A Practical Black Repertoire with \textit{f6, g6, d6} 1

English, Pirc, Reti and Other Defences

ALEXEI KORNEV
A PRACTICAL BLACK REPERTOIRE with  

f6, g6, d6

Volume 1

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English, Pirc, Reti
and Other Defences

Chess Stars
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I wrote some years ago a three volume book – “A Practical White Repertoire with 1.d4 and 2.c4”, in which I analysed the opening schemes that White might encounter if he began the game with the move of his queen’s pawn. These books provoked great interest in my readers, since they managed with their help to solve the problem with choosing reliable systems when playing with White. So, it came to my mind that I could try to write an analogous book treating the problems in the opening when playing with Black. Now, I present to my readers a two volume book “A Practical Black Repertoire with 1.f6, g6, d6”

We will pay attention in the first volume to the Pirc Defence (Chapters 10-27). At first the Pirc Defence was treated as an incorrect opening. It would be sufficient to remember the words of Willhelm Steinitz addressed to Rudolf Haruzek, who began his game with 1.e4 d6 2.d4 2.f6 3.c3 g6 and lost after only 17 moves against Siegbert Tarrasch: “You should not be surprised if you lose a game begun with such a strange opening system”. Later however, the Pirc Defence has become a popular and correct opening system and is played by strong grandmasters like Alexander Grischuk, Vassily Ivanchuk, Vladimir Kramnik and Peter Svidler.

The Pirc Defence has some definite advantages in comparison to the other openings. At first, it has not been analysed so thoroughly, since the White fans of 1.e2-e4 devote the lion’s share of their time to study the Sicilian Defence and the Open Games. Secondly, Black can play not only to equalise, but he can also count on seizing the initiative. This is particularly important in tournaments played under the Swiss System in which you must strive for a win irrelevant of the colour of your pieces.

Besides the Pirc, we analyse in the first part of the book all possible set-ups in which White refrains from the moves 1.e4 and 1.d4, namely: 1.f4, 1.b3, 1.b4 (Chapter 1), 1.f3 (Chapter 2), 1.c4 (Chapters 3, 4). The second part of the book (Chapters 5-9) is devoted to opening schemes in which White does play 1.d4, but then he does not follow up with c2-c4. This is the Trompowsky Attack (d4, g5) and the London System
(d4, ♜f3, ♖f4). In response to these set-ups Black, as a rule, remains true to ...♗f6 and ...g6. The arising opening schemes are similar to the King’s Indian Defence (see volume 2), or to the Pirc Defence. This should facilitate considerably the players to master their opening repertoire.

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to Ekaterina Smirnova for her invaluable help in the work over this book.

Alexei Kornev,

City of Vyazniki, December 2016
In the first part of our book we will deal with some rarely played tries for White with which he refrains from the most natural moves: 1.e4, or 1.d4. The most popular among them – 1.\( \text{g}f3 \) and 1.c4 will be analysed in Chapters 2-4.

In Chapter 1 we will pay some attention to lines, which are only very seldom played in the tournament practice; nevertheless, Black must be well prepared against them. These are 1.b4, 1.b3 and 1.f4. White loses his opening advantage indeed, if he plays like this, but Black must still demonstrate adequate opening knowledge in order to equalise and sometimes can even fight for an opening edge.

Before that however, we will deal with some quite rarely played moves.

1.c3 \( \text{g}f6 \) 2.\( \text{f}f3 \) (About 2.d4 – see Part 2, 1.d4 \( \text{f}f6 \) 2.c3.) 2... \( \text{g}6 \) 3.d4 – see Part 2, 1.d4 \( \text{f}f6 \) 2.\( \text{f}f3 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 3.c3.

Black’s best reaction against 1.e3 would be 1...\( \text{g}6 \)!? (This move seems a bit more accurate than 1...\( \text{f}6 \), since it impedes the development of White’s dark-squared bishop to the b2-square after b3, or b4. 2.c4 (About 2.d4 \( \text{f}6 \) – see Part 2, 1.d4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.e3; 2.f4 \( \text{f}6 \) – see 1.f4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.e3 \( \text{g}6 \); 2.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{f}6 \) – see 1.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 2.e3 \( \text{g}6 \)) 2...\( \text{f}6 \) – see 1.c4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.e3 \( \text{g}6 \).

