h}6++) 21.\textit{f}3 \textit{ad}8 22.\textit{a}4± and White has powerful queenside initiative. Black can hardly exploit the placement of White’s king in the centre, because the central files are closed. 14.a4!?}
This is the most aggressive line for White. He emphasizes the vulnerability of Black’s queenside pawns.

14...bxa4 15.\textit{Qxf6+}

15...\textit{Qxf6}

It is not preferable for Black to try 15...\textit{Qxf6} \textit{Qxf6} 16.\textit{Qxa4} \textit{Qd8} (He has no compensation for the pawn at all after 16...\textit{Qd8} 17.\textit{Qxa6} \textit{Qa8} 18.\textit{Qc4}! 0–0 19.0–0±, or 18...\textit{Qe6} 19.\textit{Qd5} 0–0 20.0–0± and here Black loses quickly after 20...\textit{Qxc8}?! 21.\textit{Qxb7!}\textit{Qxc4} 22.\textit{Qxa8}+ \textit{Qf8} 23.\textit{Qa1}+– and he is left without plenty of material unavoidably.) 17.\textit{Qf5} 0–0 (Black fails to protect his numerous weaknesses after 17...\textit{Qc7} 18.\textit{Qa5}!, for example: 18...\textit{Qxa5} 19.\textit{Qxa5} \textit{Qc6} 20.\textit{Qxd6+} \textit{Qe7} 21.\textit{Qf5}+ \textit{Qf6} 22.f3+–, 18...0–0 0–0 19.\textit{Qxa6} \textit{Qxa5} 20.\textit{Qxa5} \textit{Qf6} 21.f3+–, 18...\textit{Qc5} 19.\textit{Qxc5} \textit{Qxc5} 20.f3+– and White should not have problems with the realization of his extra pawn after the transfer into the endgame and in the variation: 18...\textit{Qb6} 19.0–0–0 \textit{Qd8} 20.\textit{Qxg7+} \textit{Qf8} 21.\textit{Qh5} \textit{Qxe4} 22.f4 Black can hardly protect his king without losing material.) 18.\textit{Qxd6} \textit{Qb8}, Iordachescu – Timoshenko, Romania 2004 (The other possibilities are not any better for Black: 18...\textit{Qc5} 19.\textit{Qxb7} \textit{Qxb7} 20.\textit{Qc4}±, or 18...\textit{Qc7} 19.\textit{Qa3} \textit{Qc5} 20.\textit{Qxb7} \textit{Qxb7} 21.\textit{Qe2} \textit{Qfd8} 22.0–0 \textit{Qd2} 23.\textit{Qf3}± and he has no compensation for his sacrificed pawn in both variations.) and here White’s advantage is considerable after 19.\textit{Qd1} \textit{Qc5} (19...\textit{Qc7} 20.\textit{Qc4} \textit{Qb6} 21.b4±) 20.\textit{Qc4} \textit{Qb6} 21.b4 \textit{Qe6} (After 21.\textit{Qa4} 22.\textit{Qb3} \textit{Qc5} 23.\textit{Qb1} \textit{Qe6} 24.\textit{Qc4}± White has not only an extra pawn, but more active pieces too.) 22.\textit{Qe2} \textit{Qfd8} 23.\textit{Qxb7} \textit{Qxd1}+ 24.\textit{Qxd1} \textit{Qxb7} 25.0–0± White has completed his development and despite the considerably reduced material he has excellent chances to press his advantage home.

16.\textit{Qxa4}+ \textit{Qf8}

After 16...\textit{Qd7} 17.\textit{Qxd7+} \textit{Qxd7} 18.f3± the endgame is clearly in favour of White, because of his active pieces and Black’s weak a6-pawn.

17.\textit{Qd3} \textit{g6} 18.0–0

18...\textit{Qc7}, Protaziuk – Swol,
Poland 1994. It is favourable for White to enter an endgame here, for example: \(19.\square c4 \square x c4\) (After \(19...\square b6 20.\square a4\) White has powerful queenside initiative, while Black must still complete his development.) \(20.\square x c4 \square x e4\) (In case of \(20...\square x e4 21.\square x e4 \square x e4\) \(22.\square x d6 \square c6 23.f4! e4 24.\square a5\) White has a great lead in development; meanwhile Black's bishop is restricted by his own pawns.) \(21.\square x e4 \square x e4 22.f3 \triangle g5\) (Black loses after \(22...d5? 23.\square b6+--; it is also bad for him to play \(22...\triangle c8?! 23.\square b6 \triangle c6 24.\triangle x a6 \triangle c5 25.\triangle d7\) and White wins the exchange. His pieces are considerable more active in the variation: \(22...\triangle c5 23.\triangle f d1 \triangle e 7 24.\triangle x d6\) \(\triangle e 7 24.\triangle c4 f 6 25.\triangle a5\) White's prospects are superior thanks to his better piece-coordination and Black's weak a6-pawn.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, we analyze Black's moves 11, which have not become popular, because they are not in the spirit of the Chelyabinsk variation. White reacts practically always with the standard maneuver \(12.\square c2\), followed by \(a2-a4\) and a transfer of the knight to e3, or to b4. In answer to \(11...\triangle b8\), it is essential for White to exploit his lead in development and to attack immediately Black's queenside with \(c3-c4\). The most popular move for Black here \(11...\triangle b7\), reduces his control over the f5-square and he must play very accurately afterwards. The maximum that he can dream about in this line is to reach a worse endgame without any chances of seizing the initiative.
Chapter 6

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{c}f3 \textit{c}6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{c}xd4 e6 5.\textit{c}c3 e5 6.\textit{c}db5 d6 7.\textit{g}g5 a6 8.\textit{a}a3 b5 9.\textit{d}d5 \textit{e}7 10.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 11.c3 \textit{e}7

This is a standard maneuver for Black with the idea to repel White's knight from its perfect deployment on the d5-outpost. Black is not afraid of his doubled f-pawns, because he plans to obtain good game thanks to his powerful centre.

12.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6

There arises a similar position in the variation: 10.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xe}7 11.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6, but White's pawn is on c2 and not on c3, so he has here some additional possibilities.

13.\textit{c}2 \textit{b}7

That is the most logical move. Black strives to advance either d6-d5, or f6-f5, and in both cases, the perfect place for his bishop is on the kingside.

13...0-0?! – Black's king would be quite uncomfortable on the kingside, due to his compromised pawn-structure there. 14.\textit{d}d3 f5 (The other thematic pawn-advance would be detrimental to Black's prospects – 14...d5 15.exd5, and here after 15...f5 16.\textit{e}e3 e4 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{g}6 18.d6± he has no compensation for the pawn, Wieczorek - Gromczak, Wroclaw 2004. In the variation: 15...wxd5 16.\textit{e}e3 \textit{e}6, Jurasek - Svab, Plzen 1996, White has the aggressive possibility 17.\textit{h}5 e4 18.\textit{c}2 \textit{b}7 19.0-0±, after which Black's defence would be very difficult, because of his bad pawn-structure on the kingside and his passive pieces. White is threatening to open files on the kingside with f2-f3 at the moment and he has even active prospects on the queenside with the help of the pawn-break a2-a4.) 15.\textit{h}5 d5, Massoni - Battesti, Bastia 2004 (It is not preferable for Black to try 15...\textit{h}8 16.exf5 \textit{d}5, Svidinsky - Kosov, St. Petersburg 2007, since after White's active move 17.\textit{h}6!? \textit{f}6 18.0-0-0 \textit{g}8 19.\textit{e}3± he remains with an extra pawn and he can begin a mas-
sive pawn-offensive on the kingside.), here after the natural line: 16.exf5 e4 17.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}e2 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}}}xf5 18.0-0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}e6 19.g4 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}}}g7 20.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}}}h6± Black's pawn centre has been blocked, his knight on g7 will hardly join the actions anytime soon and his kingside is vulnerable.

13...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}e6 – That square is less active for Black's bishop than b7 and after 14.a4 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}}b8 15.axb5 axb5 16.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}}}}b4± he has difficulties to undermine White's e4-pawn. 16...0-0 17.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}}d3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}}}d7 18.0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}}}}h8, Sandu – Macedo Rasgadinho, Sautron 2005, and here after 19.f4 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}}}}c6 20.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}}}d5± Black should better forget about his intentions to exchange his weak pawns, because his main task would be not to get checkmated.

The move 13...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}}b8 does not contribute to Black's possible counterplay in the centre. 14.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}}d3 f5 15.exf5 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}}}xf5, K.Szabo – Hidegh, Hungary 2005, and here following 16.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}}}d2 g8 (The drawbacks of Black's position are much more evident in the line: 16...0-0 17.0-0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}}}h4 18.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}e4 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}}e6 18.0-0-0↑ Black has a majority of pawns in the centre, but they are immobile and they can be attacked. The shelter of his king can hardly be safe either.

The move 13...d5 is not popular at all, because it “freezes” Black's central pawns. 14.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}f3 f5, van Amerongen – Mihevc, Sas van Gent 1990, and here after 15.0-0-0 fxe4 (In case of 15...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}e6 16.exd5 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}}}xd5 17.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}}}e3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}}}d6 18.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}}b4± Black falls behind in development and he has problems in the centre and with the safety of his king.) 16.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}f6 0-0 17.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}}}xe5 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}}}e6 18.h4± Black's central pawns are static, therefore White can attack them later in the endgame. Meanwhile, Black's king is endangered with queens present on the board.

13...f5 – Black improves his pawn-structure with that move indeed, but his pawns in the centre and on the queenside need protection and the shelter of his king is not reliable. Black's bishop will hardly get access to the long diagonal. After 14.exf5,
17.a4 \( \text{Nh4} \) 18.g3, he has difficulties obtaining counterplay, for example: 18...\( \text{Nf8} \) 19.\( \text{Nb4} \) \( \text{Ng4} \) 20.\( \text{Ne2} \) \( \text{Nxe2} \) bxa4 22.\( \text{Nd5} \)± and almost all his pawns are weak and his king is rather unsafe. Black does not have anything real on the kingside either, or 18...bxa4 19.\( \text{Ne3} \) \( \text{Nbd3} \) 20.\( \text{Nf5} \) \( \text{Nxd2} \) 21.\( \text{Nf3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 23.c4± and despite the fact that Black has an extra pawn, his position is very difficult — his bishop is a sorry sight, his knight can hardly be activated, his king is vulnerable and his queenside pawns are weak. The advance of his f-pawn might lead to its loss 21...f5? 22.\( \text{Nf1} \) \( \text{N6} \) 23.\( \text{Nxf5} \) — and Black's king has become even more endangered.)

16.\( \text{Nf4} \) \( \text{Nb7} \) 17.0–0 \( \text{Ngb8} \) (It is possible for Black to try 17...0–0 18.\( \text{Nd4} \) \( \text{Nb7} \) 19.\( \text{Nxb7} \) \( \text{Nxb7} \) 20.\( \text{Nf5} \) \( \text{e6} \) 21.f4 \( \text{exf4} \) 22.\( \text{Nd4} \)± and he has completed his development, but at the price of having numerous weaknesses.) 18.g3 h5 19.a4! bxa4 20.\( \text{Nxf5} \)! — White emphasizes the advantages of his position with that not so obvious exchange. 20...\( \text{Nxf5} \) (The other capture is much worse for Black after 20...\( \text{Nxf5} \) 21.\( \text{Nxd6} \) \( \text{Nf7} \) 22.\( \text{Nf1} \) f6 23.\( \text{Nc6} \) \( \text{Nd7} \) 24.\( \text{Nf3} \)±, not only he loses all his queenside pawns, but his king comes under a dangerous attack.) 21.\( \text{Nd3} \) \( \text{Nh8} \) 18.0–0 \( \text{Ngb8} \) 19.\( \text{Nxb5} \) axb5 20.\( \text{Nxa7} \) f5, Tsuboi — Cruz, Sao Paulo 2004, and here after 21.\( \text{Nfa1} \)± White’s pieces are much more active, his king is safer and his bishop is doubtlessly stronger than Black’s knight.) 16.\( \text{Nd3} \) \( \text{Nh8} \) 18.0–0 \( \text{Ngb8} \) 19.\( \text{Nxb5} \) axb5 18.\( \text{Nxb5} \) \( \text{Ngb8} \) (Black has also tested 18...\( \text{Nxa1} \) 19.\( \text{Nxa1} \) f5 — it is hardly any better for him to advance his central pawns, after 19...d5 20.0–0 d4 21.\( \text{exd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 22.\( \text{Nc2} \) \( \text{Nxd5} \) 23.\( \text{Nf3} \)± Black’s passed d4-pawn has been blocked reliably, therefore his compensation for the sacrificed pawn is insufficient — 20.\( \text{Nf6} \) f4 21.\( \text{Nc4} \) \( \text{Ng5} \), Olazarri — Espinosa Flores, Guarapuava 1991, Black’s king-
side threats seem dangerous, but White can parry them with precise moves, remaining with a solid extra pawn. 22.0-0 e4 23.\(\text{\textit{c6}}\) \(\text{\textit{a8}}\) 24.\(\text{\textit{b6}}\) \(\text{\textit{xc6}}\) 25.\(\text{\textit{xc6}}\) \(\text{\textit{b8}}\) 26.\(\text{\textit{d5}}\) and Black’s centre is so vulnerable that he would lose unavoidably another pawn.) 19.\(\text{\textit{c4}}\) d5 20.0-0 d4, Olazarri – Gamarra Caceres, Guarapuava 1991, and now White’s best line seems to be: 21.\(\text{\textit{c2}}\) \(\text{\textit{g6}}\) (After 21...d3 22.\(\text{\textit{b4}}\) e4 23.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) \(\text{\textit{c8}}\) 24.b3+ Black’s pawns will be blocked and they will become a target for attack.) 22.g3 \(\text{\textit{g5}}\) 23.\(\text{\textit{e1}}\) \(\text{\textit{g4}}\) 24.f3 \(\text{\textit{h3}}\) 25.\(\text{\textit{f2}}\) Black has some compensation for the pawn, because of his extra space, but it can hardly be sufficient. White needs to strive for exchanges and his advantage would increase considerably then.

**14.\(\text{\textit{d3}}\)**

In this position, Black has played most of all **a) 14...f5** and **b) 14...d5**, but he has tested some other moves too:

14...h5?! – This move impedes the activation of Black’s pieces, Blankenberg – Reiter, Internet 2001, 15.\(\text{\textit{e3}}\) f5 (It is possibly better for Black to opt for 15...d5 16.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) d4 17.cxd4 exd4 18.\(\text{\textit{xf6}}\) \(\text{\textit{g8}}\) 19.\(\text{\textit{f5}}\) \(\text{\textit{xf5}}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{xf5}}\)^\(\text{\textit{t}}\) and he regains the pawn, but after 20...\(\text{\textit{xg2}}\) 21.\(\text{\textit{e2}}\) \(\text{\textit{g5}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 23.\(\text{\textit{g1}}\) f6 24.h4± White is clearly better, because his king’s shelter is safer and in case of a transfer to an endgame, Black’s pawns would be quite vulnerable.) 16.exf5 d5 17.0-0 d4 18.cxd4 exd4 19.f6 dxe3 20.fxe7 \(\text{\textit{d5}}\) 21.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c5}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{e2}}\)± White’s e7-pawn and Black’s e3-pawn would be annihilated unavoidably and White would remain with material advantage and a safer king.

14...\(\text{\textit{g6}}\)?! – This move enables White to block his opponent’s pawn-mass in the centre. 15.\(\text{\textit{e3}}\) h5 (After 15...\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) 16.g3 \(\text{\textit{xd3}}\) 17.\(\text{\textit{xd3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c7}}\) 18.0-0 \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 19.f3± Black has no counterplay at all and he must worry about the protection of his weak d6 and f6-pawns.) 16.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\) \(\text{\textit{f4}}\) 17.\(\text{\textit{c2}}\) \(\text{\textit{c7}}\) 18.0-0 0-0 0-0 0 19.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) \(\text{\textit{d7}}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{hd1}}\) \(\text{\textit{hd8}}\) 21.a4± Black’s pieces are forced to protect passively his numerous weaknesses, Eberth – Szekeres, Sarospatak 1994.

14...\(\text{\textit{b6}}\) – Black prepares castling long, but his queen is not so active on that square. 15.\(\text{\textit{e3}}\) d5 16.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) 0-0 0 17.0-0 d4 18.cxd4 exd4 19.\(\text{\textit{f5}}\) \(\text{\textit{xf5}}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{xf5}}\)± (It is almost the same after 20...\(\text{\textit{b8}}\) 21.a4 \(\text{\textit{e6}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) \(\text{\textit{d6}}\) 23.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\)±) 21.\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) \(\text{\textit{e5}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) \(\text{\textit{hg8}}\) 23.a4 f5, Y.Gruenfeld – Kouatly, Brussels
1985, and here White's most energetic way to increase his advantage is 24.axb5! fxe4 (After 24... \(\text{axe4}\) 25.\(\text{axe4}\) fxe4 26.bxa6 \(\text{d}5\) 27.\(\text{b}4+\) Black's king is so bare that it seems to be beyond salvation.) 25.bxa6 \(\text{c}6\) 26.\(\text{d}f1\) \(\text{d}7\) (The other possibilities are not any better for Black: 26...\(\text{d}g6\) 27.\(\text{d}b4\) – and here he loses after 27...\(\text{d}d7\) 28.\(\text{d}xc6\) \(\text{bxc6}\) 29.\(\text{a}5\)+, as well as following 27...\(\text{d}g8\) 28.\(\text{d}xc6+\) \(\text{d}xc6\) 29.\(\text{b}7+\) \(\text{d}d8\) 30.\(\text{d}xc6\) exd3 31.a7+-; 26...\(\text{d}d6\) 27.a7 \(\text{d}d7\) 28.\(\text{d}xc6\) \(\text{bxc6}\) 29.\(\text{c}2+\) \(\text{d}d6\) 29.\(\text{dxe4}\) and White has a dangerous attack in a position with material equality.

The move 14...\(\text{d}g8\) looks more natural, because Black can use the g-file, besides his possible active actions in the centre. 15. \(\text{d}e3\) d5 (About 15...f5 16.\(\text{exf5}\) – see 14...f5 15.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{g}8\) 16.\(\text{d}e3\).) 16.\(\text{f}3\) f5 (The alternatives for Black are worse: 16...\(\text{d}d4\)?! 17.cxd4 \(\text{xd4}\) 18. \(\text{d}0\)-- \(\text{d}0\)-- Black loses at least a piece. 18.\(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 19.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{xe4}\) 20.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{d}8\) 21.\(\text{exe7}\) \(\text{d}2+\) 22. \(\text{f}1\) \(\text{xe7}\) 23.\(\text{xe5+}\) \(\text{f}8\) 24.\(\text{e}1\)+. After White's rook on h1 enters the actions, Black's position would become completely lost.) 17.\(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{xf5}\) 18.\(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{g}5\) (Black loses here after 18...\(\text{g}5\) 19.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}8\), Pritchett – Littlewood, England 1985, 20.0–0! \(\text{f}5\) 21.\(\text{exf5}\) e4 22.\(\text{e}3+-\) and not only he has lost material, but his king is endangered. It is not better for Black to try 18...\(\text{exg2}\) 19.\(\text{h}4\) dxe4, Den Heyer – De Vriese, corr. 1989, because after 20.\(\text{exe4}\) \(\text{exe4}\) 21.\(\text{exe4}\) \(\text{g}7\) 22.\(\text{d}1\)+ White has much superior piece-coordination and excellent attacking chances against Black's vulnerable king.) 19.\(\text{exd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 20.\(\text{exg5}\) \(\text{exg5}\) 21.\(\text{g}1\) \(\text{exg2}\) 22.\(\text{exg2}\) \(\text{exg2}\) 23.a4 0–0–0, Dibley – Anderson, corr. 2001, and now White creates great problems for his opponent with the modest retreat of the bishop 24.\(\text{e}2!\) \(\text{d}6!\) (It is worse for Black to play 24...\(\text{c}6\) 25.axb5 axb5 26.\(\text{a}7!\) \(\text{d}7\) 27.\(\text{b}4!\) and he loses his b5-pawn.) 25.axb5 axb5 26.\(\text{a}5?!\) \(\text{h}6\) 27. \(\text{xb5}\) \(\text{h}2\) (But not 27...\(\text{b}7\) 28.\(\text{e}2!\) \(\text{f}6\) 29.\(\text{a}6\) \(\text{c}6\) 30.\(\text{b}4\)+ and White ends up with an extra pawn and he can advance easily his passed pawns.) 28.\(\text{a}6+\) \(\text{d}7\) 29.\(\text{exe5}\) White's prospects are clearly superior thanks to his extra pawn. He must watch carefully however Black's passed h-pawn.
Chapter 6

a) 14...f5

Black eliminates his opponent’s e4-pawn from the centre with that move and he creates numerous weaknesses for White on the kingside.

15.exf5

This is the most natural move for Black; otherwise, he remains without a pawn and he will hardly prove sufficient compensation for it.

15...d5?! Lukov – Pelletier, Lyon 1995, Black relies quite naively that his actively placed knight would be sufficient to compensate the missing pawn, but here after White’s most accurate move 16.f3 g5 (After 16...g8 17.g3 Black’s knight has no access to the f4-square and he is a pawn down. It is not better for Black to try 16...f4 17.g3 xd3+ 18.xd3 f6 19.0–0 0–0 0–0–0 20.hel±, because he has been forced to trade his active knight, while White remains a pawn up with a much safer king.) 17.g3 e3 (The simplifications are favourable for White after 17...

h5 18.e4 e3 19.xe3 xe3+ 20.e2 xe2+ 21.xe2±, because Black’s pawn centre looks impressive, but it does not compensate the sacrificed pawn.) 18.e2 xf5 19.xb5! axb5 20.xb5+ f8 21.xb7 xa2 (After 21...a4 22.d5 g7 23.d2+– White should win easily with his extra queenside pawns.) 22.e2 xa1 23.xa1± and White’s pieces are much more active, besides his extra pawn.

15...e4?! – This move just closes the operational diagonal for the bishop. 16.e2 xf5 17.a4 e3 (After 17...g8 18.axb5 e3 19.f3 exf2+ 20.xf2± Black’s compensation for the pawn is evidently insufficient. He maintains the material balance with the line 17...bxa4 18.0–0 g5 19.xa4±, but he cannot create any serious threats on the kingside in that variation and his king is rather unsafe and the majority of his pawns are weak.) 18.0–0 g8 19.f3 e7 20.xe3 xe3 21.fxe3 0–0–0 22.axb5– Black is not only several pawns down, but his king is very weak, Yeo Min Yang – Iwasaki, Vietnam 2003.

15...d5 – Black’s central pawns look beautiful, but he closes the long diagonal for his bishop with his last move. 16.h5 b6 17.0–0 g8 18.f1 e1 19.e3 e4 20.f1 g5 21.d1 d8, Sindik – Zelenika, Tucepi 1996, and here White should better start active actions on the queenside, repelling at first
Black’s well placed rook. 22.h4 \( \text{g}8 \) 23.a4 b4 (It looks much worse for Black to continue with 23...\( \text{c}6 \) 24.axb5 \( \text{xb}5 \) 25.\( \text{h}5+ \) and White remains with more active pieces and an extra pawn.) 24.\( \text{b}3! \) a5 25.\( \text{xb}4 \) d4 (Black’s pieces are so dis coordinated that his compensation for the missing pawns is insufficient after 25...axb4 26.\( \text{xb}4 \) \( \text{a}8 \) 27.\( \text{b}5+ \) \( \text{f}8 \) 28.a5 d4 29.\( \text{ed}1+ \) and White’s threat – 30.\( \text{aa}4! \) looks extremely unpleasant for Black.) 26.\( \text{ad}1! \) dxe3 27.\( \text{xb}5+ \) \( \text{c}6 \) (After 27...\( \text{c}6 \) 28.\( \text{xd}8+ \) \( \text{xd}8 \) 29.\( \text{xe}3 \) White has three pawns for the piece and excellent attacking chances.) 28.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{xd}1 \) 29.\( \text{xd}1 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 30.\( \text{d}4!+ \) and in connection with the threat of a checkmate in one, Black can hardly find an appropriate defence. He loses, for example after 30...\( \text{f}8 \) 31.\( \text{d}6+ \) \( \text{g}7 \) 32.\( \text{xc}6++ \), the pieces are equal, but Black’s king is bare and he has lost too many pawns.

15...\( \text{g}8 \) – After that logical move Black again remains a pawn down and his centre is much rather a weakness than strength. 16.\( \text{e}3 \) d5 17.\( \text{e}2 \) d4 (In answer to 17...\( \text{d}6 \), G.Sax – Tatar Kis, Balatonlelle 2004. White’s most natural reaction seems to be 18. 0–0–0 and Black has several possibilities, but they all seem to be insufficient. After 18...\( \text{h}6 \) 19.\( \text{b}1 \) f6 20.h3 0–0–0 21.a4± White not only has an extra pawn, but a clear-cut plan for actions on the queenside. In the variation: 18...0–0–0 19.\( \text{he}1 \) d4 20.cxd4 exd4 21.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 22.g3± White has an extra pawn and a safer king and he can attack Black’s vulnerable d4-pawn. The move 18...d4 – seems to be the most aggressive, but after 19.\( \text{g}4 \) e4 20.\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{f}4+ \) 21.d2 \( \text{xc}3 \) 22.f6+ \( \text{xf}8 \) 23.bxc3± White has two extra pawns and a considerable lead in development.) 18.\( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \), Schilling – Bensiek, corr. 1995, and here it looks most natural for White to complete his development with the line: 19.0–0–0 \( \text{d}5 \) (The alternatives are not any better for Black: about 19...e4 20.\( \text{xe}4 \) – see 17...\( \text{d}6 \) 18.0–0–0 d4 19.\( \text{g}4 \) e4 20.\( \text{xe}4 \); 19...\( \text{g}2 \) 20.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 21.f6!? Black loses his central pawns irrelevant of where his knight would retreat: 21...\( \text{g}6 \) 22.\( \text{xe}5 \), or 21...\( \text{c}6 \) 22.\( \text{xe}5 \) 20.\( \text{e}4 \) 0–0–0 (It is not to be recommended to Black to try 20...\( \text{c}4 \) 21.f3 0–0–0 22.f6 \( \text{g}6 \) 23.\( \text{he}1 \) and he remains a pawn down with a weak centre and a vulnerable king.) 21.f6 \( \text{g}6 \) 22.\( \text{he}1 \)± Black’s pieces are active indeed, but he has no compensation for the pawn, because his central pawns need protection.

16.\( \text{g}1 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 17.a4

(diagram)

17...\( \text{bxa}4 \)

17...\( \text{b}6 \) – After that move, Black’s defence is without any bright prospects. 18.axb5 axb5 19.
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\[ \text{\textbullet} \text{xa8}+ \text{\textbullet} \text{xa8} 20.\text{\textbullet}e3 \text{\textbullet}c5 21.\text{\textbullet}g7 \text{\textbullet}f8 \] (The move 21...d5 – seems to be the most resilient, but after 22.\text{\textbullet}f3 \text{\textbullet}e7 23.f6+! \text{\textbullet}xf6 24.\text{\textbullet}f5+ \text{\textbullet}e6 25.\text{\textbullet}h3 \text{\textbullet}d5! 26.\text{\textbullet}h6+ \text{\textbullet}e7 27.\text{\textbullet}h4→ White’s pieces are quite active against his opponent’s king and he has an excellent compensation for the pawn. Black should worry how to parry the threat – 28.\text{\textbullet}g4, winning a piece.) 22.f6 \text{\textbullet}g6 23.\text{\textbullet}f5 \text{\textbullet}d7 24.\text{\textbullet}xb5+ \text{\textbullet}e6 25.\text{\textbullet}g4 \text{\textbullet}xf6 26.\text{\textbullet}d7+- and Black is defenseless against the numerous threats 26...\text{\textbullet}h8 27.h4 h6 28.h5 1–0 Brodsky – V.Osipov, Chelyabinsk 1991.

18.\text{\textbullet}e3 \text{\textbullet}c6

After 18...d5?! 19.\text{\textbullet}xa4+ \text{\textbullet}c6 20.\text{\textbullet}b4 \text{\textbullet}b8 21.\text{\textbullet}c5 \text{\textbullet}a7 22.\text{\textbullet}a3 \text{\textbullet}c7 23.f6 \text{\textbullet}c8 24.\text{\textbullet}g5± White is clearly better not so much due to his doubled extra pawn, but because of his active pieces and pressure against his opponent’s centre, Szczepankiewicz – Krebs, Email 2000.

19.\text{\textbullet}c2 \text{\textbullet}d7

It is hardly better for Black to opt for 19...\text{\textbullet}b8 20.f6 \text{\textbullet}g8, Berzins – Kretek, Mlada Boleslav 1992 and here after 21.\text{\textbullet}xg8+

\[ \text{\textbullet}xg8 22.\text{\textbullet}xa4 \text{\textbullet}xa4 23.\text{\textbullet}xa4+ \text{\textbullet}f8 24.0–0–0 \text{\textbullet}xf6 25.\text{\textbullet}h4→ \] White’s attack is quite dangerous, possibly winning.

20.f6 \text{\textbullet}g6, Hadraba – Branding, corr. 1996 and now after the natural line: 21.\text{\textbullet}xa4 \text{\textbullet}xa4 22.\text{\textbullet}xa4± Black must protect both his a6 and d6-pawns, while White’s pieces have an excellent outpost in the centre – the d5-square. Meanwhile, Black’s king is rather unsafe and its counterpart is excellently placed in the centre.

b) 14...d5

This is the most popular move. Now, all Black’s pieces can become active. The main drawback of that move though is that his
kingside pawn-structure will remain compromised for long.

**15.exd5 \( \text{Qxd5} \)**

Black activates his queen and he prepares to castle long.

It is bad for him to play 15... \( \text{exd5} \)?! because after 16.\( \text{e}3 \text{e}6 \) 17.\( \text{c}2 \pm \), the defects of his kingside pawn-structure cannot be compensated at all.

15...f5?! - After that move Black remains a pawn down without any compensation whatsoever. 16.d6 \( \text{Qxd5} \) (But not 16...\( \text{c}8 \) 17.\( \text{e}2 \) and here Black loses after 17...e4? 18.\( \text{xb5}+ \text{xb5} \) 19.\( \text{xb5}+ \text{d7} \) 20.\( \text{e}5 \pm \), while following 17...0-0 18.\( \text{xf5} \text{xd6} \) 19.0-0-0 \( \text{g5}+ \) 20.\( \text{e}3 \pm \), Black remains a pawn down and the unfavourable placement of his king deprives him of any possibility to regain it.)

17.\( \text{xf5} \text{xd6} \), Fossan – Svensk, Gausdal 1992. White’s main task here is to complete his development and to exploit the light squares in the centre as outposts for his pieces. His best line to do that is: 18.\( \text{f3} \text{d8} \) 19.0-0-0\pm, followed by a2-a4 and active actions on the queenside, or centralizing the rooks.

15...\( \text{exd5} \) – Black comes under an unpleasant pin after that move and he can get rid of it only tactically, but at a price. 16.\( \text{e}4 \text{f5} \) (It is bad for him to opt for 16...\( \text{c}8 \)? Specht – Hirnise, Willingen 2004 and Black fails to get rid of the pin after 17.\( \text{f3} \)! Now, no matter how Black continues - he loses: 17...\( \text{c7} \) 18.0-0-0 \( \text{d7} \) 19.\( \text{e}3 \text{exe3} \) 20.\( \text{xd7} \text{xd7} \) 21.\( \text{xb7}+--; \) 17...f5 18.\( \text{xf5} \text{c7} \) 19.\( \text{f3}+--; \) 17...\( \text{c4} \) 18.0-0-0 \( \text{exe4} \) 19.\( \text{exe4} \text{xd7} \) 20.f3+- and White has a decisive material advantage in all the variations. The move 16...\( \text{e}3 \)?! – has not been tried, since White obtains easily an overwhelming advantage after 17.\( \text{exe3} \text{exe4} \) 18.\( \text{g4} \pm \). Black lags in development and he risks coming under attack, while in the line: 17...\( \text{xd1}+18.\text{xd1} \text{exe4} \) 19.f3+ he loses unavoidably his f6-pawn.)

17.\( \text{xf5} \text{f4} \) (After 17...\( \text{g5} \)? 18.\( \text{f3} \pm \), Black can get rid of the pin only by trading queens, or by losing too many tempi for development.)

18...\( \text{xd2} \) (The other capture is not any better, after 18...\( \text{xe2}+ \) 19.\( \text{xd1} \text{xe2} \) 20.\( \text{g1} \), Black has tried several options, but neither of them is satisfactory for equality: 20...\( \text{d5} \) 21.\( \text{xe2} \text{g2} \) 22.\( \text{d6}+- \) Black can avoid being checkmated only at the price of substantial material losses, J.Diaz – Morella, Isla 1999; 20...\( \text{xd1}+ \) 21.\( \text{xd1} \text{f3} \) 22.\( \text{d3} \text{c6} \) 23.\( \text{d6} \)
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\[ \text{\textit{b7 24.\textit{g7± and White's piece-activity should be enough to settle}} } \]

\[ \text{\textit{the issue, Marani – Kholemainen, corr. 1991. The move 20...\textit{c6,}} } \]

\[ \text{\textit{Vitomskis – Rotariu, corr. 1989, may look very solid, but as a result of 21.\textit{g4 \textit{f6 22.0-0 \textit{d8 23.\textit{e1}!± Black is doomed to a long and laborious defence, because of his king stranded in the centre.) 19.\textit{g1! (After 19.\textit{g2 \textit{g2+ 20.\textit{f1 \textit{xd1+ 21.\textit{xd1 \textit{f4 22.\textit{e1! f6 23.d1!± White's prospects are slightly better, because his bishop must be stronger than Black's wonderfully placed knight, because there will be actions on both sides of the board. Naturally, White should expect more from that position.) 19...\textit{c6 (The move 19...\textit{xd1+ – leads to a very difficult endgame. 20.\textit{xd1 \textit{c6?! 21.d6!±, in answer to 20...\textit{f3, it is bad for White to follow the "pre-computer time" recommendation of GM Sveshnikov 21.d7?}, because of 21...\textit{e7 22.f5+ \textit{d8= and White can achieve nothing, despite having a discovered check at his disposal. The evaluation of the position as very difficult for Black is correct though and after 21.\textit{d7! \textit{d8 22.\textit{xd8+ \textit{xd8 23.g7± Black remains a pawn down in the endgame, although White must show good technique, because his opponent's pieces are quite active.) 20.\textit{c2 \textit{f8 (After 20...\textit{d6 21.\textit{d1 \textit{c7 22.e4 \textit{b7 23.c6+ \textit{xc6 24.f5 f6 25.g7± Black's pieces lack coordination and his king is vulnerable, while all White's pieces are well deployed.) 21.e4 \textit{c8 (The move 21...\textit{d7 – leads to favourable simplifications for White. 22.\textit{d1 \textit{b7 23.f3 \textit{b6 24.d2 \textit{xe4 25.fxe4 \textit{g8 26.d6+ \textit{xd6 27.xg8+ \textit{g8 28.xd6± and White enjoys a stable advantage in the endgame, due to his active pieces, Dietrich – Fritsche, Internet 2003.) 22.\textit{d1 \textit{f6 23.f5 \textit{a8? (Naturally, after 23...\textit{g8 24.g3± Black's defence would be difficult too, but that would have been the least of evils for him.) 24.b3 \textit{c4 25.a3+ and in the game Knebel – Satici, Email 2003, Black resigned in view of the variation: 25...b4 26.\textit{a5! \textit{xe4+ 27.f1 \textit{e6 28.xa6+- and he must give up plenty of material in order to avoid the checkmate.) 16.\textit{e3}}}}} \]

\[16.\textit{e3} \]

\[16...\textit{e6}\]

That is evidently the best square for Black's queen in the centre, but he has tried in practice some other retreats too:

16...\textit{e5} 17.\textit{h5} b4?!
bastian 2007, Black opens voluntarily files on the queenside, but
that leads to great problems for him, because of his lag in develop-
ment. (It is more reliable for Black to follow with 17...0-0-0
18.0-0-0 b4 19.c4± ), and here after 18.0-0?! bx c3 19.bxc3 Wxc3?! 20.Wc4→ White's pieces are
tremendously active;

16...Wc6 17.Wh5 0-0-0 (It
looks strange for Black to try
17...e4 18.Wc2 f5, Stopa – Kuzi-
ola, Bartkowa 2002, because af-
after 19.Wxf5 Wxf5 20.Wxf5± he
has just nothing for the sacrificed
pawn.) 18.0-0-0 We6, K.Szabo – I.Almasi, Budapest 2005,
and White obtains an obvious
edge after active queenside ac-
tions: 19.a4 Wc6 (After 19...bxa4
20.Wc4 Wb6 21.Wxf7± Black's
pawn-structure is evidently com-
promised.) 20.axb5 axb5 21.We2
Wb6 22.Wg4+ Wh7 23.Wc2 We6
24.Wb4± and Black has no satis-
factory defence against White's

17.a4 Wd8

About 17...e4 18.We2 Wd8
19.Wc2 – see 17...d8 18.Wc2 e4
19.We2.

17...f5?! – This move is prema-
turely active and Black's position
becomes very difficult, because of
his lag in development. 18.axb5 f4
19.bxa6 Wc6 20.Wc4 Wg6 21.Wg4!
Now, the central files are opened
unavoidably. 21...f6 22.We2 h5 (It
is too bad for Black to play 22...
Wxg2 23.Wg1 Wc6 24.0-0-0+ and
his king comes under a checkmat-
ing attack, or 23...f3 24.Wb5+ Wf8
White has four pawns and more
than sufficient compensation for
the piece, in addition to Black's
unsafe king. 24...We4+ (After 24...
Wh7 25.0-0-0+– it seems im-
probable that Black would manage
to protect his king against White's
mounting threats.) 25.Wxe4 Wxe4
26.0-0± It would be too difficult
for Black to fight against White's
queenside pawns. Black can hard-
ly organize any counterplay ei-
ther. 26...We7 27.Wfe1 Wc6 28.b4
Wg7 29.g3 We5 30.bab1+- Black's
pieces are discoordinated and he
is helpless against White's passed
pawns, Bauer – Nataf, Marseille

18.Wc2

18...e4

18...b4?! – White obtains the
important c4-square after that
move. 19.Wc4 Wb6 (In case of 19...
Wc8 20.Wb3 0-0 21.Wxb4 Wg6
22.Wb6±, Black's active pieces are
insufficient to equalize, Baklan
– Malakhatko, Ordzhonikidze
2000.) 20.a5 Wc6 21.Wb3 0-0
22.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb4} \textit{g6} 23.0–0 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f4} 24.f3 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d2}, Shabalov – Gamboa, New York 2000, Black’s pieces are maximally active, but that is not enough and after 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}ad1} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}fd8} 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xd2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xd2} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e7}\rightarrow White’s attack is decisive.

18...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d5}?! – That pawn-sacrifice is rather dubious. 19.axb5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe3} (It is hardly better for Black to try 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5} 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f8} 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d3}! White wins important tempi to complete his development thanks to that pin and Black has difficulties obtaining counterplay, for example: 21...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b8} 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xd5} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xd5} 23.f3 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c5} 24.b4 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b6} 25.0–0–0 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g7} 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b2}\pm White will prepare a pawn-offensive on the queenside, but he must play accurately, because his king is there. 21...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe3} – That is an attempt by Black to attack White’s king at the price of an exchange-sacrifice. 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xd8}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g7} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xg2}+ 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b8}! 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}hg1} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b6} 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c1}\pm Black’s temporary activity has not achieved much and White’s advantage is clear – see the following eventual developments: 26...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf2} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g3}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xg3} 28.hxg3\pm and White can easily advance his pawns in the endgame, thanks to his extra exchange, 26...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}h8} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}a4}! \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f4} – it is obviously worse for Black to opt for 27...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf2} 28.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f1} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b6} 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f5} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c8} 30.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf6}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf6} 31.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf6} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5} 32.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf7}\pm and White’s rook and pawns are much stronger than Black’s dis coordinated light pieces. 28.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d7} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e2}+ 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c6} 30.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xa4} 31.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d7} 32.b4\pm and despite the material equality White can easily create threats against the enemy king. In case of a transition into an endgame, White’s passed pawns look much more dangerous than Black’s pawns.) 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g8} (It is worse for Black to play 20...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5} 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f8} 22.0–0–0 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g8} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b6}, because of 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f1}! and White practically forces a transfer into an endgame. 24...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe3} 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c1} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xc1} 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xc1} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e7} 27.b4\pm – and White is slightly better, because he can advance easily his queenside pawns. In the game Eiben – Swan, Email 2004, Black failed to counter that altogether: 27...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e4} 28.c4 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f5} 29.c5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f4} 30.c6 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d4} 31.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}b2}! – After that strong move, White’s rooks support the pawns and Black can hardly counter that in any way. 31...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}c8} 32.b5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d6} 33.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g3}! \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xg3} 34.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xg3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g8} – Black loses too after 34...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f5} 35.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d3} 36.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe4} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe4} 37.b6\pm – and White’s pawns promote – 35.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g2} and Black resigned, since after the trade of the bishops White’s pawns are unstoppable.) 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e4}! – That is the most reliable move for White. He exchanges his opponent’s active bishop and he obtains the advantage thanks to his superior pawn-structure. 21...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe4} 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xe4} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g4} (or 22...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5} 23.0–0 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g6} 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}a8}\pm) 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e4} 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}e2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5} 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xb5}+ \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f8} 26.0–0 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}d2} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}f2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf2} 28.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}xf2} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textbackslash}g5}, H.Stefansson – Holmsten,
Reykjavik 2002 and here after
29...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}2} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}5} 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}8+} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}7} 31...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}4} \textcolor{red}{f5} 32...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}4+} White remains with a solid extra pawn.

19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}2}

19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}5}
Black’s best chance is to advance quickly his central pawns; otherwise, White’s queenside activity would force him to defend. His prospects of obtaining counterplay then would be minimal, due to his inferior pawn-structure.

19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}5}?! – This move enables White to obtain powerful queenside initiative. 20.axb5 axb5 21...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}6}, D.Doroshenko - A.Glazkov, Krasnodar 2006, and here it deserves attention for White to continue his offensive with 22.c4!? \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}7} 23.b4 bxc4 24.0–0 0–0 25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}2} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}6} 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}c4+}. White has a stable advantage, because of his dangerous passed pawn on the queenside and Black’s compromised king’s position.