1.a4. The chess beginners have been taught that the game should not be begun with moves with the rook pawns, but they have been seen in the tournament practice. The only plus of this move is that the actual World Champion M.Carlsen has tried it once, but in a blitz game. 1...\( \text{f}6 \)?! This is the simplest reaction for Black. He is not in a hurry to occupy the centre with moves like 1...e7-e5, or 1...d7-d5. He wishes to develop his forces like in the King’s Indian Defence (g7-g6, \( \text{g}7 \), 0–0). Now, White’s most reasonable decision would be to try to enter positions, which have been analysed in the second part of our book; otherwise, he may end up in an inferior position, because the move a2-a4 may turn out to be completely
useless in the forthcoming battle. 2.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}f3} g6 3.g3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}}7} 4.\textit{\texttt{g}}g2 0–0 5. 0–0 d6 6.d4 – see Part 2, 1.d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}f3} g6 3.g3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}}7} 4.\textit{\texttt{g}}g2 0–0 5. 0–0 d6 6.a4.

\textbf{1.h4.} It is very unlikely to encounter this move in a game with a classical time-control. Still, in games with shorter time-control and particularly in blitz, White may play like this. If Black lacks proper knowledge how to react, he may lose valuable seconds in a blitz game in order to solve the problems in the opening. 1...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}5. It would not be reasonable for Black to play here 1...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6, followed by g7–g6, since with his first move White has showed his firm intention to continue with h4–h5. Therefore, Black should better avoid creating a target for his opponent’s attack on the kingside. 2.h5 d5 3.c3 h6! Black should not allow the pawn-advance h5–h6, moreover that White’s h5-pawn may become a liability in the forthcoming middlegame. 4.d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}c6 5.dxe5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{x}}}xe5 6.\textit{\texttt{f}}f4, Dzhumagaliev – Alekseev, St Petersburg 2014. The arising pawn-structure resembles the classical variation of the Caro-Kann Defence. Black’s knight has been deprived of its habitual square for similar positions – g6, but is well placed on the queenside as well. 6...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}c6!? 7.e3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 8.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}e2 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}d6 9.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{xd}}}xd6 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{xd}}}xd6 10.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{h}}}h3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}e5 11.\textit{\texttt{f}}f4 0–0?! – Black’s position is more comfortable.

It seems rather dubious for White to prepare an early pawn-advance g2–g4. 1.\textit{\texttt{h}}h3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.g4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}e5 3.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}}}g2 d5 4.c4 dxc4 5.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}c4 a4+ c6 6.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{xc}}}xc4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}e6 7.\textit{\texttt{c}}c2 h5= – The weakening of his kingside is already hurting him, Jung – Schrimpl, Internet 2012.

1.d3. White is preparing e2–e4. 1...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.e4 (2.g3 – see 1.g3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.d3; 2.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 – see 1.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.d3) 2...d6 and there has arisen, by transposition of moves, a situation from the Pirc Defence (see 1. e4 d6 2.d3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6).

Following 1.a3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6, White would hardly manage to prove that his move a2–a3 would be useful in the forthcoming battle. 2.b4 g6 3.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}b2 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}}}7 4.g3 0–0 5. \textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}}}g2 a5. Black is already trying to seize the initiative. 6.b5 d5 7.a4, Kovalyov – Boas, ICC 2009. You have already seen the drawback of White’s first move. His pawn could have gone to the a4-square at once. 7...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{bd}}7}!? 8.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}e8 9.d4 \textit{\texttt{c}}6= Black has seized the initiative and White must take care of the protection of his queenside.

The move 1.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}c3, as a rule, may lead by transposition to the Pirc Defence. 1...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.e4 (About 2.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 g6 3.e4 d6 – see 1.e4 d6 2.\textit{\texttt{c}}c3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 3.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 g6; 2.d4 – see 1.d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6 2.\textit{\texttt{c}}c3.) 2...d6 – see 1.e4 d6 2.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}c3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}f6.

It seems too provocative for White to play 1.g4 – the so-called
Grob Attack. This opening is named after the Swiss player Henry Grob, but it leads to a serious weakening of White’s kingside. 1...d5. Black not only occupies the centre, but also attacks immediately the enemy g4-pawn.

2...\textit{ag2} (White’s situation would be hardly any better after the passive reaction 2.h3 e5 3.ag2 ac6 4.c4 ag7 5.cxd5 axd5 6.ac3 ae6 7.d3 ad7 8.cf3 f6. Black develops his forces analogously to the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence. Later, it would be difficult for White to find a safe haven for his king, since he would hardly dare to castle kingside due to his pawn-weeknesses there. 9.ad2 0-0-0 10.cc1 ab8 11.cm4 ae7 12.a3 g5 13.g3 af4+ Domingo – Dyson, FICGS 2013. Black has succeeded in emphasizing the consequences of White’s first move (the weakening of the f4-square). He will be faced with a long and difficult defence.) 2...\textit{ag4}!!? This is Black’s most principled reaction. He captures immediately the enemy pawn and is not afraid of White’s queenside counterplay. 3.c4 c6

4.b3 cf6 5.xb7 bd7 6.xc6 (6.cxd5 cxd5 – see 4.cxd5) 6...cx8 7.ca4 cc4 8.d1 ce5+. White has regained the sacrificed pawn, but lags considerably in development. He would lose immediately after 9.d3?, due to 9...xd3+ 10.xd3 cc1+ 0-1 Rabold – Forster, corr 1986.

4.cxd5. After this preliminary exchange, White’s situation is hardly any better. 4...cxd5 5.b3 cf6 6.xb7 (6.ca3 e6 7.xb7 cd7 see 6.xb7) 6...bd7 7.ca3 e6 8.b5 cc8 9.ca7. White has not only regained the sacrificed pawn, but has also obtained a material advantage. Still, his position is very difficult in view of his horrible lag in development. 9...cc5 10.ca4 0-0+. Later, in the game Michas – Tanase, ICCF 2014, White failed to cope with the difficulties of his defence. 11.b4? xf2+! After this spectacular tactical strike, the defencelessness of White’s rook on a1 leads suddenly to his demise. 12.xf2 ce4+ 13.
\[ \text{\texttt{dxex4 \texttt{f6+ 14.gxf3 \texttt{xax1 15.xg4 \texttt{xac1 16.wa3 \texttt{f6 17.f3 e5 18.h3}}}} \text{\texttt{xf1+ 19.xg2 e4 20.g4 h5--+}} \text{\texttt{White's bishop has no comfortable square to retreat to and he can hardly offer any meaningful resistance due to his undeveloped pieces.}} \]

The move 1.g3 has its venom. Now, contrary to the variation with 1.df3 and 2.g3, which will be analysed in the next chapter, White is not in a hurry to develop his knight to the f3-square, so he can advance e2-e4 with the support of his bishop on g2. He can also push f2-f4 in some variations. 1...\texttt{f6} 

![Chessboard Diagram]

About 2.d4 – see 1.d4 \texttt{f6 2.g3.} 

2.df3 – see 1.df3 \texttt{f6 2.g3.} 

2.c4 – see 1.c4 \texttt{f6 2.g3.} 

2.d3 g6 3.xg2 xg7 4.xd2. After this move, there arise original positions, but the postponement of the development of White’s kingside precludes him from obtain-

2.xg2 This move seems more natural than 2.d3. 2...g6 3.b3. White prepares the flank development of his second bishop. (About 3.f4 xg7 – see 1.f4 \texttt{f6 2.g3 g6 3.xg2; 3.d3 xg7 – see 2.d3; 3.df3 – see 1.df3 \texttt{f6 2.g3 g6 3.xg2; 3.d4 – see 1.d4 \texttt{f6 2.g3 g6 3.xg2; 3.c4 – see 1.c4 \texttt{f6 2.g3 g6 3.xg2; 3.e4 d6 – see 1.e4 d6 2.g3 \texttt{f6 3.xg2 g6.}}}) 3.xg7 4.xb2 0–0
5.\( \text{d}f3 \) – see 1.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{d}f6 \) 2.\( g3 \) \( g6 \) 3.\( \text{g}g2 \) \( \text{g}g7 \) 4.\( b3 \) 0–0 5.\( \text{b}b2 \).