19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}6} 20.axb5 axb5 21.c4! – White acts very aggressively and Black has no time to advance his f-pawn. 21...bxc4 22.0–0 0–0 (It is much worse for Black to try 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}5} 23...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}d5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}d5} 24. \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}c4} 0–0 25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}3} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}6} 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}d1+} and he cannot get rid of the pin without material losses.) 23...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}c4} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}5} 24.b4 f5 25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}6} 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}1} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}8} 27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}a8} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}8} 28...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}2} \textcolor{red}{f4} 29. \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}4} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}7} 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}f7}+! \textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}8} 31...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}1+} White has a solid extra pawn indeed, but it would not be so easy for him to realize it, because of the considerably reduced material, Krueger – Knebel, Email 2004.

19...0–0!? - That pawn-sacrifice is interesting, but obviously insufficient. 20.axb5 axb5 21...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}5} \textcolor{red}{f5} 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}4} (It looks very attractive for White to try to exchange queens, but after 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}2} \textcolor{red}{f4} 23...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}4+} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6} 24...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}e6} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}6e6} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6} Black’s position seems formidable.) 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}5} 23...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}3} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}6} 24...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}4} \textcolor{red}{f4} (It is not advisable for Black to opt for 24...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}8} 25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}7} 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xb}2} 27.0–0±, since White wins the f5-pawn and Black’s king shelter is unreliable.) 25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}7} 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}4} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6} (Black should refrain from capturing the b2-pawn, because of the variation: 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}8} 27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}5} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xb}2} 28.0–0 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6} 29...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}6} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}8} 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}6+} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}7} 31...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}5+} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}6} 32...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}4+} and he loses a piece.) 27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}5} \textcolor{red}{f3} 28.g3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}8} 29.0–0± Black is a pawn down and he can hardly exploit the vulnerability of White’s king position; therefore after 29...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}8} 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}3}, Black resigned 1–0 Zundel – Inglander, Email 2001.


**20.axb5 f4 21.bxa6 \text{\&}c6**

The move 21...fxe3? – loses. 22.axb7 exf2+, Wang – McKenzie, Email 2003 and White’s most accurate move seems to be 23.\text{\&}f1! 0–0 24.\text{\&}a4 e3 (But not 24...f5 25.\text{\&}c4 \text{\&}d5 26.\text{\&}d2! e3 27.\text{\&}d3 \text{\&}e8 28.\text{\&}a8 e2+ 29.\text{\&}xe2++) 25.\text{\&}e4 \text{\&}f5 26.\text{\&}d3 \text{\&}c5 27.\text{\&}e2 \text{\&}f5 28.g4+ – and Black’s far-advanced pawns will soon be lost, because they are not supported by his pieces.

**22.\text{\&}c4 \text{\&}g6 23.0–0**

23...\text{\&}g5, Pakenas – Necula, Email 2002, 24.\text{\&}e2 fxe3 (Black would not achieve much if he declines accepting the sacrifice – 24...f3? 25.\text{\&}c2 \text{\&}f5 26.\text{\&}fd1 \text{\&}xe3 27.fxe3+) 25.fxe3 0–0 26.b4 \text{\&}d5 (Black loses after 26...\text{\&}f5? 27.\text{\&}f4+, while in case of 26...\text{\&}d5 27.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5, or 27...\text{\&}xd5 28.\text{\&}a5 – 28.c4 \text{\&}d3 29.\text{\&}a5! f5 30.b5\pm he fails to capture his opponent’s e3-pawn, because White’s passed pawns are already too far advanced.) 27.\text{\&}a5 \text{\&}g6 (The alternatives are not any better for Black: 27...\text{\&}h8 28.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5 29.\text{\&}fa1\pm; or 27...\text{\&}h6 28.\text{\&}xd5 28...\text{\&}xd5 29.\text{\&}g4+ \text{\&}g6 30.\text{\&}xg6+ hxg6 31.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5 32.b5\pm and Black seems completely helpless against White’s pawns; 28...\text{\&}xd5 29.\text{\&}g4+ \text{\&}g6 30.\text{\&}xg6+ hxg6 31.\text{\&}d1! \text{\&}xe3 32.\text{\&}xd8 \text{\&}xd8 33.a7 \text{\&}a8 34.b5 \text{\&}c4 35.\text{\&}a6 \text{\&}g7 36.\text{\&}f2 f5 37.\text{\&}c6\pm – Black will need to give up his knight and then he can hardly stop White’s connected passed pawns. The other possibility is not better for Black either: 31...\text{\&}xc3 32.\text{\&}xd8 \text{\&}xd8 33.a7 \text{\&}a8 34.\text{\&}f2 \text{\&}f8 35.\text{\&}e1 \text{\&}e7 36.\text{\&}d2\pm and White wins the knight and he reaches a rook ending with an extra pawn and excellent winning chances.) 28.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5 (White has good chances to press his advantage home after 28...\text{\&}xc3 29.a7 \text{\&}xc3 30.\text{\&}c2 \text{\&}d5 31.a8\text{\&} w\text{\&} xe3 32.\text{\&}xce4\pm) 29.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5 30.b5\pm White advances his passed pawns easier with less pieces on the board. Now, Black loses after 30...\text{\&}xc3 31.\text{\&}c4 \text{\&}g7 32.\text{\&}c1\pm, but he can hardly offer any serious resistance in the other lines either.

**23...fxe3 24.fxe3**

White has excellent compensation for the piece. 24...0–0, Kostal – Kuta, Czech Republic 2003, (Black’s position is very dangerous too in case of 24...\text{\&}d5 25.a7 0–0 26.\text{\&}f2 \text{\&}b6 27.\text{\&}b3 \text{\&}b5 28.\text{\&}fd1 \text{\&}d3 29.\text{\&}a5\pm, while the move 25...\text{\&}xe3 loses outright: 26.a8\text{\&} \text{\&}xa8 27.\text{\&}a4+ \text{\&}c6 28.\text{\&}xf7+ \text{\&}xf7 29.\text{\&}xc6\rightarrow and White remains with three extra pawns by force:**
29...\text{d}d7 30.\text{xe}4+ \text{e}7 31.\text{c}6+ \text{d}7 32.\text{c}5! \text{xf}1 33.\text{e}5+), and here it looks very interesting for White to try 25.\text{e}2! \text{f}5 (About 25...\text{g}5 26.b4 – see 23...\text{g}5 24.\text{e}2 \text{fxe}3 25.\text{fxe}3 0-0 26.b4. White’s advantage is obvious after Black’s other possibilities: 25...\text{d}7 26.b4±; 25...\text{c}8 26.\text{a}5±) 26.a5 \text{d}6 27.\text{d}5! \text{xd}5 28.\text{xd}5± and after the trade of the bishops, Black will have great problems coping with his opponent’s passed pawns.

Conclusion

We analyze the move 11...\text{e}7 in this chapter. Its drawbacks are evident – after the natural reaction 12.\text{xf}6+ \text{gxf}6, Black loses his couple of bishops and his kingside pawn-structure is considerably weakened. Things are not so simple though, Black obtains some dynamic pluses, since he gains access to the semi-open g-file and his pawn-mass in the centre is compact and mobile. In connection with that, White must organize quickly queenside pressure and he must bring his knight on a3 closer to the centre. The line 13.\text{c}2 seems to be the best for him under the circumstances. After the natural response 13...\text{b}7 14.\text{d}3, there are only two principled lines for Black – 14...\text{f}5 – variation a, and 14...\text{d}5 – variation b. Black’s other possibilities, as you can see in the variations of our analysis, do not pose any serious problems for White in his fight for the opening advantage.

In variation a, Black disrupts his opponent’s pawn-structure on the kingside and he corrects slightly his own, but he loses plenty of valuable time in doing that. White obtains a healthy lead in development, he occupies the g-file and seizes the initiative on the queenside with the undermining move a2-a4, after which Black’s monarch has no safe shelter.

In variation b, Black ignores the defects of his pawn-structure and he acts aggressively in the centre, advancing his e and f-pawns. White is practically forced to sacrifice a piece in his fight for the advantage. He obtains three dangerous passed pawns on the queenside and he neutralizes Black’s initiative on the kingside and in the centre. As we can see in our analysis, Black can hardly contain White’s passed pawns.
Chapter 7 1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.exd4 e6 5.c3 e5 6.db5 d6 7.g5 a6 8.a3 b5 9.db5 e7 10.xf6 xf6 11.c3 g5

Black plays that move about twice less frequently than 11... 0-0. Meanwhile, it often comes to a transposition of moves. Sometimes he tries to create counterplay on the queenside, saving a tempo for castling, or he attempts to remove his opponent’s centralized knight with e7, having in mind that White cannot capture the bishop on f6, because it is not there.

12.c2

This move not only prepares the fastest possible advance a2-a4, which is thematic for White in his fight for the advantage, but also it is important that he activates his most displaced piece.

In this chapter, we will analyze all Black’s moves, except the most natural and of course the most popular – 12...0-0.

He plays most often in practice a) 12...e6, b) 12...e7, c) 12...b8.

The other moves do not lead immediately to great difficulties for Black, but they are less popular, because he has problems obtaining counterplay:

12...f5?! – It looks like Black has some counter chances after that move, since he opens the f-file. The main drawback of that try however, is that Black weakens the light squares in the centre and he falls behind in development. 13.h4! e7 (The other tries are hardly any better for Black: 13...h6?! – this move loses a pawn. 14.h5+ f8 15.exf5 a7 16.d3+ Black not only remains a pawn down, but his king is stranded in the centre, Pribila – Boran, Piestany 2004; 13...f6 – After that move, White can deprive his opponent of the two-bishop advantage at any moment. 14.exf5 xf5 15.e3 e6, Barbet – Tache, Clichy 2003, this is the
right time for capturing the bishop. After 16.\( \text{fxf6}\) \( \text{xf6} \) 17.\( \text{xd6 e7} \) 18.\( \text{e2} \) White ends up with a solid extra pawn and Black is forced to compromise his pawn-structure: 16...\( \text{gxf6} \) 17.\( \text{f3 a5} \) 18.\( \text{d3 c4} \) 19.\( \text{f5} \) – After the exchange of the light-squared bishops, Black has the almost impossible task to protect his numerous pawn-weaknesses and his attempt to trade all light pieces leads to a catastrophe after: 19...\( \text{xe3} \) 20.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{c2} \) 21.\( \text{d2 e7} \) 22.\( \text{g4 xa1} \) 23.\( \text{b7 f8} \) 24.\( \text{h5} \) – White regains his sacrificed rook and he traps Black's knight.) 14.a4 \( \text{b8} \) 15.\( \text{xb5} \) axb5 16.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 17.\( \text{e3 e6} \) Schirmacher – Freyberg, Berlin 2006, now White can keep his opponent's monarch in the centre for long with aggressive actions. 18.\( \text{a6 c8} \) 19.\( \text{f3 d7} \) 20.\( \text{d3 g6} \) 21.\( \text{h5} \);

12...\( g6 \)? – This is a solid move, but it is absolutely useless for Black in his aim to organize some counterplay. Besides, it creates a target for White on the kingside if he advances his h-pawn. 13.a4

13...\( \text{b8} \) (In answer to 13...\( \text{bxa4} \), Middelburg – Rijnaarts, Leiden 1999, it looks very energetic for White to play 14.h4, for example: 14...\( \text{f6} \) 15.\( \text{ce3} \) 0–0 16.\( \text{xa4 b7} \) 17.\( \text{h5} \) and he has occupied all the key-squares in the centre and he has excellent attacking chances, or 14...\( \text{h6} \) 15.\( \text{xa4 e7} \) 16.\( \text{f6+ f8} \) 17.\( \text{c4 g7} \) 18.\( \text{f3} \) and Black's position seems quite dangerous, while after 15...0–0 16.\( \text{h5 g5} \) 17.\( \text{ce3 e7} \) 18.\( \text{c4} \) White's kingside initiative is very powerful. Even if Black manages to parry it somehow, he has no compensation for his weak queenside pawns.) 14.\( \text{xb5} \) axb5 15.\( \text{d3} \) 0–0 16.\( \text{e2 e7} \) (Black can hardly prove any compensation for the pawn after 16...\( \text{f5} \) 17.\( \text{xb5 e7} \) 18.\( \text{cb4 xd5} \) 19.exd5 and White's queenside passed pawns are very dangerous, while Black has no real threats on the kingside, crafty – Warcraft, Internet 1998. The other retreat is clearly worse: 16...\( \text{a5} \)? – Black's knight is hanging here and that enables White to start decisive actions with 17.h4 \( \text{h4} \)? 18.\( \text{xa5} \) \( \text{xa5} \) 19.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{d8} \), Mijovic – Anicic, Bar 2005. Here, White can emphasize his advantage with the simple line: 20.g3 f5 21.exf5 \( \text{xf5} \) 22.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 23.\( \text{ce3} \), or 22...\( \text{gxf5} \) 23.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{b7} \) 24.\( \text{ce3} \) and in both cases, White's centralized knights are much stronger than a rook and a pawn. It looks more reliable for Black to opt for
17...\textit{h}6 18.\textit{c}cb4, but here not 18...\textit{d}7?, because of 19.\textit{xa}5+—, but 18...\textit{e}6 19.\textit{xb}5+ and Black is without a pawn and he has no counterplay.) 17.\textit{cb}4 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{xd}5 \textit{wd}7 (That move looks strange, but Black has great difficulties after his other lines too: 18...f5 19.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 20.\textit{xb}5 \textit{e}6 21.\textit{c}4+ White has an extra pawn and an easy game on the light squares. 18...\textit{d}7 19.0-0 \textit{c}6 20. \textit{b}4 \textit{d}7 21.h3± The vulnerability of Black’s b5-pawn ties up his forces completely.) 19.h4 \textit{d}8 20. h5 \textit{b}7, Crouan – Piat, Montlucon 1997. Now, White’s most aggressive line seems to be: 21.\textit{f}3!? \textit{a}8 22.\textit{d}1!? \textit{a}2 (It is not better for Black to try 22...g5 23.0-0 \textit{e}6 24.\textit{f}6+ \textit{h}8 25.h6± and his position is very unpleasant, due to the weakness of his light squares in the centre and on the kingside.) 23.\textit{f}6+ \textit{h}8 24.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}6! (That is the only move – after 24...\textit{xb}2? 25.\textit{h}7!→ White’s attack is very powerful, for example: 25...\textit{g}7 26.hxg6+ \textit{g}8 27.g7! \textit{xg}7 28.\textit{a}5++ Black’s d6-pawn is defenseless now, therefore White checkmates – 28...\textit{f}6 29.\textit{h}6+ \textit{e}7 30.\textit{x}d6+ \textit{e}8 31.\textit{x}d8++; or 24...\textit{a}1 25.\textit{h}7!→) 25.\textit{c}2 g5! (In answer to 25...\textit{e}6?, White follows with the already familiar motive 26.\textit{x}h7! \textit{g}xh7 27.hxg6+ and Black is helpless: 27...\textit{g}7 28.h7+ \textit{g}8 29.\textit{h}5+–, 27... \textit{g}8 28.\textit{h}5 fxg6 29.\textit{h}8+ \textit{f}7 30.\textit{h}7+ \textit{f}6 31.\textit{xb}7+-) 26.0-0 \textit{a}6! 27.\textit{a}1± White exchanges his opponent’s only active piece and he maintains somewhat better prospects, due to the vulnerability of Black’s kingside;

12...\textit{d}7, Magem Badals – F. Fernandez, Monzon 1987, Black is trying to prevent the standard pawn-advance a2-a4 with that move, but still White’s most energetic line is 13.a4!

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}
12...\(\texttt{b8}\) – Black transfers his knight to a more active position. 13.a4 bxa4, McTavish – Peckford, Toronto 1992, and here it seems most aggressive for White to continue with the intermediate move 14.h4!?  

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{14...}\texttt{h8}4 \text{(It is less logical for Black to refrain from capturing that pawn, after 14...\texttt{e7} 15.\texttt{ce3} 0–0 16.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{xe6} 17.b4± he can hardly complete his development without material losses. It is hardly any better for him to try 14...\texttt{h6}, in view of 15.g4±; now Black can save his bishop in three ways: after 15...\texttt{f4} 16.\texttt{xf4} exf4 17.\texttt{d5} \texttt{e7} 18.\texttt{d4} \texttt{e7} 19.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{xe4+} 20.\texttt{d1} \texttt{f8} 21.\texttt{g2}± – his pieces are placed quite disharmoniously and all his pawns are a sorry sight. In the variation 15...\texttt{f6} 16.\texttt{ce3} 0–0 17.\texttt{xa4± the light squares in Black’s camp are very weak, while in the line 15...\texttt{g6} 16.h5 \texttt{d7} 17.hxg6 hxg6 18.\texttt{f3} White’s compensation for the pawn is more than obvious, since Black has problems completing his development.) 15.\texttt{ce3} \texttt{g5} (15...\texttt{e7} – This move looks too passive and after 16.\texttt{xa4+} \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{a3} 0–0 18.\texttt{xe7}+ \texttt{xe7} 19.\texttt{d5} \texttt{e6} 20.\texttt{c4± Black has great worries protecting his d6-pawn, because his queenside is not well-developed and the open h-file might be dangerous for his king.) 16.\texttt{xa4+} \texttt{d7} (After 16...\texttt{f8} 17.\texttt{c4± White’s lead in development is obvious.) 17.\texttt{a3} 0–0 (In the line: 17...\texttt{c6} 18.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{e7} 19.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{xe7} 20.\texttt{xe7}+ \texttt{xe7} 21.b4± Black’s main trump – his bishop pair has been liquidated. The endgame is very unpleasant for him, because White has powerful queenside pressure and he dominates in the centre. After 17...\texttt{c6} 18.\texttt{f5} 0–0 19.\texttt{xd6± the pawns are equal indeed, but White’s pieces are tremendously active.) 18.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{c6} 19.\texttt{c4± Black can hardly neutralize his opponent’s piece activity without positional concessions or material losses ; 12...\texttt{b7} – This move is mostly connected with the further transfer of the knight to c5, via the d7-square. 13.a4 bxa4 14.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{b8}. That is the most logical line for Black. (About the moves 14...0–0 – see 11...0–0; as for 14...a5 15.\texttt{c4} 0–0 16.0–0 – see 11...0–0, Chapter 11; about 14...\texttt{e7} 15.\texttt{c4} 0–0 16.0–0 – see 11...0–0, Chapter 11) 15.\texttt{c4} \texttt{d7} 16.b4!? This alternative to the more popular move 16.\texttt{e2}, deserves serious attention, since White does not let his opponent’s knight to its most advantageous placement.  \end{array}
\]
Black has tried here:

16...\wl c8?! – That is a step to the wrong side. 17.\w d3 \w c6? (This is a continuation of the maneuver, which was started on the previous move.) 18.b5 \w c8, Barglowski – Markos, Oropesa del Mar 1999, here, after the natural try 19.bxa6 \w c6 20.a1 White is left with a far-advanced passed pawn as a result of the rather strange roaming of Black’s queen;

16...\b b6 17.\b b6 \w b6 18.\a d5 0–0 19.0–0 \a d5 (After 19...\a c8 20.a3 \a d5 21.\w d5 \w b5 22.d4 White’s prospects are better, because of his pressure against Black’s vulnerable a6 and d6-pawns.) 20.\w d5 \w b5 21.a1! – Black has great problems after that precise move. 21...\a c8 (It is hardly better for Black to try here 21...\w d5 22.exd5 \a c8 23.xa6 \a xc3 24.c6!±) 22.xa6 \we 2 23.\a6a2 \a xc3 (In the variation: 23...\w c4 24.xc4 \a xc4 25.b5 \a xc3 26.b1± White’s passed b5-pawn is very dangerous and his knight has an access to the d5-square, via b4.) 24.e3 \w d3, Berndt – Babula, Germany 1999, and here after 25.d1 \w d5 26.dxd5 \a b3 27.g3± White has the classical advantage of an excellent centralized knight against a passive bishop;

16...0–0 – This is a logical completion of Black’s development and he postpones the fight for the d5-outpost for several moves. 17.0–0 a5 – Black wishes to get rid of his weak pawn, but his defence is still too difficult (About 17...\b b6 18.\b b6 \w b6 19.\d d5 – see 16...\b b6 17.\b b6 \w b6 18.\d d5 0–0 19.0–0. After the other possibilities for Black, White’s prospects remain superior too: 17...h8 – Black prepares to organize some counterplay by advancing his f-pawn, but that is too slow. 18.d3 a5 19.\fa1 axb4 20.xa8 \xa8 21.bx d4± Botsvin – Frolyanov, Cherepovets 2001; 17...g6 – Black has no time to create threats on the kingside – White’s queenside offensive is faster and he controls the centre. 18.c3 \h 8 19.d3 a5 20.a1 axb4 21.xa8 \xa8 22.bx d4± Stefnsson – Crocodile, Internet 1995.) 18.d3 \b b6?! 19.\b b6 \w b6, Dolzhikova – Kernazhitsky, Kiev 2005, now, Black has great problems with the protection of his a5-pawn and after the natural line: 20.d5! \a d5 (or 20...\fb8 21.bxa5±) 21.\w d5 \a c8 (It is not advisable for Black to try 21...\c7 22.c4± and he loses his a5-pawn.) 22.bxa5 \w b2 23.\b b4±
The development of that piece seems slightly premature.

13.a4 bxa4

The alternatives for Black are not any better:

About 13...0-0 – see 11...0-0 12.\( \text{c}2 \text{g}5 13.a4 \text{e}6; \)

13...\( \text{a}5? \) – That is a typical bluff. Black loses a pawn without any compensation. 14.axb5 \( \text{b}3 \), Haugen – Harestad, Randaberg 1990, and here after White’s precise reaction 15.\( \text{a}3 \) ! Black loses material after the attractive line:

15...\( \text{d}2+ 16.\text{e}2 \text{h}4 17.\text{c}7+ \text{e}7 18.\text{xe}6 \text{xe}4+ 19.\text{e}3-\text{e}4, \) therefore, he is forced to continue with 15...\( \text{c}5 16.f3-\text{c}6 \) – but White remains with a solid extra pawn;

13...\( \text{b}8 14.\text{cb}4 \text{xb}4 \) (In case of 14...\( \text{xd}5 15.\text{xd}5 0-0 16.axb5 axb5, \) it looks very good for White to play 17.h4, repelling Black’s bishop from its active position – after 17...\( \text{f}6 18.\text{d}3 \text{e}8 19.\text{e}2 \text{b}4 20.\text{b}5\text{±} \) Black has great problems on the light squares, Lyew – Vetter, Email 2002. It is not preferable for Black to try 17...\( \text{h}6 18.\text{a}6 \text{e}7, \) Schenning – Schenning, Veldhoven 1991, after White’s natural reaction 19.\( \text{e}2 \text{xd}5 20.\text{xd}5\text{±} \) Black loses one of his weak pawns.) 15.\( \text{xb}4 \text{xb}4? \), Korneev – Puigdemont, Badalona 1995 (Black should better play 15...\( \text{b}6 16.axb5 axb5 17.\text{a}6 \text{b}7 18.\text{d}3\text{±} \) preserving some chances for successful defence), and now after 16.\( \text{c}6 \text{b}6 17.\text{xb}8+ \) White’s material advantage is decisive.

14.\( \text{xa}4 \text{a}5 \)

After Black’s other moves, he loses his a6-pawn without any compensation:

14...\( \text{xd}5?! 15.\text{exd}5 \text{e}7 16.\text{xa}6 0-0 17.0-0 \text{f}5 18.\text{b}4 \text{f}4, \) Trabert – Opacic, Lido Estensi 2003, and here after 19.\( \text{f}3 \text{h}4 20.\text{fa}1 \text{b}6 21.\text{d}3\text{±} \) White parries easily his opponent’s kingside activity and he remains with a solid extra pawn;

14...0-0? ! 15.\( \text{xa}6 \text{e}7 16.\text{cb}4 \text{xd}5, \) Pioch – Weider, Tarnow 1979, 17.\( \text{exd}5 \text{g}6 18.0-0 \text{f}5 19.\text{c}4 \text{d}7 20.\text{c}6\text{±} \)

15.\( \text{b}5 \text{d}7 \)

About 15...\( \text{e}8 16.\text{c}4 \text{d}7 17.\text{h}4 – see 15...\( \text{d}7 16.\text{c}4 \text{c}8 17.\text{h}4. \)

16.\( \text{c}4 \text{c}8 17.\text{h}4 \text{e}7 \)

After 17...\( \text{h}6 18.\text{a}3 0-0 19.\text{a}4 \text{b}8 20.\text{xd}7 \text{xc}4 21.\text{xc}4 \text{xd}7 22.\text{c}6\text{±} \) White occupies all the key-squares in the centre and he obtains a material advantage too.

18.\( \text{ce}3 \text{g}6 19.\text{a}4 \text{b}8 \)
Chapter 7

The most energetic line for White in the diagrammed position is:
20.\(\texttt{b6}\)! \(\texttt{xc4}\) 21.\(\texttt{exc4}\) \(\texttt{xc4}\) 22.\(\texttt{xb5}\)+ \(\texttt{f8}\) 23.\(\texttt{h5}\)+– Black’s queenside has been crushed and he has not completed his development yet. His knight is under arrest; therefore, he has no counterplay at all.

b) 12...\(\texttt{e7}\)

This move is thematic. Black wishes to remove White’s knight from its excellent placement in the centre.

13.\(\texttt{h4}\)

White, in his stead, repels Black’s bishop to a less active position.

13...\(\texttt{h6}\)

The other possibilities for Black are doubtlessly worse: 13...\(\texttt{xh4}?!\) – this move loses by force. 14.\(\texttt{xe4}\) \(\texttt{xd5}\), Suarez Pousa – Soto, Los Barrios 1995, and here after 15.\(\texttt{xd5}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 16.\(\texttt{b7}\) \(\texttt{b8}\) 17.\(\texttt{c6+}\) \(\texttt{f8}\) 18.0–0–0 \(\texttt{b6}\) 19.\(\texttt{c5}\)+– White ends up with an extra knight; 13...\(\texttt{xd5}?!\) 14.\(\texttt{xd5}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 15.\(\texttt{c6}\)+ \(\texttt{d7}\) 16.\(\texttt{xd6}\)± White has a solid extra pawn.

14.\(\texttt{a4}\) \(\texttt{bxa4}\)

Black has not tried in practice yet the move 14...\(\texttt{b8}\), since after 15.\(\texttt{xe7}\) \(\texttt{xe7}\) 16.\(\texttt{axb5}\) axb5 17.\(\texttt{b4}\)± he would have great problems with the protection of his b5 and d6-pawns, without any counterplay whatsoever.

15.\(\texttt{cb4}\)!

White would not achieve much with 15.\(\texttt{xa4}?!\) \(\texttt{xd5}\) 16.\(\texttt{xd5}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 17.\(\texttt{d1}\), and here after 17...\(\texttt{a5}\) 18.\(\texttt{b5+}\) \(\texttt{e7}\) 19.0–0 \(\texttt{b6}\) 20.\(\texttt{c4}\) \(\texttt{hf8}\) 21.\(\texttt{b4}\)+ he had a very powerful initiative in the game T.Airapetian – V.Tarasova, St. Petersburg 2007, but in the line: 17...\(\texttt{b6}\)! 18.\(\texttt{b4}\) a5 19.\(\texttt{d5}\) \(\texttt{xb2}\) 20.\(\texttt{b5+}\) \(\texttt{d8}\)± Black not only ends up with an extra pawn, but his pieces are much more active.
Black has tried to solve his problems in the diagrammed position with b1) 15...d7, or with the help of b2) 15...0–0.

b1) 15...d7
This logical move forces White to take extreme measures.

16...xa4!?
That positional sacrifice is quite typical. It is absolutely correct, because Black’s bishop on h6 is out of play. In answer to the other principled line for White – 16.g4 – Black has at his disposal the interesting exchange sacrifice – 16...a5!? 17.a6 d5 18.xd5 f4 19.xa8 xa8 20.c7+ e7 21.xa8 xa8, and he not only obtains a pawn for it, but his queenside pressure is quite unpleasant for White.

16...xd5
Black can reach much calmer positions with the line: 16...a5 17.xe7 axb4 (About 17...xe7 18.d5 d8 19.a1! – see 16...xd5 17.xd5 a5 18.a1.) 18.xa8 xa8 19.d5 0–0 20.cxb4 c8! This line is the best for Black, according to GM Sergey Karja-
Chapter 7

White has a powerful knight in the centre and he has good chances to win Black's a6-pawn, so all that more than compensates his exchange sacrifice. The run-up of the game and the variations of the analysis confirm that evaluation:

19...a5

It is logical for Black to try to save his a-pawn, otherwise White's compensation for the exchange is more than obvious: 19...g6 20...xa6 f5 21.b5=, or 19...c8 20.e2 g6 21.0-0 g7 22.a1=  

20.b5 b8

It is not better for Black to defend with 20...g6 21.b6 g7 22.g3 f5 23.c7! c7 24.xa8 x8 25.c6 b8 26.a6= and he would have problems fighting against his opponent's b6-pawn in a position with material equality.

21.g3! g6 22.h3 g7 23.0-0 f8 24.a1 h8?!

Black's only chance of saving the game is to try to activate his pieces - 24...f5 25.exf5 gxf5 26.xa5±

25.xa5 e8 26.c4 f5

The alternatives are not any better for Black: 26...a8?! 27.xa8 x8 28.xa8 x8 29.b6= and he would have to give up a rook for the b6-pawn; 26...b7 27.b4 Black must stop somehow White's passed pawn; meanwhile he must protect his weakness on d6 and his bishop is incapable of coming to the queenside, which makes his defence tremendously difficult.

27.c7 f7

Black loses now after 27...c8?! 28.xd6 xc4 29.exf5 xb5 30.a7=, but even after 27...f7 28.xd6 f8 29.c6 xc6 30.bxc6± a satisfactory outcome of his defence is highly unlikely.

28.exf5! xc7 29.xc7 gxf5 30.a6 f7 31.d5+– Black's d6 and f5-pawns are very weak, while White enjoys a practically complete control over the light squares. This makes us evaluate Black's position as lost, Karjakin – Radjabov, Warsaw 2005.

b2) 15...0-0

That is the calmest line for Black. He completes his development and although he would have problems obtaining counterplay,
he relies on the solidity of his position. It is far from easy for White to win against such an approach.

16.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}a4}} a5

About 16...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}d5}} 17.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}d5}} a5 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}b5}} – see 17.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}b5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}} 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}} – see 16... a5 17. \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}b5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}} 18. \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}}.

The move 16...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}7}} – leads to a quiet game with a slight edge for White. 17.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}a5 \textbackslash{\texttt{c}7}}, Tairova – Kovalevskaja, Bad Homburg 2007 (After 17...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}d5}} 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}h8}} 19.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d8}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}xd8}} 20.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}c4}} White's prospects are superior thanks to his domination over the \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}5}}-outpost and the possible pressure against Black's a- and d-pawns.), and now White obtains a slight, but stable advantage after 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}c4}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}c8}} 19.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}e7}}+ \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}e7}} 20.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}d5}}. The main drawback of Black's position is his bishop on \texttt{h6}, which can hardly enter the actions anytime soon.

17.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}}

The move 17...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}7}}! – enables White to force advantageous simplifications. 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}c6}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}c6}} 19. \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}e7}}+ \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}e7}} 20.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}c6}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}b8}} 21. \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}a2}} – Black's dark-squared bishop is very passive and it will not be activated in the nearest future, while his \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}6}} and \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}5}}-pawns are weak. Instead, White's light-squared bishop is very powerful. 21...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}c8}} 22.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}5}} 23.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{g}3}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}h8}} 24.0–0 f5?! That attempt by Black to organize some counterplay leads to his swift demise, but he is reluctant to stay completely passive. 25.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}4}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}c3}} 26.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}a5}} f4 27. \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}6}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}a7}}, Pushkarev – Gladyszew, Sochi 2006, and here White exploits the vulnerability of Black's last rank, winning by force with the line: 28.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}b2}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}f8}} 29.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}7}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}c5}} 30.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}7}}+

18.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}d5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}6}}

18...f5?! – This move only compromises the light squares in the centre and on the kingside, while Black's counterplay is non-existent after it. 19.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}f5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{xf5}}}, Aliavdin – Holmsgaard, Pardubice 2007, and here White can develop his initiative in the most energetic fashion with the aggressive line: 20.g4! \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}6}} 21.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}4}} g6 (It is not preferable for Black to opt for 21...g5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}3}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}6}} 23.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{xe}6}}+ \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{xe}6}} 24.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}5}}±, since his bishop is bound to remain passive on \texttt{h6}.) 22.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{g}5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{g}7}} 23.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}6}}+ \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}f6}} 24.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{g}xf6}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}f6}} 25.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}6}}± White's king is not so safe indeed, but Black's compensation for the pawn is insufficient anyway, because there is only too little material left on the board.

18...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}h8}}?! – This move is connected with the idea to obtain counterplay on the f-file, but it would weaken the light squares in the centre. 19.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}4}} f5 20.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}6}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{a}7}} 21.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}f5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{xf5}}} 22.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}a5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{d}3}} 23.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{b}5}} \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}b5}} (It is not better for Black to try 23...\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{f}5}} 24.0–0 \texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{e}6}} 25.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{c}6}}±) 24.\texttt{\textbackslash{\texttt{x}b5}}± White has an extra outside passed pawn and a magnificently deployed knight in the centre, so his position is quite close to
Chapter 7


19.\textit{\texttt{c6}} $\textit{\texttt{b8}}$

White has a forcing line in the diagrammed position: \textbf{20.\textit{\texttt{b4}}} (He can also continue in a calmer fashion: 20.\textit{\texttt{b3}} $\textit{\texttt{h8}}$, An.Volokitin – Ar.Timofeev, Spain 2006, because after 21.\textit{\texttt{a2}} White has no active prospects and that is confirmed by the following exemplary variation: 21...f5 22.exf5 $\textit{\texttt{xf5}}$ 23.0–0 $\textit{\texttt{xf4}}$ 24.$\textit{\texttt{xf4}}$ $\textit{\texttt{xb3}}$ 25.$\textit{\texttt{xa5}}$ $\textit{\texttt{xa2}}$ 26.$\textit{\texttt{xa2}}$ $\textit{\texttt{xf4}}$ 27.g3± The light-squared complex is very weak in Black’s camp. His bishop is out of action and his \texttt{d6}-pawn is vulnerable.) \textbf{20...axb4} 21.\textit{\texttt{cxb4}} $\textit{\texttt{xd5}}$

(Black must capture the b4-pawn; therefore it is worse for him to follow with 21...\textit{\texttt{h8}} 22.\textit{\texttt{b5}} $\textit{\texttt{xd5}}$ 23.$\textit{\texttt{xd5}}$ $\textit{\texttt{d7}}$ 24.$\textit{\texttt{c6}}$ $\textit{\texttt{g4}}$ 25.0–0 $\textit{\texttt{xb4}}$ 26.$\textit{\texttt{b3}}$± – and despite the extra pawn, Black’s position is almost beyond salvation. His rooks are very passive and his bishop can hardly come back to the g1-a7 diagonal. 26...f5 27.g3 $\textit{\texttt{d8}}$ 28.\textit{\texttt{exf5}} $\textit{\texttt{d2}}$ 29.$\textit{\texttt{a3!}}$ $\textit{\texttt{g5}}$ 30.$\textit{\texttt{d3}}$ $\textit{\texttt{c7}}$ 31.$\textit{\texttt{a6+}}$– White’s pieces are tremendously active in a position with material equality, Ganguly – Khader, Abu Dhabi 2007)

\textbf{22.$\textit{\texttt{xd5}}$ $\textit{\texttt{b6}}$ 23.0–0 $\textit{\texttt{xb4}}$, Dominguez Perez – Jakovenko, Foros 2007, and here after 24.$\textit{\texttt{d7}}$ $\textit{\texttt{h8}}$ 25.$\textit{\texttt{a6}}$ White has a powerful initiative. Black’s bishop is out of action and he either loses his \texttt{f}-pawn, or he must push it forward, which compromises irrevocably the light squares on his kingside.

\textbf{c) 12...\textit{\texttt{b8}}!?}

Black understands perfectly that White’s plan is connected with the pawn-advance a2-a4, so he tries to organize some counterplay along the b-file.

\textbf{13.a4}

Black is well-prepared for this operation indeed, but it is necessary for White in his fight for the advantage.

\textbf{13...bxa4}

The other possibilities for Black lead to a transposition of moves: about 13...\textit{\texttt{e6}} 14.\textit{\texttt{cb4}} – see 12...\textit{\texttt{e6}} 13.a4 \textit{\texttt{b8}} 14.\textit{\texttt{cb4}}, variation \texttt{a}; as for 13...0–0 – see 11...0–0.
14.\( \triangleleft \text{cb}4 \)

[Diagram]

14...\( \triangleleft \text{d}7 \)

It is essential for Black to preserve his a4-pawn in order to create some counterplay. Therefore, it is worse for him to play 14...\( \triangleleft \text{xb}4 \) 15.cxb4! – this move is much stronger than capturing with the knight, since now the rook on b8 does not attack the vulnerable b2-pawn, but instead it is restricted by the well-protected b4-pawn. 15...0-0 (about 15...\( \triangleleft \text{d}7 \) 16.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) – see 14...\( \triangleleft \text{d}7 \) 15.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xb}4 \) 16.cxb4!) 16.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}4 \)

and here:

16...\( \text{W}d7 \)?? – This is a strange move. Black loses a pawn as well as his main trump – the two-bishop advantage. 17.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) 18.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) \( \text{fc}8 \) 19.0-0± White has an extra pawn and his omnipotent knight on d5 makes his position almost winning, Damjanovic – Svicevic, Kladovo 1994;

16...\( \triangleleft \text{e}6 \)?? – This move looks more natural, but after 17.\( \triangleleft \text{c}4 \) \( \text{W}d7 \) 18.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \triangleleft \text{h}8 \) 19.0-0\( \pm \) Black loses unavoidably his a6-pawn and his active prospects are nowhere to be seen. 19...f5 (Black’s only possible counterplay can be connected with opening of the f-file.) 20.\( \text{exf}5 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 21.\( \text{xa}6 \) e4 22.\( \triangleleft \text{e}3 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xe}3 \) 23.\( \text{fxe}3 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xc}4 \)? (It is much better for Black to play here 23...\( \text{xf}1+ \) 24.\( \text{xf}1 \) d5 25.\( \text{ff}4 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 26.\( \text{f}1\)±, and although he has no compensation for the pawn in that variation either, he maintains some chances of successful defence.) 24.\( \text{bxc}4 \) \( \text{xf}1+ \) 25.\( \text{xf}1+- \) Jakovenko – Wang Yue, Ergun 2006;

After 16...\( \triangleleft \text{b}7 \) 17.\( \triangleleft \text{xa}6 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xd}5 \) (It is evidently worse for Black to try 17...\( \triangleleft \text{c}6 \) 18.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \triangleleft \text{xb}5 \) 19.\( \triangleleft \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{xb}5 \) 20.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 21.0-0\( \pm \) and the dominance of the centralized knight over the bishop makes White’s advantage obvious, Edelstein – Rinaldi, corr. 1992.) 18.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 19.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 20.0-0 \( \text{b}6 \) 21.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{h}8 \) 22.f3± White has an extra passed pawn, despite its being doubled, and he has neutralized Black’s possible kingside counterplay with his last move. Black failed to cope with the problems of his defence 22...\( \triangleleft \text{d}4 \) 23.\( \triangleleft \text{d}3 \) \( \text{w}6 \) 24.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{fxe}6 \) 25.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{fe}8 \) 26.\( \text{a}6\)± and despite the opposite-coloured bishops, Black was doomed to a long and very difficult defence, Palac – Gagarin, Zadar 2005;

16...f5 – This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice with the idea to obtain counterplay on the kingside. 17.\( \text{exf}5 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 18.\( \text{xa}6 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 19.\( \text{a}3 \) \( \text{h}8 \) 20.0-0\( \pm \) The vulnerability of the light squares in the centre
makes Black's compensation for the pawn insufficient and after 20...\texttt{h6}?!, Getz – B. Christensen, Copenhagen 2007, it deserves attention for White to continue with the prophylactic move 21.\texttt{c3}, preventing the sortie of the Black's queen to the kingside – 21...\texttt{h4} 22.\texttt{c4}±;

16...a5 17.b5 \texttt{b7}(After 17...\texttt{d7} 18.\texttt{b3} \texttt{c8} 19.\texttt{c3} \texttt{d8} 20.\texttt{c4} \texttt{b6} 21.0–0± Black has something to brag about indeed: his dark-squared bishop is on the perfect diagonal, but White has already a passed pawn on the queenside and he can start a kingside offensive pushing f2-f4 after some preparation, Duijn – Lemmers, Leeuwarden 1995. 17...f5? – This move looks more aggressive, but it weakens considerably the light squares in the centre and on the kingside. 18.h4 \texttt{f6} 19.\texttt{c4} \texttt{h8} 20.\texttt{e2} \texttt{d7} 21.exf5 \texttt{c8} 22.0–0 \texttt{xh4} 23.\texttt{d3}± White dominates in the centre and his dangerous passed b5-pawn provides him with superior prospects, RYBKA – THE BARON, Leiden 2006.) 18.\texttt{c4} \texttt{h8} 19.0–0 f5 20.exf5 \texttt{xf5}, P. Cramling – Tisdall, Glad-saxe 1983, and here after 21.\texttt{e2} \texttt{c8} 22.\texttt{d3} \texttt{f8} 23.\texttt{e4} \texttt{c5} 24.\texttt{d1}± Black is helpless against White's dominance over the light squares in the centre and therefore his position is without any good prospects.

15.\texttt{xa6} \texttt{xb4}

15...\texttt{a5}?! – This move leads to material losses. 16.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{xa4} 17.\texttt{xa4}+ \texttt{f8} 18.0–0 \texttt{a8}, Sanz Barrionuevo – Sanchez Cuchillo, Burriana 1990, White wins easily here with the line: 19.\texttt{a1} \texttt{b7} (It is not better for Black to defend with 19...\texttt{c4} 20.\texttt{b5} \texttt{d2} 21.\texttt{c6} \texttt{d7} 22.\texttt{b6}± and after White captures his opponent's rook on a8, he will remain with an extra piece.) 20.\texttt{xb7}! \texttt{xa4} 21.\texttt{xa4}+– Black has no satisfactory defence against 22.\texttt{a8}, therefore White will end up with two light pieces and a pawn against a rook.

15...0–0?! – This move loses a pawn. 16.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{xb4} (The pawn-advance 16...f5?! – compromises the light squares in the centre. 17.exf5 e4 18.h4! \texttt{h6} 19.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 20.\texttt{c4} \texttt{a8} 21.\texttt{c8} \texttt{a5} 22.\texttt{xb8} \texttt{xb8} 23.\texttt{c4} \texttt{xb2} 24.0–0± White not only has an extra pawn, but he has excellent attacking prospects thanks to his centralized pieces and Black's vulnerable kingside, M. Sorokin – Gutman, USSR 1978.) 17.\texttt{xb4} \texttt{a5} 18.\texttt{c4} \texttt{c5} 19.\texttt{xb8} \texttt{xb8} 20.b3± White has won a pawn, but he lags a bit in development, so in answer to 20...\texttt{b5}, it is very good for him to opt for 21.0–0! \texttt{xc4} 22.bxc4 \texttt{xc4} 23.\texttt{g4} h6 24.\texttt{d8} 25.g3 \texttt{b6} 26.\texttt{g2}± White has powerful positional pressure, thanks to his centralized knight and Black should play very carefully. The imprecise move 26...\texttt{c5}?, enabled White to activate his rook with 27.\texttt{b1} \texttt{f8} 28.\texttt{b7}±.

Following 15...\(\text{\textit{De}}\text{7}, \text{Droessler} – \text{Hauschild, Germany 2004}, it is sensible for White to attack his opponent’s weak pawn with 16.\(\text{\textit{De}}\text{3}!\? \text{\textit{Dx}}\text{e} 3 \text{17.} \text{f} \text{xe} 3 \text{\textit{W}}\text{b} 6 \text{18.\textit{W}}\text{d} 3 \text{f} 5 \text{19.} \text{0} – \text{0} – \text{0} – \text{0} (\text{It is hardly better for Black to try here 19...f4 20.\textit{Wh}}\text{1} \text{0} – \text{0} \text{21.} \text{exf} 4 \text{exf} 4 \text{22.\textit{Dc}}\text{4+ \textit{Wh}}\text{8 23.} \text{e} 5\text{±) 20.} \text{exf} 5 \text{\textit{Dxf}}\text{5 21.\textit{Wd}}\text{2±} \text{ – and White has somewhat better chances, due to the vulnerability of Black’s d6 and a4-pawns.}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

16.cxb4!

This is an important moment. Now, the placement of Black’s rook on b8 is pointless, because his attack against the b4-pawn is not as effective as that against the b2-pawn. Meanwhile, the b4-pawn is passed and it is ready to advance at an opportune moment.

16...0–0 17.0–0 \(\text{\textit{Cc}}\text{6}

17...g6, Bilen – Chasovnikova, Moscow 2006, This is a useful move, because if White decides to sacrifice the exchange analogously to the main line, his initiative would not be so effective. He can continue without sacrifices, though: 18.b3!? a\textit{xb}3 (or 18...\(\text{\textit{Cc}}\text{6} 19.\text{\textit{Dxa}}\text{4} \text{\textit{Dxa}}\text{4} 20.\text{\textit{Bxa}}\text{4} \text{\textit{Wd}}\text{7} 21.\text{\textit{Dd}}\text{3}±) 19.\text{\textit{Wxb}}\text{3} \text{\textit{Cc}}\text{6} 20.\text{\textit{Cc}}\text{4±} \text{ – White has somewhat better chances, because of his active pieces and the dominance over the central d5-outpost.}

17...\(\text{\textit{We}}\text{8} – This move prevents the exchange sacrifice indeed, but it dooms Black to a long defence without any bright prospects. 18.b3 a\textit{xb}3 (After 18...\(\text{\textit{Cc}}\text{6}?! – White’s exchange sacrifice is very effective. 19.\text{\textit{Dxa}}\text{4} \text{\textit{Dxa}}\text{4} 20.\text{\textit{Bxa}}\text{4±}) 19.\text{\textit{Wxb}}\text{3} \text{\textit{Cc}}\text{6}, \text{Corrales} – \text{Gongora, Santa Clara 2007, and now after 20.\textit{Fd}}\text{1± White controls the centre and his queenside passed pawn is ready to advance at any moment. Black’s only possible counterplay is connected with f7-f5, but that compromises the light squares on the kingside.}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board1.png}
\end{center}

18.\textit{Dxa}4!

This is no doubt the best line for White. He obtains an excellent compensation for the exchange thanks to his powerful knight in the centre and his queenside passed pawn.
18...\$xa4

Black is forced to accept the sacrifice, because after 18...\$d7 19.b5 \$xb5 20.\$xb5 \$xb5 21.\$b4+ the superiority of the knight over the bishop is obvious and Black's attempt to change the course of actions with a queen-sacrifice led to a lost position for him after 21...\$xb4 22.\$xb4 \$xb4 23.\$xd6 \$b5 24.g3+- Perunovic - Milanovic, Belgrade 2006.

19.\$xa4

\[ 
\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\textbf{Position 19} \textbf{\$xa4} \textbf{\$e8}.
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
\]

19...\$e8

Black's defence is not any easier if he enters an endgame. His position is difficult too after the alternatives:

19...\$h6?! - This move is connected with the idea to transfer the queen to the kingside, but Black does not obtain any counterplay with it. Instead, White's passed pawn advances to the penultimate rank. 20.b5 \$h4 21.b6 \$fd8 22.b7± Mr335 - crafty, Internet 1999;

19...\$h8?! - That is a loss of time. 20.\$c6 \$d2 21.b5 \$a5 22.b7 \$h4 (In case of 22...\$e8 - the exchange of queens is in favour of White. 23.\$a1 \$d8 24.\$xe8 \$xe8 25.\$c6 \$f8 26.\$a6+ Black's extra exchange is absolutely immaterial and his pieces are so cramped that he has no active prospects. 26...g6 27.b6 f5 28.exf5 e4 29.b7+- Ahn - Bewersdorff, Germany 2001.) 23.b4 \$d8 24.\$xd6 \$g5, Zapata - C.Lopez, Cali 2001, Black's position is nearly hopeless after White's active move 25.\$b6!, for example: 25...\$bd8 (Black would not fare any better after his other possibilities 25...\$fd8 26.\$c7 \$g4 27.\$c4 \$d7 28.\$xd7 \$xd7 29.\$c6 \$d4 30.\$xe5±; or 25...\$fe8 26.g3 \$g4 27.\$d5± and in both cases his pieces remain totally passive.) 26.\$d7 \$fe8 (Or 26...f5 27.\$c5 \$f7 - after 27...\$e7? 28.\$c7+- Black loses plenty of material. - 28.\$c6 fxe4 29.g3 \$h5 30.\$xe5± White obtains unavoidably a third pawn for the exchange.) 27.\$c6 \$c7 28.\$xe5 \$xb4 29.\$d4± Black's defence will be very difficult, because his rooks are stuck to the last rank and White has two pawns for the exchange, one of them being a dangerous passed pawn;

19...f5 - This move weakens the light squares on the kingside. 20.exf5 \$xf5 21.\$d3 \$f8 (Following 21...\$f7 22.b5+- Black has problems fighting against his opponent's active pieces. 22...\$f8 23.h4 \$f4 24.h5± White dominates in the centre and he can create threats on both sides.
of the board, Toth – Pechy, Trieste 2004.) 22.b5 \( \text{\#} \)d7 23.\( \text{\#} \)e4 g6, L’Ami – Moser, Augsburg 2002, White controls the centre and he can prepare the development of his initiative at leisure, after 24.a1 \( \text{\#} \)f5 25.\( \text{\#} \)e2 \( \text{\#} \)f7 26.\( \text{\#} \)e4± Black must consider the possible advance of his opponent’s passed pawn as well as his eventual kingside offensive with g2-g3, followed by the advance of his h-pawn;

19...g6 – It was considered for a long time that Black could equalize after that move. 20.\( \text{\#} \)c6 \( \text{\#} \)d2 21.b5 \( \text{\#} \)a5 22.\( \text{\#} \)b7 f6! – This is the only move, because Black brings his rook on f8 to the defence of his queenside. 23.\( \text{\#} \)c1! (In the game Barua – B. Lalic, Ubeda 1998, White continued with 23.b4?! \( \text{\#} \)b6! 24.\( \text{\#} \)xb6 \( \text{\#} \)f7 25.\( \text{\#} \)d1 \( \text{\#} \)xb7 26.\( \text{\#} \)xd6 \( \text{\#} \)xd6 27.\( \text{\#} \)xd6 \( \text{\#} \)b6= and the position was already looking rather drawish.) 23...\( \text{\#} \)f7 (It is worse for Black to play 23...\( \text{\#} \)d2?! 24.\( \text{\#} \)c2 \( \text{\#} \)a5 25.g3 \( \text{\#} \)b4 26.\( \text{\#} \)a6! \( \text{\#} \)h8 27.\( \text{\#} \)c4 \( \text{\#} \)d2 28.b4 \( \text{\#} \)d8 29.b6+-, since his pieces are helpless against White’s queenside onslaught.) 24.\( \text{\#} \)c8 \( \text{\#} \)a7 25.h4± Black has prevented the advance of White’s b-pawn indeed, but he has no active prospects. Meanwhile, White has excellent attacking chances on the kingside.

20.\( \text{\#} \)xe8 \( \text{\#} \)xe8 21.b5 f5

The diagrammed position was reached in the game Anand – Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 2006. In his comments, Anand recommended how White should develop his initiative in the most energetic fashion: 22.h4! – White must obtain the control over the c-file. 22...\( \text{\#} \)xh4 23.\( \text{\#} \)c1 fxe4 24.b6 \( \text{\#} \)f8 25.g3 \( \text{\#} \)g5 26.\( \text{\#} \)c6 \( \text{\#} \)d2 27.b7 \( \text{\#} \)e1 28.\( \text{\#} \)c2!? \( \text{\#} \)f7 (It is not better for Black to opt for 28...e3 29.fxe3 \( \text{\#} \)f7 30.\( \text{\#} \)c8 \( \text{\#} \)e6 31.e4 \( \text{\#} \)f2+ 32.\( \text{\#} \)h1 \( \text{\#} \)a7 33.\( \text{\#} \)b4 \( \text{\#} \)d7 34.\( \text{\#} \)b5+ \( \text{\#} \)e6 35.\( \text{\#} \)c7±, since he cannot maintain the material balance anymore and in addition he cannot capture White’s dangerous b7-pawn.) 29.\( \text{\#} \)f1 \( \text{\#} \)a5 30.\( \text{\#} \)b4 \( \text{\#} \)e6 (Black loses too after 30...\( \text{\#} \)d8 31.\( \text{\#} \)c8 \( \text{\#} \)g5 32.\( \text{\#} \)b6+-) 31.bxa5 \( \text{\#} \)xd5 32.\( \text{\#} \)b5!+- Black is completely helpless against White’s two connected far-advanced passed pawns.
Conclusion

In this chapter, we analyze one of the modern lines of the Chelyabinsk variation 11...g5 – Black ensures the two-bishop advantage, with the idea that it would compensate the defects of his pawn-structure.

In answer to the strongest move for White 12.c2, (White centralizes his knight and prepares the crucial pawn-advance a2-a4, which is aimed at exploiting the weakness of the light squares on the queenside.) Black has tried in practice different moves and in this chapter we analyze thoroughly: a) 12.e6?! b) 12.e7, c) 12.b8.

It is worth mentioning that Black does not lose after some other rarely played lines, but they all lead to positions without any good prospects for him, while White’s game is very easy on the weak squares on both sides of the board.

The development of Black’s bishop to the e6-square in variation a, is no doubt premature, because at first, that square is not always the best for that bishop – it must be deployed sometimes to b7, or d7 and secondly, Black thus weakens his a6-pawn and White develops his initiative effortlessly with quite natural moves.

The logical move 12.e7 (Black fights immediately against White’s powerful centralized knight.) is analyzed in variation b. The basic drawback of that move however is that White can play 13.h4! repelling Black’s bishop to the edge of the board and it cannot join in the actions easily from there. After the practically forced line 13.h6 14.a4 bxa4 15.cb4! Black has to make up his mind between several possibilities:

In variation b1, he forces his opponent to sacrifice the exchange on a4. White obtains numerous advantages as compensation – he has complete control over the light squares in the centre and on the queenside. His knight on d5 is all-powerful and he can create a passed pawn on the queenside after he captures Black’s weak a6-pawn. Then, it would be practically material equality on the board. Accordingly, Black’s extra exchange cannot compensate completely all the defects of his position.

In variation b2, Black obtains a more solid, but rather passive position, practically without counterplay, but in a position with material equality. He tries to complete his development and he tries to make a draw by simplifications. The disadvantageous placement of
his bishop on h6 is especially emphasized in that variation. In the critical position, arising after Black’s move 19, White has the pleasant choice between the move, which forces the issue immediately – 20.b2-b4 and the calmer line – 20.b2-b3. The first line leads to considerable simplifications – there are only kingside pawns left on the board, but the presence of heavy piece emphasizes the different power of the opposite-coloured bishops and that dooms Black to a fight for a draw without any active prospects. In the second case, White is not in a hurry to create a passed pawn on the queenside and because of that, there remain many more pawns on the board. In that case, Black must consider the possible advance of his opponent’s b-pawn at any moment and he must take care about the protection of his weak a5-pawn too.

In variation c) 12...@b8, Black tries to save a tempo by postponing his castling, with the idea to create some counterplay on the b-file. He plans to counter White’s thematic break a2-a4, by exchanging b5xa4 and exerting pressure against the b2-pawn. Despite that, White, in his fight for the opening advantage, is forced to sacrifice temporarily a pawn with 13.a4, followed by 13...bxa4 14.©cb4! – he covers the b-file in that fashion and he gobbles unavoidably Black’s a6-pawn. The key moment in that variation is the possibility for White to capture c3xb4! in answer to c3xb4!. After that, Black’s rook is restricted in its movements by his opponent’s b4-pawn and it is much easier for White to protect that pawn than the b2-pawn. Later, after White captures Black’s a6-pawn, he creates a passed pawn along the b-file. It is essential for White to control the d5-outpost, since he needs to have a piece there. Just like in variation b1, it is a classical resource, in his fight for the advantage, to exchange at an opportune moment his rook for Black’s light-squared bishop.
You can see on the diagram one of the critical positions of the Chelyabinsk variation. White centralizes his knight; he increases the pressure in the centre, planning to advance the undermining move a2-a4. He will thus create weaknesses on Black's queenside, freeing the c4-square for his pieces (it would be used most probably by White's light-squared bishop).

How can Black counter that plan?

In this chapter, we will analyze some rarely played lines like a) 12...e6, b) 12...b7 and c) 12...b8, while the next chapter will be devoted to the popular move 12...b8.

We have to mention that there will arise numerous transpositions of moves, leading to the variation 12...g5, which is in fact the main line. We will study it at the end.

At first, we will pay some attention to several quite unusual possibilities for Black:

About 12...a7 13.a4 bxa4 14.ea4 a5 – see 12...a5;

About 12...h8 13.a4 bxa4 14.ea4 a5 – see 12...a5;

It is too passive for Black to play 12...e7?! 13.a4 bxa4 (If 13...b8 14.axb5 axb5, as it was played in the game Rossato - Belotti, Pellestrina 1979, then 15.d3, and it would be too risky for Black to opt for 15...f5 16.exf5 xf5 17.xf5 xf5 in view of 18.a6±) 14.ea4 b7 (or 14...a5 15.b5! a7 16.0-0± Gara - Moshina, Balatonlelle 2000) 15.c4± Neiksans - Gvatua, Rimavska Sobota 1996 – and White has accomplished his plan and he is clearly better;

It is not so good for Black to continue with 12...d7, A.Panov
While after 12...\(\text{b}8\), White should better provoke the appearance of weaknesses with the help of the line: 13.\(\text{c}x\text{f}6+\ \text{gxf6} 14.\text{d}3\) (We will mention here that we will analyze later a line, which looks rather similar: 12...\(\text{b}8\) 13.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 14.\(\text{c}x\text{f}6+\ \text{gxf6} 15.\text{d}3\) – our readers will be easily convinced that the absence of the pawn on h4 can be advantageous for White as well.). After the rather indifferent move 14...\(\text{e}6\) 15.\(\text{e}3\) White’s advantage is doubtless and Black’s active attempts prove to be insufficient for equality: 14...d5 15.\(\text{e}d5\) (It is not correct for Black to try 15...\(\text{c}x\text{d}5?!\) 16.\(\text{w}h5\) f5 17.\(\text{c}x\text{f}5\ \text{e}5\) 18.\(\text{w}x\text{f}5\ \text{d}f4\) 19.0–0\(±\)) 16.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{e}6\), Jurasek – Svab, Plzen 1996, 17.\(\text{w}h5!\) f5 (White is evidently better after 17...e4 18.\(\text{c}2\) f5 19.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{g}6\) 20.\(\text{w}h4\) \(\text{e}8\) 21.0–0\(±\)) 18.g4! That is a very strong move now, since Black has problems irrelevant of his choice on the next move. 18...\(\text{w}g6\) 19.\(\text{h}4\)\(±\), or 14...f5 15.\(\text{e}\text{f}5\) \(\text{c}x\text{f}5\), Janz – Lampe, Hamburg 1997 (but not 15...\(\text{c}x\text{f}5?!\) 16.\(\text{w}f3+–\)) 16.\(\text{c}x\text{f}5\) \(\text{c}x\text{f}5\) 17.\(\text{w}g4+\ \text{g}7\) 18.0–0\(\text{f}6\) (in case of 18...f5, it is good for White to play 19.\(\text{w}b4\)\(±\)) 19.\(\text{h}f1\) a5 (19...\(\text{f}d8\) 20.\(\text{b}4\)\(±\)) 20.\(\text{e}3\) b4 21.\(\text{c}4\)\(±\) and White has some positional edge;

Finally, in case of 12...g6 13.a4 \(\text{b}xa4\) (or 13...\(\text{b}8\) 14.\(\text{a}x\text{b}5\ \text{a}x\text{b}5\) 15.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 16.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{g}5\) 17.0–0 \(\text{h}3\) 18.f3\(±\) Chase – Mason, Las Vegas 1996) 14.\(\text{a}x\text{a}4\) \(\text{g}7\) (or 14...\(\text{b}8?!\) 15.\(\text{a}x\text{a}6\)\(±\); about 14...a5 15.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{g}5\) – see 12...\(\text{g}5\); as for 14...\(\text{g}5\) – see 12...\(\text{g}5\) 15.\(\text{c}4\) a5 (In the game Sluka – Vaculik, Litomysl 1996, Black chose 15...\(\text{b}7\), and White’s simplest reaction would have been 16.0–0 \(\text{e}7\) 17.\(\text{c}3\)\(±\) 16.0–0 \(\text{b}8\) 17.\(\text{b}3\)\(±\) Soleveld – Rijnaarts, Hengelo 1999. There arises a standard situation, quite favourable for White, because Black’s bishop on g7 is bound to remain very passive.

\subsection*{a) 12...\(\text{e}6\)}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chessdiag.png}
\caption{Diagram for 12...\(\text{e}6\)}
\end{figure}

Black determines the placement of his bishop a bit prematurely and he does not prevent the move a2–a4. Considering the immediate exchange on d5, it has certain drawbacks too and we will prove that.

13.a4 \(\text{b}xa4\)

About 13...\(\text{b}8\) 14.\(\text{a}x\text{b}5\ \text{a}x\text{b}5\) 15.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}5\) – see 12...\(\text{g}5\).

In the line: 13...\(\text{a}5\) 14.\(\text{a}x\text{b}5\ \text{g}5\), Black relies mainly on 15.\(\text{b}xa6?\ \text{b}3\), but after 15.\(\text{c}b4\ \text{a}x\text{b}5\) 16.\(\text{c}x\text{b}5\ \text{b}8\) 17.\(\text{d}3\)\(±\) Roth
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Konik, Chemnitz 1998, White simply remains with an extra pawn.

We must deal thoroughly with the principled move 13...\textit{\textit{\textit{x}}d5}. White should play 14.exd5!, and later there might follow:

14...\textit{\textit{\textit{a}}7 (planning to capture on b5 with the knight) 15.\textit{\textit{\textit{e}}2 \textit{\textit{b}}6 16.axb5 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}}b5 17.0-0 \textit{\textit{c7 18.\textit{\textit{a}}2 a5 (The endgame is very difficult for Black after 18...\textit{\textit{b}}3?! 19.\textit{\textit{b}}4 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}}d1 20.\textit{\textit{x}}d1±) 19.\textit{\textit{e}}3 \textit{\textit{c5, Lafond – Simon, Bischwiller 1999 (In case of 19...\textit{\textit{g}}5 20.\textit{\textit{c4 \textit{\textit{c5, White has the tactical resource 21.\textit{\textit{x}}a5! \textit{\textit{x}}a5 22.b4 \textit{\textit{x}}d5 23.bxa5 \textit{\textit{d}}8 24.\textit{\textit{a}}4±) 20.\textit{\textit{a}}4! \textit{\textit{f}}b8 (or 20...\textit{\textit{g}}5?! 21.\textit{\textit{c}}4 \textit{\textit{a}}7 22.\textit{\textit{f}}5±) 21.\textit{\textit{c}}4 \textit{\textit{a}}7 22.\textit{\textit{c}}2± – White has a very promising game on the light squares; After 14...\textit{\textit{e}}7 15.axb5, Black has tried in practice 15...axb5 16.\textit{\textit{x}}a8 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}}a8 17.\textit{\textit{b}}4 (That is an ideal square for the knight.) 17...\textit{\textit{b}}7 (The line: 17...\textit{\textit{a}}4 18.\textit{\textit{d}}3 \textit{\textit{x}}d1+ 19.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}}d1 \textit{\textit{a}}8 20.\textit{\textit{c}}2 \textit{\textit{a}}5 21.\textit{\textit{c}}6 \textit{\textit{c}}6 22.\textit{\textit{d}}6 \textit{\textit{d}}8 23.\textit{b}4+-, led to a lost endgame for Black in the game Gligoric – Riego, Asuncion 1960.) 18.\textit{\textit{e}}2 \textit{\textit{g}}6 19.0-0 \textit{\textit{g}}5 20.\textit{\textit{d}}3 \textit{\textit{b}}8 21.\textit{\textit{a}1± Chiburdanidze – Grigic, Vinkovci 1982 and White has a clear advantage, as well as 15...\textit{\textit{b}}6, Ytteborg – Polenske, Hamburg 1999, 16.\textit{\textit{d}}3 axb5 17.\textit{\textit{x}}a8 \textit{\textit{a}}8 18.0-0±, followed by \textit{\textit{b}}4 with pressure against the weak pawn on b5.

14.\textit{\textit{\textit{e}}a4 a5 15.\textit{\textit{c}4 \textit{\textit{e}}7 Here, objectively Black's best move is 15...\textit{\textit{g}5, and we will study it later – see 12...\textit{\textit{g}5.

White's task is much easier after 15...\textit{\textit{x}}d5?! 16.\textit{\textit{x}}d5 \textit{\textit{b}}6 17.\textit{\textit{e}}3 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}}ab8 (In case of 17...\textit{\textit{e}7, as it was played in the game Krejcova – Kopecky, Klatovy 2003, White could have punished Black with 18.\textit{\textit{c}4! \textit{\textit{a}c8 19.\textit{\textit{\textit{c}6 \textit{\textit{x}c6 20.\textit{\textit{d}5+- winning a piece. It can hardly be recommended to Black to opt for 17...\textit{\textit{b}2?! 18.\textit{\textit{c}4±) 18.0-0±

In case of 15...\textit{\textit{b}8, Klundt – Benko, Germany 1992, White can follow with 16.\textit{\textit{a}2±, and after 16...\textit{\textit{g}5, there arises a position from the variation 12...\textit{\textit{g}5.

16.\textit{\textit{f}6+ \textit{\textit{g}6

17.\textit{\textit{\textit{e}}x6!? White does not need to exchange there right now, but he must try to provoke an immediate crisis. 17...\textit{\textit{\textit{f}6 18.\textit{\textit{g}4+ \textit{\textit{\textit{f}7 19.0-0± Simacek – Choleva, Czech Republic 1997. The defects of Black's pawn-structure are quite evident and his king is rather unsafe. White's advantage is doubtless.
b) 12...\(\text{\#b7}\)

The development of this bishop to b7 is usually connected with the maneuver of Black's knight along the route c6-b8-d7-c5(b6). That interesting plan was suggested and introduced into practice, at the beginning of the 70ies of the past century, by GM Bukhuti Gurgenidze.

13.a4 bxa4

It seems too artificial for Black to play 13...\(\text{\#a7}\)! 14.axb5 \(\text{\#xb5}\) 15.\(\text{\#c4}\) \(\text{\#c7}\) 16.\(\text{\#ce3}\)± Taufratshofer – Ludwig, BRD 1989, while in case of 13...\(\text{\#e7}\), White follows with the typical reaction 14.\(\text{\#xf6}\)+ gxf6 15.\(\text{\#d3}\) d5 (It is not logical for Black to opt for 15...\(\text{\#h8}\) 16.0–0 \(\text{\#g8}\) 17.\(\text{\#e3}\)± Moulin – Lein, Philadelphia 2002.) 16.exd5 \(\text{\#xd5}\) 17.\(\text{\#e3}\) \#e6 18.axb5 axb5 19.\(\text{\#xa8}\) \#xa8 20.0–0± and White ends up with a stable edge.

14.\(\text{\#xa4}\) \(\text{\#b8}\)!?

The other possibilities are not of any separate value: about 14...\(\text{\#g5}\) – see 12...\(\text{\#g5}\); as for 14...\(\text{\#e7}\) 15.\(\text{\#c4}\) \(\text{\#g5}\) – see 12...\(\text{\#g5}\); 14...a5 15.\(\text{\#c4}\) \(\text{\#b8}\) (or 15...\(\text{\#g5}\) – see 12...\(\text{\#g5}\); 15...\(\text{\#e7}\), Henk – Schmitz, Germany 1986, 16.0–0±) 16.0–0 \(\text{\#d7}\) 17.\(\text{\#e2}\) – see 14...\(\text{\#b8}\).

15.\(\text{\#c4}\) \(\text{\#d7}\) 16.\(\text{\#e2}\)

White has deployed his forces harmoniously and he has fortified his central pawn with his last move. Now, if Black places his knight on c5, White's rook would retreat to a2 and then he would advance b2-b4 with tempo.

16...a5

About 16...\(\text{\#g5}\) – see 12...\(\text{\#g5}\). White obtains a very good position after 16...\(\text{\#b6}\) 17.\(\text{\#xb6}\) \#xb6 18.\(\text{\#b4}\) a5 19.\(\text{\#d5}\) \(\text{\#xd5}\) 20.\(\text{\#xd5}\)±

17.0–0

17...\(\text{\#xd5}\)

Black fails to solve his problems by simplifying the position.

About 17...\(\text{\#g5}\) – see 12...\(\text{\#g5}\).

In case of 17...\(\text{\#b6}\), White follows with 18.\(\text{\#xb6}\) \#xb6 19.\(\text{\#e3}\)!

Here it is too risky for Black to grab his opponent's central pawn: 19...\(\text{\#xe4}\) 20.\(\text{\#d5}\)?! \(\text{\#xd5}\) 21.\(\text{\#xd5}\) \#c6 (or 21...\#d8 22.\#f1± followed by b2-b4) 22.\#xf6+ gxf6 23.\#h4 \#fb8 24.f4– and Black's monarch is seriously endangered.

In the game Ahn – Vandevoort,
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Charleroi 1994, Black played 19...\(\&\)ab8, but White should have countered that with 20.\(\&\)d3! \(\&\)c6 (or 20...\(\&\)xb2? 21.\(\&\)b1 \(\&\)xe4 22.\(\&\)xb2 \(\&\)xd3 23.\(\&\)xb8 \(\&\)xb8 24.\(\&\)xd3+-) 21.\(\&\)a2 \(\&\)c5 22.\(\&\)d1, preserving better prospects.

White is better after 17...\(\&\)c5 18.\(\&\)a3 a4 19.\(\&\)cb4± Juhnke – Valeinis, corr. 2005.

If 17...\(\&\)a7, then White increases his queenside pressure by rather simple means: 18.\(\&\)fa1 \(\&\)b6 (Black has also tried in practice 18...\(\&\)xd5 19.\(\&\)xd5 \(\&\)b8 20.\(\&\)b4!± Vrenegoor – van Oosterom, Amsterdam 2005 – but he has failed to maintain the material balance. Instead of 19...\(\&\)b8, Black would not improve anything with 19...\(\&\)c5 20.\(\&\)a4a2 a4, because of 21.b4±) 19.\(\&\)xb6 \(\&\)xb6 20.\(\&\)b4! \(\&\)b8 (20...\(\&\)fa8 21.\(\&\)d5 \(\&\)xd5 22.\(\&\)xd5±, and after the retreat of the rook from a8, White follows with 23.b4.) 21.\(\&\)1a2 \(\&\)g5 22.\(\&\)d5± with an overwhelming advantage for White.

In case of 17...g6 18.\(\&\)fa1 \(\&\)g7, it is very good for White to continue with 19.b4 axb4 20.\(\&\)xa8 \(\&\)xa8 21.cxb4 \(\&\)b7 (or 21...\(\&\)f6 22.\(\&\)d3±) 22.\(\&\)ce3± – and White’s position is better thanks to his powerful control over the d5-outpost and his passed b-pawn, Vrenegoor – Nijboer, Amsterdam 1994.

18.\(\&\)xd5 \(\&\)b6 19.\(\&\)xa8 \(\&\)xa4

20.\(\&\)c6! \(\&\)c5

It is a mistake for Black to play 20...\(\&\)xb2? 21.\(\&\)b1 \(\&\)c7 (or 21...\(\&\)b6 22.\(\&\)b5+-) 22.\(\&\)b5! \(\&\)xc3 23.\(\&\)e3++, and his knight is trapped.

\[21.\&e3 \&b6 22.\&d5±\]

In the game van Delft – Jelen, Groningen 1996, White obtained better chances. After he places his knight on the c4-outpost, Black will have problems with the protection of his d6-pawn, There followed 22...a4 23.g3 \(\&\)b8 24.\(\&\)c4 \(\&\)c7 25.\(\&\)d1±. White will soon try to create another weakness in his opponent’s camp. He can use his h-pawn in order to accomplish that task.

c) 12...\(\&\)b8

This is a variation of the same idea as in the previous line. The difference is that Black does not
lose time for the move \( \text{b7} \), and he will attack faster White's e4-pawn.

13.h4!

White plays more often here the standard line: 13.a4 bxa4 14.hxa4 d7\( \text{=} \), but that just helps Black to achieve what he wanted in the first place.

Therefore, I recommend another method and GM Viswanathan Anand used it quite successfully in one of his games. White is not in a hurry with the undermining operation on the queenside and he restricts his opponent's possibilities.

13...\( \text{d7} \) 14.\( \text{ce3} \) \( \text{c5} \) 15.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{b7} \)

Black loses after 15...\( \text{xe4?} \) 16.\( \text{g2} \)-

16.\( \text{d3} \)!

That is the ideal square for White's light-squared bishop in this situation.

16...\( \text{g6} \)

Black only loses additional tempi with 16...\( \text{a4} \), Mueller – Raijmaekers, Email 1998, 17.\( \text{d2?!} \) \( \text{b6} \) 18.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{c8} \) (or 18...\( \text{c4} \) 19.\( \text{xc4} \) bxc4 20.b4\( \text{=} \)) 19.\( \text{d1} \)-

– it is essential that White maintains reliable control over the d5-outpost.

After 16...a5 (with the idea to follow with b5-b4), White should continue with the accurate line: 17.a3 \( \text{c6} \) 18.\( \text{c2} \) g6 19.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{g7} \) 20.h5\( \text{=} \) Cioara – Moraru, Bucharest 1999.

17.\( \text{c2} \) a5

In case of 17...\( \text{g7} \) 18.h5, Black would not achieve much with the aggressive queen-sortie 18...\( \text{g5} \) – since after 19.\( \text{f3} \)- White had a superior position in the game Aldea – Moraru, Bucharest 2001.

18.a3 \( \text{g7} \) 19.\( \text{h5} \)

That position arose in the game Anand – Kramnik, Monaco 1994. The Indian grandmaster did some wonderful prophylactics and it bore fruit after 19...\( \text{c8} \) (19...\( \text{g5} \), Schuetze – Sandner, corr. 2005, 20.\( \text{f3} \)-) 20.hxg6 fxg6 21.\( \text{e2} \) a7 22.\( \text{h2} \) a7 23.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{a6} \) 24.\( \text{b6} \) d3+ 25.\( \text{xd3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 26.\( \text{d8} \) xd8 27.\( \text{h4} \) h5 28.\( \text{d1} \)- Anand ended up with an extra pawn in the endgame and gradually he pressed his advantage home.
Conclusion

Therefore, we have analyzed all Black’s possibilities besides the most principled and strong 12...b8 and 12...g5. White obtains the advantage in all the lines without too much of an effort and that explains why all these lines are not so popular at all. White’s opening advantage is not so great indeed, but it is important that he can usually transfer from a better middle game into a superior endgame.

If we ignore the numerous possible transpositions of moves leading to the variation with 12...g5, then it is very interesting for Black to try the idea of GM Gurgenidze, connected with the maneuver of the knight along the route c6-b8-d7-c5(b6). It is essential then, whether Black with play at first 12...b7, or he would choose immediately 12...b8. In the first case, White should not refrain from his thematic break 13.a4, because then he manages to accomplish his ideal deployment of forces thanks to the additional tempo. After 12...b8 however, it is not so easy for White, therefore I consider as more precise the prophylactic move 13.h4!, which was tried successfully by Viswanathan Anand.
Chapter 9

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{\textdollar}f3 \textit{\textdollar}c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\textit{\textdollar}xd4 e6 5.\textit{\textdollar}c3 e5 6.\textit{\textdollar}db5 d6 7.\textit{\textdollar}g5 a6 8.\textit{\textdollar}a3 b5 9.\textit{\textdollar}d5 \textit{\textdollar}e7 10.\textit{\textdollar}xf6 \textit{\textdollar}xf6 11.c3 0–0 12.\textit{\textdollar}c2 \textit{\textdollar}b8

Black has the following possibilities now: a) 13...a5, b) 13...\textit{\textdollar}e6, c) 13...\textit{\textdollar}e7, d) 13...g6, e) 13...\textit{\textdollar}e7.

About 13...\textit{\textdollar}e8 14.\textit{\textdollar}ce3 \textit{\textdollar}e7 – see 13...\textit{\textdollar}e7.

The following line contradicts the main ideas of that opening: 13...h6?! 14.g3 a5, Dani – Pal, Zalakaros 1996 (14...g6 15.\textit{\textdollar}h3± Pierrot – Tovillas, Mar del Plata 2007), in view of 15.\textit{\textdollar}ce3 b4 16.\textit{\textdollar}c4± and White maintains a clear advantage.

13.h4!

This is the most principled response by White. Practice has shown that after the traditional line: 13.\textit{\textdollar}e2 \textit{\textdollar}g5 14.0–0 a5, Black has nothing to be afraid of. In case of 13.h4, his dark-squared bishop is restricted and of course, it would be a disaster for him to capture the pawn – 13...\textit{\textdollar}xh4? 14.\textit{\textdollar}h5+-

\textbf{a) 13...a5}

It seems quite logical for Black to advance his couple of pawns on the queenside, but that has some drawbacks too. He loses his control over the b5 and c4-squares and that enables White to deploy his forces comfortably and to increase his pressure in the centre.

14.\textit{\textdollar}ce3 b4

This move is consequential, but as we have already mentioned, it involves some strategical risk.

There arise some other variations after 14...\textit{\textdollar}e6 – see 13...\textit{\textdollar}e6 and 14...g6 15.g3 \textit{\textdollar}g7 16.h5 \textit{\textdollar}e6
17.\textit{h}3 – see 13...\textit{g}6 14.\textit{g}3 \textit{\textit{g}7}
15.\textit{h}5 \textit{\textit{e}6} 16.\textit{h}3 \textit{a}5 17.\textit{\textit{c}e3}.

It is too passive for Black to play 14...\textit{\textit{h}8} 15.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textit{e}7} 16.\textit{\textit{d}3} \textit{\textit{e}6} 17.\textit{\textit{f}5±} Reeve – Zubac, Richmond 2002, as well as 14...\textit{\textit{e}8} 15.a4 \textit{b}4 16.\textit{\textit{b}5} \textit{\textit{d}7} 17.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textit{e}7} 18.\textit{\textit{f}5±} Gaponenko – Manakova, Tivat 1995.

In the game Schaefer – Gunther, Budapest 1995, Black chose 14...\textit{\textit{e}7}, and White should have countered that with 15.a4!? There might follow 15...\textit{b}4 16.\textit{\textit{b}5} \textit{\textit{a}7} (If 16...\textit{\textit{d}7}, then 17.\textit{\textit{c}x}6 \textit{\textit{c}x}6 18.\textit{\textit{c}xb}4 \textit{\textit{c}xb}4 19.\textit{\textit{f}5±}, and White’s knights are obviously stronger than Black’s bishops.) 17.\textit{\textit{c}x}b4, and here Black solves his problems neither with 17...\textit{\textit{c}xb}5 18.\textit{\textit{a}xb}5 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}c}5} (18...\textit{\textit{a}xb}4 19.\textit{\textit{a}a}7 \textit{\textit{f}6} 20.\textit{\textit{e}2±}) 19.\textit{\textit{e}2} \textit{\textit{a}6} 20.\textit{\textit{c}3} \textit{\textit{b}6} 21.\textit{b}5± and White occupies the d5-square, nor with 17...\textit{\textit{c}xb}4 18.\textit{\textit{c}c}4 \textit{\textit{c}6} 19.a5± – White’s passed a-pawn is tremendously dangerous. The other possibility is – 15...\textit{\textit{b}xa}4 16.\textit{\textit{\textit{c}x}a}4 \textit{\textit{b}7} (16...\textit{\textit{d}7} 17.\textit{\textit{b}5±}) 17.\textit{\textit{b}5} \textit{\textit{a}7} 18.\textit{\textit{\textit{c}e}7+} \textit{\textit{x}e}7 19.\textit{\textit{d}3±}. White has a considerable positional advantage in both lines.

\textit{15.\textit{\textit{c}4}!}
That is the ideal place for White’s light-squared bishop.

\textit{15...\textit{\textit{c}x}c3 16.\textit{\textit{c}x}c3}
Formally, the c3-pawn should be a liability, but it controls the all-important d4-square and Black cannot attack it in the nearest future.

\textit{16...\textit{\textit{e}7}}
Black loses a pawn without sufficient compensation after 16...\textit{\textit{e}6} 17.\textit{\textit{xf}6+!?} \textit{\textit{x}f}6 18.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}d}6} \textit{\textit{\textit{b}c}8} 19.\textit{\textit{d}5±}

He has also tried in practice 16...\textit{\textit{h}6} 17.g3 \textit{\textit{e}8} 18.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textit{e}6} 19.\textit{\textit{d}1±} Zhou – Li, Suzhou 2006, as well as 16...\textit{\textit{e}7} 17.\textit{\textit{xf}6+} gxf6 18.\textit{\textit{f}3±} Driamin – Polyakov, St. Petersburg 1998, with a better game for White in both cases.

\textit{17.g3 \textit{\textit{e}6} 18.\textit{\textit{a}4}!}
White’s queen occupies a very comfortable square with tempo, although it is good for him to follow with 18.\textit{\textit{f}3} – see variation b.

\textit{18...\textit{\textit{a}7}}
If 18...\textit{\textit{d}7}, then 19.\textit{\textit{b}5} \textit{\textit{c}8} 20.\textit{\textit{c}4±} Russo – Mohandesi, Charleroi 2006.

\textit{19.0–0±}
White has managed to restrict his opponent's light pieces and prevent his real counterplay. Black's a5 and d6-pawns are weak and he must be prepared for a difficult passive defence. In case of 19...\(\text{c8}\), White follows with 20.\(\text{ab1}\), occupying the b-file (Black cannot play 20...\(\text{d7}\)!, because of 21.\(\text{xb8}\) ! \(\text{xa4}\) 22.\(\text{xc8}\) ! \(\text{d7}\) 23.\(\text{c7}\) + -). It is relatively best for Black to try 19...\(\text{xd5}\) 20.\(\text{c8}\) 21.\(\text{ab1}\) \(\text{b6}\) 22.\(\text{c6}\) !; but White is still better.

b) 13...\(\text{e6}\)

This development of the bishop is typical for the Chelyabinsk variation in general, therefore this line does not lead to any original positions and it often transposes to other variations.

14.\(\text{ce3}\) a5

Black follows the same plan as in variation a, but with a bishop on the e6-square.

About 14...\(\text{e7}\)!? – see 13...\(\text{e7}\).

The other possibilities are quite dubious for Black: 14...\(\text{g6}\)?! 15.\(\text{xf6}\) ! \(\text{xf6}\) 16.\(\text{xd6}\) ! Beshukov – Sketchkov, Perm 1997; 14...\(\text{e7}\)?! 15.\(\text{xf6}\) ! \(\text{xf6}\) 16.\(\text{f3}\) ! Vo-uldis – Sutovsky, Holon 1995; 14...\(\text{d7}\)?! 15.\(\text{xf6}\) ! \(\text{xf6}\) 16.\(\text{f3}\) ! Berelovich – Samoilov, Alushta 1999.

After 14...\(\text{xd5}\) 15.\(\text{xd5}\) b4, as it was played in the game Oliver Serrano – Alvares, Calvia 2006, White should have continued with 16.\(\text{xa6}\) \(\text{bxc3}\) 17.\(\text{bxc3}\) !\(\text{a5}\) 18.\(\text{c4}\) ! – and Black's partial piece-activity would not compensate his sacrificed pawn.

15.\(\text{f3}\)

White's alternative here is – 15.\(\text{xf6}\) !? (This move has not been tried in practice.) 15...\(\text{xf6}\) 16.\(\text{xd6}\) !\(\text{c8}\) 17.\(\text{e2}\) !; I think that Black's temporary threats do not compensate his missing pawn.

15...b4

In case of 15...\(\text{e7}\), White follows with 16.g3 b4 17.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{bxc3}\) 18.\(\text{bxc3}\) !\(\text{d7}\) 19.0–0 !\(\text{c8}\) 20.\(\text{fd1}\) ! Baumann – Gueroff, corr. 1996. He has a stable positional advantage. There arise similar positions in variation a.