5.c4. This move leads to positions from the English Opening. 5...\( d6 \) 6.\( d4 \) (6.\( \text{d}f3 \) – see 1.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{d}f6 \) 2.\( g3 \) \( g6 \) 3.\( \text{g}g2 \) \( \text{g}g7 \) 4.\( b3 \) 0–0 5.\( \text{b}b2 \) \( d6 \) 6.\( c3 \) \( \text{c}c6 \) 7.\( \text{f}f3 \) \( e5 \) 8. 0–0 – see 1.c4) 6...\( e5 \). This is a typical pawn-break for similar positions and we will encounter it numerous more times in this book. The delay of the development of White's king knight has led to the weakening of the control over the important e5-square and Black exploits this immediately. 7.\( dxe5 \) (About 7.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( c5 \) – see Chapter 10, variation B) 7...\( \text{d}d7 \). This move has become possible, because White's dark-squared bishop is not protected. Black wishes to capture on \( e5 \) with his pawn. 8.\( \text{f}f3 \) \( dxe5 \) 9.\( \text{c}c3 \) \( e4 \). Once again the defencelessness of White's bishop on \( b2 \) hurts him. Black occupies space in the centre and on the kingside and obtains an edge. 10.\( \text{d}d4 \) \( \text{c}c5 \) 11. \( \text{c}c2 \) \( a5 \) 12.\( \text{w}c1 \) \( f5 \) 13.\( \text{b}b5 \) \( axb2 \) 14.\( \text{w}xb2 \) \( c6 \) 15.\( \text{d}d1 \) \( w7 \) 16.\( \text{c}c3 \), Redolfi – Hollis, Canada 1996, 16...\( \text{b}bd7 \)!?

After 5.e4 Black has the energetic response 5...\( e5 \)!, preventing the further advance of White's pawn. 6.\( d3 \) (It would be too risky for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice due to his lag in development. 6.\( \text{xe5?!} \) \( d5 \)!) 6...\( \text{e}e8 \) 7. \( \text{d}d3 \) d5 8.\( \text{b}bd2 \) a5. Black is preparing \( a4 \). 9.0–0 \( a4 \) 10.a3 axb3 11.\( \text{cx}b3 \). He has managed to exchange favourably his a-pawn for the enemy c-pawn. 11...\( d4 \). Black restricts the enemy bishop on \( b2 \). 12.\( \text{w}c2 \) \( a6 \) 13.b4 \( \text{d}d7 \) 14.\( \text{c}c4 \) \( \text{h}h5 \) 15.\( \text{ab}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 16.\( \text{a}5 \) \( c5 \)= Punzon Moraleda – Tarrio Ocana, ICCF 2011.
In this chapter we will analyse A) 1.b4, B) 1.b3 and C) 1.f4.

A) 1.b4

1...e5
This an energetic reply. In principle, Black can complete calmly his development with d6, g6, g7, 0–0. Still, the active move e7–e5 enables him not only to equalise, but even to seize the initiative in some variations.

2.Bb2
White attacks immediately the enemy central pawn.

2.a3. This move is too passive. 2...d5 Black has managed to occupy the centre with his pawns.
3.Bb2 d7 4.e3 g6 5.c4 a5 6.c5. This move is forced, because after b4–b5, Black’s pieces gain access to the important c5-square. 6... g6! White has restricted the enemy bishop on f8 with his last move. Therefore, Black plans to develop it to another diagonal. 7. d3 e4 8.d4 g7 9.h3 d5 10. e2 0–0 – He has managed to oust the enemy knight away from the f3-square and if White castles kingside, Black will have good attacking prospects thanks to his powerful knight at the centre of
the board, Verhoeven – Pirs, Internet 2012.

2...\textbf{AXB4}

In general, it is not recommended to trade central pawns for flank pawns in the opening. Still here, due to his lag in development, White is incapable of utilising his pawn-majority in the centre.

3.\textbf{Axe5}

3.f4?! d6 4.fxe5 dxe5 5.a5 f6 6.f3 c6 7.b2 e7+ White’s lag in development is considerable.

3...\textbf{Af6}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

4.\textbf{Af3}

Or 4.a3 a5 5.e3 d5 6.f3 0–0, or 4.e3 d5 5.f3 – see 4.f3.

Following 4.c3 a5 5.e3 c6 6.g3 d5\textsuperscript{7}, Black reaches a very comfortable position.