16.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{bxc3}\)

It is in favour of White if Black plays 16...a4 17.g3 a3 18.b3 \(\text{bxc3}\) 19.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{d4}\) 20.\(\text{d1}\) !\(\text{a5}\) 21.\(\text{c1}\) !\(\text{bc8}\) 22.0–0 !\(\text{a8}\) 23.\(\text{cd5}\) ! Korneev – Ramos, El Sauzal 2003.

17.\(\text{bxc3}\) a4

About 17...\(\text{e7}\) 18.g3 – see 15...\(\text{e7}\).

In the game Yurtaev – Holmsten, Helsinki 1992, Black chose 17...\(\text{b2}\) 18.g3 a4 19.0–0 \(\text{e7}\)
20.\texttt{a}b1 \texttt{b}b8 21.\texttt{x}b2 \texttt{x}b2, but White countered that with the precise reaction 22.\texttt{d}d1!, and that provoked a swift outcome of the fight after 22...a3 23.\texttt{a}4 \texttt{c}8 24.\texttt{a}a6 1–0.

\textbf{18.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{h}8 19.0–0±}

In the game Betko – Lasanda, Slovakia 1995, Black had great problems. After the move he played – 19...\texttt{e}7, White’s best would be 20.\texttt{a}b1±

\textbf{c) 13...\texttt{e}7}

That is a standard method of neutralizing White’s knight on d5, but in this case Black fails to solve his problems in the opening.

\textbf{14.\texttt{x}f6 +!}

This is the right decision. White compromises his opponent’s pawn-structure on the kingside and that naturally endangers his king. He plans to follow with castling long. In general, that is rather untypical for the Chelyabinsk variation, but it is quite promising in this position. Tournament practice shows that Black’s defence is difficult.

\textbf{14...\texttt{g}xf6 15.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{d}5}

Black is forced to advance his d-pawn, or his f-pawn; otherwise, White deploys his knight on e3 with an overwhelming advantage.

Black’s alternative to the main line is – 15...f5. After 16.exf5 \texttt{x}f5 (16...d5 17.f6 \texttt{g}6 18.\texttt{b}4± Pletanek – Prachar, corr. 1996) 17.\texttt{x}f5 \texttt{x}f5 18.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{d}7 (It is hardly any better for Black to try 18...\texttt{c}8, Traut – Scholz, corr. 1996, 19.g4 \texttt{c}7 20.\texttt{x}d6 \texttt{x}g4 21.\texttt{e}3±, or 18...\texttt{f}6 19.0–0–0 \texttt{d}8, T.Olafsson – Sanchez Serrano, corr.1995, 20.\texttt{b}4±. White is clearly better after 18...\texttt{e}7 19.0–0–0 \texttt{b}6 20.\texttt{e}3± Sorri – Nokso Koivisto, Finland 1997.) 19.0–0–0± (Kasparov) and White is threatening g2–g4 with initiative.

Instead of 16...\texttt{x}f5, Black plays more often 16...\texttt{x}f5, but then 17.\texttt{h}5 e4 (only move) 18.\texttt{e}2, and White obtains a comfortable blocking position. There might follow 18...d5, Salzmann – Strebel, Email 2000, 19.0–0–0 \texttt{b}6 20.\texttt{e}3!\texttt{xe}3 (20...\texttt{h}6 21.\texttt{x}d5! \texttt{x}h5 22.\texttt{x}d8 \texttt{x}h4 23.\texttt{x}h4 \texttt{xe}4 24.\texttt{d}6±) 21.fxe3±;
18...\( \text{\&g7} \) 19.\( \text{\&h6} \) \( \text{\&b6} \), Hjartarson - Schandorff, Reykjavik 1997, 20.0-0-0 d5 21.\( \text{\&d2} \)±; 18...\( \text{\&e7} \), Belotti - Leoncini, Montecatini Terme 1995, 19.0-0-0; 18...a5, Borge - Schandorff, Denmark 1995, 19.\( \text{\&g4} + \text{\&g7} \) (Black protects indirectly his e4-pawn. It is not good for him to play 19...\( \text{\&h8} \) 20.\( \text{\&xe4} \) \( \text{\&e8} \) 21.\( \text{\&d3} \)±) 20.\( \text{\&f4} \)

16.exd5

16...\( \text{\&xd5} \)

The move 16...\( \text{\&xd5} \), seems to be a mistake after 17.\( \text{\&h5} \), but in the game Jedryczka – Debowiak, Czestochowa 1998, Black played like that and the fight continued with 17...f5 18.\( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&xf5} \) 19.\( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&f4} \). This original idea is insufficient, however. White obtains an advantage by force in the endgame after 20.\( \text{\&d1} \)? \( \text{\&xg2} + \) 21.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&f4} + \) 22.\( \text{\&f3} \) \( \text{\&e7} \) 23.\( \text{\&d7} \) \( \text{\&e6} \) 24.\( \text{\&xe6} \) \( \text{\&xe6} \) (24...\( \text{\&xe6} \) 25.\( \text{\&b4} ± \) 25.\( \text{\&g1} + \text{\&h8} \) 26.\( \text{\&d5} \) f6 27.\( \text{\&b4} ± \) - Black's king is stranded on the h8-square, while White has occupied the open files and he has a superior pawn-structure.

In the game Vuckovic – Kerek, Guarapuava 1995, Black opted for 16...f5. White should have played here 17.\( \text{\&h5} \) \( \text{\&xd5} \) (about 17...\( \text{\&xd5} \) – see 16...\( \text{\&xd5} \); 17...e4 18.\( \text{\&g5} + \text{\&g6} \) 19.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&xd5} \) 20.\( \text{\&b4} \) \( \text{\&c5} \) 21.\( \text{\&d1} \)± 18.\( \text{\&g5} + \text{\&g6} \) 19.\( \text{\&b4} \)!, and that would lead to a situation similar to the main line (16...\( \text{\&xd5} \)), except that White’s knight had chosen another route and it was much better at that. Black cannot be happy with the line: 19...\( \text{\&c5} \) 20.\( \text{\&xf5} \)±, or 19...\( \text{\&e6} \) 20.h5 f6 (It is a disaster for Black to try 20...\( \text{\&e7} \) 21.\( \text{\&h6} + \)–, while if 20...e4 21.\( \text{\&c2} \) f6, then 22.\( \text{\&e3} \), and it would not work for Black to play 22...\( \text{\&e5} \)? in view of 23.\( \text{\&b3} \) \( \text{\&c4} \) 24.\( \text{\&g3} – \) 21.\( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&xf5} \) 22.\( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&xf5} \) 23.\( \text{\&hxg6} \) \( \text{\&hxg6} \) 24.\( \text{\&xa6} ± \). Black’s relatively best defence is 19...\( \text{\&b7} \) 20.\( \text{\&xf5} \) f6 21.\( \text{\&g4} \) \( \text{\&xf5} \) 22.\( \text{\&xf5} \) \( \text{\&bd8} \) (It is too risky for Black to follow with 22...\( \text{\&xg2} \) 23.0-0-0±, since White’s attack is crushing.), but after 23.\( \text{\&d3} ± \) White preserves his extra pawn without any serious compensation for Black.

17.\( \text{\&e3} \) \( \text{\&e6} \)

Some other lines have been tried: 17...\( \text{\&d7} \) 18.\( \text{\&e2} \) f5 19.0-0-0 20.g4! f4 21.\( \text{\&f5} ± \) Grube – Heide, corr. 1996; 17...\( \text{\&c6} \), Rigo – Zojer, Banska Stiavnica 2006, 18.\( \text{\&c2} + \)– it is essential for White to prevent f6-f5.

18.\( \text{\&h5} \) f5

In the famous game Kasparov – Lautier, Moscow 1994, in which that position was reached for the first time, Black advanced his cen-
tral pawn prematurely and he lost his control over the f4-square. After 18...e4?! 19.\texttt{c}2 b4 (In case of 19...f5 20.\texttt{g}5+! \texttt{h}8 21.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{b}6 22.0-0-0, Black loses immediately after 22...\texttt{g}6, because of 23.\texttt{h}6 - threatening 24.h5, while the move 23...\texttt{g}8 loses to 24.\texttt{b}3++, and Black's queen has no square to retreat to.) 20.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{h}8 (20...f5 21.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{h}8 22.\texttt{f}4±) 21.0-0-0 f5 22.\texttt{g}5± White seized the initiative and he gave no respite to his opponent to the end of the game. The thirteenth World Champion finished off his attack instructively and spectacularly: 22...\texttt{b}6 23.h5 \texttt{c}6?! (Black had better try 23...\texttt{g}8 24.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{h}6, Kasparov, at least exchanging queens.) 24.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{c}5 25.h6 \texttt{e}5 (25...\texttt{g}8 26.\texttt{d}8++) 26.\texttt{h}5! \texttt{g}8 (26...\texttt{g}6 27.\texttt{d}8++; 26...\texttt{c}6 27.\texttt{g}4! fxg4 28.\texttt{g}7++) 27.\texttt{g}4! 1-0. Black resigned, since his position was hopeless following 27...\texttt{x}g5 28.\texttt{x}e5 \texttt{x}h5 29.\texttt{d}8+ \texttt{g}8 30.\texttt{xf}7#, as well as after 27...\texttt{e}6 28.\texttt{d}8+-

**19.0–0–0!**

The a2-pawn is untouchable, while against 19.g4, Black has the resource 19...\texttt{g}6!

**19...\texttt{g}6**

About 19...\texttt{h}8 20.\texttt{c}2 b4 21.c4 e4 – see 18...e4.

In case of 19...\texttt{xa}2? 20.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{g}6 21.\texttt{b}1! Black is defenseless: 21...\texttt{a}5 22.\texttt{d}5++; 21...\texttt{e}6 22.\texttt{x}f5 \texttt{a}2 (22...\texttt{e}7 23.\texttt{d}5! \texttt{x}g5+ 24.\texttt{x}g5++) 23.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{xf}5 (23...f6 24.\texttt{g}4++) 24.\texttt{xf}5+

Black’s position is very difficult after 19...b4?! 20.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{h}8 21.\texttt{c}4±

**20.\texttt{f}3?!**

This move has not been tested sufficiently, but it is very interesting and ambitious. Kasparov mentioned it in his comments about his game against Lautier. White’s queen eyes Black’s f5-pawn and that provokes him to play either e5-e4, weakening the f4-square, or \texttt{b}7. In the latter case, Black loses his control over the important c8-h3 diagonal and that is essential in numerous variations.

White has a calmer and reliable alternative, leading to a favourable endgame for him – 20.\texttt{g}5. There might follow 20...\texttt{f}6 (if 20...\texttt{x}g5 21.\texttt{x}g5 \texttt{e}6, then 22.g4 \texttt{fxg}4 23.\texttt{x}h7 \texttt{bd}8 24.\texttt{h}6++) 21.\texttt{g}x6+ \texttt{hx}g6 22.\texttt{c}2. White’s advantage is based on his extra queenside pawn, his domination over the d-file, as well as on Black’s compromised pawn-structure on the kingside.

If 22...\texttt{f}4, then 23.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{xd}5 24.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{g}7 (24...\texttt{b}7 25.\texttt{d}6
\( \text{xg2 26.\textcolor{red}{g}1 f3 27.\textcolor{red}{x}xg6+) 25.h5 gxh5 26.\textcolor{red}{x}xh5 \textcolor{red}{b}6 (26...\textcolor{red}{h}8? 27.\textcolor{red}{x}xh8 \textcolor{red}{x}xh8 28.\textcolor{red}{d}d8+ \textcolor{red}{g}7 29.\textcolor{red}{f}5+-) 27.\textcolor{red}{h}7+ \textcolor{red}{g}8 28.\textcolor{red}{d}d1 \textcolor{red}{e}6 29.\textcolor{red}{e}d1h1 f5 30.\textcolor{red}{h}h6+ Chorfi - T.Olafsson, corr. 1999.} \\

In the game Solozhenkin – Sitnikov, Russia 1999, Black chose 22...\textcolor{red}{g}7 and after 23.h5! g5 (23...f4 24.\textcolor{red}{x}xg6!\textcolor{red}{b}8 23...\textcolor{red}{g}xh5 24.\textcolor{red}{x}xh5 \textcolor{red}{g}h8 25.\textcolor{red}{x}xh8 \textcolor{red}{x}xh8 26.\textcolor{red}{d}d8+ Solozhenkin) 24.\textcolor{red}{h}h6+ \textcolor{red}{h}8 25.\textcolor{red}{f}3+ he had problems. It would be in favour of White if he had played 23...\textcolor{red}{h}h8 24.\textcolor{red}{x}xg6 \textcolor{red}{e}6 (24...\textcolor{red}{x}xh1 25.\textcolor{red}{x}xg6 26.\textcolor{red}{g}4+) 25.\textcolor{red}{h}h7+ \textcolor{red}{x}xh7 26.\textcolor{red}{x}xh7 \textcolor{red}{x}h8 27.\textcolor{red}{d}d6\textcolor{red}{e}6 Salvador Marques – Rousselot, corr. 1994.

It is more precise for Black to defend with 22...\textcolor{red}{b}6, but then White is not obliged to play the hasty line 23.h5 g5\textcolor{red}{e}6 (White's h5-pawn becomes a potential weakness.). It is preferable for him to follow with the accurate 23.g3!? \textcolor{red}{e}6 24.\textcolor{red}{a}5\textcolor{red}{b}3 \textcolor{red}{g}7 (24...\textcolor{red}{x}xb3 25.\textcolor{red}{a}xb3\textcolor{red}{e}6, and only now 25.h5 f4 (25...\textcolor{red}{g}5 26.\textcolor{red}{d}xe6 \textcolor{red}{x}xe6 27.\textcolor{red}{d}d7+) 26.gxf4 exf4 27.\textcolor{red}{c}c2\textcolor{red}{e}6+ with a transfer of the knight to the d4-square to follow. In the game Pletanek – Tomecek, corr. 1996, Black played 24...\textcolor{red}{f}7, and after 25.h5 \textcolor{red}{x}xh5 26.\textcolor{red}{x}xh5 \textcolor{red}{x}xh5 27.\textcolor{red}{a}xb3 \textcolor{red}{e}6, the centralization of his king equalized the game. White's play could be improved with the line: 26.\textcolor{red}{d}7! \textcolor{red}{x}xb3 (26...\textcolor{red}{e}e8 27.\textcolor{red}{a}a7+) 27.\textcolor{red}{a}xb3 \textcolor{red}{e}6 28.\textcolor{red}{x}xe7+! \textcolor{red}{x}xe7 29.\textcolor{red}{d}d5+ \textcolor{red}{e}6 (29...\textcolor{red}{d}d6 30.\textcolor{red}{x}xb6 \textcolor{red}{c}c6 31.\textcolor{red}{x}xh5 f4 32.gxf4 \textcolor{red}{x}xb6 33.\textcolor{red}{f}5+) 30.\textcolor{red}{x}xb6 \textcolor{red}{b}8 31.\textcolor{red}{a}a4 bxa4 32.\textcolor{red}{b}xa4 \textcolor{red}{h}8 33.\textcolor{red}{h}4\textcolor{red}{e}4 with considerable winning chances in the rook ending. These variations show that Black must fight long and hard for a draw.

20...\textcolor{red}{b}4

After 20...e4?! 21.\textcolor{red}{f}4\textcolor{red}{e}6 – the defenselessness of the rook on b8 is the tactical motive behind the move 20.\textcolor{red}{f}3.

Black can play 20...\textcolor{red}{b}7, without the inclusion of the moves 20...b4 21.c4, but then 21.\textcolor{red}{e}2 e4 22.\textcolor{red}{c}2 f4 23.h5 \textcolor{red}{f}6 (23...\textcolor{red}{g}5 24.\textcolor{red}{g}4\textcolor{red}{e}4 24.\textcolor{red}{g}4 \textcolor{red}{g}5 (if24...\textcolor{red}{e}6, then 25.\textcolor{red}{b}3\textcolor{red}{e}6 25.\textcolor{red}{b}1\textcolor{red}{e}6 White's prospects are better.

21.c4 \textcolor{red}{b}7

22.\textcolor{red}{e}2!

White's queen is better placed here than on h3. There will soon appear a black pawn on the e4-square and it must be kept under control.

22...e4

In case of 22...\textcolor{red}{f}6!? 23.\textcolor{red}{a}c2 \textcolor{red}{f}d8, it looks attractive for White to advance his rook-pawn, enlarging the scope of action of his
rook: 24.h5 əd4 (This is a seemingly attractive idea.) 25.h6 əbd8 26.əxd4 əxd4 (If 26...exd4, White has the resource 27.əxf5! əxf5 28.əg4±) 27.əh5! e4 28.f3±, and White is better.

23.əc2 f4 24.h5!

That is an important intermediate move. It is now essential where Black's queen will go.

24...əg5

If 24...əf6?!., then 25.əd5 əxd5 (25...əxd5 26.cxd5±) 26.əxe4!± – and in connection with the checkmating threat on h7, White regains his material with interest and Black's position remains very difficult. In this variation, you can see the tactical resources behind White's move 22.

His task becomes much more difficult after 24...əh6. It turns out that the discovered check is not so dangerous for White, so he can play 25.əd5 əxd5 (It is weaker for Black to opt for 25...f3+ 26.əe3 əxe3+ 27.əxe3 fxg2 28.əhg1 əfd8 29.əxg2+, and later 29...əf8 30.ədg1±, or 29...əh8 30.əxd8+ əxd8 31.əg5±. It is hardly any better for Black to try 25...əxd5 26.cxd5 f5 27.d6 f3+ 28.əe3 əxe3+ 29.fxe3 əc6 30.gxf3 exf3 31.əhg1+ əh8 32.d7± – and White's passed pawn is very powerful, while Black's king is endangered.) 26.cxd5 f3+ (It is rather unsafe for Black to avoid the trade of queens: 26...f5 27.d6 or 26.əfe8 27.əhe1 f5 28.f3 əxh5 29.d6+) 27.əe3 əxe3+ 28.fxe3, and White ends up in a slightly better endgame. The fight might continue like that: 28...fxg2 29.əhg1±; 28...əfe8 29.əd4±; 29...əbc8 29.əb1 əfe8 30.əh4± – and in all the variations Black's pawn weaknesses are quite obvious; nevertheless, White's victory is not guaranteed at all.

25.əg4!

That move is necessary and it had to be anticipated in advance.

25...h6

It is too dubious for Black to play 25...f6?! 26.əe6+ əf7 (26...əh8 27.əxe7 fxe3 28.fxe3 əxe3+ 29.əb1±) 27.əg4 əf8 (If 27...f3+ 28.əe3 əe5, then 29.əxe5 fxe5 30.gxf3 əxf3 31.əd7±, while in case of 27...əbf8, White has the tactical strike 28.əxf6+! əxf6 29.əxf6 əxf6 30.əd7±. It is insufficient for Black to play 27...əe8 28.əa4 əef8 29.əhg1?±) 28.əhe1 f3+ 29.əe3 əe5 (29...fxg2 30.əg1 əxh5 31.əxg2±) 30.əxe5 fxe5 31.gxf3 əxf3 32.əg4± – and the endgame is difficult for Black.

It is also in favour of White, if Black plays 25...əxg4 26.əxg4 f5 27.əe5±
26.\textit{\textbf{w}}xg5+ hxg5 27.\textit{\textbf{g}}g4 f5 28.\textit{\textbf{e}}e5±

White has the initiative, although Black has defensive resources. Here, it seems too risky for him to play 28...e3 29.\textit{\textbf{d}}d7 \textit{\textbf{x}}xg2 30.\textit{\textbf{h}}hg1+. It is more reliable for Black to continue with 28...\textit{\textbf{f}}fd8, but White maintains his advantage even then after 29.\textit{\textbf{h}}h6 \textit{\textbf{h}}h7 (29...e3 30.\textit{\textbf{f}}xe3 fxe3 31.\textit{\textbf{h}}h5±) 30.\textit{\textbf{x}}xd8 \textit{\textbf{x}}xd8 31.\textit{\textbf{f}}f7 \textit{\textbf{g}}g8 32.\textit{\textbf{d}}d1 threatening to penetrate along the open d-file.

\textbf{d) 13...g6!?}

This move is quite popular. Black plans at first to retreat with his bishop to g7 and to follow that eventually with \textit{\textbf{c}}c6-e7. The obvious defect of the move is that White has the possibility to open the h-file.

14.\textit{\textbf{g}}3 \textit{\textbf{g}}g7

It is only a transposition of moves after 14...\textit{\textbf{e}}e6 15.\textit{\textbf{h}}h3 (15. \textit{\textbf{x}}xf6+?! \textit{\textbf{w}}xf6 16.\textit{\textbf{w}}xd6? \textit{\textbf{w}}f3+?) 15...\textit{\textbf{g}}g7 (If 15...\textit{\textbf{x}}xd5 16.\textit{\textbf{w}}xd5 \textit{\textbf{e}}e7, then it is good for White to play 17.\textit{\textbf{w}}d3 d5 18.exd5 \textit{\textbf{w}}xd5 19.\textit{\textbf{w}}xd5 \textit{\textbf{e}}e6 20.0-0-0± with a slightly better endgame, as well 17.\textit{\textbf{w}}b3!±, which prevents 17...d5?!., in view of 18.0-0-0 d4 19.cxd4 exd4 20.f4±) About 16.h5 – see 14...\textit{\textbf{g}}g7.

Black has not tested yet the move 14...h5, but it would not solve his problems either. After 15.\textit{\textbf{h}}h3 \textit{\textbf{e}}e6 (Black complies with that exchange only in that particular case.) 16.\textit{\textbf{c}}b4 \textit{\textbf{b}}xb4 17.\textit{\textbf{c}}xb4± White has the edge.

15.\textit{\textbf{h}}5 \textit{\textbf{e}}e6

The fight develops in an analogous fashion after 15...\textit{\textbf{c}}e7 16.\textit{\textbf{c}}ce3 \textit{\textbf{c}}xd5 17.\textit{\textbf{x}}xd5 \textit{\textbf{e}}e6 18.\textit{\textbf{h}}xg6 hxg6 19.\textit{\textbf{h}}h3 \textit{\textbf{w}}d7 20.\textit{\textbf{x}}xe6 fxe6 21.\textit{\textbf{b}}b4 – see the comments to the final position of the main line (18.\textit{\textbf{c}}c4).

16.\textit{\textbf{h}}3

The exchange of the lightsquared bishops is in favour of White, as a rule.

16...\textit{\textbf{w}}d7

Black plans to recapture on e6 with his pawn, in order to repel White’s knight away from the d5-outpost.

We must study some other possibilities too:
Chapter 9

If 16...b4, then 17.hxg6 hxg6
18...dxb4 d5 18...dxb4 19...e6 d5 20.d5 b6 21.b1 b1 22...xb1±) 19.d5 d5 b6 20...c1± - White preserves his control over the d5-square;

The exchange of the bishop for White’s knight does not solve any problems either: 16...d5 17.d5 e7 18.d3 b6 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.d1 b8 21...e3± Lehtio - Nokso Koivisto, Finland 1998;

In the variation 16...a5 17...e3 e7 (In case of 17...g5, White forces his opponent to capture on h3 with the help of the line: 18.c7! xh3 19.xh3 ffd8 20.f1 b4 21.d5 d5 22.a4 bxc3 23.bxc3 d8 24.g2 e7 25.hxg6 hxg6 26.h1!± J.Polgar - Illescas, Leon 1996 and he obtains a great positional advantage, thanks to his dominance over the d5-outpost and the superiority of his knight over the bishop. If 17...d7, then White should refrain from the straightforward line: 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.f5! gxf5 20.h5 f6+ and he should prefer the calmer variation: 18.h6! h8 19.g2, with a better game for White. It would be too risky for Black to try 19...f5!, because of 20.exf5 gxf5 21.h5!±) 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.e7+ xe7 20.d3± and White has again a stable advantage.

17.hxg6 hxg6
After 17...xh3 18.w5 fxg6 19.xh3 xh3 20.xh3, or 17...fxg6 18.e6+ xe6 19.e2± (van Kempen) White’s position is quite comfortable.

18...cb4!±

In the game Barlow - van Kempen, corr. 1997, White chose 18.g2, and after Black’s precise reaction 18...b4! 19...xb4 cb4 20.exb4 a5, he even managed to seize the initiative.

I believe that the new move 18...cb4 leaves Black with fewer active possibilities. See an exemplary line, which shows that White maintains a slight, but stable edge, while Black must fight patiently to equalize: 18...xb4 19.e6 fx6 (Black’s attempt to deflect his opponent’s queen from the kingside does not facilitate his defensive task either: 19.c2+ 20.xc2 fx6 21.e3±) 20.exb4 a5 21.d3 (It is also possible to try 21...bc8 22.g4 f6 23.0-0-0 b7 24.b1±, or 21...b4 22.cxb4 axb4 23.0-0±) 22.g4±

e) 13...e7

That is Black’s most reliable line. He avoids weakening of his kingside and retreats his bishop
to e7 with the idea to follow that with the development of his other bishop to e6, the queen to d7 and the maneuver d8-b6 and to play at some moment d7. I have to mention that it is not easy at all for White to obtain a serious advantage in that line.

14. \( \text{d} \text{ce3} \text{ e6} \)

About 14...a5 – see 13...a5.

When Black’s bishop is on e7, it is rather untypical for him to play 14...g6?!; Zinchenko – Kruglyakov, Alushta 2006, 15.g3 \( \text{d} \text{e6} \) (15...f5 16.h5 fxe4 17.hxg6 hxg6 18.g2±) 16.f3 b4 (16...f5 17.h5±) 17.c4±

The move 14...b4 enables White to deploy his pieces quite comfortably: 15.c4 bxc3 16.bxc3 \( \text{d} \text{a5} \) 17.d3 e8, Mijnheer – Schenkeveld, Hoogeveen 2006, 18.g3±

It might be interesting for Black to try 14...h6!? Black thus creates a real threat to capture White’s h4-pawn and he prevents the advance h4-h5-h6. That move was tested in the game Sevecek – Joseph, corr. 1994, in which Black solved successfully his opening problems. White had however, the excellent possibility 15.h5?! (instead of the schematic 15.g3). After 15...e6 (15...b4 16.c4±) 16.e2 b4 17.g4 bxc3 18.bxc3 White plans to organize a dangerous attack with f5, g4, h3. In case of 18...h7 19.f5+, Black loses after 19...g6?, because of 20.g4!+-

If 14...e8, Horcman – De Saint Germain, corr. 1998, then 15.f3 f8 16.h5 h6 17.d3 d7 18.c2± with slightly better prospects for White.

15.f3 d7

About 15...a5 16.g3 – see 13...e6 14.d3 a5 15.f3 d7 16.g3.

In case of 15...b4, White is not obliged to accept the challenge and enter the line: 16.xa6 bxc3 17.bxc3 a5 18.d8=, Lunde – Mansfield, corr. 1996, 18...d8=. It would be much simpler for him to play 16.c4 bxc3 17.bxc3, reaching the standard position.

16.d1

White has also tried the radical solution 16.g4 d8 17.d3, but after 17...a5!!, followed by b5-b4, Black’s counterplay is sufficient
and tournament practice has confirmed that.

The move 16.\textit{\texttt{d}d1} seems to me as a calmer solution and I advise my readers to follow it. White deploys his forces optimally and he refrains from drastic changes of his pawn-structure.

\textbf{16...\texttt{d}d8 17.\textit{\texttt{e}2} \texttt{e}7}

There might arise a large scale exchange of light pieces on the d5-square rather soon. There will remain opposite-coloured bishops on the board, but that would not guarantee any easy equality for Black at all, since there will be queens and rooks left on the board. It is essential to understand that White must strive to capture on d5 with a piece and not with a pawn, in order to sustain the pressure against the d6-square. The exceptional case is when he can create threats against his opponent’s king by opening the b1-h7 diagonal.

\textbf{18.h5 h6}

That move is just obligatory; otherwise White’s rook-pawn will advance even further.

After 18...\texttt{xd5} 19.\textit{\texttt{dx}d5} \texttt{xd5} 20.\texttt{xd5}, it would be a mistake for Black to play 20...f5?, because of 21.exf5 \texttt{xf5} 22.\texttt{xd}d6\texttt{f} White maintains his edge again. It looks like Black can solve his problems with the help of 20...\texttt{xd}d5, but after 21.\texttt{dx}d6 (The exchange-sacrifice looks too optimistic – 21.\texttt{xd}d5?! \texttt{xd}d5 22.exd5 g6\texttt{f})

\textbf{19.0–0}  \textbf{(diagram)}

\textbf{19...\texttt{b}6}

That is the most popular move for Black, but I am not convinced that it is the best.

There is another idea, which deserves a great attention – to remove the queen from the d7-square, with the aim to free squares for the light-squared bishop and to create the positional threat of capturing White’s knight on d5. Let us see what might happen in that case:

The move 19...\texttt{b}7! has been tested in the game Kurmann – Zinchenko, Istanbul 2005. Instead of the rather modest move 20.a3, White could have played 20.\texttt{f}5, after which Black is faced with a choice. He can reach similar positions to the main line with the variation: 20...\texttt{xf}5 21.exf5 \texttt{xd}d5 22.\texttt{xd}d5\texttt{f}, or 20...\texttt{xf}5 21.exf5 \texttt{xd}5 (21...\texttt{d}7 22.f6\texttt{f}) 22.\texttt{xd}d5\texttt{f}. In case of 20...\texttt{xd}d5 21.\texttt{xe}7\texttt{e} 22.\texttt{xe}7 22.\texttt{xd}d5\texttt{f} White maintains his edge again. It looks like Black can solve his problems with the help of 20...\texttt{xa}xd5, but after 21.\texttt{xa}xd6 (The exchange-sacrifice looks too optimistic – 21.\texttt{xa}xd5?! \texttt{xa}xd5 22.exd5 g6\texttt{f})
low 24.\(\text{\textlt{d}}\)d5!? \(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f5 (The endgame is rather unpleasant for Black after 24...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd5 25.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd5 \(\text{\textlt{a}}\)f6 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d6 a5 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d5\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f7; in case of 24...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)f6, it is good for White to react with 25.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d6! \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b6 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xf6 gxf6 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d6 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd8!? 28.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd1 \(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g7 29.\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g4±; if 24...\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)e8, then 25.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)e4! \(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f6 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d5 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)d8 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd1±, and White increases his pressure with queens present on the board.) 25.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d7! (The trade of queens would enable White to penetrate on the open file.) 25...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd7 (25...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)f4 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)g4 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b6 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xf4 exf4 28.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d6\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f7) 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd7 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b6 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd1 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd8 28.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)f1 \(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f8 29.\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g4 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd7 30.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd7 \(\text{\textlt{d}}\)d8 31.\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b7±. White can play for a win in that endgame without any risk whatsoever. Black’s queenside pawns are vulnerable and the f7-square is potentially very weak.

Quite recently, in the game Karjakin – Yakovich, Sochi 2007, Black tried a new move 19...\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c8!? and after 20.\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)xe7+ \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)xe7 21.\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)f5 (White has no advantage after 21.\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b3 \(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g5!? 22.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd6 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xc3 23.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xa6 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)xe3 and in the game Jakovenko – Ivanuchik, Foros 2007, the opponents agreed to a draw in that position, since White’s attempts to play for a win would have been fruitless, for example: 24.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xe3 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xe3 25.\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)xe3 \(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a8 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xb5 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xa6 27.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xa6 \(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a8 28.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)c4 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xc4 29.bxc4 \(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xa2 30.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)c1 \(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f8=, or 28.\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b7 \(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xa2 29.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)d5 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b2 30.\(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a1 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd5 31.exd5 \(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xb3= and the rook endgames are quite drawish in both cases.) 21...\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c7

22.\(\text{\textlt{d}}\)d3?! \(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g5 23.\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c2 b4! 24.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd6 \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)fd8± and Black had no problems at all.

Instead of 22.\(\text{\textlt{d}}\)d3, it is stronger for White to play 22.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)g3!? , so that after 22...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xf5 23.\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xf5 \(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g5 24.\(\text{\textlt{d}}\)d5± he can obtain the typical pawn-structure for that variation. Black has at his disposal an interesting possibility – 22...\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g5!? (temporary pawn-sacrifice) 23.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd6 \(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f4 (23...\(\text{\textlt{h}}\)xa2 24.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xe5±) 24.\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f3 \(\text{\textlt{h}}\)xa2. The first impression is that Black has no problems, but White’s resources have not been exhausted yet. After 25.\(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a1! \(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xd6 (25...\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)e6 26.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xa6 b4 27.\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c4±) 26.\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)xa2 and there arises the usual material ratio (opposite-coloured bishops with heavy pieces on the board) and White maintains the initiative. There might follow 26...\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)e6 27.\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)fa1 \(\text{\textlt{b}}\)b6 28.\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g3 \(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g5 29.\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f5! \(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c6 (if 29...\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xf5 30.\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xf5 \(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a8, then 31.\(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a5 b4 32.\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c4±, and Black’s queenside pawns will be an easy prey for White. In case of 29...\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)e8, White follows with 30.\(\text{\textlt{w}}\)xe6 \(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xe6 31.\(\text{\textlt{c}}\)c4, and Black is faced with a difficult choice: 31...\(\text{\textlt{f}}\)f6?! 32.\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)xb5 \(\text{\textlt{a}}\)xb5 33.\(\text{\textlt{g}}\)g8+ \(\text{\textlt{h}}\)h7 34.\(\text{\textlt{a}}\)a7+-; 31...\(\text{\textlt{b}}\)xc4 32.\(\text{\textlt{e}}\)xc4±;
31...b4 32...a5± 30...d1± and White occupies the d-file, or 26... fd8 27...d1...e6 (After 27...b6 28...d5± White has the threat – 29.g3.) 28...d5!...g5 (It is quite risky for Black to open the b1-h7-diagonal, for example 28...xd5?! 29.exd5...d6 30...d3...d8 31...e4...f8 32.g3...g5 33...f5±) 29...a1± (It also deserves attention for White to try 29...d1!?, followed by 30...b3.) – and White has a slight, but stable advantage and he can increase his pressure without any risk.

20...f5!
White exploits some specific features of the position in the process of solving strategical tasks. It is amazing, but Black has four possible captures now, but they might all lead to the same situation by a transposition of moves.

20...xf5
About 20...xf5 21.exf5...d5 22.exd5 – see 20...xf5.

After the trade on d5, White will capture with his rook, taking advantage of the defenselessness of Black’s queen on d7: 20...d5 21.xd5!...xf5 (It is obviously bad for Black to play 21...xd5? 22...g4...xf5 23.exf5!± threatening 24.f6 and 24...d1.) 22.exf5 – see 20...xf5, or 20...xd5 21.exd5!...d5 (about 21...xf5 22.exf5 – see 20...xf5) 22...g4...xf5 23...xf5...f6 24...d1...f8 25...g3...Korneev – Khairullin, Sochi 2006. Black’s queen-sacrifice for a rook and a piece can enable him only to fight for a draw at best.

21.exf5...d5
Naturally, it is bad for Black to play 21...xf5? 22...xf5...e7+-

22...d5±

There has arisen a standard position again. There are opposite-coloured bishops on the board and White has occupied the d5-outpost and he has excellent possibilities for active actions on both sides of the board. The fact that Black’s bishop is on the queenside, creates prerequisites for the effective pawn-advance f5-f6. In the game Zontakh – Nakhapetiane, Moscow 2007, Black chose 22...e4 23...xe4...e8 24...f3...e7 25...d3±, but his
pawn-sacrifice was not justified. Black has also tried 22...e7 23.f6 \textit{xf6} (23...gxf6?! 24.d3 e8 25.e4+) 24.xf6 gxf6 25.xd6 \textit{f}d8 26.fd1\textpm Kurmann – Widmer, Zug 2005 – and White has considerable winning chances in that endgame.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The prophylactic move 12...\textit{fb}8 is still quite popular and it is probably as strong as the main line 12...g5. The drawback of that variation is that it is a bit slow and that enables White to restrict the mobility of Black's bishop on f6 with the move 13.h4! The character of the subsequent fight largely depends on Black's decision on move 13.

White counters 13...e7 with 14.xf6+! – and later he chooses an aggressive plan, including castling long and a kingside attack. After 13...g6, the fight is not so sharp – White exploits Black's g6-pawn as a target for attack in order to open the h-file and he strives to trade advantageously the light-squared bishops.

Black's most precise defensive line is – 13...e7. The adherents to that variation did not come to that move so easy, but presently almost everybody plays like that and the theory of that line has developed tremendously. White must play with great resourcefulness in order to create real problems for Black. In general, it can be seen that there usually appear opposite-coloured bishops on the board, but as our readers have already seen, that circumstance does not guarantee Black any easy equality at all.

Generally speaking, the variation with 12...b8 seems to be reliable for Black, but White obtains an edge after an accurate play. In some cases, that advantage becomes quite obvious after a transition into an endgame. That implies that the White player should enjoy playing endgames and possess good technique.
The diagrammed position is often encountered in contemporary tournaments. Black is happy that he has the two-bishop advantage, some lead in development and seemingly a very solid position. White, in his stead, is trying to prove that his control over the central squares, the domination over the d5-outpost and his queenside initiative is worth much more than Black’s above-mentioned achievements.

Black has tried in this position to preserve his b5-pawn with a) 13...\texttt{xb8}, but he has played in practice most of all b) 13...\texttt{bxa4}.

He has experimented with some other moves as well, but they can hardly be called logical:

13...\texttt{e6}?! – It is not easy to understand why Black gives up a pawn here. 14.axb5 axb5 15.\texttt{xb5 xa1} 16.\texttt{xa1 xd5} 17.exd5 \texttt{e7} 18.\texttt{b4 b6} 19.\texttt{a6} and White remained with a solid extra pawn in the game A.Zaitsev – Podchufarov, Tula 2000;

13...b4? 14.\texttt{xb4 xb4} 15.\texttt{cxb4 f5} 16.\texttt{c4 h8} 17.exf5 \texttt{xf5} 18.0–0± White controls reliably the light squares in the centre and he will soon have two connected passed pawns on the queenside, Voelker – Hager, Bayern 2002.

a) 13...\texttt{b8}

Black attempts to maintain his pawn on b5, so that White’s bishop cannot occupy its most favourable placement on the c4-square. The main drawback of that move however is that Black’s b5-pawn becomes a liability and its defence overburdens his forces.

14.axb5 axb5 15.\texttt{d3}

White’s plan is rather simple. He wishes to attack Black’s b5-pawn with all his pieces and to occupy the a-file, while later his actions will depend on circumstances.
Black has played here mainly **a1) 15...\( \square e_6 \)**, but it looks like his most resilient defensive move is **a2) 15...\( \square e_7 \)**.

He has tried too:

15...d5? – This move weakens the light squares in the centre and on the kingside and it enables White to exchange advantageously the light-squared bishops. 16.exf5 \( \square xf5 \) (After 16...e4?, the opening of the e-file does not compensate Black’s loss of two pawns. 17.\( \square xe4 \) \( \square e8 \), Urbina – Caminos, San Salvador 2003, and here after 18.\( \square de3!+ \) – White not only preserves his couple of extra pawns, but he creates some dangerous threats.) 17.\( \square xf5 \) \( \square xf5 \) 18.0–0 e4 (In answer to 18...\( \square e8 \), Krantz – W.Schmidt, Esbjerg 1976, White can play 19.\( \square g4 \) \( \square d8 \) 20.\( \square e4! \) and he establishes total control over the light squares in the centre of the board.) 19.\( \square ce3 \) \( \square e5 \) 20.\( \square g4 \) \( \square e8 \), Holzschuh – Brener, Osterburg 2006, after 20...\( \square f5 \) 21.\( \square e1\)± Black has great problems with the protection of his e4-pawn, but here after 21.\( \square a6! \) \( \square c8 \) 22.\( \square c7 \) \( \square xc7 \) 23.\( \square d5+ \) \( \square h8 \) 24.\( \square xc6 \) \( \square d7 \) 25.\( h3\)± White simplifies the position quite favourably and Black loses unavoidably one of his weak pawns on e4, d6, or b5;

15...\( \square h8 \) – That move seems to be just a loss of time. 16.\( \square e2 \) \( \square e7 \) 17.\( \square xe7 \) \( \square xe7 \) 18.\( \square b4 \) \( \square b7 \) 19.0–0 \( \square e6 \), Ganguly – Buscar, Guelph 2005, and here after 20.\( \square a5\)± Black loses his b5-pawn and he obtains no positional pluses for it;

15...\( \square d7 \) – This bishop is much more passive here than on e6, but still the b5-pawn is safer. 16.0–0 g6 17.\( \square a6 \) \( \square b7 \) 18.\( \square e2 \) \( \square b8 \) 19.\( \square fa1\)± Black has no active counterplay at all and White can easily improve his position, for example with g2–g3, followed by h2–h4, A.Goldberg – Schachtetka, corr. 1982;

15...\( \square a5 \), Bacic – Milinkovic, Nova Gorica 2005 that is not the best square for Black’s knight. His defence is not any easier after 16.\( \square cb4 \) \( \square e6 \) (16...\( \square d7 \) – It looks like Black admits his mistake. 17.0–0 \( \square c6 \) 18.\( \square xc6 \) \( \square xc6 \) 19.\( \square b3 \) \( \square d7 \) 20.\( \square a5\) White has a long-lasting initiative thanks to his domination over the d5-outpost, the a-file and his pressure against the weak b5-pawn.) 17.0–0 \( \square b7 \) 18.\( \square c2 \) g6 19.\( \square a2\)± White has occupied the a-file and he is evidently ahead of his opponent in the creation of concrete threats.

**a1) 15...\( \square e6 \)**

That is the most popular move for Black, but it is hardly the best.
Chapter 10

16.\textit{We}2!
In case of 16.\textit{Cc}b4 \textit{Cb}4 17. \textit{Dd}b4, White can transpose to variation \textit{a2}), but the move in the text is better, because he wins a pawn and Black has problems proving any compensation for it.

16.\textit{Xd}5
Black has considerable difficulties after his other moves too:

Following 16...\textit{f}5 17.0-0 \textit{Xd}5 18.\textit{Exc}5 \textit{De}7 19.\textit{Cc}b5 \textit{Cb}6 20.\textit{Da}3 \textit{Dc}7 21.\textit{Cc}4± Black loses a pawn without any compensation at all, Wajnberg – B.Johnson, Email 1999;

After 16...\textit{Dd}7 17.\textit{Cc}b4 \textit{Xd}5 18.\textit{Exc}5 \textit{Dd}7, Diesen – Gvein, Oslo 2006, it deserves attention for White to continue with 19.\textit{Cc}6!? \textit{Xc}6 (After 19...\textit{Da}8 20.0-0± Black obtains no compensation for the eventual loss of his b5-pawn.) 20.\textit{Dxc}6 \textit{Db}6 (In the variation 20...d5 21.0-0 e4 22.\textit{Xxb}5 \textit{Dc}6 23.\textit{Da}4 \textit{Xxb}2 24.\textit{Xxb}2 \textit{Xxb}2 25.\textit{Dab}1± White’s passed c6-pawn looks quite threatening.) 21.\textit{Dc}4 g6 22.0-0 \textit{Dfc}8 23.\textit{Dg}4 \textit{Dd}8 24.\textit{Dc}4± White’s c6-pawn might become a considerable asset only in the endgame, but still he has the advantage, because his pieces are evidently more active.

17.\textit{Dxc}5 \textit{Dd}7 18.\textit{De}4 \textit{f}5
This is the most popular move for Black. He does not wish to defend passively and he tries to seize the initiative on the kingside.

18...\textit{We}8 – Black fails to preserve his b5-pawn in that fashion and he does not achieve anything with the transfer of his queen to the kingside, 19.0-0 \textit{f}5 20.\textit{Ba}5 \textit{e}4 21.\textit{Dxb}5 \textit{Wg}6 22.\textit{f}4± Black’s kingside counterplay has reached its dead end and White has remained with a solid extra pawn in the game Skrochocka – Baran, Krynica 2001.

18...\textit{Wb}6 19.\textit{Wf}5 \textit{h}6 20.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}6?, Muhrren – Shiraliyeva, Oropesa del Mar 2001, Black had better try here 20...\textit{Df}6 21.\textit{Wg}4 \textit{Da}8 22.0-0±, but White still would maintain a stable advantage thanks to the vulnerability of the light squares on Black’s kingside. Now, after 21.\textit{Df}3! \textit{Da}8 22.\textit{Da}8 \textit{Da}8 23.\textit{De}2 \textit{Df}4 24.g3 e4 25.\textit{De}4 \textit{Df}5 26.\textit{h}5+– Black manages to save his bishop indeed, but he pays a dear price for that. He has remained without a pawn and under a dangerous attack.

19.\textit{Dxb}5
19...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{V}}}}\)b6, Vilaltella – Porta, Spain 1999 (In answer to 19...e4, White obtains a considerable edge with the line: 20.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)b6 21.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)d7 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{Q}}}}\)h8 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{A}}}}\)a6±. It is even worse for Black to play 21...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{Q}}}}\)f6 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{C}}}}\)c6! \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xc6 23.dxc6 d5 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)a6 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)c7 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)a7+-, since the presence of opposite-coloured bishops on the board does not facilitate his defence, because White's c6-pawn is too difficult to be stopped. 25...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{Q}}}}\)f4 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)xc7 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{O}}}}\)xc7 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}\)a7 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}\)e5 28.b4 1–0 O’Donovan – Gilbert, Saint Vincent 2005.), and here White can improve his position considerably by transferring his bishop to the centre with: 20.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)d7 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{G}}}}\)6 (or 20...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{E}}}}\)a8 21.0–0±) 21.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{E}}}}\)e6+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{H}}}}\)h8 22.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{F}}}}\)f4 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)a6 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{C}}}}\)c7 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{G}}}}\)3±. If Black plays 24...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xe6, then after 25.dxe6, White's knight obtains an excellent outpost in the centre of the board, otherwise the knight-maneuvers would turn out to be a loss of time.

a2) 15...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{E}}}}\)e7

This is a logical decision, Black fights for the important d5-square.

16.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)b4

16...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xd5

Black defensive task is much more difficult after his other possibilities:

16...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)d7, Gauche – Bielefeldt, Florianopolis 1998, This looks like a loss of time in connection with the fight for the d5-square and White's most natural reaction seems to be 17.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xd5 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xd5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{C}}}}\)c6 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)b3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)d7 20.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{A}}}}\)a5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)b7 21.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)a3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)d7 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{H}}}}\)b4+, Black is doomed to a difficult defence, because of his weaknesses on b5 and d6;

16...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}\)b7 – Black's bishop will be very active here in case he manages to push f7-f5, but it would be rather easy for White to exchange it on that diagonal. 17.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)xe7+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)xe7 18.0–0 f5 (It is obvious worse for Black to play the passive line: 18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{A}}}}\)a8 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)e2 g6 20.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{A}}}}\)a5 f5, Pavlik – Skaric, Subotica 2004, and here after 21.exf5 gxf5 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}\)xb5±, or 21...e4 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{H}}}}\)xb5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{F}}}}\)xf5 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{E}}}}\)a1 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}\)b7 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{C}}}}\)c4+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{H}}}}\)h8 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{F}}}}\)xf5 gxf5 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{D}}}}\)d5± White remains with a solid extra pawn. The move 18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\)d8 does not re-
duce Black's difficulties, connected with the protection of his b5-pawn. 19.\texttt{\textgreek{e}2} \texttt{\textgreek{w}6} 20.\texttt{\textgreek{f}d1} \texttt{\textgreek{e}7}, Reschun – Biedekoepper, St. Veit 1995, and now after 21.\texttt{\textgreek{x}b5} \texttt{\textgreek{x}e4} 22.\texttt{\textgreek{x}e4} \texttt{\textgreek{x}b5} 23.\texttt{\textgreek{c}6} \texttt{\textgreek{b}7} 24.\texttt{\textgreek{c}4} \texttt{\textgreek{w}b6} 25.\texttt{\textgreek{b}4±} White dominates in the centre and on the queenside.) 19.exf5 e4 20.\texttt{\textgreek{x}b5} e3 21.\texttt{\textgreek{c}4+} \texttt{\textgreek{h}8} 22.fxe3± Black's piece-activity does not compensate fully his opponent's extra pawn and after 22...\texttt{\textgreek{x}e3+} 23.\texttt{\textgreek{h}1} \texttt{\textgreek{e}4} 24.\texttt{\textgreek{d}5±} White simplifies the position advantageously, Bindrich – Arnhold, Leutersdorf 2000.

Things are hardly any better for Black after the more active line: 22...\texttt{\textgreek{x}e3+} 23.\texttt{\textgreek{h}1} \texttt{\textgreek{x}g2+} (In the variation: 23...\texttt{\textgreek{e}4} 24.\texttt{\textgreek{e}2} \texttt{\textgreek{x}f5} 25.\texttt{\textgreek{x}e4} \texttt{\textgreek{x}e4} 26.\texttt{\textgreek{f}5} \texttt{\textgreek{x}f5} 27.\texttt{\textgreek{c}6±} Black has nothing to counter his opponent's passed pawns with.) 24.\texttt{\textgreek{x}g2} \texttt{\textgreek{e}4+} 25.\texttt{\textgreek{f}3} \texttt{\textgreek{e}4} 26.\texttt{\textgreek{e}1±} White's king shelter does not look so safe indeed, but Black can hardly exploit that in any way, while he remains a pawn down.

17.\texttt{\textgreek{c}xd5} \texttt{\textgreek{e}6} 17...f5?! – This move seems active only at first sight. In fact, it weakens a complex of squares in the centre. After 18.exf5 e4 19.\texttt{\textgreek{c}2!} \texttt{\textgreek{x}f5} 20.0–0 \texttt{\textgreek{d}7} 21.\texttt{\textgreek{d}4±} Black has problems with the protection of his second rank, as well with his vulnerable pawns on e4, d6 and b5, Stepanovic – Zacik, Slovakia 2003.

18.\texttt{\textgreek{b}4}
hurry to win a pawn and he should better exploit the fact that its protection ties up Black’s forces. He should improve the position of his pieces with the line: 21.\textit{c4}, for example after 21...\textit{xc4} 22.\textit{xc4} \textit{bxc4} 23.\textit{g3±}, or 21...\textit{d7} 22.\textit{b1!} \textit{e6} 23.\textit{a2±} Black maintains the material balance, but he cannot activate his pieces.\) 20.\textit{e2} \textit{d7} 21.\textit{a5} \textit{f8} 22.\textit{fa1±} – Black’s position looks solid, but he has no active counterplay in sight, Trygstad – Gvein, Oslo 2006.

18...\textit{a8}! – This is the most natural move, because Black simplifies the position and he impedes White’s attack against his weaknesses, Ehlert – Kuehl, Kappeln 1990, and now after 19.\textit{xa8} \textit{xa8} 20.0–0 \textit{b8} 21.\textit{e2} \textit{b7} 22.\textit{g3} \textit{g6} 23.\textit{h4} \textit{d8} 24.\textit{a1}+ \hfill

White has the initiative, since he can easily attack his opponent’s weak \textit{d6} and \textit{b5}-pawns, while Black has problems creating counterplay. The following variations prove how difficult Black’s position is:

24...\textit{f5} 25.\textit{exf5} \textit{gx5} 26.\textit{xb5} \textit{xb5}? 27.\textit{xb5} \textit{xb5} 28.\textit{a8}+– The position has been simplified and White should not have great problems to realize his extra pawn;

24...\textit{b6}!? – That is the most active placement of Black’s dark-squared bishop. 25.\textit{xb5} \textit{c5} (The rook and pawn ending is very difficult for Black after 25...\textit{xf2}+ 26.\textit{xf2} \textit{b6}+ 27.\textit{e1} \textit{xb5} 28.\textit{xb5} \textit{xb5} 29.\textit{a6} \textit{d5} 30.\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5} 31.\textit{xd5} \textit{e6} 32.\textit{b4}± White’s pawns are far advanced and Black must fight hard for the draw, for example: 32...\textit{d3} 33.\textit{c4} \textit{xe3} 34.\textit{b5}+, or 32...\textit{f5} 33.\textit{c4} \textit{d4} 34.\textit{c6} \textit{d3} 35.\textit{b5} \textit{xe3} 36.\textit{b6}+– and White’s pawns are unstoppable in both cases.) 26.\textit{a6} \textit{d7} 27.\textit{d2}± White will not realize his extra pawn easily, but Black still does not have a full compensation for it;

24...\textit{g7} 25.\textit{a6} \textit{c8} (or 25...\textit{a8} 26.\textit{xb5} \textit{g4} 27.\textit{d3} \textit{b6} 28.\textit{f1}?!±) 26.\textit{xb5} \textit{f5} 27.\textit{b4}! \textit{c5} 28.\textit{d3}± and White has an extra pawn, but Black’s pieces are active and its realization will be rather difficult.

19.0–0
19...g6
Black’s only possible counterplay is connected with the advance f7-f5. That is not so easy to prepare, though.

The immediate move 19...f5? is obviously premature and leads to White’s complete control over the light squares in the centre. 20.exf5 gxf5 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.a6 e7? (Black could have maintained some illusion of a resistance only with the line: 22...d6 23.d5+ h8 24.a8±) 23.c6 b8 24.d5+ h8 25.a7 1-0 Ortiz Fernandez – Blanco Fernandez, Oviedo 2004.

19...h8?! 20.e2 f5, van Allen – Plukkel, Haarlem 2001, and here after 21.exf5 gxf5 22.dxe5 dxe5 23.fd1± White has a great advantage, because of his control over the centre after the trade of the light-squared bishops.

19...b7 20.a6 fb8 21.e2 b6 22.xb6 xb6 23.a1± Black has succeeded in exchanging a pair of rooks indeed, but he still fails to protect his b5-pawn. 23...b7? (After 23...g6 24.a5± White wins a pawn.) 24.xb5 e7 25.c4 xc4 26.xc4+– White’s pieces are much more active and he has an extra pawn too, Jadoul – Fournell, Luxembourg 1987.

In answer to 19...d8, Ahn – Sprenger, Germany 1999, it deserves attention for White to continue with 20.e2!?, and if Black continues with the transfer of his bishop, then after 20...b6 21.a6 c5 22.c6! a8 23.xa8 xxa8 24.xb5 xc7 25.b4 b6 26.c4± he will remain a pawn down.

19...fc8, Kriens – J. Larsen, Soro 1982, and here after 20.e2 d8 21.a6 c5 22.fal± Black’s position is solid, but quite passive.

20.e2 fc8
Otherwise, Black can hardly protect his b5-pawn:

...h5?! 21.a5 f4 22.xb5± Antognini – Lehmann, Winterthur 2003;

20...f5 – That move only creates additional weaknesses. 21.a6! h8, Fabrega – Rodriguez, Buenos Aires 1995, and here after 22.exf5 gxf5 22.c6 b7 23.xb5± White not only wins a pawn, but he creates powerful pressure against his opponent’s central pawns.

21.a5 c4 22.fal b7 23.xc4 bx4 24.d1±

Black’s weak c4 and d6-pawns need protection and he has problems activating his pieces. In the diagrammed position, in the game Zapata – Hazim, Santo Domingo 2001, Black tried to obtain some
kingside counterplay with the line: 24...f5?! But White could have increased his advantage considerably with 25.exf5 gxf5 (It is just terrible for Black to try 25...Wxf5 26.gxh6+ -) 26.EXe5 dx e5 27.EXd7 EDxd7 28.g3 Ee2 (After 28...e4 29.Wh5 Eg7 30.h4 Ec1 31.Wxf5 Ec8 32.Ec5+- Black’s pawns are so weak and his king is unsafe, so the position can be evaluated as winning for White.) 29.Wxe5 Ef8 30.Ec6 Ebxb2 31.Ee6+ Eh8 32.Ed5+- White has a material advantage and an excellent piece-coordination.

b) 13...bxa4

This is the most popular move for Black. He complies with the appearance of a weak pawn on his queenside, but opens the b-file in order to organize some counterplay.

14.Exa4

We will analyze thoroughly here: b1) 14...Ec7, b2) 14...Ed8 and b3) 14...Eb7.

The main line here for Black – 14...a5, will be dealt with in the following chapters. The other moves like 14...Ec7; 14...g6; 14...Ed6 – have been analyzed in Chapter 8 (see 12...Ec7; 12...g6 and 12...Ed6 accordingly).

Black has tried other possibilities too:

In answer to 14...Ec8, White is not obliged to transpose to the main lines with 15.b3 a5 16.Ed4, but he can instead repel Black’s bishop to an unsatisfactory position with the line: 15.h4! Eh6 (Naturally, after 15...Edh4?! 16.Wh5 Edxf2+ 17.Edxf2 h6 18.b4 f5 19.Ed4+- Black’s compensation for the piece is insufficient, Solleveld – Prange, Vlissingen 2003.) 16.Exa6 Ebxb2 (Following 16...Ed7 17.Ed2±, Black remains a pawn down in comparison to the line with Ebxb2 and he has obtained nothing for it, Volzhin – Chevallier, Metz 1994.) 17.Edc8 Ee8 18.Ed4 Eb7 (It is not any better for Black to try 18...Ec8 19.0–0 Ed5 20.Ed4 Eb4 21.cxb4 Ec6 22.Ed3±, because White has a great advantage thanks to his powerful knight in the centre and his outside passed pawn, Iordachescu – Sawatzki, Berlin 1995.) 19.0–0 Ed8 (After 19...Wh8 20.Ed4 Eb4 21.Ed6 Eb8 22.Edxb4± White has a solid extra pawn, Scheuermann – Cartagena, Email 1999. It is hardly better for Black to continue with 19...Ec8 20.Edb4 Edxb4 21.Ed6 Eb8 22.Edxb4± – and White has an almighty knight on the d5-outpost and a dangerous passed pawn.
on the queenside, moreover that Black's bishop on h6 can be hardly transferred to a better placement anytime soon, Ramus – Blankenberg, Internet 2001.) 20.c7 b3 (After 20...b8 21.e7+ h8 22. c8 b6, Pott – Novoa, Internet 2004, White can play 23.d5±, winning a pawn and preserving all his positional pluses.) 21.cb4 b6 22.c6 xd1 23.exd1 c5 24.f3 d8 25.e7+ f8 26.d5 d2 27.d5 b7 28.c7±. The sequence of almost forced moves has led to a position in which the difference in the activity of pieces is obvious even to the naked eye. White's knight on d5 controls the entire board and Black's attempt to repel it from the centre would lead to considerable material losses for him: 28.g6 29.xd2 b1+ (After 29...xd2 30.h6, Black is forced to give back the exchange, because of the checkmating threat: 30...xd5 31.exd5 c5 32.xf7+ e8 33.xh7++ and White remains with a couple of extra pawns in the endgame.) 30.h2 gxf5 31.b4+ and Black loses at least a pawn and he will be forced to defend passively, because of the unsafe placement of his king, Read – Saarenpaeae, corr. 1999.

14...f5?! – This premature activity leads to the occupation of the central light squares by White and excellent attacking chances for him. 15.h4! h6, Huisman – Delisle, Aix les Bains 2006 (After 15...e7 16.c4 b7 17.exf5 xf5 18.d3 f7 19.c3± – White's pieces control the centre and they are tremendously active.), and here White would control completely the light squares in the centre after the natural line: 16.exf5 xf5 (It is not better for Black to try 16...b8 17.b4 xf5 18.xa6 c8 19.c3±, or 17...e7 18.g4 b7 19.g2± and White remains with a solid extra pawn in both variations.) 17.g4 xc2 (The active move 17...e6 loses a piece after 18.g5 d4 19.g2 d7 20.a2+) 18.xc2 f4 19.xd3 h6 20.e4+ – Black's pawns on a6 and d6 are weak and his pieces are passive and lack coordination. Meanwhile, he must take into account the possibility of the pawn-break g4-g5, after which White will obtain excellent attacking chances.

14...b8 – Black plans to organize some counterplay by transferring his knight to the c5-square. 15.c4 d7 16.e2 c5 17.a3 b7 18.0–0 a5 19.f1 a4 – All that seems quite reasonable, because Black fixes his opponent's weak pawn on b2, but he gives up the control over the important b4-square. (In answer to 19...g6, Simonovic – Ning Chun-hong, Beijing 1997, it is possible for White to continue with 20.b4 axb4 21.xa8 xxa8 22.cxb4 d6 23.g3± and the position is very unpleasant for Black, because his pieces are very passive and
White’s passed b4-pawn is potentially quite dangerous. 19...\(\text{\textit{h}}\text{8} 20.\text{b4 axb4 21.\textit{\textit{e}}\text{xa8 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{xa8 22.\textit{\textit{c}}\text{xb4 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{e6 23.g3 \textit{\textit{b}}\text{7 24.\textit{\textit{d}}\text{d3 g6 25.h4+}}}}}}\)

Traut – Polakovic, corr. 1996; 23...\(\text{\textit{\textit{b}}\text{8 24.b5 \textit{\textit{d}}\text{d8 25.\textit{\textit{c}}\text{ce3 \textit{\textit{d}}\textit{d4 26.\textit{\textit{a}}\text{2 \textit{\textit{g}}\text{5 27.b6\pm}}}}}}\)

White’s far advanced passed b6-pawn provides him with clearly better prospects, Goldberg – Goetz, Germany 1995.). After 20.\(\text{\textit{\textit{c}}\text{b4, Black has tried 20...\textit{\textit{h}}\text{6 21.f3 \textit{\textit{g}}\text{5, Tchen – Dores, corr. 1993, and here after 22.\textit{\textit{d}}\text{d1 g6 23.\textit{\textit{b}}\text{b6 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{e3+ 24.\textit{\textit{f}}\text{f1\pm}}}} \text{it turns out that Black loses a pawn, without any compensation. It is hardly any better for him to opt for 20...\textit{\textit{g}}\text{6 21.\textit{\textit{d}}\text{d3 \textit{\textit{b}}\text{3 22.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{b}3 axb3 23.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{a8 \textit{\textit{a}}\text{xa8 24.\textit{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{b}3 f5 25.\textit{\textit{c}}\text{c4\pm}}}}}}}}}}\)

and the weak pawn on b3 will soon be lost, while Black’s attempt to obtain some counterplay with the line: 25...\(\text{\textit{\textit{f}}\text{7 26.exf5 gxf5 27.\textit{\textit{c}}\text{c6 \textit{\textit{x}}\text{xc6 28.\textit{\textit{xc6 d7, Vrbljanac – S.Yudin, Heraklio, 2004, leads after 29.\textit{\textit{\textit{b}}\text{6 e4 30.\textit{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{b3 f4 31.\textit{\textit{c}4+- to a lost position for him. He is helpless against the oncoming march forward of White’s b2-pawn.}}}}}}}}\)

b1) 14...\(\text{\textit{\textit{e}}\text{7 15.\textit{\textit{c}4}}\)

15...\(\text{\textit{\textit{x}}\text{xd5}}\)

White occupies the light squares in the centre after that move.

About 15...\(\text{\textit{\textit{a}5 – see 14...\textit{\textit{a}5; as for 15...\textit{\textit{h}}\text{8 16.0–0 – see 14...\textit{\textit{h}}\text{8 15.\textit{\textit{c}4 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{7 16.0–0; 15...\textit{\textit{b}7 16.0–0 – see 14...\textit{\textit{b}7 15.\textit{\textit{c}4 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{7 16.0–0.}}}}}}}}\)

15...\(\text{\textit{\textit{d}}\text{7 16.\textit{\textit{a}2 \textit{\textit{h}}\text{8 (Black has no compensation for the pawn in the line: 16...\textit{\textit{c}}\text{8 17.\textit{\textit{c}x}e7+ \textit{\textit{e}}\text{7 18.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{a}6 \textit{\textit{e}}\text{a8 19.\textit{\textit{c}4 \textit{\textit{x}a2 20.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}a2 \textit{\textit{b}5, Morris – Hoxie, New York 1991, and here after 21.\textit{\textit{a}3, it is just terrible for Black to try 21...\textit{\textit{b}6 22.\textit{\textit{b}3+- . White has a clear advantage after 21...\textit{\textit{\textit{b}8 22.\textit{\textit{d}5 \textit{\textit{a}6 23.b4\pm, but even after 21...\textit{\textit{a}6 22.\textit{\textit{c}4 \textit{\textit{b}7 23.\textit{\textit{d}5 \textit{\textit{a}6 24.\textit{\textit{c}4\pm, or 22...\textit{\textit{x}c4 23.\textit{\textit{c}x}c4 \textit{\textit{a}8 24.0–0 \textit{\textit{\textit{e}}\text{xe}4 25.\textit{\textit{x}d}6\pm White ends up with a solid extra pawn.)}}}}}}}}}}}}}}\)

17.0–0 \(\text{\textit{\textit{e}}\text{8, Zapata – Gamboa, Neiva 2005, and here it is not clear what Black has to do in order to counter White’s extra pawn after 18.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}a}6 \textit{\textit{\textit{x}a}6 19.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}a}6 \textit{\textit{b}6 20.\textit{\textit{c}b}4\pm}}}}\)

15...\(\text{\textit{\textit{e}}\text{6 – Black can hardly prove any worthwhile compensation for the sacrificed pawn after 16.\textit{\textit{\textit{b}6 \textit{\textit{a}6 17.\textit{\textit{\textit{x}d}5 18.exd5 f5 (or 18...\textit{\textit{b}5 19.\textit{\textit{b}4\pm}) 19.0–0 \textit{\textit{g}6, Schlitter – Gropp, Herborn 1994, and now, following 20.\textit{\textit{\textit{e}}\text{2 e4 21.\textit{\textit{d}4 \textit{\textit{e}7 22.g3 \textit{\textit{e}5 23.\textit{\textit{c}6 \textit{\textit{f}6 24.\textit{\textit{x}e}5 \textit{\textit{\textit{e}5 25.f4 exf3 26.\textit{\textit{\textit{f}5 dxe5 27.\textit{\textit{f}x}f3\pm White’s pawns look much more dangerous, moreover that one}}}}}}}}}}}}}}\)

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of them is extra, but even in the variation: 20...\textit{\textsc{c}}f4 21.\textit{\textsc{w}}b5 e4 22.\textit{\textsc{d}}d4\textpm, or 21...\textit{\textsc{w}}f6 22.g3 \textit{\textsc{g}}g6 23.\textit{\textsc{w}}d7\textpm Black has no compensation for the pawn at all. White must play very precisely, though.

\textbf{16.\textit{\textsc{w}}xd5 \textit{\textsc{a}}d7}

That seems to be the most tenacious defence for Black.

White's advantage is quite evident in the variation: 16...\textit{\textsc{a}}a7 17.0–0 \textit{\textsc{h}}h8 18.\textit{\textsc{w}}e2 f5 19.\textit{\textsc{c}}b4\textpm, because he can capture the a6-pawn at any moment and Black has no counterplay in sight, Pereira – Cadillon, Evora 2006.

16...\textit{\textsc{a}}b8 – It looks at first sight that Black might obtain some counterplay along the b-file after that move, but following 17.\textit{\textsc{c}}b4 \textit{\textsc{w}}b6 18.0–0 a5 19.\textit{\textsc{c}}c6 \textit{\textsc{d}}d7 20.\textit{\textsc{c}}xb8 \textit{\textsc{a}}xa4 21.\textit{\textsc{w}}xa4 \textit{\textsc{a}}xb8, Chatte – Huisman, Romans 1999, White can seize the initiative on the light squares with the line: 22.b4 axb4 23.\textit{\textsc{b}}1\textpm. Here, the move 23...\textit{\textsc{g}}6?! leads to a loss of a pawn for Black: 24.\textit{\textsc{c}}xb4 \textit{\textsc{w}}c7 25.\textit{\textsc{x}}xf7+! \textit{\textsc{g}}7 26.\textit{\textsc{c}}xb8 \textit{\textsc{x}}xb8 27.\textit{\textsc{b}}3\textpm, while in case of 23...\textit{\textsc{e}}8 24.\textit{\textsc{x}}xb4 \textit{\textsc{w}}c7 25.\textit{\textsc{b}}7 \textit{\textsc{w}}xc3 26.g3 \textit{\textsc{h}}8 27.\textit{\textsc{x}}f7\textpm, despite the considerable simplifications, Black's defence will be rather difficult, because of his weak a5-pawn.

\textbf{18.0–0 \textit{\textsc{w}}b6}, Szuecs – Hogyé, Hungary 1994, and here White has a very powerful maneuver \textbf{19.\textit{\textsc{a}}a3?! \textit{\textsc{c}}5 20.\textit{\textsc{c}}c4\textpm}. Black has great problems neutralizing his opponent's pressure, for example: 20...\textit{\textsc{b}}5 21.\textit{\textsc{b}}3 a5 22.\textit{\textsc{g}}4 \textit{\textsc{f}}6 23.\textit{\textsc{f}}a1, and in the variation: 23...\textit{\textsc{x}}c4 24.\textit{\textsc{x}}c4 \textit{\textsc{a}}8 25.\textit{\textsc{e}}4 26.\textit{\textsc{d}}1\textpm. White has a powerful initiative on the light squares, while Black has no counterplay whatsoever. Also, in the line: 23...\textit{\textsc{a}}4 24.\textit{\textsc{a}}3 \textit{\textsc{b}}8 25.\textit{\textsc{b}}4 \textit{\textsc{c}}7 26.\textit{\textsc{b}}2\textpm it is obvious that Black would lose his a4-pawn sooner or later.

\textbf{b2) 14...\textit{\textsc{h}}8}
It would be difficult for Black to prepare f7-f5 without that move.

15.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}4

The complications are rather unclear after 15.h4 \textit{\textcircled{h}h}6 16.g4 \textit{\textcircled{f}f}4∞

15...\textit{\textcircled{e}e}7

About 15...a5 – see 14...a5.

In answer to 15...\textit{\textcircled{a}a}5, Smeets – van der Wiel, Hilversum 2007, White obtains a slight but stable edge after 16.h4 \textit{\textcircled{h}h}6 17.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}e3 \textit{\textcircled{b}b}8 18.\textit{\textcircled{d}d}3±, and here in case of 18...
\textit{\textcircled{x}x}e3 19.\textit{\textcircled{x}x}e3 \textit{\textcircled{e}e}6 20.\textit{\textcircled{a}a}3 \textit{\textcircled{b}b}7 21.b4± Black has problems bringing his knight on b7 into the actions, while in the variation: 18...
\textit{\textcircled{x}x}b2 19.\textit{\textcircled{w}a}1 \textit{\textcircled{d}d}2 20.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}4 \textit{\textcircled{x}c}4 21.\textit{\textcircled{x}c}4 \textit{\textcircled{e}d}5 22.\textit{\textcircled{d}d}5± his two bishops are not enough to compensate the exchange, because of the wonderful position of his opponent's knight, for example after 22...f5 23.\textit{\textcircled{a}a}3 fxe4 24.\textit{\textcircled{x}e}4 \textit{\textcircled{f}f}5 25.\textit{\textcircled{b}b}4 \textit{\textcircled{e}e}8 26.c4± White has consolidated his position and Black has no active prospects.

The move 15...g6 creates a target for White on the kingside. 16.\textit{\textcircled{w}e}2 \textit{\textcircled{a}a}5 17.h4 \textit{\textcircled{h}h}6 18.h5± (White controls the centre and he can organize active actions on both sides of the board much easier than his opponent.) 18...\textit{\textcircled{g}g}5, Toth – Laszlo, Hungary 1996, and here after 19.\textit{\textcircled{c}e}3 \textit{\textcircled{d}d}7 20.\textit{\textcircled{a}a}1
\textit{\textcircled{x}e}3 21.\textit{\textcircled{x}e}3 \textit{\textcircled{x}c}4 22.\textit{\textcircled{x}c}4 \textit{\textcircled{e}e}6 23.\textit{\textcircled{d}d}3 \textit{\textcircled{b}b}6 24.0–0† Black has compromised the dark squares on his kingside and the light squares in the centre. Meanwhile his pawns on a6 and d6 are very weak too.

15...\textit{\textcircled{b}b}8 – This move leads to the exchange of the weak pawn on a6, which is favourable for Black indeed, but White manages instead to create powerful pressure against Black's vulnerable d6-pawn. 16.b4 a5 17.0–0 axb4 18.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}xb4 \textit{\textcircled{d}d}7 19.\textit{\textcircled{a}a}6± and despite some simplifications, Black's defence is difficult, because White's pieces on the queenside are quite active. 19...\textit{\textcircled{a}a}5 20.\textit{\textcircled{e}e}2 \textit{\textcircled{c}c}8 21.\textit{\textcircled{a}a}7 \textit{\textcircled{b}b}7?! (It would be more tenacious for Black to defend with 21...\textit{\textcircled{d}d}7 22.\textit{\textcircled{w}c}2±, but he will have problems then as well.) 22.\textit{\textcircled{w}a}4 \textit{\textcircled{a}a}8 23.\textit{\textcircled{x}a}8 \textit{\textcircled{x}a}8 24.\textit{\textcircled{b}b}6 \textit{\textcircled{a}a}7 25.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}4 \textit{\textcircled{a}a}8 26.\textit{\textcircled{d}d}6± and the position is almost winning for White, because of his extra pawn and active pieces, Zapata – Remon, Cienfuegos 1983.

16.0–0 f5

About 16...\textit{\textcircled{b}b}7 17.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}xe7 – see 14...\textit{\textcircled{b}b}7 15.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}4 \textit{\textcircled{e}e}7 16.0–0 \textit{\textcircled{h}h}8 17.\textit{\textcircled{x}e}7.

In answer to 16...\textit{\textcircled{g}g}6, Betko – Chmelik, Ruzomberok 1996, it looks very aggressive for White to continue with 17.\textit{\textcircled{c}c}e3 a5 18.\textit{\textcircled{f}f}5±

17.\textit{\textcircled{x}e}7 \textit{\textcircled{w}e}7

The other capture is not better for Black after 17...\textit{\textcircled{x}e}7 18.\textit{\textcircled{e}e}3 fxe4 19.\textit{\textcircled{d}d}5 \textit{\textcircled{b}b}8 20.\textit{\textcircled{x}e}4± White has a total control over the light squares in the centre and if Black captures the pawn, he would come
under a dangerous attack: 20...\texttt{AXB2} 21.\texttt{WH5} \texttt{H6} 22.\texttt{WG6}\textsuperscript{+} The light squares in Black's camp are so weak that he can hardly survive the attack. 22...\texttt{DG8} 23.\texttt{WH7+} \texttt{DF7} 24.\texttt{AD5+} \texttt{DE8} 25.\texttt{WG6+} \texttt{D7} 26.\texttt{AE6+} \texttt{DC7} 27.\texttt{AC4+-}

18.\texttt{AD5} \texttt{AB7}, Hartikainen – Saastamoinen, Finland 1998, and now after 19.\texttt{EXF5} \texttt{EXF5} 20.\texttt{EB4} \texttt{AXD5} 21.\texttt{WXD5} \texttt{EAF8} 22.\texttt{EB7±} White dominates in the centre and his opponent's pawns on \texttt{A6} and \texttt{D6} are very weak.

b3) 14...\texttt{AB7}

Black leaves his pawn on \texttt{A6} and it is even more vulnerable there, but he considers it more important to preserve his control over the b5-square. Meanwhile, he keeps the a5-square free, so that he can activate his knight.

15.\texttt{AC4}

This is a standard move. White exploits the fact that his opponent does not have a pawn on \texttt{B5} and he places his bishop on the most active position. His main task is to keep the control over the important d5-outpost.

15...\texttt{DA5}

Black is trying to activate his knight, taking advantage of the somewhat unstable placement of White's pieces on the queenside.

It is only a transposition to the main line, analyzed in Chapter 11, if Black plays 15...a5 16.0–0 – see 14...a5 15.\texttt{AC4} \texttt{AB7} 16.0–0.

15...\texttt{G6} – That is a reliable, but a bit passive move, Susnik – Breznik, Bled 2000, and here after 16.0–0 \texttt{DE7} 17.\texttt{CE3} a5 18.\texttt{DXE7+ WX7} 19.\texttt{DXD5±} there arises a standard position with a slight but stable advantage for White, because of his queenside pressure and his reliable hold on the centre.

15...\texttt{DB8} – This move is connected with the idea to deploy the knight on \texttt{C5}. 16.0–0 \texttt{DD7} (about 16...a5 – see 14...a5 15.\texttt{AC4} \texttt{DB7} 16.0–0 \texttt{DB8}, Chapter 11) 17.\texttt{WE2} a5 (about 17...\texttt{DC5} 18.\texttt{EA3} a5 19.\texttt{EFA1} – see 17...a5) 18.\texttt{EFA1} \texttt{DH8} (about 18...\texttt{DC5} 19.\texttt{EA3} – see 14...\texttt{DB8} 15.\texttt{AC4} \texttt{DD7} 16.\texttt{WE2} \texttt{DC5} 17.\texttt{EA3} \texttt{DB7} 18.0–0 a5 19.\texttt{EFA1}) 19.B4 axB4 20.\texttt{AXA8} \texttt{AXA8} 21.cxB4 \texttt{AXD5} (It is too bad for Black to play 21...
b6? 22.axb6 axb6 23.xf7+, because White remains with an extra pawn. It is not preferable for Black to try 21...xf6 22.xf6 xf6 23.b5+, since White's passed pawn is supported by his pieces and it is very dangerous. In answer to 21...b7, Svatos - Babula, Czech Republic 1998, it is possible for White to follow with 22.ce3 f6 23.xf6 xf6 24.d5+ with a considerable advantage, because of the dominance over the d5-square and the possibility of advancing the b-pawn.) 22.xd5 b6 23.c6 f5 24.exf5 d5, Matsuura - Pacheco, Sao Paulo 1995, after 24...c8 25.b5 xf5 26.e3± Black's pawns remain immobile and it looks quite energetic for White to opt for 25.a6! d4 (Black is lost after 25...xf5 26.b5 c8 27.a8 ef8 28.xd5+-) 26.d3 c7 27.b5± and White has excellent chances of materializing his extra pawn.

15...e7 - White is much better prepared for the fight for the important d5-outpost. 16.0-0

![Chess Diagram](image)

and now:

16...h8 (about 16...a5 - see Chapter 11) 17.xe7 xe7 (Black should avoid the line 17...xe7 18.d5 d7 19.e3 fb8 20.b4+, because after the unavoidable exchange of the light-squared bishops, White's knight on d5 would control too many important squares. In addition, Black's a6-pawn remains too weak, Bezo - Krajovic, Trencianske Teplice 2005.) 18.d5 a5 19.a3 ab8 20.xa5± and White remains with a solid extra pawn, Manik - Chmelik, Slovakia 1995;

16...b8 - Black has great problems with the protection of his a6-pawn after that move. 17.e7+ e7 18.e2 d7 19.fal c6 20.b4± Dorer - L.Webb, Internet 2004;

16...a7 - The idea to place the heavy pieces into the corner will hardly find too many followers. 17.d3 a8 18.fal± Purgar - Racki, Delnice 2005;

16...xd5 17.xd5 xd5? (It is more accurate for Black to defend with 17...d7 18.a5 c7 19.a2 fb8 20.d3+, although White still maintains his edge, because of his control over the d5-outpost and the possible pressure against Black's weak a6 and d6-pawns.) 18.xd5± - White has managed to trade advantageously the light-squared bishops and Black's defence is very problematic. He failed to survive after 18...e7 19.b4 b6 20.fal fc8 21.d3 a5 22.d5+-, since White had decisive material gains in the game.
Chapter 10

K. Simonian – P. Lovkov, Rybinsk 1997, as well as in the variation: 18...a5 19.\(\text{d}a3\) \(\text{e}7\) 20.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{c}7\) 21.\(\text{f}a1\) – Black’s position was totally compromised and he was a pawn down, Nokso Koivisto – Eriksson, Turku 1996.

15...\(\text{h}8\) – That move is necessary if Black wishes to prepare f7-f5 and to try to seize the initiative on the kingside. 16.0–0 f5 (The move 16...g6, Bartholomew – Rhee, Las Vegas 2004, seems less aggressive, but more solid than 16...f5, nevertheless Black might have problems with the protection of his a6-pawn, for example after 17.b4 \(\text{e}7\) 18.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{xd}5\) 19.\(\text{x}d5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 20.\(\text{xd}5\)+ White manages to simplify the position and he can easily activate his knight, while Black’s bishop is not so useful, because he must take care of the protection of his weak a6 and d6-pawns. 16...\(\text{a}5\) – after that try, Black’s previous move looks like a loss of a tempo. 17.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 18.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{b}7\) 19.\(\text{c}4\) a5 20.b4\(\text{b}4\)+ The main drawback of Black’s position is his knight on b7, which has no moves whatsoever, Kukk – Tsvetkov, corr. 2003.) 17.exf5 \(\text{xf}5\) (In answer to 17...\(\text{e}7\) 18.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{xe}7\), Lipcak – Munk, Slovakia 2002, White can preserve his extra pawn with the line: 19.\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{c}6\) 20.\(\text{g}4\) a5 21.\(\text{e}3\)+) 18.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{f}8\) 19.\(\text{h}5\) \(\text{h}6\) 20.\(\text{ce}3\) \(\text{e}7\) 21.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{xe}7\), Boeykens – Fletcher, Chalkidiki 2002, and here after 22.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{f}6\) 23.\(\text{x}h6\) White compromises his opponent’s pawn structure on the kingside, for example 23...\(\text{x}h6\) (After 23...\(\text{gxh}6\) 24.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{g}8\) 25.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 26.\(\text{f}3\)+ Black loses a pawn.) 24.\(\text{x}h6\) \(\text{gxh}6\) 25.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{ab}8\) (It is hardly better for Black to try 25...\(\text{f}7\) 26.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{g}8\) 27.g3\(\text{f}3\) 28.\(\text{a}1\) \(\text{g}7\) 27.f3\(\text{f}3\)+ – Black has problems protecting his queenside weaknesses and his doubled h-pawns are an evident liability in his position.

16.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{c}6\)

That is the most logical line for Black.

In answer to 16...\(\text{c}8\), it is simplest for White to transpose to the main line with 17.h4 \(\text{h}6\) 18.\(\text{ce}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 19.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{xe}3\) 20.\(\text{xe}3\) \(\text{b}5\) (Naturally, it is very bad for Black to try 20...\(\text{xe}4\) 21.\(\text{a}4\)+) 21.\(\text{f}5\).

16...\(\text{h}8\) – After that solid move, the idea to maneuver the knight to the edge of the board looks senseless. 17.b4 \(\text{c}6\) 18.0–0 \(\text{e}7\), Brandl – Gindl, Poland 1991, and here after 19.\(\text{ce}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 20.\(\text{a}5\) \(\text{b}5\) 21.c4 \(\text{c}6\) 22.\(\text{d}3\) g6 23.\(\text{d}1\)+ White consolidates his position in the centre and he prepares to break through on the queenside with b4-b5, or c4-c5.
White must play accurately, since after 17...b4?! b7 18.a3 a5 19.c4 c5± his pieces are awkwardly placed and dis coordi nated.

17...b5
That is the most natural move for Black, since he thus prevents his opponent’s king from finding a safe haven on the kingside.

17...h8?! – This is just a half measure. 18.0–0 b5 (Black cannot be happy with his position after 18...f5 19.exf5 xf5 20.de3! e8 21.d5 c8 22.b4 – he loses his a6-pawn and he can hardly prove sufficient compensation for it.) 19.e1 b7 (After 19...f5 20.exf5 xf5 21.de3 e8 22.b4 b7 23.d5± White sends his opponent’s knight to its most passive position and he can easily attack Black’s queenside weaknesses, Houtman – Gallet, Internet 2004, it looks like Black’s most reliable line is 19...c4 20.xc4 xc4 21.ce3 b5 22.g3 a5 23. h4+ although even then White maintains a stable advantage thanks to his active pieces and the dominance over the d5-outpost.) 20.c3 (White has the edge too after 20.b4 a5 21.b3±) 20...c5 – Black tries to bring his knight into action and that is his most logical line. (It is bad for him to opt for 20.xe3 21.xe3± Melao – Paessler, corr. 2000, as well as 20...a5 21.c4 d7 22.b4 – and Black’s knight is stuck for long on the b7-square.) 21.wf3 d3 (After 21...xe3 22.xe3 d3 23.e2 f4 24.d2 f6 25.h1 c6 26.a5 g6 27.b1 fd8 28.c2± Black’s counterplay is over, while his weaknesses remain on the board.) 22.b1 xb1 23.xb1 xe3 24.xe3 and the position has been simplified indeed, but Black still has problems. He must either withstand a powerful pressure against his a6-pawn, or allow White to create a dangerous passed pawn.