White fails to obtain any advantage after 4.c4 d5 5.cxd5 0–0

6.f3 \textbf{xd5}. He has managed to trade both his opponent’s central pawns, but Black’s lead in development provides him with excellent counterplay. 7.e3 f5 8.e2 d7 9.b2 c5. He wishes to force the pawn-advance d2-d4, so that later White would not have the possibility to oust the enemy knight from the e4-square with the move d2-d3. 10.0–0 e8 11.a3 a5 12.d4 e4 13.e5, Dopper – Simmelink, Netherlands 1992, 13...b6?! 14. b3 c6\textsuperscript{8}. Black’s pieces are very active and this compensates White’s pawn-dominance in the centre. He can hardly advance his central pawns, since they will become targets for attack for Black’s pieces.

4...\textbf{d5} 5.e3 0–0

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

6.a3

Following 6.c4 f5 7.a3 d6 8.b2 bd7 9.cxd5 xd5, Black has a comfortable position. 10. e2 c6 11.d4 e8 12.c3 d7f6\textsuperscript{9}, with a reliable control over the
central d5 and e4-squares, Avchinnikov – Schoch, ICCF 2014.

6.\(\mathcal{A}\)e2 c5. Before playing \(\mathcal{C}\)e6, Black advances his pawn. 7.0–0 \(\mathcal{C}\)c6 8.\(\mathcal{A}\)b2 \(\mathcal{A}\)a5 9.d3 d4. He restricts the enemy bishop on b2. 10.e4 \(\mathcal{A}\)e6 11.\(\mathcal{A}\)bd2, Skerlik – Novikov, ICCF 2012, 11...b5!? Black deprives the enemy knight of the c4-square. 12.\(\mathcal{A}\)b3 \(\mathcal{A}\)b6 13.a4 a6. – His pieces have been placed obviously more harmoniously, because White’s knight on b3 and his bishop on b2 are restricted by his pawns on c5 and d4.

6...\(\mathcal{A}\)a5 7.c4 c5 8.cxd5 \(\mathcal{A}\)xd5 9.\(\mathcal{C}\)c2 \(\mathcal{C}\)c6 10.\(\mathcal{A}\)b2 \(\mathcal{A}\)e7
Black defends his pawn and prepares \(\mathcal{A}\)d8 at the same time.

11.\(\mathcal{A}\)e2 \(\mathcal{A}\)g4 12.0–0 \(\mathcal{A}\)ad8
The queen’s rook must be placed on d8.

With this move, just like in variation A, White prepares the development of his bishop to b2, but now, his pawn on b3 is not vulnerable.

1...e5 2.\(\mathcal{A}\)b2

About 2.c4 \(\mathcal{A}\)f6 3.\(\mathcal{A}\)b2 \(\mathcal{C}\)c6 – see variation B1.

2.e3 \(\mathcal{A}\)f6 3.\(\mathcal{A}\)b2 \(\mathcal{C}\)c6 – see variation B2.

2...\(\mathcal{A}\)c6
After this move White must make an important strategical decision.
He can play either **B1)** 3.c4, after which there would arise a position from the Sicilian Defence, but with colours reversed, or he can follow with **B2)** 3.e3, planning to attack later the enemy knight on c6, protecting the pawn on e5, with the move abyrinth.

It would be too precarious for White to choose 3.g3, since after that Black might occupy effortlessly the centre with his pawns after 3...d5 4.g2 f5! 5.e3 ndef6 6. ne2 axe6 There has arisen a very complex middle game and Black’s prospects are not worse to say the least.

He has hardly any problems after 3.d4 e4, for example: 4. d4 xdx4 5.xdx4 d5 6.e3 a6!? Before advancing c6-c5, it would be useful for Black to deprive his opponent of the possibility to give a check with his bishop from the b5-square. 7.c4 c5 8.b2 d4 9.d3 dx3 10.fxe3 6.f6 11.c3 6d6 12. c2 edx3 13.xd3 we7. Black lags a bit in development indeed, but his superior pawn-structure would be sufficient to provide him with equality. 14.0–0 6.g4. It would be too risky for him to capture the pawn on e3. 15.xe1 xe5. It is reasonable to neutralise the pressure of White’s bishop on the long diagonal. 16.xd5 xdx5 17. cxd5 6d8 18.h3 6d7 19.hf1 6b5 20.xe5 6xe5 21.xb5+ axb5 22. e4 0–0= Perini – Sodormsky, ICCF 2014. White’s king is rather unsafe and Black has more than sufficient counterplay to balance the chances. If White does not play precisely, Black may even seize the initiative.

**B1)** 3.c4 6f6

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**4.e3**

About 4.a3 d5 5.cxd5 xdx5 6. e3 – see 4.e3.

It seems a bit too provocative for White to try 4.d3 e4 5.d4 x_c5 6.xc6 (6.e3 6_d4 7.exd4 d5+) 6...dx_c6 7.e3 _c5 8.c2 e7 9.e2 0–0–0 and his position is already slightly worse. In the fa-
mous game Larsen – Spassky, Belgrade 1970, the Danish grandmaster, who was famous for his optimism, failed to defend accurately and was quickly crushed. 10.f4?! Ng4 11.g3 h5 12.h3 h4! –+. Black sacrifices a piece and begins a decisive attack. White’s king is horribly vulnerable at the centre of the board and his queenside pieces are not developed at all. 13.hxg4 hxg4 14.Ed1 Edh1! This sacrifice was not forced, but no doubt, it was Black’s most spectacular road to victory. Black sacrifices a rook on the alter of his attack. 15.Exh1 g2 16.Ed1 Wh4+ 17.Ef1 gxf1=0+ 0–1.


Black regains his bishop and will have two pawns for the exchange. His prospects will be clearly better in view of White’s vulnerable king.

4...d5 5.cxd5 Exd5

6.a3

White must take immediately the b4-square under control. This will eliminate numerous problems for him in the future.


6.Ed6
Black provides additional protection of his e5-pawn and prepares to castle.

7.\text{d3}

Following 7.\text{c2}, Black can transfer to an approximately equal endgame. 7...\text{g}5!? 8.\text{f}3 \text{g}6 9.\text{x}g6 \text{x}g6 10.\text{b}5, pinning the enemy knight and preparing d2-d4. (After the rather passive approach 10.d3 f6? Radjabov – Dreev, Hyderabad 2002, Black’s prospects would be preferable.) 10...\text{f}6 11.d4 \text{exd}4 12.\text{xd}4 \text{e}7. White’s temporary activity has gradually reached its dead end. 13.\text{xc}6 \text{xc}6 14.\text{d}2 \text{d}7 15.h3 0-0 0 16.0-0-0 \text{e}7 17.\text{e}2 a6 18.\text{b}4 \text{b}8 19.\text{b}3 \text{e}6 20.\text{xd}8+ \text{xd}8 21.\text{d}4 \text{d}5 22.\text{xc}6+ \text{xc}6 23.f3, draw, Pauwels – Simon, ICCF 2012.

7...0–0 8.\text{f}3 \text{f}5

9.\text{bd}2

After 9.\text{e}2, Black can bring his g-pawn into the attack – 9...\text{g}5!!

\text{9...e}7 10.\text{c}2 \text{d}7 11.\text{e}2

\text{11...b}5!? This is a very interesting move. Black weakens a bit his queenside pawn-structure, but deprives the enemy knight of the c4-square and thus prevents the trade of his important dark-squared bishop. 12.\text{g}3 (12.0–0 \text{e}8 13.\text{g}3 – see 12.\text{g}3) 12...\text{ae}8 13.0–0 \text{f}4 14.\text{exf}4 \text{exf}4 – There has arisen a complicated Sicilian middle game in which Black is better, since White’s castling position has been weakened by the pawn-advance g2-g3, Rubinas – Stephan, ICCF 2013.

B2) 3.\text{e}3 \text{f}6
4.\textbf{b5}

4.c4 – see 3.c4.