17...b7 – Black’s knight will be long out of action after that move. 18.b4 a5 19.0–0 axb4 20.cxb4 b5 21.e1± Fontaine – Palmblad, Stockholm 2003.

18.h4 h6
About 18...f4 19.ce3 xe3 20.xe3 – see 18...h6 19.ce3 xe3 20.xe3.

19.ce3

19...xe3
The other moves are worse for Black, because he has problems protecting his d6-pawn.

19...h8 20.f5 c4 21.xc4 xc4 22.b3 b5 23.c4 d7 24. xd6 g6 25.c5 f5, Kaminski –
Todorovic, Vrnjacka Banja 1990, and here after 26.h5 \( \text{g5} \) 27.hxg6 \( \text{xg6} \) 28.b4+-- White has a decisive advantage, because of his extra pawn and his powerful knight.

19...\( \text{b7} \) 20.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{e8} \) (In answer to 20...\( \text{c5} \), Zontakh – Pisk, Sala 1995, White can pose great problems for Black with the move 21.c4, for example after 21...\( \text{d7} \) 22.\( \text{xe}6+ \) \( \text{xh6} \) 23.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{e4} \) 24.\( \text{b1}+-- \) Black is under the threat of a terrible attack and he loses unavoidably several pawns.) 21.\( \text{xe}6+ \) \( \text{h6} \) 22.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 23.\( \text{d2}+-- \) -- Black's pieces are passive and his king is vulnerable, Edwards – Blumetti, USA 1989.

20.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{c8} \)

White obtains a great advantage much quicker after Black’s other moves.

In answer to 20...\( \text{a7} \), Rechel – Beshukov, Anapa 1991, it looks very good for White to continue with 21.b4 \( \text{b7} \) 22.\( \text{d5} \)

20...\( \text{c7} \) – Black thus loses a couple of tempi, but he deflects his opponent’s knight away from the f5-square. 21.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{d8} \), Quadri – Gallet, Email 2001, and here after 22.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{c4} \) 23.\( \text{xc4} \) \( \text{xc4} \) 24.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e6} \) 25.\( \text{h6} \) \( \text{g6} \) 26.0–0 \( \text{g5} \) 27.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{xh6} \) 28.\( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{f4} \) 29.\( \text{d3}+ \) White’s queenside pawns are tremendously dangerous.

After 20...\( \text{b7} \) 21.\( \text{d5}+ \) no matter what Black’s does, his position remains terrible:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
21.\text{wc7} 22.\text{wg4} \text{d7} 23.\text{xf5} \\
24.\text{xf5} \text{h8} 25.\text{f6} \text{g8} 26.\text{h5}+ \text{Lopez Paz – Sueiro Coronado, Cuba 1998;}
\end{array}
\]

21...\( \text{b6} \) 22.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{c5} \), Joao – Moskov, corr. 1995, the threat to check from the d3-square seems dangerous, but in fact it is harmless for White. 23.\( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 24.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{d3}+ \) 25.\( \text{f1} \) \( \text{xb2}+ \) 26.\( \text{g1}+ \) White has an extra exchange and excellent attacking chances;

In answer to 21...\( \text{b8} \), Saxe – McCollum, USA 1998, it is very strong for White to continue with 22.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{a5} \) 23.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{axb4} \) 24.\( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{b6} \) 25.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{d7} \) 26.0–0 and he preserves excellent attacking prospects, while Black’s knight is a sorry sight;

21...\( \text{a7} \) 22.\( \text{b4} \) – Black can hardly defend against the simultaneous attack on the kingside and his a6-pawn, 22...\( \text{a5} \) (It is not any better for Black to try 22...\( \text{b6} \) 23.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{d8} \) 24.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e6} \) 25.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 26.0–0 \( \text{f4} \) 27.\( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{d5} \) 28.\( \text{x5} \) \( \text{e5} \) 30.\( \text{g3}+\) ) 23.\( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \) 24.\( \text{xa5}+ \) White a has a solid extra pawn and after he brings his rook
on h1 into the actions, his position will be winning, De Holanda – Rivas Romero, Email 1999.

21.h5!

The move 21.\textit{f5} has been played much more often, but it leads practically by force to a very sharp endgame in which Black manages to build an impenetrable fortress after precise play. 21...\textit{c4} (21...\textit{b7} – This move leads to a difficult endgame for Black. 22.\textit{g4} \textit{f6} 23.\textit{g5} \textit{c7} 24.\textit{xf6} gxf6 25.\textit{b4}\pm Black’s defence is very difficult, because of his bad knight and disrupted pawn-structure. 25...a5 26.bxa5 \textit{a8} 27.\textit{h3} \textit{c4}, Lanka – Krasenkow, Moscow 1989, and here the fastest road for White to victory is 28.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 29.a6 \textit{xe4}+ 30.\textit{e3} \textit{exe3}+ 31.fxe3 \textit{d8} 32.\textit{xd6}+–) 22.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 23.\textit{xd6} (White maintains a slight positional advantage after 23.f3 \textit{c6} 24.\textit{d2}\pm – despite all, Black should succeed in equalizing with accurate defence) 23...\textit{d4} 24.\textit{cxd4} \textit{xd6} 25.f3 \textit{exd4} 26.\textit{f2} d3 27.\textit{d2} \textit{d4}+ 28.\textit{g3}

Analyzing that position, it looks like the seemingly attractive move 28...\textit{f5}, would not bring Black anything promising: 29.\textit{e1} \textit{f4}+ 30.\textit{h2} \textit{f6} (The move 30...\textit{g5}? is a fruitless attempt to play for a checkmate. 31.\textit{hxg5} \textit{h6} 32.\textit{g6} \textit{e6} 33.\textit{c3}+– Zagrebelny – Kochetkov, Moscow 1995.) 31.\textit{f2} \textit{c8} (Black would not fare any better after 31...\textit{d8} 32.e5 \textit{e7}, Timoshenko – Dubinka, Alushta 2000, and White’s advantage can be emphasized with the transfer of his rook to the a3-square. The quickest way to accomplish that is 33.\textit{c3} \textit{h6} 34.\textit{g1} \textit{h7} 35.\textit{d2} \textit{h4} 36.\textit{c7}\pm – White has lost his h4-pawn indeed, but he has coordinated his pieces and his passed pawn is no less dangerous than its black counterpart is.) 32.e5 \textit{c2} (After 32...\textit{e6} 33.\textit{c3}\pm White’s pieces are much more active and that means Black has no compensation for the exchange.) 33.\textit{xf6} \textit{xf2} 34.\textit{c3}! \textit{f7} (The alternatives for Black lose quickly: 34...\textit{xf6}? 35.\textit{e7} \textit{c2} 36.\textit{xc2} \textit{dxc2} 37.\textit{c7}+, or 34...\textit{d2}? 35.\textit{e7}+–) 35.\textit{g7} \textit{g7} 36.\textit{e6}\pm Black’s passed d3-pawn is seemingly dangerous, but in fact it is a liability, which need permanent protection. Meanwhile, his king is unsafe too. White must play very accurately, though.

Still, GM Y.Yakovich has found an amazing defensive resource here: 29...\textit{xe4}?! 30.\textit{exe4} \textit{d6} 31.\textit{f2} \textit{c5} 32.\textit{e3} \textit{d4}! 33.g3 \textit{e8} and White cannot get rid of the pin, for example: 34.\textit{c3}
Chapter 10

a5! 35...c1 a4! 36...e1 c8! 37...c1 e8=. This variation is based on the motive that Black’s pawn advances effortlessly from a6 to a4, but White’s play can be improved. 34...b3! – White does not allow his opponent’s pawn to come to the a5-square and he is threatening to give back the exchange gobbling Black’s passed pawn in the process. 34...c8 – In case Black ignores his opponent’s threats, for example after 34...h6, then after 35...b4 c5 36...xb5?!, or ...xb5 37...xe8+ ...xe8 38...xd3± White ends up with an extra pawn in a queen and pawn ending and he has excellent chances of materializing it. Following 36...xb5 37...xd3 b4 38.f4±, there are still rooks left on the board, but Black must fight long and hard for the draw.

After 35...c3 e8 36...c1 a5! 37.b3 h5! Black has failed to place his pawn on a4 indeed, but White has no real chances of breaking that “fortress”.

21...h6

This move seems necessary.

The other attractive line for Black is not any better for him at all: 21...c4 22...xc4 ...xc4 23.h6 g6 24...xc4 ...xc4 25...d3 c8 (In case of 25...c6 26...xa6 ...xa6 27...xa6 ...g5 28.0–0 ...d8 29...b6± Black has no compensation for the sacrificed pawn. His defence will be very difficult too in the line 25...b6 26.0–0 c6 27...d2 ...b8 28.b4±. The material is equal indeed, but Black’s weaknesses on a6 and d6, combined with the unsafe situation of his king would not promise him any real chances of equalizing.) 26.0–0 ...c6 27...f1 ...xe4 (After 27...a8 28.f3 ...b6+ 29.h2 ...c6 30...d5±, or 29...c6 30.a5 ...f8 31...d5± Black’s pieces remain quite passive and his queenside pawns are weak, so he is doomed to a laborious defence without any counterplay.) 28...xd6 ...h4 29...xa6 ...xh6 30.a8 e4 31...d5 ...c8 32...xc8 ...xc8 33...e4 ...d2 34...b1± White ends up with a solid extra pawn, but he must show good technique on order to realize it, since Black’s pieces are active.

22...g4!

22...d7

The move 22...c4 leads to a difficult endgame for Black, because of the vulnerability of his pawns on a6, d6 and g7. 23...xc4 ...xc4 24...f5 ...f6 25...h4 ...xh4 26...xh4 ...b8 (It is a disaster for Black to try 26...h7? 27...xd6++) 27.b4 ...b6 28...g4 ...h8 29...xg7 ...e6 30...g3± White has an extra pawn and he has
good chances of pressing his ad-

vantage home.

23. \( \text{h4} \) \( \text{b6} \)

Black's defence is harder in
the endgame after 23...\( \text{h4} \)
24.\( \text{xh4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 25.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{b8} \) (It is
even worse for Black to opt for
25...\( \text{b8} \) 26.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{c8} \) 27.\( \text{b4} \+-)
26.\( \text{h1} \) \( \text{c7} \) 27.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{c8} \) 28.\( \text{c4} \)
\( \text{d8} \) 29.\( \text{b4} \+-, because he cannot
create any counterplay, since his
pieces are tied up with the protec-
tion of the pawns on a6 and d6.

24.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 25.0-0 \( \text{e6} \)

The game Kotronias - Timo-
shenko, Thessaloniki 2007 followed
with 26.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{b8} \) (Black would
not fare any better after 26...\( \text{a5} \)
27.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{c7} \) 28.\( \text{bxa5} \+-\) 27.\( \text{f1} \+-\)
– White's advantage is more than
obvious: Black has no counterplay
and he must defend passively his
queenside weaknesses, mean-
while his king is rather unsafe too.
White will be threatening soon
\( \text{f5} \). He coped with the realiza-
tion of his advantage skillfully:
27...\( \text{c7} \) 28.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{h8} \) (Black fails
to activate his pieces with 28...
\( \text{c6} \) 29.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) 30.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{b7} \)
31.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{xc4} \) 32.\( \text{f5} \+-) 29.\( \text{f5} \)
\( \text{xf5} \) (Black loses too after 29...
\( \text{d7} \) 30.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{xe6} \) 31.\( \text{c7} \) \( \text{xc4} \)
32.\( \text{g6} \) \( \text{g8} \) 33.\( \text{xf8} \) \( \text{xf8} \) 34.
\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{xb4} \) 35.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{g8} \) 36.\( \text{f6} \+-
and the pawns he has for the ex-
change start falling one after an-
other.) 30.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{d7} \) (Black could
have sustained some "illusion" of
resistance with the line: 30...\( \text{d8} \)
31.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{g5} \) 32.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 33.\( \text{d1} \)
\( \text{c6} \) 34.\( \text{b1} \+-, although the su-
premacy of White's bishop over
Black's knight is more than obvi-
ous. Meanwhile, Black's queens-
side pawns are vulnerable and he
must consider the possibility of
White advancing his b-pawn after
he improves his position. 31.
\( \text{xa6} \+-\) and the game was soon
over after. 31...\( \text{f6} \) 32.\( \text{e7} \) \( \text{b6} \)
33.\( \text{b7} \) \( \text{d4} \) 34.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 35.
\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{a8} \) 36.\( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 37.\( \text{f3} \)
1-0
Conclusion

In this chapter we have started analyzing the main lines of the Chelyabinsk variation – 11...0–0 12.\(\Box_c2\) \(\Box_g5\) 13.a4. Here, Black has two possibilities, if he is reluctant to remain a pawn down – a) 13... \(\Box_b8\) and b) 13...bxa4.

In variation a, after 13...\(\Box_b8\) 14.axb5 axb5 15.\(\Box_d3\), there arises a position, in which Black’s weakness on b5 is hurting. He has played most of all 15...\(\Box_e6\), but after 16.\(\Box_e2\)!, White wins that pawn immediately. Black can hardly prove any compensation for it. It is stronger for him to play 15...\(\Box_e7\), with the idea to facilitate his defence with exchanges. Still, it is difficult for Black to activate his forces then, because they are burdened with the protection of the b5-pawn and that is well illustrated by the variations in the chapter.

Naturally, it is stronger for Black to capture 13...bxa4. After 14.\(\Box_xa4\), he has numerous possibilities and the most popular line for him is 14...a5, which will be dealt with in the next chapters. Here, we analyze Black’s all other alternatives.

In answer to 14...\(\Box_b8\) and 14...\(\Box_f5\), it is very good for White to play 15.h4! in order to repel Black’s bishop to a unfavourable position. White obtains a great advantage in both cases by simple means. Black tries sometimes the move 14...\(\Box_b8\) too, but the maneuver of the knight to the c5-square is too slow.

In variation b1, Black tries to facilitate his defence by simplifying, but White then controls the light squares in the centre and he has powerful pressure against the a and d-pawns.

In variation b2, Black plays 14...\(\Box_h8\), planning to open the f-file in order to organize counterplay on the kingside. That leads to the occupation by White of the important central squares e4 and d5.

In variation b3, Black manages after 14...\(\Box_b7\) 15.\(\Box_c4\) \(\Box_a5\) 16.\(\Box_a2\) \(\Box_c6\) 17.\(\Box_a3\) \(\Box_b5\), to activate his light pieces and that forces White to act with maximum precision. In the main line, it is essential for him to avoid the popular variation, in which he wins the exchange, because there Black’s chances of making a draw are considerable. Therefore, the novelty of the Greek grandmaster V.Kotronias looks very attractive – 21.h5!, and that move enables White to avoid the sharp variations, creating pressure against Black’s weak pawns in a rather calm situation.
Chapter 11

1.e4 c5 2.\( \text{\texttt{f}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 3.d4 \( \text{\texttt{x}d}4 \) 4.\( \text{\texttt{x}d}4 \) e6 5.\( \text{\texttt{c}3} \) e5 6.\( \text{\texttt{d}b}5 \) d6 7.\( \text{\texttt{g}5} \) a6 8.\( \text{\texttt{a}3} \) b5 9.\( \text{\texttt{d}5} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}7} \) 10.\( \text{\texttt{xf}6} \) \( \text{\texttt{xf}6} \) 11.c3 0-0 12.\( \text{\texttt{c}2} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}5} \) 13.a4 bxa4 14.\( \text{\texttt{xa}4} \) a5 15.\( \text{\texttt{c}4} \)

White placed his bishop on a promising diagonal after having exchanged his opponent's b5-pawn and now Black must make a choice.

In this chapter we will analyze Black's attempts to avoid the popular lines 15...\( \text{\texttt{d}7} \) and 15...\( \text{\texttt{b}8} \), and these are: a) 15...\( \text{\texttt{b}7} \), b) 15...\( \text{\texttt{e}6} \), c) 15...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \).

15...\( \text{\texttt{e}7} \) – This move usually leads to a transposition of moves. 16.\( \text{\texttt{c}e}3 \) \( \text{\texttt{xe}3} \) (The alternatives for Black transpose to other lines: 16...\( \text{\texttt{e}6} \) 17.0-0 – see variation b; 16...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \) 17.0-0 – see variation c; 16...\( \text{\texttt{d}7} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{a}2} \), or 16...\( \text{\texttt{x}d}5 \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{x}d}5 \) \( \text{\texttt{d}7} \) 18.\( \text{\texttt{a}2} \) – see variation d from Chapter 12) 17.\( \text{\texttt{xe}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}7} \) (About 17...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \) 18.0-0 – see variation c; as for 17...\( \text{\texttt{d}7} \) 18.\( \text{\texttt{a}2} \) – see variation a from Chapter 12.) 18.\( \text{\texttt{d}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}6} \) (About 18...\( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 19.\( \text{\texttt{a}2} \) – see variation a from Chapter 12; 18...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \) 19.0-0 – see 15...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{c}e}3 \) \( \text{\texttt{xe}3} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{xe}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}7} \) 18.0-0 \( \text{\texttt{b}7} \) 19.\( \text{\texttt{d}3} \); the move 18...\( \text{\texttt{c}8} \) – leads to simplifications, which are favourable for White. 19.\( \text{\texttt{d}5} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}6} \) 20.\( \text{\texttt{x}b}6 \) \( \text{\texttt{x}b}6 \) 21.0-0 \( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 22.\( \text{\texttt{a}2} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}7} \) 23.\( \text{\texttt{x}d}6 \) \( \text{\texttt{xe}4} \) 24.\( \text{\texttt{f}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}6} \) 25.\( \text{\texttt{xc}6} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc}6} \) 26.\( \text{\texttt{b}3} \) – Black's a5-pawn is vulnerable, so he is forced to continue simplifying. 26...a4 27.\( \text{\texttt{b}a}4 \) \( \text{\texttt{xa}4} \) 28.\( \text{\texttt{xa}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{a}4} \) 29.\( \text{\texttt{a}1} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}2} \), Viktorsson – Albano, Email 2002, and here after 30.\( \text{\texttt{a}5} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}8} \) 31.\( \text{\texttt{d}5} \) \( \text{\texttt{f}8} \) 32.\( \text{\texttt{c}4} \) White's passed pawn becomes very dangerous.) 19.b3 \( \text{\texttt{f}c}8 \) 20.0-0 \( \text{\texttt{a}6} \) 21.\( \text{\texttt{a}3} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc}4} \) 22.\( \text{\texttt{xc}4} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}5} \) 23.\( \text{\texttt{fa}1} \) and Black loses unavoidably his a5-pawn, Vega Gutierrez – Linares Quero, Oropesa del Mar 2001.

It is again only a transposition of moves after 15...g6 16.0-0 \( \text{\texttt{h}8} \) (or 16...\( \text{\texttt{b}8} \) 17.b3 – see 15...\( \text{\texttt{b}8} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{ce}3} \) – see 15...\( \text{\texttt{h}8} \).

The trade of the light-squared bishops is clearly in favour of
White: 15...a6 16.axa6 \( \mathbb{A} \)xa6 17. 0–0± Patrascu – Voin, Bucharest 2000.

In the game Yudkovsky – Alcazar, Tallinn 1997, Black tried to bring his knight to d7 and he played 15...b8, but that was hardly the best way to accomplish that plan. White could have emphasized that with the line: 16.h4!? \( \mathbb{A} \)h6 (The pawn is of course untouchable: 16...xh4? 17.\( \mathbb{W} \)h5++) 17.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3. White is clearly better after 17...d7 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)f5±, or 17...a6 18.axa6! \( \mathbb{A} \)xa6 19.\( \mathbb{Q} \)g4, and Black is in trouble even after the extravagant line: 19...c1!? 20.\( \mathbb{Q} \)gf6+ gxf6 21.\( \mathbb{W} \)xc1 \( \mathbb{A} \)e6 22.\( \mathbb{W} \)h6 \( \mathbb{A} \)xd5 23.exd5 f5 24.0–0±. His relatively best defence is 17...\( \mathbb{A} \)xe3, but after 18.\( \mathbb{A} \)xe3 \( \mathbb{Q} \)a6 19.b4 axb4 20.cxb4 White maintains a stable edge.

a) 15...\( \mathbb{B} \)b7

In general, the development of that bishop on the long diagonal is not so typical for the Chelyabinsk variation. In this particular case, that maneuver should be connected with the transfer of the knight via the route c6-b8-d7.

16.0–0 \( \mathbb{Q} \)b8

16...c8?! – That is a dubious move, because the weakness of the a5-pawn becomes critical. 17.\( \mathbb{W} \)d3 \( \mathbb{W} \)e8 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)f1± Ferret – Hossa, Internet 1998.

In case of 16...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8 17.\( \mathbb{W} \)d3 (about 17.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3 – see 15...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8) 17...g6 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)c3± White maintains the advantage, Holm – Andersen, Gladsaxe 1993.

Black has tried sometimes 16...\( \mathbb{Q} \)e7, but he should hardly strive to exchange light pieces in the centre, because at the end he might end up with a weak dark-squared bishop against White’s dominant knight on d5. After 17.\( \mathbb{W} \)d3, there might follow:

17...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3 – see 15...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8 16.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3 \( \mathbb{Q} \)b7 17.0–0 \( \mathbb{Q} \)e7 18.\( \mathbb{W} \)d3;

17...\( \mathbb{Q} \)xd5 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)xd5 \( \mathbb{W} \)b6 19.b4 \( \mathbb{Q} \)xd5 (The move 19...\( \mathbb{Q} \)c6 loses a pawn for Black: 20.\( \mathbb{X} \)xa5± Paethz – Drobka, Germany 2002.) 20.\( \mathbb{W} \)xd5 \( \mathbb{Q} \)ac8 (It is not better for Black to try 20...\( \mathbb{X} \)fc8 21.c4 \( \mathbb{A} \)a7 22.\( \mathbb{Q} \)f1 Martinovic – Friedrich, Wuerzburg 1987.) 21.bxa5 \( \mathbb{W} \)b2 (If 21...\( \mathbb{W} \)c6, then 22.\( \mathbb{W} \)xc6 \( \mathbb{X} \)xc6 23.\( \mathbb{Q} \)b4 \( \mathbb{Q} \)xc3 24.\( \mathbb{Q} \)d5± Voicu – Aydin, Marina d’Or 1998.) 22.\( \mathbb{Q} \)a2 \( \mathbb{X} \)xc3 23.a6± Shahade – Krapivin, Budapest 2003.

Or 17...\( \mathbb{Q} \)c6 18.\( \mathbb{Q} \)a2 \( \mathbb{Q} \)xd5 (About 18...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8 19.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3 – see 15...\( \mathbb{Q} \)h8 16.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3 \( \mathbb{Q} \)b7 17.0–0 \( \mathbb{Q} \)e7 18.\( \mathbb{W} \)d3 \( \mathbb{Q} \)c6 19.\( \mathbb{Q} \)a2; after 18...\( \mathbb{W} \)b8 19.\( \mathbb{Q} \)xe7+ \( \mathbb{Q} \)xe7 20.\( \mathbb{Q} \)e3, it is bad for Black to opt for 20...\( \mathbb{W} \)d8?)

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11.c3 0–0 12.\text{\textit{c2}} \text{\textit{g5}} 13.a4 bxa4 14.\text{\textit{xa4}} a5 15.\text{\textit{c4}}

in view of 21.\textit{xf7}!+- Mueller – Apostu, Aschach 2004, but even after 20...g6 21.\textit{d5}± Black’s position remains very difficult. In case of 18...\textit{b8}, it is good for White to play 19.\textit{xe7}+ followed by 19...\textit{xe7} 20.b3±, or 19...\textit{xe7} 20.b3± Svetkova – Tamaskovic, Slovakia 2000.) 19.\textit{xd5} \textit{b6} (or 19...\textit{c7} 20.\textit{fa1} \textit{ab8} 21.\textit{c4}± Braghetta – Panizzia, Piacenza 2005) – and in that situation, which happened in the game Schussler – Kouatly, Groningen 1977, White had to emphasize his advantage with 20.\textit{a3}± with the idea 21.\textit{c4}.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

17.\text{\textit{b4}}

White creates a passed pawn and he restricts the mobility of his opponent’s knight, depriving it of the c5-square.

17...\textit{d7} 18.\textit{d3} \text{\textit{xb4}}

Black cannot be happy with his position after 18...g6 19.\textit{fa1} axb4 20.\textit{xa8} \textit{xa8} 21.cxb4± Cutillas Ripoll – Pfretzschner, corr. 1994, or 18...\textit{b6} 19.\textit{xb6} \textit{xb6} 20.\textit{fa1} axb4 21.\textit{xa8} \textit{xa8} 22.\textit{xa8}+ \textit{xa8} 23.cxb4 g6 24.d5± Kalod – Pisk, Brno 1994, or 18...\textit{h8} 19.\textit{fa1} axb4 20.\textit{xa8} \textit{xa8} 21.cxb4 g6 22.\textit{a6}± Vehi – Jose Abril, Barcelona 2000.

19.\textit{xa8} \textit{xa8}

Or 19...\textit{xa8} 20.\textit{xb4} \textit{c8} 21.\textit{a1} \textit{b8} 22.b5 \textit{c5} 23.\textit{e2} \textit{e6} 24.\textit{cb4}± Korsunsky – Arbakov, USSR 1978.

20.\text{\textit{xb4}} \textit{g6}

In case of 20...\textit{b6} 21.\textit{xb6} \textit{xb6} 22.\textit{a1}, White’s advantage becomes even greater, for example: 22...\textit{c7} 23.g3 g6 24.h4 \textit{d2} 25.b5 \textit{a5} 26.\textit{e3}± Dervishi – Cacco, Padova 1999; 22...\textit{b7} 23.g3 g6 24.h4 \textit{h6} 25.d5± Dervishi – Cacco, Padova 2000.

21.\textit{d1} \textit{g7}

In the game Penna – Sender, Internet 1998, Black tried 21...\textit{b8} 22.\textit{g3} \textit{d8} 23.\textit{ce3}±, but White was again better.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

22.\textit{c3}± – White controls reliably the d5-outpost and he exerts pressure against his opponent’s backward d6-pawn, Seme- niuk – Gurgenidze, Saratov 1981. Black has failed to organize any counterplay, but his position is still relatively solid.

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b) 15...\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}6\)
This decision is too schematic. Black did not need to determine the placement of his bishop so early.
16.0-0

We will analyze now b1) 16...\(\text{\textit{h}}\text{h}8\) and b2) 16...\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}7\).

About 16...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\) 17.b3 – see 15...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\).

Black plays only very seldom 16...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\) 17.b3 \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}7\), Bobras – Lukasiewicz, Poland 1996, 18.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}7+ \text{\textit{d}}\text{d}7\) 19.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}3\), as well as 16...\(\text{\textit{a}}\text{a}7\) 17.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}2\) g6 18.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}a1\) \(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}7\) 19.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}4\) Potrykus – Kuhl, Germany 1992.

b1) 16...\(\text{\textit{h}}\text{h}8\) 17.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{e}3\) \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}7\)
About 17...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\) 18.b3 – see 15...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\).

17...\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}5?!\) – That move is too dubious and White increases his advantage with quite natural moves. 18.exf5 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\) 19.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\) \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\) 20.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}3\) and Black has lost his two-bishop advantage and he has presented White with complete dominance over the centre and the light squares, Auvray – Golubeva, Sibenik 2007.

After 17...\(\text{\textit{a}}\text{a}7\) 18.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}2\) \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}7\) 19.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}a1\) \(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\) 20.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}3\) White keeps his pressure, Teuschler – Schweiger, Gleisdorf 1996.

In case of 17...\(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g}6\), it is interesting for White to play 18.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}3\)?, and after 18...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}8\) (The move 18...\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}5\), Yukhno – Vl.Kovalev, Illichevsk 2006, looks more logical, but it only leads to exchanges, which are favourable for White. Here after 19.exf5 gxf5 20.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}7\)! \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}4\) 21.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}4\) e4 22.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}4\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}7\) 23.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}5\) \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{e}7\) 24.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}e7\) \(\text{\textit{f}}\text{f}e7\) 25.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}7\) Black has many pawns in the centre indeed, but he has problems protecting them. Or 21.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}7\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}6\) 22.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\) and Black has too many weaknesses to worry about and his king is endangered too.) 19.b3, there arises a position, which we will analyze in Chapter 13.

18.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}7\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}7\)
If 18...\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}7\), then 19.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}6\) fxe6 (It would not work for Black to play 19...\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}6\)?, because of the intermediate move 20.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\) and White wins the exchange.) 20.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{b}3\)

The move 18...\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{c}3\), can be neutralized by the precise reply 19.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}5\)! \(\text{\textit{x}}\text{d}5\) (otherwise White’s
11.c3 0-0 12.\textit{c}2 \textit{g}5 13.a4 \textit{bxa}4 14.\textit{x}xa4 a5 15.\textit{x}c4

knight will go to \textit{c}6 with tempo) 20.\textit{x}xd5± and White has a clear advantage.

19.\textit{we}2±

That is even more precise than 19.\textit{wd}3, as it was played in the game Fruebing – Becker, Willowingen 2006, since White does not have any problems with the protection of his \textit{b}2-pawn. The situation has clarified and White is better, because Black's weaknesses are too obvious. Still, it would be far from easy for White to break Black's resistance in that position.

b2) 16...\textit{de}7 17.\textit{d}ce3

17...\textit{xb}8
About 17...\textit{h}8 18.\textit{x}xe7! – see 16...\textit{h}8.

Black's alternatives are insufficient to equalize:

17...\textit{c}8, Nadvesnik – Berke, Busevec 2005, 18.\textit{x}xe7+ \textit{xe}7 (or 18...\textit{xe}7 19.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 20.\textit{wb}3±) 19.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 20.\textit{c}4±;

17...\textit{d}7 18.\textit{a}2 \textit{a}4 (In case of 18...\textit{c}6, Beltz – Sickert, Sennitz 2002, White should capture 19.\textit{xe}7+ and Black has problems after 19...\textit{xe}7 20.\textit{d}5±, as well as following 19...\textit{xe}7 20.\textit{f}5±) 19.\textit{xe}7+ \textit{xe}7 20.\textit{d}5 \textit{a}6 (After 20...\textit{ab}8 21.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 22.\textit{exf}5± Black's \textit{a}4-pawn is very weak.) 21.b4±;

17...\textit{xe}3 18.\textit{xe}3 \textit{c}8 (After 18...\textit{d}7, Nicholas – Hansell, Witley 2000, White can play 19.\textit{a}2 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{d}3± transposing to variation \textit{a} from Chapter 12 – and the fact that Black's pawn is on \textit{a}5 in this case and not on \textit{a}4 is even better for White.) 19.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 20.b4 \textit{f}7 21.\textit{b}3± and Black loses at least one of his weak pawns, Schneider – Martens, Hamburg 1999.

18.b3 \textit{xe}3

18...\textit{c}6?! – This move looks very strange, because the knight was there several moves ago, Behling – Sandek, corr. 1989, and here White's most energetic line seems to be attacking the \textit{d}6-pawn with 19.\textit{f}5 \textit{e}7 (It is hardly better for Black to try 19...\textit{h}8 20.\textit{de}3 \textit{xe}3 21.\textit{fxe}3 \textit{b}6 22.\textit{d}2 \textit{xc}4 23.\textit{xc}4 \textit{d}8 24.b4±, because the weakness on \textit{d}6 is much more important, while
Black’s pieces are dis-coordinated,
than White’s ugly doubled central pawns.) 20. \( \text{Q} \) \text{fxe7+} \text{Qxe7} 21. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d3+} – White has a long-lasting initiative thanks to his active pieces and the vulnerability of Black’s pawns on a5 and d6.

In answer to 18...\( \text{Q} \) \text{c8}, it deserves attention for White to continue with the aggressive move 19. \( \text{W} \) \text{a1}!? It is then bad for Black to try 19...\( \text{Q} \) \text{b6} 20. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xa5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xc4} 21. \( \text{B} \) \text{xc4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{a8} 22. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{b8} 23. \( \text{Q} \) \text{f5+} and White remains with an extra pawn exerting strong pressure against the d6-pawn, or 22...\( \text{Q} \) \text{e3} 23. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xe3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c8} 24. \( \text{B} \) \text{a4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c7} 25. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a3}+ and White’s extra pawn is weak, but Black’s d6-pawn looks no less vulnerable. 19...\( \text{Q} \) \text{e3} (That exchange would not save the a5-pawn for Black.) 20. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xe3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{b6} (After 20...\( \text{Q} \) \text{xc4} 21. \( \text{B} \) \text{xc4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{b6} – or 21...\( \text{Q} \) \text{a8} 22. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a3}+ Klundt – Benko, Germany 1992 – 22. \( \text{B} \) \text{xa5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c8} 23. \( \text{Q} \) \text{c5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xc5} 24. \( \text{B} \) \text{xc5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{dxc5} 25. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a7}+ Black could have restored the material balance indeed, but White’s pieces would be much more active and that would provide him with a clear advantage.) 21. \( \text{B} \) \text{xa5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xc4} 22. \( \text{B} \) \text{xc4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c7} 23. \( \text{B} \) \text{a4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{fc8} 24. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d1}+ (White transfers his queen to the d3-square and from there it will not only attack the weakness on d6, but it will protect his own pawns as well.) 24...\( \text{B} \) \text{a8} 25. \( \text{Q} \) \text{b4} \( \text{B} \) \text{a2} (It would be a loss of time for Black to play 25...\( \text{B} \) \text{a3} 26. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{g6} 27. \( \text{Q} \) \text{f1} \( \text{B} \) \text{a2} 28. \( \text{Q} \) \text{h4}+) – he does not have any active plan in sight, while White’s extra pawn is reliably protected.) 26. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{g6} 27. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d1} \( \text{Q} \) \text{g7} 28. \( \text{Q} \) \text{h4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{e7} 29. \( \text{Q} \) \text{g3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{f6} 30. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d2}+ – and now White repels his opponent’s active rook from the second rank and he seizes the initiative, or he forces his opponent to exchange his most active piece after which Black has problems proving compensation for his sacrificed pawn. His attempt to activate his queen with 30... \( \text{Q} \) \text{xd2} 31. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xd2} \( \text{Q} \) \text{f3} 32. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xd6} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xe4} 154 33. \( \text{Q} \) \text{c5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{f3} 34. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xe5}+ \( \text{Q} \) \text{f6} 35. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d4}+ only leads to a position in which White has two extra pawns and excellent chances of turning them into a full point.

19. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xe3}

[Chessboard diagram]

19...\( \text{Q} \) \text{b6}

Black has also tried here 19... \( \text{Q} \) \text{d7} 20. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a2} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c6} 21. \( \text{Q} \) \text{d3} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c7} 22. \( \text{Q} \) \text{a1} \( \text{Q} \) \text{a8} 23. \( \text{B} \) \text{b4} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xb4} 24. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xf7}+. Now, he loses if he captures the bishop 24...\( \text{Q} \) \text{x} 25. \( \text{Q} \) \text{c4}+ \( \text{Q} \) \text{g6} (Black should better defend with 25...\( \text{Q} \) \text{d5} 26. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xd5} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xa2} 27. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xc6}+ \( \text{Q} \) \text{f6} 28. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xa2} \( \text{Q} \) \text{xc3} 29. \( \text{Q} \) \text{g4}+ \( \text{Q} \) \text{f5} 30. \( \text{Q} \) \text{e2}–, but he would hardly save the game in that line anyway.) 26. \( \text{Q} \) \text{xa8} \( \text{Q} \) \text{c8} 27. \( \text{Q} \) \text{e6}+ 1–0
Szarvas – Csorbai, Hungary 2001, therefore Black must follow with 24...\texttt{h}8 25.cxb4 \texttt{c}ab8 26.\texttt{c}c4 \texttt{b}b6 27.\texttt{e}e6 \texttt{xb}4 28.\texttt{xb}4 \texttt{xb}4 29.f3 \texttt{fb}8, Muneret – Maia, Email 2000, but after 30.\texttt{a}7± he has problems defending against the threats along the seventh rank as well as holding on to the d5-pawn.

20.\texttt{b}4 axb4 21.\texttt{xb}4 \texttt{c}c6

Black's position remains difficult even after the more resilient line: 21...\texttt{d}8 22.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{xb}4 23.cxb4 \texttt{xc}4 24.\texttt{xc}4± and White's outside passed pawn looks very dangerous.

22.\texttt{xe}6 \texttt{xb}4 23.\texttt{xf}7+ \texttt{xf}7 24.cxb4 \texttt{xe}4 25.\texttt{xd}6± White's passed pawn was decisive for his quick victory in the game Passerotti – Rivera Kuzawka, Luzern 1982.

c) 15...\texttt{h}8

Black retreats his king away from the a2-g8 diagonal in advance and he plans to continue with the move f7-f5 at some moment.

16.\texttt{ce}3

16...\texttt{xe}3

Here, there are numerous possibilities to transpose to other variations: 16...\texttt{b}8 17.\texttt{b}3 – see 15...\texttt{b}8; 16...\texttt{d}7 17.0–0 – see 15...\texttt{d}7; 16...\texttt{e}6 17.0–0 – see 15...\texttt{e}6.

After 16...\texttt{c}7 17.0–0, we reach again positions, which are analyzed elsewhere: 17...\texttt{b}7 18.\texttt{d}3 – see 16...\texttt{b}7; 17...\texttt{e}6 18.\texttt{xe}7 – see variation \textbf{b}1; 17...\texttt{d}7 18.\texttt{a}2 – see variation \textbf{b} from Chapter 12.

16...\texttt{b}7 17.0–0 \texttt{c}7 18.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{c}6 (It is clearly worse for Black to opt for 18...\texttt{g}6 19.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{b}8, Gleichmann – V.Kaufmann, corr. 1990, because here after 20.\texttt{f}5 \texttt{c}6 21.\texttt{a}2± White's pieces are tremendously active in the centre, while Black has his weaknesses on a5 and d6 to worry about.) 19.\texttt{a}2 \texttt{xe}3 20.\texttt{xe}3 – see 16...\texttt{xe}3.

It is just terrible for Black to play 16...f5?! 17.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xf}5 18.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xf}5, because of the counter measure 19.h4! \texttt{xb}4 (In case of 19...\texttt{h}6 20.g4 \texttt{f}8 21.\texttt{g}5+ Black loses a piece and if 19...\texttt{e}7, then White plays 20.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{f}7 21.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{g}8 22.\texttt{g}6 \texttt{ff}8 \texttt{g}8 23.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}8 24.\texttt{eh}4+ etc.)
23.\textit{c}c4+-, and Black is helpless. It is not any better for him to try 20...e4 21.\textit{d}xe4 \textit{e}e5 22.f4 \textit{e}e6 23.\textit{w}g4+-, because White ends up with a solid extra pawn and he soon won in the game Duigou – Flores, Email 1998.) 20.g3 \textit{g}5 (Black has no compensation for the piece after the desperate line 20...\textit{x}xg3 21.fxg3 e4 22.\textit{w}g4+-, Abdelmoumen – Karsdorp, Email 2002.) 21.\textit{e}xh7+! \textit{e}xh7 22.\textit{w}h5+ \textit{h}6 (or 22...\textit{x}g8 23.\textit{f}f6+ \textit{f}8 24.\textit{w}f7#) 23.\textit{w}xf5+ g6 (or 23...\textit{h}8 24.\textit{d}d3+-) 24.\textit{w}f7+ \textit{g}7 25.\textit{l}b5+-, and White wins.

In the game Bednarich – Blagojevic, Nova Gorica 1997, Black prepared and pushed f7-f5 with the help of the line 16.g6 17.0–0 f5 (about 17...\textit{d}d7 18.g3 – see variation \textit{b} from Chapter 12). We can recommend here for White the move 18.\textit{w}d3!?±, fortifying the central pawn. It is quite probable that the game may transpose after that to some other familiar variation (for example after 18...\textit{b}8 19.b3 – see variation \textit{b}2\textit{a} from Chapter 13).

17.\textit{d}xe3 \textit{e}e7
About 17...\textit{b}8 18.b3 – see 15...\textit{b}8.

18.0–0 (diagram)

18...f5
About 18...\textit{d}d7 19.\textit{a}2 – see variation \textit{b} from Chapter 12.

The move 18...g6, Omtvedt – Tjolsen, Oslo 2006, is too slow, since after 19.\textit{w}d3 f5 20.\textit{d}d1 f4 21.\textit{c}c2± Black fails to organize any real counterplay, while his pawns on d6 and a5 are vulnerable.

If 18...\textit{b}7, then 19.\textit{w}d3 f5, Vicioso – Davidoff, corr. 1999 (About 19...\textit{c}6 20.\textit{a}2 – see 15...\textit{d}7 16.\textit{c}e3 \textit{h}8 17.0–0 \textit{xe}3 18.\textit{xe}3 \textit{e}7 19.\textit{a}2 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{w}d3.), and here it looks very good for White to continue with 20.exf5 d5 21.\textit{b}3±, and Black will hardly manage to regain his pawn.

19.\textit{ex}f5 \textit{xf}5

20.b4!
This is an improvement in comparison to the game Tiviakov – van Der Wiel, Netherlands 2000.

20...\textit{d}xe3
Black’s position is difficult following 20...\textit{w}b6 21.bxa5 \textit{xa}5
22. hx5 \textit{w}x5 23. dx5 \textit{xf}5 24. \textit{wd}6 \textit{dc}8, because after the precise reaction by White 25. \textit{d}d1! h6 26. \textit{a}a6\textsuperscript{\pm} — he can exploit the defenselessness of Black's last rank.

21. fxe3 \textit{fxf}1+ 22. \textit{xf}1 \textit{wb}6
23. \textit{wd}2\textsuperscript{\pm} —

(diagram)

White maintains his positional advantage despite the simplifications. Black's pieces are forced to protect the weaknesses on a5 and d6, while his counterattack against the e3-pawn is almost immaterial.

\textbf{Conclusion}

\textit{In this chapter, we have analyzed some lines, which are not so often played by Black: a) 15... \textit{b}7, b) 15... \textit{e}6 and c) 15... \textit{h}8. The more recent and fashionable move 15... \textit{d}7 is dealt with in the next chapter, while the move, which has long acquired the reputation to be the main line — 15... \textit{b}8 is analyzed in Chapter 13.}

Either the alternatives for Black transpose to other variations, or they enable White to obtain a considerable advantage almost effortlessly.