It would be too passive for White to play 4.d3, since he would not prevent his opponent from occupying the centre with his pawns. 4...d5=

4.\textbf{c3} e4 5.\textbf{d4} (5.\textbf{e5} \textbf{xe5} 6.\textbf{xe5} d5 7.d4 exd3 8.cxd3 \textbf{b4}+ 9.\textbf{d2} 0–0 10.\textbf{e2}, Gonzalez Rodriguez – Jerez Perez, Sant Boi 1998, 10...\textbf{e8}?! 11.\textbf{b2} c6 12.0–0 \textbf{f5}=) 5...\textbf{xd4} 6.\textbf{xd4} \textbf{e7} 7.c4. White fails to create any pressure against the enemy e4-pawn. 7...0–0 8.\textbf{wc2} (It would not be preferable for White to opt for 8.\textbf{xc3} c5 9.\textbf{xf6} \textbf{xf6} 10.\textbf{wc2} \textbf{xc3} 11.dxc3 \textbf{we7} 12.\textbf{e2} d6 13.0–0 \textbf{d7} 14.\textbf{ad1} \textbf{ad8} 15.\textbf{d2} \textbf{c6} 16.\textbf{e1} f5 17.g3 \textbf{f6=} Reichgeld – Pospelov, ICCF 2011. Black has protected reliably his d and e-pawns. Later, he can try to exploit his space advantage and White’s weakened queenside pawn-structure.) 8...\textbf{e8} 9.\textbf{xc3} c5 10.\textbf{xf6} \textbf{xf6} 11.\textbf{e2} b6 12.0–0 \textbf{b7}=.

Black’s d7-pawn is a bit weak indeed, but his two-bishop advantage compensates this, Karg – Canibal, ICCF 2009.

4.\textbf{d6}

As a rule, it is not recommended to place a bishop in front of the d-pawn, since it impedes the natural development of the bishop on c8, but here we have an exception to the rule.

5.\textbf{a3}

White wishes to increase the pressure against the e5-pawn with the move \textbf{c4}.

After the more natural move 5.\textbf{c3}, White’s position would be worse. 5...a6 6.\textbf{xc6} dxc6 7.\textbf{ge2} h5!? 8.h3 h4 9.d3 \textbf{we7} 10.\textbf{d2} \textbf{e6} 11.e4 0–0 0 12.0–0 0 12.0–0 \textbf{h5=} – Black’s two-bishop advantage provides him with better prospects, Morley – Vroom, ICCF 2007.

Following 5.d4 exd4 6.exd4 0–0 7.\textbf{e2} \textbf{e8} 8.h3 a6 9.\textbf{d3} \textbf{b4} 10.0–0 b5=, Black ends up again with two powerful bishops.

After 5.d3, Black can continue with 5...\textbf{e7}!?, so that White would be forced to play 6.d4, in order to provide a way for his bishop to retreat from the b5-square. 6...e4 7.\textbf{e2} c6 8.c4 \textbf{c7} 9.d5 cxd5= – White must still prove that he has sufficient compensation for the pawn in the

5.\textit{\texttt{hxh6}} dxc6 6.d3 e4!? Black has the two-bishop advantage, so he must strive to open the position. 7.\textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{f5}} 8.dxe4 \textit{\texttt{xe4}} 9.\textit{\texttt{xe4}} \textit{\texttt{xe4}} 10.\textit{\texttt{g4}} \textit{\texttt{e7+}} Gonzalez Rodriguez – Avila Jimenez, Barcelona 2011. His two bishops are powerful force in this open position and White’s attempt to gobble up a pawn may end tragically for him after: 11.\textit{\texttt{xe5}} 0–0–0 12.\textit{\texttt{f3}} \textit{\texttt{h5}} 13.\textit{\texttt{f6}} \textit{\texttt{b4+}} 14.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{c5+}}

5.\textit{\texttt{f3}}. This move enables Black to advance his pawn with tempo. 5...\textit{\texttt{e4}} 6.\textit{\texttt{h4}} (6.\textit{\texttt{f4}} 0–0=) 6...\textit{\texttt{e5}} 7.d4 (It would be better for him to continue with 7.\textit{\texttt{xe5}} \textit{\texttt{xe5}} = and White is not worse.) 7...\textit{\texttt{exd3}} 8.c3, Shirazi – Malaniuk, Malakoff 2010, 8...\textit{\texttt{d2+?!}} 9.\textit{\texttt{xd2}} \textit{\texttt{d5+}}. White has failed to save his pawn. He has some compensation for it indeed, but it is insufficient for equality.

After 5.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{e7+}} 6.f4 \textit{\texttt{g6}} 7.\textit{\texttt{fxe5}} \textit{\texttt{xe5}} 8.\textit{\texttt{g3}} c6 9.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{c7}} 10.d4 \textit{\texttt{g6}}, White ends up with a backward e-pawn and it will be a cause for worries for him in the future, Zurek – Navara, Czech Republic 2007.