\textit{In variation a, White manages to create a passed pawn on the queenside and he controls the centre too. Black has practically no real counterplay and that provides White with long-term positional pressure in the centre and on the queenside.}

\textit{Black's position is much more solid in variation b, but there the vulnerability of his pawns on a5 and d6 is hurting him, while organizing any effective counterplay is nearly impossible.}

\textit{In variation c, Black is trying to accomplish the thematic pawn-advance f7-f5, and he plays 15... \textit{h}8 in order to prepare it. Still, that move does not help him obtain sufficient counter chances, because the position is simplified considerably and his weaknesses on a5 and d6 become even greater liability.}
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1.e4 c5 2.d4 f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.cxd4 c6 5.c3 e5 6.db5 d6 7.g5 a6 8.a3 b5 9.d5 xe7 10.exf6 xxf6 11.c3 0–0 12.c2 g5 13.a4 bxa4 14.xa4 a5 15.c4 d7

This move was played as early as in the 70ies of the past century, but it became popular only lately, since GM Teimour Radjabov tested it successfully at the highest level. Presently, it can still be considered as not so thoroughly analyzed. Black eyes White's rook on a4 and in some lines he plans to advance his rook-pawn a5-a4, in order to provide it with adequate protection and to fix White's pawn on the b2-square. Similar developments may turn out to be rather unfavourable for White.

16...a4!

That is the best reaction for Black. He plans the maneuver c6-a5-b3, after which he can even seize the initiative in some lines.

17.0–0

Black's task to obtain counter chances becomes easier after White's other possibilities.
After the indifferent reaction: 17.\textit{d}d3 \textit{a}a5 18.\textit{b}b5?! Black becomes even better after 18...\textit{b}b3! (with the terrible threats 19...\textit{c}c1 and 19...\textit{d}d2+) 19.0-0 (If White defends against the fork with 19.a3, then he loses his b2-pawn – 19...\textit{c}c5 20.\textit{e}e4 \textit{xb}5 21.\textit{xb}5 \textit{b}b8+) 19...\textit{c}c1!\textit{=} and Black wins the exchange.

After 17.b5, Black can immediately exploit the defenselessness of White’s bishop and his rook on a2 with the line: 17...\textit{b}b4! 18.\textit{xb}xb4 (The other possibilities are not any better for White: 18.cxb4 \textit{xb}5 19.h4 \textit{h}6 20.\textit{ce}3 \textit{xe}3 21.\textit{xe}3 \textit{c}8\textit{=}, or 18.cxb4 \textit{xb}5 19.h4 \textit{h}6 20.g4 \textit{xf}4 21.\textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}4 22.\textit{f}3 \textit{e}8 23.\textit{xf}4? \textit{d}5\textit{=} – and after the opening of the game in the centre White risks ending in a disastrous position very quickly.) 18...\textit{xb}5 19.\textit{a}3, Djukic – Calistri, Cannes 2007, and here it is essential for Black to preserve his light-squared bishop on the board – 19...\textit{d}d7! (In the game after 19...\textit{b}6? 20.\textit{xb}5 \textit{xb}5 21.\textit{d}5! \textit{xd}5 22.\textit{xd}5\textit{=} there arose a standard endgame, quite favourable for White, because of his almighty knight on d5 against Black’s “bad” dark-squared bishop.) 20.\textit{xd}6 (If White does not accept the pawn-sacrifice, then after 20.0-0 \textit{e}6 21.\textit{a}1 \textit{b}6 22.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}5= Black remains with a bishop-pair in a superior position.) 20...\textit{e}6 21.\textit{xd}8 \textit{axd}8 22.\textit{a}1 \textit{d}2 23.h4 \textit{f}4 24.\textit{d}5 \textit{xb}2 25.\textit{c}4 \textit{c}2=, and the best that White can dream about is a draw in that position.

\textit{17...\textit{a}5}

\textbf{18.\textit{d}3}

After 18.\textit{e}2, White’s e4-pawn remains defenseless and Black can exploit that outright with the line: 18...\textit{b}3 19.\textit{ce}3 \textit{c}5 20.\textit{c}2 \textit{c}6! 21.\textit{c}4 \textit{xe}3! 22.\textit{f}xe3 (White is forced to comply with that ugly capture; otherwise he loses his central pawn.) 22...\textit{h}8\textit{=} – White has held on to the d5-square indeed, but his pawn-structure has been compromised considerably, so that provides Black with the advantage.

In case of 18.\textit{ce}3, Black follows with 18...\textit{xe}3 19.\textit{xe}3 \textit{xc}4 20.\textit{xc}4 \textit{b}8! Now, White loses after 21.\textit{xe}5? \textit{e}6\textit{+}, as well as after 21.\textit{xd}6? \textit{d}8 22.\textit{b}4 \textit{e}6 23.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}3\textit{+}, or 21.\textit{xd}6? \textit{e}6\textit{+}. Therefore, he is forced to simplify the game with the variation: 21.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}6 22.\textit{xa}4 \textit{xb}2 23.\textit{xa}8 \textit{xa}8 24.\textit{xd}6 \textit{xc}3\textit{=} with a complete equality.

\textbf{18...\textit{b}3 19.\textit{cb}4}

If 19.\textit{ce}3, then 19...\textit{c}5 20.
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\( \text{c2}, \text{Samuelson - Shabalov, Washington 2006, and here Black's simplest line is } 20...\text{c6}!\? (He is threatening to capture } 21...\text{xa3 and White cannot take with his knight, because of the vulnerability of his e4-pawn). After } 21.\text{xf3 } \text{xe3 } 22.\text{xe3 g6 } 23.\text{d1 f5=} \) Black begins active actions first.

19...\text{c5}

The arising position resembles very much the game Anand – Radjabov, Monaco 2007, which we will analyze a bit later (see the variation 16.0-0 \text{d4}). The only difference is that Black’s knight has come to the c5-square via a5, winning an important tempo attacking his opponent’s bishop on c4. Now, it must retreat and Black obtains an excellent game because of that.

20.\text{c2} a3! 21.\text{a3} \text{xa3} 22.\text{bxa3} w\text{a5=} 

White has not achieved anything in the opening. There might follow 23.a4 \text{a8} 24.\text{e3 xxa4} 25.\text{c4 xc2} 26.\text{xc2 c7} 27.\text{d5 xc6} 28.\text{b1 d8=} . We must assume that in the variation 16.\text{a2}, Black equalizes easily.

2) 16.0-0

That line creates more problems for Black, but at the same time, it presents him with numerous possibilities. It is amazing, but even Teimour Radjabov has tried different lines for Black here.

16...\text{e7}

That is the most logical reaction for Black, but it is by far not his only one. We must analyze at first his possible knight-moves:

16...\text{b4}!? (Black takes the a2-square from White’s rook and he opts for tactical play.) 17.\text{a3} (That is a quite natural move indeed, but it deserves attention for White to try here the typical positional sacrifice for that scheme: 17.\text{xb4}!? \text{xa4} 18.\text{xa4 xxb4} 19.\text{xb4x} – and White has a pawn for the exchange and an almighty knight on the d5-outpost, as well as a potentially dangerous passed pawn along the b-file.) 17...\text{xd5} (In case Black refrains from the immediate capturing on d5 in favour of the intermediate move 17...\text{c8}!?, he risks a lot, because of the line: 18.cxb4! Here, in case of 18...\text{xc4}?! White coun-
ters with 19.bxa5 \(\text{exe}4\) 20.a6 \(\text{e}4\) 21.\(\text{exa}4\) \(\text{exa}4\) 22.\(\text{we}2\) – and it would be very difficult for Black to fight against the powerful passed a-pawn, while in case of 18... axb4, then 19.\(\text{ea}6\) \(\text{exc}4\) 20.\(\text{exd}6\) and White has the unpleasant threats 21.\(\text{exd}7\) and 21.\(\text{db}6\). In the game Volokitin – Radjabov, Biel 2006, there followed 20...b3 21.\(\text{ce}3\) \(\text{d}4\), and here instead of 22.\(\text{wb}3\) \(\text{wc}8\) 23.\(\text{wc}2\) \(\text{e}6\) 24.\(\text{c}6\) \(\text{wb}8\) 25.\(\text{bb}1\) \(\text{xe}3\)! 26.\(\text{xe}3\) \(\text{fd}8\) with sufficient counterplay for Black, it is much more interesting for White to continue with 22.\(\text{wb}3\)!? – he protects his e4-pawn with that move and he threatens 23.\(\text{df}5\), forcing his opponent to clarify his intentions concerning his rook on d4. In case of 22...g6, White can activate his passive rook with 23.\(\text{ea}1\), while following 22...\(\text{ge}7\), White has at his disposal the beautiful tactical line: 23.\(\text{xd}7\)! \(\text{xd}7\) 24.\(\text{wg}3\)! The appearance of the knight on f5 spells great trouble for Black. After 24...\(\text{xe}4\), White follows with 25.\(\text{df}5\)!+– anyway and Black can capture neither knight. It is bad for him to play 24...g6 25.\(\text{xe}5\) – because his rook and bishop are hanging, while after 24...f6 25.\(\text{df}5\) \(\text{c}5\) 26.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{xd}4\) 27.\(\text{xb}3\) White remains with a solid extra pawn and good winning chances. Therefore, Black has nothing better than to enter an endgame with heavy pieces, being a pawn down: 24...\(\text{we}6\) 25.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{f}6\) 26.\(\text{xf}6+\)

\(\text{xf}6\) 27.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{exd}4\) 28.\(\text{xb}3\) 18.\(\text{xd}5\) (It is also possible for White to play 18.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{e}6\) 19.\(\text{wd}3\) \(\text{wc}7\) 20.\(\text{dd}5\) \(\text{ab}8\) 21.\(\text{b}4\) axb4 22.\(\text{xb}4\), but after 22...

\(\text{wc}5\) 23.\(\text{xe}6\) \(\text{fxe}6\) 24.\(\text{a}6\) \(\text{fc}8\)!

25.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) 26.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xc}3\)± White has only minimal chances of winning, mostly thanks to his superior pawn-structure. Therefore, it is better for him to capture on d5 with the bishop.) 18...\(\text{bb}8\) 19.\(\text{a}2\)!? (It deserves attention for White to slow down with the advance of the b-pawn for a while. He should better double his rooks along the rook-file first. That is much trickier than the immediate straightforward line: 19.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{xb}4\) 20.\(\text{xb}4\)! \(\text{b}5\) 21.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{e}7\) 22.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{fc}8\) 23.\(\text{ea}1\)++, although even then White maintains some minimal edge, thanks to his pressure against the f7-square and the threat of penetrating to the seventh rank.) 19...a4 (If Black refrains from that move and he plays instead 19...g6, then after 20.\(\text{f}3\)!? \(\text{wc}7\) 21.\(\text{fa}1\) White would go back to the plan with b2-b4.) 20.\(\text{b}4\) g6 21.\(\text{xa}4\)! \(\text{xa}4\) 22.\(\text{xa}4\)±. White has accomplished the thematic exchange sacrifice for that variation and he maintains superior prospects. He dominates on the a-file and his bishop on d5 restricts the mobility of Black's rooks considerably. White will follow with advancing his queenside pawns after retreat CA17895 of his knight from b4.
16...d4 (You can see Black’s great problems in that variation in the game of the Indian grandmaster against the greatest specialist of that variation.) 17.a2 e6 (The trade on c2 does not look so attractive to Black. His idea is to transfer his knight to the c5-square, but it is not effective either.) 18.e2 a4, Anand – Radjabov, Monaco 2007 (Black is faced with a dilemma. He can fix White’s pawn on b2, or he can let it advance two squares forward in the line: 18..c5 19.a1 c6 20.b4 axb4 21.cxb4 a2 22.a2, and here the best solution for White is to exchange immediately the light-squared bishops after which Black’s weaknesses (the d5-square and the a4-pawn) become even more vulnerable: 19.b5! (White played in the game 19.d3 f5 20.b3 h5 21.d1 h4 22.f3, Anand – Radjabov, Wijk aan Zee 2007, 22...fxe4 23.fxe4 g7∞) 18..c7 (White is slightly better too in case of 18.e6 19.d3±, followed by 20.d1.) 19.h5! (White emphasizes the drawbacks of Black’s last move with that decision. He would not achieve anything much after 19.d3 e7 20.d1 e6 21.d5 d5 22.d5 b5 23.b3 d7=, as it was played in the game Karjakin – Radjabov, Cap d’Agde 2006.) 19.f6 (Black is forced to weaken his light squares.) 20.d5 (White goes back to the idea of placing his knights on d5 and e3 under much more favourable circumstances.) 20..d8 (or 20.e7 21.b4 e6 22.e3± with positional pressure for White) 21.e3±. The specifics of that position is that Black’s pawn is on f6 and not on f7 and that is obviously in favour of White.

17.a2

17..c8!

The line: 17..h8 18.e3, will be analyzed later – see 16.e3.

Naturally, Black is not obliged to play so aggressively and he can opt for much calmer lines:

16..h8 17.e3, that variation will be analyzed after a different move-order – see 16.e3.

In case of 16.b8 17.a2 h8, it is very good for White to play 18.de3! (This is more precise than 18.e3 g6 19.d3 f5 20.b3 h6 21.d1 h4 22.f3, Anand – Radjabov, Wijk aan Zee 2007, 22...fxe4 23.fxe4 g7∞) 18..c7 (White is slightly better too in case of 18.e6 19.d3±, followed by 20.d1.) 19.h5! (White emphasizes the drawbacks of Black’s last move with that decision. He would not achieve anything much after 19.d3 e7 20.d1 e6 21.d5 d5 22.d5 b5 23.b3 d7=, as it was played in the game Karjakin – Radjabov, Cap d’Agde 2006.) 19.f6 (Black is forced to weaken his light squares.) 20.d5 (White goes back to the idea of placing his knights on d5 and e3 under much more favourable circumstances.) 20..d8 (or 20.e7 21.b4 e6 22.e3± with positional pressure for White) 21.e3±. The specifics of that position is that Black’s pawn is on f6 and not on f7 and that is obviously in favour of White.

17.a2

17..c8!

The line: 17..h8 18.e3, will be analyzed later – see 16.e3.
If 17...\underline{c}c6, then 18.\underline{w}d3 \underline{c}xd5 19.\underline{c}xd5 \underline{w}b6 20.\underline{f}a1 \underline{a}b8 21.\underline{d}a3!± Schussler – Kouatly, Groningen 1977 and White has the powerful threat 22.\underline{c}c4.

It is a bit premature for Black to try 17...\underline{c}xd5 18.\underline{c}xd5 \underline{c}c8 19.\underline{d}a3! (White’s knight is headed for the c4-square in order to attack Black’s two weaknesses.) 19...a4! (It is weaker for Black to play 19...\underline{g}e6?!, Vescovi – Mecking, Sao Paulo 2000, because of 20.\underline{c}xe6 fxe6 21.\underline{g}g4, followed by 21...\underline{f}f6 22.\underline{h}b5 d5 23.\underline{x}a5±, or 21...\underline{e}7 22.\underline{d}b5 \underline{f}4 23.\underline{d}e2±; in case of 19...\underline{h}h8!? 20.\underline{c}c4 \underline{b}5, besides the reliable line 21.\underline{b}b3±, White can try the principled variation 21.\underline{x}a5!? \underline{xf}x 22.\underline{x}f1 \underline{d}d7 23.\underline{c}c4 \underline{c}7 24.\underline{b}4± with more than sufficient compensation for the exchange.) 20.\underline{c}c4! \underline{b}b5 21.\underline{c}xd6 (The exchange-sacrifice is again possible here – 21.\underline{x}a4!? \underline{x}a4 22.\underline{w}xa4 \underline{h}h8 23.\underline{a}a6 \underline{e}7 24.\underline{a}a1) 21...\underline{xf}1 22.\underline{x}f1 (But not 22.\underline{x}c8?, because of 22...\underline{c}c4!±) 22...\underline{c}c7 23.\underline{b}b5 \underline{c}c5 24.\underline{w}xa4± with an edge for White.

17...\underline{c}c8! – That is the best defence for Black and White must play very precisely in order to obtain the advantage.

(diagram)

18.\underline{w}d3!

White would not achieve much with 18.\underline{x}e7+ \underline{w}xe7 19.\underline{d}d5, relying on the line: 19...a4 (about 19...\underline{d}d8 – see 17...\underline{c}xd5) 20.\underline{b}b4! \underline{h}h8 21.\underline{x}xa4! (That is once again the already familiar exchange-sacrifice.) 21...\underline{x}xa4 22.\underline{x}xa4, with good prospects for White, for example: 22...g6 23.\underline{c}c6 \underline{d}d7 24.b4 f5 25.b5 fxe4 26.\underline{x}e4 \underline{c}7 27.g3± Aliavdin – Voitsekhovsky, Sochi 2007, or 22...f5!? (That is an attempt by Black to organize active counterplay on the kingside.) 23.\underline{x}xf5 \underline{x}f5 24.\underline{c}c6 \underline{c}7 25.g3 (It is useless for White to play 25.\underline{e}6?!, because of 25...\underline{f}f4.) 25.\underline{e}8f 26.\underline{g}g2 \underline{w}b7 27.\underline{w}c2 \underline{c}e3 28.\underline{f}3±

It is much stronger for Black to play 19...\underline{c}c5! (He leaves his pawn on a5, controlling the b4-square and he prevents the exchange-sacrifice.) 20.b4 (After 20.b3 \underline{e}3 21.\underline{x}a5 \underline{e}6 22.\underline{b}b4 \underline{f}c8±, as it was played in the game Anand – Radjabov, Mainz 2006, Black’s position was even slightly preferable. White has no advantage after 20.\underline{w}d3 \underline{b}5 21.c4 \underline{a}7 22.\underline{f}a1 a4=) 20...\underline{e}3 21.bxa5 \underline{b}5 22.\underline{e}1 (or 22.a6 \underline{a}7∞) 22...\underline{f}c8 23.\underline{e}3 \underline{a}7 24.\underline{f}3 \underline{b}8c7 25.\underline{a}a1∞. This position is with mutual chances, since White’s dominance over the d5-outpost and his passed a-pawn is balanced by Black’s active pieces.
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18...\texttt{txd5} 19.\texttt{txd5} \texttt{a4}

In case of 19...\texttt{b6}, as it was played in the game Magyar – Ponnath, Germany 1999, White had the powerful counter measure 20.\texttt{ta3}! (threatening 21. \texttt{tc4}, and both Black’s a5 and d6-pawns would be hanging) 20...\texttt{c5} (In case of 20...\texttt{c7}, it is very strong for White to play 21.\texttt{tb5}! \texttt{xb5} 22.\texttt{xb5}±, and his bishop is much stronger than Black’s dark-squared bishop in the arising position.) 21.\texttt{fa1} \texttt{h8} 22.\texttt{c4} \texttt{a4} 23.\texttt{xa4}! \texttt{xa4} 24.\texttt{xa4}± – White’s queenside pawns are ready to advance with tempo.

20.\texttt{a6}!? (Now, capturing on a4 is again on the agenda.)

20...\texttt{c7} 21.\texttt{b4} \texttt{h8} 22. \texttt{xa4}! \texttt{xa4} 23.\texttt{xa4}±

There might follow 23...\texttt{b6} 24.\texttt{a1} \texttt{f5} 25.\texttt{a6}! \texttt{xa6} 26.\texttt{xa6} \texttt{fxe4} 27.\texttt{xe4}± – and after the exchange of queens, White can centralize his king and advance his queenside passed pawn. It looks like Black has great difficulties to cope with his problems.

So, we are convinced now that the move 16.\texttt{a2} should not worry Black too much because of 16...\texttt{a4}!, while after 16.0–0, White has a slight positional pressure, but in order to maintain it he must be ready to sacrifice the exchange. That sacrifice is promising indeed, but it is still not so well analyzed.

After 16.\texttt{ce3}, Black has tried:

a) 16...\texttt{xe3}, b) 16...\texttt{h8}, c) 16...\texttt{b8}, d) 16...\texttt{e7} and e) 16...\texttt{g6}.

a) 16...\texttt{xe3}

That is a principled move, but it is a too straightforward attempt at solving the problems in the opening.

17.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{e7} 18.\texttt{a2} \texttt{c6} 19.\texttt{d3}!

In the game Hamid – Muralidharan, Chennai 2004, White played 19.\texttt{d5} \texttt{xd5} 20.\texttt{xd5}, and Black could have solved his problems with the line: 20...\texttt{c8} 21.0–0 \texttt{c5}±. White should not have provoked exchanges on d5.

19...\texttt{a4}
It is much worse for Black to play 19...\(\text{b6} \) 20.g3 a4, Kasperek – Nikel, Internet 2005. It is essential that Black has lost his control over the d5-square and he has failed to activate his knight. After 21.d5 \(\text{xd5} \) 22.\(\text{b6} \) \(\text{e7} \) 23.\(\text{d3} \) \(\text{b6} \) 24.0-0 \(\text{f8} \) 25.\(\text{a1} \) \(\text{b3} \) 26.\(\text{c4} \) Black's pawns on a4 and d6 remain very weak, while White can easily protect his backward b2-pawn.

20.0-0 \(\text{c7} \) 21.\(\text{d1} \) \(\text{f8} \)

22.\(\text{b5} \), and here it is in favour of White if Black plays 22...\(\text{b6} \) 23.\(\text{xc6} \) \(\text{xc6} \) 24.\(\text{c4} \), as well as 22...d5 23.\(\text{xc6} \) dxe4 24.\(\text{xe4} \) \(\text{xd1}+ \) 25.\(\text{xd1} \) \(\text{xc6} \) 26.\(\text{xe5} \). This last variation leads to a position in which White has an extra pawn indeed, but his pieces are placed a bit awkwardly. Black can hardly exploit that, though.

b) 16...\(\text{h8} \)

(diagram)

17.0-0

I will have to remind you that position might be reached after a different move-order too – 16.0-0 \(\text{h8} \) 17.\(\text{e3} \), and it should be noted that White should not be in a hurry to play 17.h4?! because of 17...\(\text{xe3} \) 18.\(\text{xe3} \) \(\text{e7} \) 19.\(\text{a2} \) \(\text{c6} \) 20.\(\text{g4} \) d5! Volokitin – Radjabov, Cap d'Agde 2006.

17...\(\text{e7} \)

In case of 17...\(\text{xe3} \) 18.\(\text{xe3} \) \(\text{e7} \) 19.\(\text{a2} \) \(\text{c6} \) 20.\(\text{d3} \), Black still has problems. It is bad for him to try 20...\(\text{a7} \)!, Garcia Martinez – Almeida, Mexico 1991, 21.b4! \(\text{f5} \) 22.\(\text{xf5} \) d5 23.\(\text{b5} \) e4 24.\(\text{e2} \), it is too passive for him to opt for 20...\(\text{c7} \) 21.\(\text{d1} \) \(\text{d8} \) (Black's other rook must take care about the f7-pawn.), March – Saez, Oropesa 1998, 22.\(\text{da1} \)? \(\text{b7} \) 23.\(\text{d5} \) \(\text{xd5} \) 24.\(\text{xd5} \) \(\text{a8} \) 25.\(\text{b3} \) – Black has great problems protecting his a5-pawn. If 20...\(\text{f5} \) 21.\(\text{xf5} \) d5, then White can counter Black’s active strategy with the line: 22.\(\text{b5} \) d4 23.\(\text{xc6} \) \(\text{xc6} \) 24.\(\text{c4} \) \(\text{d5} \), and here 25.\(\text{a4} \) e4 26.\(\text{d1} \) \(\text{c5} \) 27.\(\text{xd4} \) \(\text{xd4} \) 28.\(\text{e3} \) Kravtsov – Kolesov, Alushta 2007, or 25.\(\text{f3} \) – and White has an extra pawn in both variations with excellent winning chances.

Black cannot solve his problems with the move 17...g6, Stanojloski – Dinev, Stip 2002, 18.g3 f5
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19.\textit{exf}5 \textit{gxf}5 20.\textit{f}4 \textit{exf}4 21.\textit{gxf}4 \textit{\&}h4 22.\textit{\&}h1± and White has a slight advantage.

The move 17...\textit{\&}b8 has not been tested in practice yet. It is interesting here to try for White the original idea 18.\textit{\&}a1!? After 18...\textit{\&}e7 19.\textit{\&}xa5, it is not good for Black to enter the variation 19...\textit{\&}xd5 20.\textit{\&}xd5 \textit{\&}xb2 21.\textit{\&}c4± with a clear advantage for White. It is stronger for Black to play 19...\textit{\&}xb2!? , but then White maintains his initiative with the line: 20.\textit{\&}xe7 \textit{\&}xe7 21.\textit{\&}a7 \textit{\&}b8 22.\textit{\&}b1 \textit{\&}xb2+ 23.\textit{\&}xb2 \textit{\&}g5 24.\textit{\&}d5±. In case of 18...\textit{g}6 (instead of 18...\textit{\&}e7), White would follow with 19.\textit{\&}a3! \textit{f}5 20.\textit{\&}d3±, planning 21.\textit{\&}c4 with powerful pressure against the d6-pawn.

In the game Zawadzka – Zhi-galko, Warsaw 2005, there followed 18...\textit{g}6 19.\textit{b}3 \textit{\&}xe3 (It is insufficient for Black to try here 19...\textit{a}4 20.\textit{b}xa4 \textit{\&}a5 21.\textit{\&}xe7 \textit{\&}xe7 22.\textit{\&}d2±) 20.\textit{\&}xe3 \textit{\&}c6 21.\textit{\&}d2 (It would be interesting to test 21.\textit{\&}d3?! , so that after 21...\textit{f}5 22.\textit{\&}d1 \textit{f}4 23.\textit{\&}c2 \textit{f}3, White can exploit the tactical nuances of the position by playing 24.\textit{\&}d4!±) 21...\textit{\&}c8 (After 21...\textit{\&}xe4 22.\textit{\&}xd6 \textit{\&}c7 23.\textit{\&}d7 \textit{\&}c5 24.\textit{\&}d2±, followed by \textit{\&}d1, White occupies reliably the central d-file.) 22.\textit{\&}d5 \textit{\&}c7. In this position, White can increase his pressure in the centre with 23.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{f}6 24.\textit{\&}fd1±;

After 18...\textit{\&}g6, Fragakis – Papadopoulos, Greece 2005, White should better play 19.\textit{\&}f5 \textit{\&}xf5 20.\textit{exf}5 \textit{\&}e7 21.\textit{\&}d3±

19.\textit{\&}xe7 \textit{\&}xe7 20.\textit{\&}f5

This move leads to a position with opposite-coloured bishops and Black’s attempt to seize the initiative backfires, as we are going to see.

20...\textit{\&}xf5 21.\textit{exf}5 \textit{e}4

It is even weaker for Black to play 21...\textit{\&}d7?! 22.\textit{\&}g4 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{\&}e4±
11. \(c3\) 0-0 12. \(\text{d}c2\) \(g5\) 13. \(a4\) \(bxa4\) 14. \(\text{xa4}\) a5 15. \(\text{c}4\) \(\text{d}7\)

22. \(\text{d}5\) e3!?

That is the best chance for Black, because after 22...\(\text{xa5}\), then White plays 23.\(\text{e}e1\) e3 24.\(b4\) \(\text{xa7}\) 25.\(\text{f}xe3\) a3 26.\(\text{w}d3\)±, and Black's position is very difficult.

23.\(\text{f}xe3\) \(\text{w}xe3\)+ 24.\(\text{h}1\) \(\text{e}3\) 25.\(\text{w}xa4\) \(\text{w}d2\) 26.\(\text{d}1\)
\(\text{f}e8\) 27.\(\text{w}d4\) \(\text{e}1\)+ 28.\(\text{xe}1\)
\(\text{w}xe1\)+ 29.\(\text{g}1\)±

White has parried the threats along the first rank and he has a material advantage. Naturally, it would be far from easy for him to win with his extra pawn in that position.

c) 16...\(\text{b}8\) 17.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{h}8\)

18.\(\text{a}2\)!?

After that move, Black must consider the possibility of White advancing his h-pawn. Meanwhile, White maintains his edge even after castling short, for example: 18.0-0 \(g6\) 19.\(\text{w}d3\) f5 20.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{h}6\) 21.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{w}4\) 22.f3.

In the first game, in which that variation was played Topalov – Kasparov, Leon 1998, there followed 22...\(\text{e}6\) 23.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{f}xe4\) 24.\(\text{w}xe4\) (It is also possible for White to play 24.\(f\)xe4, Wiersma - Goeldi, Triesen 2006, but it seems to me that in this case keeping the queens on the board should rather be in favour of Black.) 24...
\(\text{w}xe4\) 25.\(\text{f}xe4\) \(\text{f}7\) 26.\(\text{f}2\) (White can preserve an additional couple of rooks with 26.\(h4\)!? \(g7\) 27.\(d3\), with the idea to follow with \(\text{h}2\)-f3, or \(d2\)-f3, but the move in the game is simpler.) 26...\(g7\) 27.\(\text{xf}7\)+ \(\text{xf}7\) 28.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{d}8\) 29.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{e}6\) 30.\(\text{x}a5\) \(\text{c}5\), and here White maintains a clear advantage after 31.\(\text{a}7\)! (Instead, he played in the game 31.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{xb}3\), and Black avoided the worst.) 31...\(\text{xe}4\)+ 32.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{g}5\)+ 33.\(\text{e}2\)±

After 22...\(\text{g}5\), Black is not out of the woods: 23.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{d}8\) 24.\(\text{h}1\) f4 25.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{g}5\) 26.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{b}4\) 27.\(\text{xb}4\) \(\text{xb}5\) 28.\(c4\) \(\text{xc}4\) 29.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{xb}4\) 30.\(\text{d}5\)±. He managed later to save the game indeed, but the character of the fight would hardly satisfy Black: 30...
\(\text{c}7\) 31.\(\text{d}6\) \(\text{f}6\) 32.\(\text{a}5\) \(\text{b}3\) 33.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{b}8\) 34.\(\text{c}e1\) \(\text{b}2\) 35.\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{b}3\), and here it deserves attention for White to continue with 36.\(\text{c}4\)!? (or 36.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{c}2\) 37.\(\text{e}8\)
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18...\( \text{e7} \)

This is the most logical solution.

It is too dangerous for Black to play 18...\( \text{g6} \)?!, because White can counter that with 19.h4! \( \text{hxh4} \) 20.g3. That resource of seizing the initiative is often used in similar positions. Here, the circumstances are especially favourable for White. The second rank is free and it can be exploited to bring the rook on a2 into the attack. Black’s problems can be illustrated by the following exemplary variations: 20...\( \text{xf6} \) 21.f4 \( \text{exf4} \) 22.gxf4 \( \text{hxh4}+?! \) 23.\( \text{f1 f5} \) 24.\( \text{ah2}+--;\) 20...\( \text{e7} \) 21.f4 \( \text{g8} \) 22.\( \text{ah2} \) 23.f5 \( \text{g5} \) 24.\( \text{f3+--;}\) 20...\( \text{g5} \) 21.f4 \( \text{exf4} \) 22.\( \text{ah2} \) 23.gxf4+ and White’s threats are decisive in all the variations.

It is premature for Black to play 18...\( \text{f5} \) 19.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 20.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{h4} \) 21.h4!? \( \text{e7} \) (In case of 21...\( \text{h6} \) 22.g4! +-, followed by 23.g5, Black loses a piece.) 22.\( \text{d3 e4} \) (The light squares are already very weak and Black is reluctant to enter the variation 22...\( \text{f7} \) 23.\( \text{e4} \)) 23.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{e5} \) 24.\( \text{e2} \) ± Skok – Bologanovsky, Evpatoria 2006.

White is clearly better after 18...\( \text{h6} \) 19.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{h4} \) 20.\( \text{h3 f5} \) 21.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 22.\( \text{d3 e4} \) 23.0–0 \( \text{f4} \) 24.\( \text{d5} \) ± Nisipeanu – Apel, Germany 1995.

In the game Krokay – Baran, Krynica 2001, after 18...\( \text{a8} \) (In fact, Black admits his mistake on move 16 with that decision.) 19.0–0 \( \text{e7} \), the opponents agreed to a draw, but White’s position was obviously better. He could have tried the line: 20.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 21.\( \text{f5} \) ±

The move 18...\( \text{e6} \) – seems rather strange, because then Black did not need to develop his bishop to d7, since he could have put it on e6 in one move. 19.0–0 \( \text{d7} \) (It is not better for Black to opt for 19...\( \text{g6} \) 20.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 21.\( \text{d3 f5} \) 22.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 23.f4 e4 24.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{d8} \), Grazins – Halwick, corr. 2000, because after 25.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{e7} \) 26.\( \text{b1} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 27.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{c8} \) 28.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{c5} \) 29.c4 ± the exchange of the light-squared bishops is unavoidable and White will fortify his knight in the centre of the board.) 20.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{g6} \), Schreber – Halwick, corr. 2001, and no doubt, White must
be well prepared to counter the advance \( f7-f5 \), for example with \( 21.g3 f5 \) (That is the most principled decision for Black.) \( 22.exf5 \) \( gxf5 \) 23.f4 \( \text{d}d8 \) (After \( 23...\text{exf}4 \) \( 24.gxf4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 25.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{g}8 \) 26.\( \text{h}5 \); Black cannot obtain any effective counterplay, because of his new weakness on \( f5 \).) \( 24.\text{d}1 \) \( \text{g}8 \) \( 25.\text{h}5 \); and Black's position looks solid indeed, but he has no counterplay. Therefore, White's prospects are superior.

19.\( \text{xe}7 \) \( \text{xe}7 \)

If 19...\( \text{xe}7 \), then not 20.\( \text{xa}5 \)! \( \text{xe}3 \) 21.\( \text{fxe}3 \) \( \text{h}4 \), but 20.\( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 21.\( \text{ex}f5 \) e4 22.0–0 and White maintains his positional advantage.

20.0–0 \( \text{g}6 \)

In the game Pavlov – Kolesov, Alushta 2006, there followed 20...\( \text{f}5 \)! 21.\( \text{ex}f5 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 22.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 23.\( \text{xa}5 \) \( \text{xa}5 \) 24.\( \text{xa}5 \), and White reached an endgame with an extra pawn.

21.\( \text{d}3 \) a4 22.\( \text{b}4 \)

Black's pawns on a4 and d6 are weak. White has deployed his forces quite harmoniously and he controls reliably the central d5-outpost. These factors guarantee his advantage.

d) 16...\( \text{e}7 \) 17.\( \text{a}2 \)

About 17...\( \text{xe}3 \) 18.\( \text{xe}3 \) – see 16...\( \text{xe}3 \); as for 17...\( \text{h}8 \) 18.0–0 – see 16...\( \text{h}8 \).

In a game played between computers some time ago, the move 17...a4 was tested, but after 18.0–0 \( \text{xd}5 \) 19.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{b}8 \), Voyager 2.29 – The Crazy Bishop 37, 1999, White had the typical resource 20.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{b}5 \) 21.\( \text{xa}4 \) \( \text{xa}4 \) 22.\( \text{xa}4 \), with an excellent compensation for the exchange due to his dominance in the centre, his control over the light squares and his potentially dangerous passed b-pawn.

About 17...\( \text{b}8 \), Schwierzy – Neumann, Germany 1991, 18.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 19.\( \text{xd}5 \) – see 17...\( \text{xd}5 \).

In case of 17...\( \text{c}8 \)!, with the idea to increase the pressure along the c-file, White should refrain from 18.\( \text{b}3 \)! a4!\( \text{f} \) Ortiz Fernandez – Wendt, Calvia 2004, but he should play instead 18.\( \text{d}3 \)! \( \text{xd}5 \) 19.\( \text{xd}5 \), and later 19...a4
20.\textbf{b}5\textpm, or 19...\textbf{b}8 20.b3! a4 21.b4\textpm

\textbf{18.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}xd5} g6}
Black is preparing the pawn-advance f7-f5.
He has tested in practice some other moves too, besides 18...g6:
The original move 18...\textbf{c}8?! was tried in the game Prathamesh – Ganguly, Mumbai 2003, but it proved to be incorrect, because of 19.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}b}6 \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}c6 20.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}xd7} \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xc4 (Black loses a piece in the line 20...\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xe4+ 21.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}e2 \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}fd8 22.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}b6 \textbf{\textit{\textit{a}}}b8 23.f3\textpm) 21.\textbf{\textit{\textit{a}}}a4\textpm, and White wins the exchange.

It is more solid for Black to opt for 18...\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}b8 19.0-0 \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}h8 (It is too risky to lose the control over the f7-square: 19...\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}8 20.b3a4, Thanhauser – Cvetnic, corr. 2000, 21.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}h5! – Black loses after 21...\textbf{\textit{\textit{a}}}xb3? 22.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xa8 \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xa8 23.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}b6\textmp, while in case of 21...h6, White follows with 22.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}f6+! \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xf6 23.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xf7+ \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}h7 24.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xd7 \textbf{\textit{\textit{a}}}xb3 25.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xa8 \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}xa8 26.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}xb3 \textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}xc3 27.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}e6 \textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}d8 28.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}f7 \textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}c7 29.\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}f5+ \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}h8 30.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}g6 \textbf{\textit{\textit{g}}}g8 31.\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}e6+ \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}h8 32.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}b1\textpm and he has a powerful attack in a position with opposite-coloured bishops.) 20.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}e2 f5 21.\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}xf5 \textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}xf5, as it was played in the game Loskutov – Iskusnyh, Arkhangelsk 1996. At that moment, White had better continue with 22.\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}d3 \textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}f8 23.h4 \textbf{\textit{\textit{h}}}h6 24.\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}e4\textpm with a slight but stable advantage.

In case of 18...\textbf{\textit{\textit{b}}}b8, White can play 19.b3 g6 20.0-0 \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}h8 21.\textbf{\textit{\textit{w}}}e2\textpm, and later 22.\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}fa1.

Following 18...\textbf{\textit{\textit{h}}}h8, as it was played in the game Miciak – Skarb, Slovakia 1996, it would be good for White to try 19.b3!, after which 19...g6 would lead to a transposition of moves – see 18...g6, while in case of the immediate 19...\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}5 20.\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}xf5 \textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}xf5 21.0-0\textpm – White would preserve a slight but stable advantage, despite the fact that Black had managed to push f7-f5, without preparing it first with g7-g6. White's plan includes the transfer of his bishop to the e4-square and Black has problems countering that. The exchange of the light-squared bishops will make the presence of the knight on d5 even more effective and if Black counters the move \textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}d3 with the advance e5-e4, then his light-squared bishop will be forced to protect later that new weakness.

\textbf{19.b3 \textbf{\textit{\textit{h}}}h8}
If 19...a4, then 20.b4\textpm

\textbf{20.0-0}
This is a reliable move indeed, but it is worth having a look at the aggressive line 20.h4!? This thematic pawn-sacrifice is attractive
in this situation (without a black knight on the c6-square), because after White pushes f2-f4 in some variations, Black cannot capture exf4, since he loses his control over the d4-square. The drawback of the situation for White is that the exchange of the knights has diminished his attacking potential.

After 20...\textit{hxh}4 21.g3, it is too risky for Black to play 21...\textit{e}7 22.f4 \textit{g}8 23.\textit{ah}2 \textit{g}7, in view of 24.f5! Here, Black is helpless after 24...\textit{gx}f5 25.\textit{ex}f5 \textit{c}6 (25...\textit{xf}5 26.\textit{f}3+-) 26.\textit{f}3! \textit{f}6 27.\textit{xf}6!!+, or 24...\textit{g}5 25.\textit{f}3! \textit{gx}f5 26.\textit{ex}f5 4 (if 26...\textit{f}6, then 27.\textit{xf}6! \textit{xf}6 28.\textit{ex}h7! \textit{ex}h7 29.\textit{ex}h7+ \textit{hx}h7 30.\textit{h}5+ \textit{g}7 31.\textit{g}6++) 27.\textit{f}1! (This surprising maneuver settles the issue.) 27...\textit{f}6 28.\textit{h}6! \textit{g}5 29.\textit{h}5! \textit{a}4 30.\textit{b}4 \textit{a}3 31.\textit{a}2+--. Black's relatively best defence is 24...\textit{c}6 25.\textit{g}4 \textit{g}5 (or 25...a4 26.\textit{f}6 \textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 27.\textit{x}g6!!+-), but then 26.\textit{c}7! \textit{f}6! (or 26...\textit{xc}7 27.\textit{x}g5 \textit{xf}5 28.\textit{f}6 \textit{g}8 29.\textit{xf}5+++) 27.\textit{x}a8 \textit{xf}5 28.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 29.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xa}8 30.\textit{f}6! \textit{xf}6 31.\textit{f}1 \textit{g}5 32.\textit{xf}7 \textit{xf}7 33.\textit{xf}7+, and White wins the exchange.

In the game Arnaudov – Yordanov, Pleven 2006, Black defended more precisely – 21...\textit{xf}6! 22.f4 \textit{g}8! (Black loses after 22...\textit{ex}f4? 23.\textit{ah}2 \textit{fx}g3 24.\textit{ex}h7+ \textit{g}8 25.\textit{d}2+-, as well as following 22...\textit{g}7? 23.\textit{ah}2 \textit{h}6 24.\textit{f}5! \textit{g}5 25.\textit{f}6 \textit{hx}g3+ 26.\textit{d}2 \textit{g}5+ 27.\textit{c}2 \textit{xf}6 28.\textit{ex}h6+ \textit{g}7 29.\textit{h}7+ \textit{g}8 30.\textit{d}2+-; White is clearly better too after 22...h5 23.\textit{f}5 \textit{g}7 24.\textit{f}2!) 23.\textit{a}2. White has compensation for the sacrificed pawn for sure, but it would be far from easy for him to break Black's defence. In this particular game, he failed to do that, though.

20...\textit{f}5 21.\textit{ex}f5 \textit{xf}5

In case of 21...\textit{gx}f5, White follows with the thematic move 22.\textit{f}4±

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\textbf{22.\textit{w}e}2±
\textit{ – and White ends up with a slight positional advantage. Black has pushed f7-f5 indeed, but he has not equalized completely yet.}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\textbf{e) 16...\textit{g}6}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Black begins the immediate
preparation of the advance of his f-pawn.

**17.b3!?**

This is the most ambitious decision for White. The idea should be well familiar to our readers. White postpones his castling short, planning to push h2-h4 at some moment.

Meanwhile, White has a calmer alternative. It is good for him to opt for 17.0-0 \( \text{b}8 \) (about 17... \( \text{h}8 \) 18.g3 – see 16... \( \text{h}8 \)) 18.\( \text{a}2 \)?! In the game Wallace – Kalinschew, Budapest 1995, Black chose 18... \( \text{h}8 \), but White could have obtained the advantage with the line: 19.g3 f5 20.exf5 gxf5 (or 20... \( \text{xf}5 \) 21.\( \text{xf}5 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 22.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{f}7 \) 23.\( \text{g}4 \) 21.f4 \( \text{xf}4 \) 22.gxf4 \( \text{h}6 \) 23.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 24.b3 \( \text{xd}5 \) 25.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 26.\( \text{d}3 \)±. It would be insufficient for Black to equalize with 18... \( \text{e}7 \) 19.\( \text{xe}7 \)+ \( \text{xe}7 \) 20.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 21.g3±

**17... \( \text{h}8 \)**

**18... \( \text{xe}4 \)**

In case Black declines the gift and he plays 18... \( \text{h}6 \)!, then after 19.\( \text{a}2 \) (It is also possible for White to play 19.h5 \( \text{f}4 \) 20.\( \text{d}3 \)±) 19... \( \text{e}7 \) 20.\( \text{f}6 \)! it becomes obvious that he is in a big trouble. After 20... \( \text{xe}3 \), White’s simplest reaction is 21.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) (or 21... \( \text{g}8 \) 22.\( \text{xg}8 \) \( \text{xg}8 \) 23.\( \text{d}6 \)±) 22.\( \text{h}5 \) g5 (In case of 22... \( \text{g}8 \), White wins with 23.\( \text{xe}7 \)! \( \text{h}7 \) 24.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 25.\( \text{hxg}6 \)+ \( \text{g}6 \) 26.\( \text{h}5 \)± \( \text{f}6 \) 27.\( \text{h}7 \)+ – with an unavoidable checkmate.) 23.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 24.0-0 \( \text{d}8 \) (or 24... \( \text{c}6 \) 25.\( \text{af}2 \)±) 25.\( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{xf}1 \)+ 26.\( \text{xf}1 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 27.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 28.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{b}4 \) (28... \( \text{xe}4 \) 29.\( \text{xd}6 \)±) 29.\( \text{h}6 \)± – and Black is left with numerous weaknesses all over the board. He lost quickly after 20... \( \text{e}6 \), which was played in the game Timofeev – Smirnov, Tomsk 2006. There followed 21.\( \text{h}5 \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 22.\( \text{xc}4 \) \( \text{g}5 \)? (That move loses outright, but Black’s chances of saving the game are not much greater after 22... \( \text{g}7 \) 23.\( \text{g}4 \)±, or 22... \( \text{c}6 \) 23.\( \text{d}5 \) 23.\( \text{hxg}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 24.\( \text{h}5 \) 1-0.

It is more logical for Black to play 18... \( \text{xe}3 \)! 19.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \), but then White obtains an advantage with the help of an exchange sacrifice: 20.\( \text{d}6 \)! \( \text{xa}4 \) 21.\( \text{f}6 \)+ \( \text{g}8 \) 22.\( \text{xa}4 \) \( \text{c}8 \)! (The alternatives for Black are even worse: 22... \( \text{c}8 \) 23.\( \text{xf}1 \)+–; 22... \( \text{h}5 \) 23.\( \text{xe}5 \)±; 22... \( \text{b}8 \) 23.0-0±) 23.\( \text{g}4 \) (This move forces Black to give back
some material. It is also good for White to play 23.\textit{W}xe5 \textit{b}c6 24.\textit{W}f4 \textit{W}c7 25.\textit{W}xc7 \textit{bxc7} 26.\textit{W}b5\pm 23... \textit{Q}f5 (that is an only move) 24.\textit{W}xf5 \textit{W}xf6 25.\textit{Q}xf6+ \textit{Q}g7 26.\textit{Q}d7 \textit{bxc4} 27.f6+ \textit{Q}g8 28.\textit{W}xf8 \textit{W}xf8 29.\textit{Q}e2! \textit{Q}e4+ (or 29...\textit{W}xa4 30.\textit{B}b1 \textit{Qe}8 31.\textit{B}b5\pm; 29...\textit{W}xc3 30.\textit{B}b1 \textit{Qe}8 31.\textit{B}b5\pm) 30.\textit{B}d3 \textit{Q}f4 31.\textit{E}e1\pm and White has good chances of winning that rook and pawn ending.

19.g3 \textit{g}5

White maintains a long lasting initiative in a position with material equality if Black retreats his bishop to other squares:

19...\textit{h}f6 20.\textit{Q}f5 \textit{g}7 (About 20...\textit{g}5 – see 19...\textit{e}e7 20.\textit{Q}f5 \textit{g}5; after 20...\textit{e}e6 21.\textit{Q}xd6 \textit{g}5 22.\textit{Q}b7 \textit{W}b8 23.\textit{Q}c5\pm Black has no active prospects whatsoever.) 21.\textit{Q}xd6 \textit{d}d4 22.\textit{E}a2 \textit{c}6 (It is not any better for Black to play 22...\textit{e}e6 23.\textit{Q}xf7+ \textit{B}xf7 24.\textit{c}xd4 \textit{exd}4 25.\textit{W}d3\pm 23.\textit{Q}xf7+ \textit{B}xf7 24.\textit{c}xd4 \textit{exd}4 25.f4\textbf{t} White’s position is superior, because of his dominance in the centre and Black’s passive bishop on g7.

19...\textit{e}e7 20.\textit{Q}f5 \textit{g}5 (It seems too dangerous for Black to try 20...\textit{Q}xf5 21.exf5 \textit{g}5 22.\textit{W}g4\textbf{t} – and he has great problems to fight against White’s centralized and well-coordinated forces.) 21.\textit{Q}xd6 \textit{e}e6 22.\textit{Q}b7 \textit{W}b8 23.\textit{Q}c5\textbf{t} The material is equal and White’s pieces are more active and much more harmoniously placed.

20.f4 \textit{exf}4 21.\textit{g}xf4 \textit{h}4+ 22.\textit{Q}f1\\textbf{t}

We have already seen similar pawn-sacrifices. This position has not been tested in practice yet. The analysis shows that White’s prospects are excellent. Black’s d6-pawn is hanging in some lines and his queen’s rook cannot assist in the defence of his king (his own bishop stands in the way).

There may arise the following developments:

22...\textit{h}f6?! 23.\textit{E}a2 \textit{g}7 (After 23...\textit{g}7 24.\textit{E}ah2 \textbf{h}6 25.\textit{W}e2\pm White is threatening 26.\textit{E}xh6+! followed by 27.\textit{W}h2.) 24.e5! \textit{Q}xe5 (It is hopeless for Black to opt for 24...\textit{d}xe5 25.\textit{Q}xf6 \textit{W}xf6 26.\textit{W}xd7--; or 25...\textit{Q}xf6 26.\textit{E}xh7--; 25.fxe5 \textit{Q}xe5 26.\textit{E}g2\pm; 22...f5 23.\textit{E}xf5 \textit{Q}xf5 24.\textit{E}xf5 \textit{E}xf5 25.\textit{E}e2! (White’s bishop is redeployed to another diagonal in order to free the fourth rank for maneuvers of the rook.) 25...g5 (or 25...\textit{E}a7 26.\textit{Q}g4 \textit{E}f8 27.\textit{Q}c4\pm) 26.\textit{Q}f3\pm – Here, it is too bad for Black to play 26...\textit{g}xf4? because of 27.\textit{Q}e4 \textit{E}e5 28.\textit{W}g4+-;

22...\textit{g}8 (That is the most tenacious defence for Black.) 23.\textit{E}a2 \textit{g}7 24.\textit{E}ah2 \textit{e}7 (In case of 24...\textit{h}f6?! White plays again 25.e5!\pm)
25.\textit{W}c2!\textit{\textordmasculine} – and White has more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn. He can increase the pressure by trebling his heavy pieces along the h-file, or by advancing his f4-pawn, placing his queen on the f2-square in advance.

\textit{Conclusion}

\textit{In this chapter, we have dealt with one of the most fashionable and not so well analyzed lines of the Chelyabinsk variation, which was introduced into the high-level tournament practice by GM Teimour Radjabov.}

\textit{Presently, after }15...\textit{d}d7\textit{! White often encounters problems in his attempts to obtain an advantage in the opening. Therefore, we have analyzed in this chapter three possibilities for White and the most interesting are }16.0–0\textit{ and }16.\textit{\textordmasculine}ce3\textit{!? In the first case, White must be ready to sacrifice the exchange for a pawn, positional compensation and long-lasting initiative. The second possibility looks quite promising too. White can continue with an aggressive gambit plan advancing his h-pawn. That idea is particularly effective when Black’s bishop is on }d7\textit{.}
In this chapter, we will analyze the main and the most popular line of the Chelyabinsk variation. Black’s last move looks the most natural, since he has improved the placement of his rook and he has avoided the pin along the a-file with tempo. The next idea on his agenda is to prepare and accomplish the thematic pawn-advance f7-f5.

16...b3

This move fortifies the light-squared bishop and it defends the hanging pawn. Now, Black has a choice. Sometimes he chooses a) 16...e6, but still he plays much more often b) 16...h8. Before beginning our analysis of these lines, we will pay some attention to Black’s alternatives.

The position arising after 16...d7 17.e3! was analyzed thoroughly in our previous chapter – see 15...d7.

In case of 16...b7 17.e3 h8 18.0-0 e7 19.d3 xe3 20.xe3, there arises again a transposition to other lines – see 16...h8 17.e3 xe3.

After 16...g6 17.0-0, original positions can be reached only after 17...g7 (The move 17...h8 leads to the main line – see 16...h8.), but it is not easy to recommend such a move, because Black’s king is not comfortable on the g7-square after standard developments in the game. There might follow 18.e2 e6 19.h1 d7, and here in the game Janturin – Kamenets, Decin 1998, White had to play 20.e3, and then to counter 20...f5 with the standard reaction 21.exf5 gxf5 22.f4 exf4 23.xf4 xf4 24.xf4 xc4 25.xc4+, creating a maximal number of pawn-islands for the opponent.

Black cannot equalize with the move 16...e7, which was
played in the game Brener – Kostic, Internet 2005, in view of 17.\(\text{\texttt{	extbackslash d7xe7+?}}\) and Black is forced to capture on e7 with his bishop and after 17...\(\text{\texttt{	extbackslash d7xe7}}\) 18.0-0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d7a2 A4}}\) (That is an attempt by Black to get rid of his weakness.) 20.bxa4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash c7c7 \textbackslash d3a3 \textbackslash c8c8 \textbackslash a7d5 \textbackslash c3xc3 \textbackslash c3c3 \textbackslash a5c5 \textbackslash b1+-}}\) and the endgame is better for White, because of his passed a-pawn. Black cannot play 25...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash c3xe3?}}}\) 26.fxe3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash e6e6 \textbackslash d5xd5 \textbackslash xd5 \textbackslash a8e8 \textbackslash b1+-}}\), since the rook and pawn ending is winning for White.

a) 16...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash e6e6}}\)

This move is not flexible, because the e6-square is not always optimal for Black’s bishop.

17.0-0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h8h8}}\)

In case of 17...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d7e7}}\), White’s most principled reaction is 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d7xe7+!}}\), as it was played in the game Nijboer – van Kooten, Dieren 1984, and after 18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d7xe7}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d3e3}}\) White obtained a stable advantage. Black would not change the evaluation of the position with 18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f7f5?!}}\) when Black’s king is under X-ray is not so good for him. White follows with 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f5xf5 \textbackslash f4xf4 \textbackslash c4xc4 \textbackslash c4xc4 \textbackslash f3f3\pm}}\), and he obtains good attacking chances. White is better too after 18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h6}}\), Zaslavsky – Dragicevic, Budva 2003, 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f3f3?! \textbackslash h8h8\ (but not 19...\textbackslash f5f5}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f5xf5 \textbackslash xxf4 \textbackslash xxb1+-}}\) – and the game develops in the spirit of the main line 17...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h8}}\).
11.c3 0-0 12.\&c2 \&g5 13.a4 bxa4 14.\&xa4 a5 15.\&c4 \&b8 16.b3

18.\&ce3
That is a natural move, pre­venting the advance f7-f5.

18...g6
About 18...\&d7 19.\&e2 – see 17...\&d7.

Naturally, White is clearly better after 18...f5? 19.exf5 \&xf5 20.\&xf5 \&xf5 21.\&d3 \&f8, Incedi – Strellicka, Svetla nad Sazavou 1998, 22.h4! \&f4 (or 22...\&xh4? 23.\&h5+--) 23.g3 \&h6 24.\&c2 g6 25.h5\pm and Black’s kingside ends up in ruins.

If 18...\&xe3 19.\&xe3 \&e7, then 20.\&xe6 fxe6 21.\&c4\pm CompZChess – Jaulin, Aubervilliers 1999.

19.\&f3!?  
This interesting idea was successfully tried in the game Radulski – Nataf, Vrnjacka Banja 2005. It is very difficult for Black to prove that the advance of his f-pawn is good for him when White’s queen is on the f3-square. On the contrary, Black only creates new weaknesses after that.

19...f5 20.\&d1
No doubt, it deserves attention to analyze the tactical possibility: 20.exf5 gxf5 21.\&b4!? , but after correct play from both sides, there arise simplifications after which White has a symbolic extra pawn, but the position is evidently quite drawish: 21...e4 22.\&xc6 exf3 23.\&xd8 \&xc4 24.\&xc4 fxg2 25.\&d1 \&xd8 26.b4 axb4 27.\&xb4 \&c8 28.\&xd6 \&xc3 29.\&b8 \&g7 30.\&xd8 \&xd8 31.\&xf5+ \&f6 32.\&xd8 \&xf5=

20...\&d7 21.h3
It is necessary for White to take the g4-square under control. He should not be in a hurry and he should test his opponent how he is going to solve the problem with the juxtaposition of the pawns on f5 and e4. The line: 21.\&g3 \&d8 22.exf5 gxf5 23.f4\pm leads to an unclear position with mutual chances.

21...\&h4
White would have a comfortable blocking game after the exchange on e4.

22.\&d2 f4
Black closes the kingside with the idea to organize a direct attack there.

23.\&g4 \&f7

24.\&h2!
This is a very powerful maneuver. White transfers his knight along the route g4-h2-f3; meanwhile the queen goes back to the queenside in order to exert pressure against Black's weaknesses there.

24...\textit{d}8 25.\textit{d}1 \textit{h}5 26.\textit{f}3±

White has created a concealed tactical threat, which was realized in the abovementioned game.

After Black's mistake 26...\textit{e}g8? 27.\textit{x}f4! (This is beautiful and strong.) 27...\textit{ex}f4 (The position is hopeless for Black after 27...\textit{xc}4 28.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xf}4 29.\textit{xc}6+-) 28.\textit{xd}6 \textit{xc}4 29.\textit{xc}4 \textit{e}e7 30.\textit{g}5 \textit{f}8 31.\textit{d}4+ \textit{g}7 32.\textit{f}7+ \textit{h}7 33.\textit{xd}8+- and Black should better resign.

After 26...\textit{h}7, it works again for White to continue with 27.\textit{xf}4! \textit{ex}f4 28.\textit{xd}6 \textit{xc}4 29.\textit{xc}4+-

It is better for Black to play 26...\textit{e}8, but White can counter that with 27.\textit{a}1 (with the idea \textit{a}3) and later for example: 27...\textit{g}5 28.\textit{x}g5! \textit{d}7 (or 28...\textit{x}g5 29.\textit{c}7± 28...\textit{xd}5 29.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{g}6 30.\textit{xc}6±) 29.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}6 30.f3 \textit{x}g5 31.hxg5 \textit{x}g5 32.\textit{c}7 \textit{e}7 33.\textit{a}2! \textit{e}8 34.\textit{b}5 \textit{f}6 35.\textit{d}1 \textit{d}8 36.\textit{d}3±. Black's attack is not so dangerous anymore; meanwhile White has prepared to triple his heavy pieces along the d-file in a classical fashion.

\textbf{b) 16...\textit{h}8}

This is the most popular and logical move for Black. He removes his king away from the a2-g8 diagonal and that is necessary for the preparation of f7-f5. Meanwhile he has not made up his mind yet whether he would push immediately his bishop pawn, or he would precede that with the move g7-g6.

17.\textit{ce}3!? The move 17.0-0 has been played in numerous games, but lately White encounters real problems to obtain any opening advantage. After Black's most energetic reaction 17...\textit{f}5! 18.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 19.\textit{ce}3 \textit{g}6∞ he has excellent prospects and that evaluation was confirmed by a lot of games played at the highest possible level.
I advise my readers to avoid the main lines just at that moment and to try to reach not so well analyzed positions, which are quite interesting and with good prospects for White. The move 17.\texttt{Qxe3}!? restricts Black's possibilities, since it does not allow the immediate move f7-f5. The drawback of that move is that Black can get rid of his potentially bad dark-squared bishop, but as we are going to see, things are far from easy for him after similar developments. We will analyze here \textbf{b1) 17...\texttt{Qxe3}} and \textbf{b2) 17...g6.}

\textbf{b1) 17...\texttt{Qxe3}}

This is a straightforward attempt by Black to solve his opening problems. He forces White's knight to abandon the central d5-outpost and then Black advances f7-f5 without the preparatory move of his knight-pawn.

\textbf{18.\texttt{Qxe3} Qe7 19.0-0 f5}

The other possibility for Black here is 19...\texttt{Qb7} 20.\texttt{Qd3} f5 (but not 20...\texttt{Qd7}? 21.\texttt{Qd1} \texttt{Qbd8} 22.\texttt{Qxa5} \texttt{Wc6} 23.\texttt{Qd5}+= Schoene – Helmbold, Willingen 2001), but White has at his disposal the powerful argument 21.\texttt{Qd1}! It becomes clear now that after 21...\texttt{Qxe4} 22.\texttt{Qxd6} \texttt{Qxd6} 23.\texttt{Qxd6}, Black has great problems in the endgame, for example 23...f4 24.\texttt{Qf1} \texttt{Qc8} 25.\texttt{Qd2} \texttt{Qb6} 26.\texttt{Qxa5} \texttt{Qxc4} 27.bxc4 \texttt{Qbc8}
28.c5!? (The alternative for White is – 28.\textbf{Exe}5 \textbf{Exc}4 29.\textbf{Ed}4 \textbf{Exd}4 30.\textbf{cxd}4 \textbf{Ed}3 31.g4 \textbf{fxb}3 32.hxg3± and he has considerable chances of materializing his extra pawn.)

28...\textbf{Ec}6 29.\textbf{Ed}6e4 30.g3 \textbf{g5} 31.\textbf{Ea}7± – White’s rooks are very active and Black’s defence is difficult.

In the game Obukhovski – Kalugin, Kaluga 1981, Black refrained from capturing on e4 and he preferred the aggressive move 21...f4. There followed 22.\textbf{Ed}1 \textbf{f6} 23.\textbf{Ea}2 g5 24.\textbf{Ed}a1 \textbf{g4} 25.\textbf{Exa}5 \textbf{Ed}6 26.\textbf{Ea}5 \textbf{Ba}8 27.\textbf{Ea}a8 \textbf{Ea}a8 28.\textbf{Ea}6 \textbf{Ed}8 29.\textbf{Ed}4±. White won a pawn, while Black’s pieces were incapable of supporting effectively the pawn-offensive on the kingside.

20.\textbf{Exf}5 \textbf{Exf}5

The move 20...\textbf{Exf}5 may seem attractive for Black, but White can counter it with 21.\textbf{Ea}5 \textbf{Exf}5 (21...\textbf{Exf}5 22.\textbf{Ed}5 \textbf{Ba}7 23.\textbf{Exa}5 \textbf{Eg}5 24.\textbf{Ed}1± Bindrich – Jefic, Obrenovac 2004) 22.\textbf{Ed}5± Maidla – Puittinen, Helsinki 1993, and Black fails to keep the material equality.

White must attack both his opponent’s pawn, one after another, in order to break his defence. In the game Santo-Roman – Blaskowsk, Sudlohn 1981, White did not play in the best possible fashion and he could have become even worse if after 21.\textbf{Ea}1 d5 22.\textbf{Ed}1 \textbf{Ed}7 23.\textbf{Exa}5 \textbf{cxd}4 24.\textbf{Ea}7, Black had played 24...\textbf{Exb}3! 25.\textbf{Ea}2 (25.\textbf{Ea}6 \textbf{Bb}2 26.\textbf{Bb}1 \textbf{Bb}6 27.\textbf{Exe}7? \textbf{Bb}6±) 25...\textbf{Ec}6 26.\textbf{Exd}7 \textbf{Ee}8 27.\textbf{Ed}7d6 e4±

21...\textbf{Ea}4

In case of 21...\textbf{Ed}6 22.\textbf{Ed}5 \textbf{Exd}5 23.\textbf{Ed}5 \textbf{Ed}7?! (The passive defence is also hopeless for Black.) 24.\textbf{Exa}5± Pokazanjev – Malina, Kemerovo 2007, Black remains a pawn down.

22.\textbf{Ed}2 \textbf{Bb}6

The move 22...\textbf{Bb}6?, Vombek – Pavlidou, Sibenik 2007, can be countered by White with 23.\textbf{Ed}g4! \textbf{Bg}6 24.\textbf{f}7±

23.\textbf{Ea}1

White exploits his heavy pieces with maximal effectiveness.

It is also interesting for him to try 23.\textbf{Ee}1!? \textbf{Cc}7 24.\textbf{Ef}1!, freeing the c4-square for his knight.

23...\textbf{Cc}7 24.\textbf{Ef}d1±

21.\textbf{Ea}2!

This is an important moment.
White exerts powerful long-term positional pressure. That position was reached in the game Buczinski – Surin, Email 2000, and it followed with 24...\text{h}c6 25.\text{h}h1 (It is also good for White to play immediately 25.\text{w}a3!?) 25...\text{w}b6 (It is more resilient for Black to defend with 25...\text{g}f5 26.\text{x}xf5 \text{x}xf5 27.\text{w}a3 \text{d}d8 28.\text{h}3± and White has only a slight advantage.) 26.\text{w}a3 \text{f}f5 27.\text{x}xf5 \text{x}xf5 28.\text{e}e2 \text{x}f4 29.f3 \text{g}6 30.\text{e}d2 \text{f}6 31.\text{d}d5±, and Black's situation was absolutely critical.

b2) 17...\text{g}6

Black usually plays like that, preparing the pawn-advance \text{f}7-f5, being reluctant to part with his bishop pair.

18.0–0

White can try to fortify his position in the centre without castling with 18.\text{w}d3 \text{f}5 19.f3, but that is far from being safe, for example: 19...\text{h}4+ 20.\text{e}e2!? (Black is better after 20.g3 \text{f}4 21.\text{f}1 \text{g}5±) 20...\text{f}4 (It is not so effective for Black to continue with 20...\text{f}xe4 21.\text{w}xe4 \text{f}5 22.\text{x}xf5 \text{gxf5} 23.\text{c}2 \text{g}5 24.\text{g}3 \text{w}g7 25.\text{e}e1±) 21.\text{f}1 \text{d}7 22.\text{d}1 \text{a}7∞

It has become very fashionable lately for White to play aggressive lines with \text{h}2-h4. He can try 18.h4!? right now, but the consequences of that move are absolutely unpredictable. We will have to remind our readers that we recommend that method of seizing the initiative only considering some concrete features of the position. For example, in the Radjabov variation, which we analyzed in our previous chapter, Black's bishop was on the \text{d}7-square and it was covering the seventh rank for Black's queen rook. That circumstance was quite advantageous for White's attacking chances; therefore, we recommended \text{h}2-\text{h}4 in numerous lines.

After 18.0–0, Black usually chooses between b2a) 18...\text{f}5 and b2b) 18...\text{h}6.

About 18...\text{e}6 19.\text{w}f3 – see 16...\text{e}6.

b2a) 18...\text{f}5

Black is playing quite systematically according to his plan.
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19. \text{?}d3!?

This is an original decision. White should not be in a hurry to clarify the situation in the centre. It is much more popular for him to play the move 19.exf5. Let us see what might happen later. It is not good for Black to play here 19...\text{?}xf5 20.\text{?}xf5 \text{gxf5} (or 20...\text{?}xf5 21.g3 \text{?}h6 22.\text{?}d3 \text{?}f7 23.\text{?}e4\pm Sott – Novotny, Klatovy 1998) 21.\text{?}h5 e4 22.\text{?}fa1 \text{?}f6 23.g3 \text{?}g7 24.f4\pm

It is stronger for Black to opt for 19...\text{gxf5}, after which White has two possibilities.

He obtains no advantage with 20.f4 exf4 21.\text{?}c2 (but not 21.\text{?}xf4? \text{??}b6 22.\text{?}d3 \text{??}e8=+ Makarova – Sterliagova, Serpukhov 2003), because of 21...\text{?}d7! (That is an important inclusion for Black, since the usual move 21...\text{?}e5 is not so convincing.) 22.\text{?}a3 \text{?}e5 23.\text{?}xf4 \text{?}xc4 24.bxc4 \text{??}b2, and White has nothing better than to maintain the balance with the line: 25.\text{?}d3 \text{??}b8 26.\text{?}f4= It is more promising for White to play 20.\text{?}h5! \text{?}d7 21.\text{?}fa1! (In the first game, in which that variation was played, White tried 21.\text{?}h1?!, but after 21...\text{?}e8 22.\text{?}h3 f4 23.\text{?}d3 \text{?}d7=+ Hamdouchi – Cherniaev, Cannes 1997, he had nothing to brag about. It is not advantageous for White to continue with 21.\text{?}a3 e4! 22.f4?! exf3 23.\text{?}xf3 \text{?}e5 24.\text{?}g3 h6 25.h4 \text{?}e8 26.\text{?}d1 f4 27.\text{?}h3 \text{?}d7=, as well as 21.\text{??}a2 \text{?}e8 22.\text{?}h3 f4 23.\text{?}d3 \text{?}d7 24.\text{?}f5 \text{?}f7 25.\text{?}e6 \text{?}h5 26.\text{?}hx5 \text{?}hx5 27.\text{?}c4 \text{?}d8 28.\text{?}d7 \text{?}f7 29.\text{?}d1 \text{?}xd5 30.\text{?}xd5 \text{?}xb3 31.g3 \text{?}b7=) He attacks Black’s a5-pawn and the f1-square is free for White’s knight. What should Black do?

He loses after 21...f4? because of 22.\text{?}d3=+. In case of 21...\text{?}e8, White regroups his forces comfortably with 22.\text{?}d1! f4 23.\text{?}f1 e4 (This move weakens the a1–h8 diagonal, but White is clearly better after 23...f3 24.gxf3! \text{?}h5 25.\text{?}e2 \text{?}g8 26.\text{?}h1 \text{?}f7 27.\text{?}g3=) 24.\text{?}d2 \text{?}g6 25.\text{?}f1 e3 (In case of 25...\text{?}e8, it is completely safe for White to play 26.\text{?}c4 e3 27.\text{?}xa5 \text{?}xa5 28.\text{?}xa5 exf2+ 29.\text{?}xf2 \text{?}e4 30.\text{?}d4= \text{??}e5 31.b4=) 26.\text{?}f3=, and he neutralizes his opponent’s activity and he obtains the advantage.

We must also analyze the move 21...e4!, since it poses the greatest problems for White. If 22.\text{?}d1, then 22...f4, and later it is possible to play 23.\text{?}e2 \text{?}e8! (This is more precise than 23...f3 24.g3 \text{?}e8, since then White has the resource 25.\text{?}e3= with the idea after 25...\text{?}e5, to regroup his forces with the help of 26.\text{?}d5!, combining his threats with the indirect protection of the c3-pawn: 26...\text{?}xc3? 27.\text{?}c4=; 26...\text{?}bc8 27.\text{?}xc6 \text{?}xc6 28.\text{?}xa5 \text{?}g7 29.c4=) 24.\text{?}xa5 (White is practically forced to sacrifice the exchange, because after 24.\text{?}d4 \text{?}e5 25.\text{?}xa5 f3 26.g3 e3 27.\text{?}5a2
11.c3 0-0 12.\texttt{c2} \texttt{g5} 13.a4 bxa4 14.\texttt{xa4} a5 15.\texttt{c4} \texttt{b8} 16.b3

e2 28.\texttt{exe2} \texttt{xc4} 29.bxc4 fxe2 30.\texttt{exe2} \texttt{g6}† Black is even better.) 24...\texttt{xa5} 25.\texttt{xa5} f3 26.g3 – and White has a sufficient compensation for the exchange, but not more than that. Besides 22.\texttt{d1}, White can play passively 22.\texttt{f1} \texttt{g8}! 23.\texttt{e2} \texttt{g6} 24.\texttt{h1} \texttt{f8} 25.\texttt{a4} \texttt{h6} 26.\texttt{g1} \texttt{g7} 27.\texttt{g3} \texttt{e5}∞ and although the position remains unclear, Black has the initiative.

So, all these lines show that after 19.exf5, Black manages somehow to solve his problems, although not effortlessly, therefore I consider the move 19.\texttt{d3}!? more precise.

\begin{center}
\textbf{19...f4}
\end{center}

About 19...\texttt{h6} – see 18...\texttt{h6}.

In case of 19...\texttt{fxe4} 20.\texttt{exe4}, White achieves what he is after. The computer game The King – The Baron, Leiden 2006, continued with: 20...\texttt{e6} 21.\texttt{d3} \texttt{d7} 22.\texttt{b5}! \texttt{xe3} 23.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{xb3} 24.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{b7} 25.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 26.\texttt{a6} \texttt{b6} 27.\texttt{xb6} \texttt{xb6} 28.\texttt{b1} – and Black came under a deadly pin and following 28...\texttt{a8} 29.c4 \texttt{a3} 30.c5! \texttt{xc5} 31.\texttt{c3} \texttt{g8} 32.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{e6} 33.\texttt{xc5} Black gradually realized his extra pawn. If 20...\texttt{xf5}, then 21.\texttt{xf5} gxf5 22.\texttt{d7} \texttt{h5} \texttt{g7} 24.\texttt{d1} with superior prospects for White.

Black's attempt to advance the f-pawn as quickly as possible should not worry White too much – 19...\texttt{xe3} 20.\texttt{xe3} f4 21.\texttt{d3} f3, because after 22.g3, he maintains the advantage after the straightforward line 22...\texttt{h5} 23.\texttt{d1} \texttt{h4} 24.\texttt{e3}! with the following eventual developments 24...\texttt{hxg3} 25.\texttt{hxg3} \texttt{xf8} 26.\texttt{d5} \texttt{f8} 27.b4! \texttt{g7} 28.b5 \texttt{a7} (It would not work for Black to play 28...\texttt{g5} 29.bxc6 \texttt{h8}, because of 30.\texttt{f6}! \texttt{xf6} 31.\texttt{xa5}+) 29.\texttt{da1} \texttt{b7} 30.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{c8} 31.\texttt{b3} \texttt{d7} 32.\texttt{d1} \texttt{xd5} 33.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{g4} 34.\texttt{a4}±, or 22...\texttt{e6} 23.\texttt{e1} \texttt{d7} 24.\texttt{e3} \texttt{g4} 25.\texttt{d1}! \texttt{g7} 26.\texttt{d3} \texttt{h5} 27.\texttt{e3} \texttt{f6} 28.\texttt{a2}±

It would be interesting for Black to try 19...\texttt{e6}!? Here, in comparison to the variations we have analyzed before with a black bishop on e6, White’s queen is on d3 and not on the f3-square. Now, White can fight for the advantage with the help of the move 20.\texttt{d1}! (not weakening the shelter of his king) 20...\texttt{d7} 21.\texttt{f3} \texttt{a7} 22.\texttt{h1} \texttt{xe3} 23.\texttt{exe3} \texttt{xc4} 24.\texttt{xc4} f4 25.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{fxe3} 26.c4± or with the help of the already well tested line 20.f3!? \texttt{h6} 21.\texttt{d1} \texttt{fxe4} 22.\texttt{exe4} \texttt{xf5} 23.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{gxf5} 24.\texttt{e2} \texttt{b7} 25.\texttt{h1} \texttt{e7}, Aginian – Kucypera, Mureck 1998, and later 26.\texttt{d3}! \texttt{g6} 27.\texttt{da1}±
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20.\texttt{c2} f3

After 20...\texttt{h4}, White can begin to concentrate cold-bloodedly his forces against Black's a6-pawn, since it is evident that Black's attacking resources are insufficient, for example: 21.\texttt{fa1} g5 22.\texttt{b5} x\texttt{b5} 23.\texttt{xgb5} \texttt{h3} 24.\texttt{e1} x\texttt{g2} 25.\texttt{xg2} f3 26.\texttt{f1}

\textbf{21.g3}

Black's f3-pawn is a potential weakness.

\textbf{21...\texttt{d7}}

White is better after 21...h5, Szilagyi – Balogh, Hungary 2001, 22.\texttt{fa1} h4 23.\texttt{e1} hx\texttt{g3} 24.hxg3 \texttt{g4} 25.\texttt{b5}

In the game Brundisch – Illinca, ICCF 2003, Black played 21...\texttt{h3} 22.\texttt{fa1} c8 23.\texttt{e1} \texttt{g4} (White can counter 23...\texttt{g4}, with the line: 24.\texttt{c7}! d7 25.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{xf3} 26.\texttt{xf3}, and he wins the exchange: 26...\texttt{xc7} 27.g4\texttt{+}, or 26...\texttt{g4} 27.\texttt{f7}\texttt{+}), and here White could have combined his threats against the pawns on d6 and f3 with the variation: 24.\texttt{e3}!? \texttt{h3} (or 24...\texttt{xe3} 25.\texttt{xe3}\texttt{+}) 25.\texttt{c2} \texttt{g4} 26.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{f6} 27.\texttt{d3}

\textbf{22.\texttt{fa1}}

It also deserves attention for White to test here 22.\texttt{d1}\texttt{?} \texttt{d8} (or 22...\texttt{h3} 23.\texttt{de3} e7 24.b4 axb4 25.cxb4\texttt{±}) 23.\texttt{e1} g7 24.\texttt{d2} (threatening 25.\texttt{xf3}) 24...\texttt{g5} (It is bad for Black to play immediately 24...\texttt{g4}, because of 25.\texttt{e3}.) 25.\texttt{d2} \texttt{g4} 26.h4 \texttt{h6} 27.\texttt{e3}, and here after 27...\texttt{xe3} 28.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{d7} 29.\texttt{a3} (freeing the bishop from the protection of the b3-pawn), as well as following 27...\texttt{h3} 28.\texttt{f1} and then \texttt{h2}, Black's defence would be very difficult.

\textbf{22...\texttt{h3} 23.\texttt{de3}}

It is not so hard to understand here that Black will fail to checkmate White's king, so that means that his aggressive play will backfire and the key-role in the evaluation of the position will be decided by other factors. After 23...\texttt{f4}?! White plays 24.\texttt{d5}\texttt{!} \texttt{a6} (It is bad for Black to opt for 24...\texttt{d7} 25.\texttt{f1} h6 26.\texttt{d6}+ ) 25.\texttt{d1} (Black was hoping for 25.\texttt{xa6}? \texttt{h4}! 26.gxh4 \texttt{f4}++ ) 25...\texttt{h4} (or 25...\texttt{bf8} 26.\texttt{f1}\texttt{±} ) 26.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{b7} 27.\texttt{h1} \texttt{h6} 28.\texttt{g2}\texttt{±} and White ends up with a clear advantage. It is more reliable for Black to play
23...\texttt{f}6, but then 24.\texttt{d}e1 \texttt{axe3} (24...\texttt{wh}5 25.\texttt{b}4! \texttt{AXB} 26.\texttt{a}a8±) 25.\texttt{xe}3 \texttt{g}4 26.\texttt{g}g5 \texttt{d}g7 27.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{d}7 28.\texttt{e}3±, and once again Black is faced with a difficult and laborious defence.

\textbf{b2b) 18...\texttt{h}6}

That is a logical preparatory move. Black is not in a hurry to advance his f-pawn and he retreats his bishop to a safer square. At least, there it would not come under attack with tempo after f2-f4. The drawback of that move is that it is a bit too slow.

19.\texttt{d}3

If White plans to exchange on f5, then he should better choose the prophylactic move 19.\texttt{h}1 and that is a good alternative for him. After 19...f5 20.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{gxf} 21.f4, Black must make up his mind. There might follow:

21...\texttt{wh}4?! (This is a dubious decision.) 22.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{e}4, Ding – Rybenko, Ulan Bator 2002, 23.\texttt{c}4! \texttt{d}7 24.\texttt{g}1 and amazingly enough, Black is in a zugzwang in a board full of pieces! His position is very bad too after 24...

\texttt{g}8?! 25.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{xc}6 26.\texttt{xf}5+-, as well as following 24...\texttt{bc}8 25.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{wd}8 26.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{fxg}4 27.\texttt{xe}g4±, or 24...\texttt{xf}4 25.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{xe}g3 26.\texttt{xe}3 \texttt{d}5 (or 26...f4 27.\texttt{xe}4++) 27.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{g}8 28.\texttt{xd}7 \texttt{g}xg3 29.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{wh}3 30.\texttt{xe}g3 \texttt{xd}7 31.\texttt{xe}4± – and White has a winning position in all the variations.

After 21...\texttt{d}7, Fomichenko – Mamjan, Krasnodar 2002, 22.\texttt{a}1 \texttt{g}7 23.\texttt{d}2± White has a slight edge.

21...\texttt{e}7 22.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{xd}5 23.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xf}4 (It is even more dangerous for Black to play 23...\texttt{g}7 24.\texttt{fa}1! – since 24...\texttt{a}8 will be countered by White with 25.\texttt{b}4, while if 24...\texttt{xf}4, then 25.\texttt{xa}5 \texttt{e}5 26.\texttt{a}7 \texttt{b}7 27.\texttt{a}8± Ibragimov – Andreev, Tomsk 1997, and again Black is faced with big problems.) 24.\texttt{xf}4 \texttt{e}4 25.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{b}7 26.\texttt{xf}4 \texttt{e}4 27.\texttt{d}1± – Black has so many pawn-islands that he must comply with passive defence.

Finally, in case of 21...\texttt{e}8, as it was played in the game Saunina – Savushkina, Orsk 2000, White has at his disposal a tactical resource – 22.\texttt{b}5! and following 22...\texttt{d}7 (The exchange-sacrifice 22...\texttt{xb}5? 23.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{g}6 24.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{xf}4 is not convincing in view of 25.\texttt{axf}4! \texttt{xf}4 26.\texttt{d}5 with a variation like 26...\texttt{a}6 27.\texttt{xf}4 \texttt{f}6 28.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{xb}5 29.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{d}4 30.\texttt{b}6 \texttt{b}8 31.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{e}5 32.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{c}5 33.\texttt{e}7++, which illustrates Black’s difficulties. If 22...\texttt{xf}4, then 23.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{g}7 24.\texttt{e}1±) 23.\texttt{c}4!
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(The bishop on b5 is untouchable as before.) 23...g6 24.cb6 g8 25.a2 (The g2-square has been fortified just in time.) 25.e8 26.a4 g7 27.c4 e6 28.a2 with a positional advantage for White.

19...f5

Black can play 19...d7, forcing White’s rook to abandon the fourth rank. In that case after 20.a2 f5, the game transposes to the Radjabov variation – see 15...d7 16.ce3 b8 17.b3 h8 18.0–0 g6 19.d3 f5 20.a2 h6.

20.d1!? A similar position (only with the inclusion of the moves d7 and a2) was played in the game Anand – Radjabov, Wijk aan Zee 2007, and we analyzed it in out previous chapter. White should better follow the plan, which was realized successfully by the Indian grandmaster, in this position as well.

20...f4 It is not so good for Black to play 20...h4, when his rook is on a4 (analogously to the above-mentioned game), because of 21.exf5 e4 (or 21...xf5 22.xf5 xf5 23.e2, and Black cannot play 23...bf8? due to 24.b5+–) 22.f1 gx5 23.b5. If 23...a7, then 24.a6! d7 25.xa5 f4 26.c4 f3 27.g3 g4 28.de3±, and White ends up with extra material. It is also insufficient for Black to opt for 23...e5?! 24.f4 xb5 25.xb5 d7 (In case of 25...xf4

26.xf4 xf4 27.e2 g8 28.h1 h6 29.d5 g4 30.h3 e3 31.f1± Black’s attack reaches its dead end.) 26.f1 xxa4 27.bxa4 d3 28.g3 d8 29.b1 d7 30.b5± – White has managed to occupy important key-squares.

Whenever Black is not in a hurry to clarify the situation in the centre, then as I have already mentioned, the White players should follow the example of the games Topalov – Kasparov, Leon 1998 and Anand – Radjabov, Wijk aan Zee 2007. At first, White must take care of some prophylactic – a4-a2 and f2-f3 with the idea to stabilize the centre and to protect his second rank in case Black plays actively on the kingside. After that, he should start attacking Black’s weaknesses and mostly his pawns on a5 and d6.

21.c2 f3 22.g3 d7 23.a2±

A similar situation arose in variation b2a. Black has no real attacking prospects, White will soon exert pressure against Black’s weaknesses, and his f3-pawn has just become one more of them.
Conclusion

In our final chapter, we have dealt with practically the main line of the Chelyabinsk variation, which is frequently played more than a quarter of a century. Tournament practice has shown that White’s natural way of developing his initiative – 16...h8 17.0–0, does not promise him much after 17...f5, because Black thus manages to activate his forces. White’s attempts to neutralize his opponent’s counterplay by exchanges often lead to an almost complete exhaustion of available resources. Therefore, I believe that at the contemporary stage of development of that variation, White’s hope of obtaining an advantage should be focused on a relatively new plan, based on keeping the position relatively closed. That is the idea behind the move 17...e3! – it not only prevents the immediate advance 17...f5, but what is tremendously important is that Black fails to accomplish the typical freeing maneuver with the line: 17...xe3 18.xe3 e7 19.0–0 f5 20.xf5 xf5 21.xf5 xf5 22.d5, since he thus loses his a5-pawn.

Later, White must hold on to his blocking construction on the central outposts e4 and d5. That plan might seem a bit slow; nevertheless, it is very unpleasant for Black, because he cannot coordinate his pieces in that situation. The connection between his two flanks has been disrupted. The variations we have analyzed show that Black’s counterplay on the kingside is not so dangerous for White if he plays carefully, while Black will have problem with his compromised pawn-structure to the end of the game. He will need to find improvements in this variation!
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For contacts:
E-mail: soloviov@chess-stars.com; semkov@chess-stars.com

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