5...\textit{\texttt{e4+}}?

This move is not as popular as 5...\textit{\texttt{a5+}}, but it seems more natural, since Black’s knight is not sent to the edge of the board. Instead, he is trying to solve quickly the problem with the development of his queenside pieces (\textit{\texttt{e5}}, d7–d5).

\textbf{6.\textit{\texttt{c4}}}

This is the most logical move for White. He prevents \textit{\texttt{e5}}.

His alternatives are not so reliable.

6.\textit{\texttt{xc6}} dxc6 7.\textit{\texttt{c4}}, Chernyshov – Saric, Pardubice 2011. Now again, Black can comply with the weakening of his pawn-structure. 7...\textit{\texttt{e6+?}} 8.\textit{\texttt{xd6+}} \textit{\texttt{xd6}} 9.\textit{\texttt{xf6}} \textit{\texttt{gf6}} 10.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{g4+}}! 11.h3 \textit{\texttt{xe2}} 12.\textit{\texttt{exe2}} \textit{\texttt{g8}} 13.0–0 0–0–0= — He has some pawn-weaknesses, but dominates on the semi-open d and g-files and his prospects are equal to say the least.

It would be too passive for White to choose 6.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{e5}} 7.\textit{\texttt{c1}} 0–0 8.h3 \textit{\texttt{e7}} 9.\textit{\texttt{xc6}} \textit{\texttt{xb2}} 10.\textit{\texttt{xb2}} dxc6=. Here, he had to castle kingside and enter an approximately equal position. After the too aggressive approach 11.0–0–0?!
a5 12.\textit{c}3 b5+, White's king came under a dangerous attack in the game Jobava – Aronian, Beijing 2012.

It would not be preferable for White to opt for 6.f4 \textit{c}5 7.xc6 dxc6 8.xc4 h5 9.e2 h4 10.h3 \textit{c}e7 11.0–0 \textit{e}6 12.e5 0–0–0+ – Black has the two-bishop advantage and his pieces are harmoniously and actively deployed.

6...\textit{e}7 7.xc6 bxc6

This is stronger for Black than capturing with the d-pawn, since it would be essential for him to preserve the possibility for the pawn-advance d7-d6.

\textbf{8.d3}

It is worse for White to opt for 8.e2 0–0 9.0–0 a5 10.f3 d5 11.e5 \textit{c}e8 12.fxe4 \textit{x}xe4+ – the position is opened and Black's bishops become very powerful, Rapport – Bacrot, Calvi 2013.

Or 8.e5 0–0 9.e2 \textit{c}e8 10.\textit{d}4 \textit{d}8 11.f4 c5 12.e2 d6+ – Black ousts his opponent's knight away from the centre and White has no compensation for Black's two powerful bishops, T.Petrosian – Barsov, Tashkent 2015.

\textbf{8...0–0 9.e2 \textit{c}8 10.d2 exd3 11.cxd3 a5 12.0–0 a4!?}

Black sharpens the game with this pawn-sacrifice. 13.bxa4 c5 14.\textit{c}2 d6 15.e4 \textit{d}7 16.c3 d5 17.\textit{fe}1, Stephan – Koegler, ICCF 2013, 17...c6!? 18.exd5 cxd5 19.b5 d4 20.c4 \textit{b}7 – He has excellent compensation for the pawn – two powerful bishops and good attacking prospects. The majority of White's pieces are concentrated on the queenside and are likely to fail to join in the defence of his king.

\textbf{C) 1.f4}

This opening was named after the English master H.Bird, who contributed greatly to its theoretical development.

White is playing the Dutch Defence with colours reversed and
with an extra tempo at that. Still, he cannot rely on obtaining an opening advantage. In principle, this opening is often used by players who like to choose the Dutch defence with Black like B.Larsen, M.Gurevich and some others.

1...\( \mathcal{d}f6 \)

Black is not in a hurry to play d7-d5, because in numerous variations it would be useful for him to play instead d7-d6, preventing his opponent from occupying the e5-square.

\[ \text{Diagram 1} \]

2.\( \mathcal{d}f3 \)

2.d3 g6 3.e4 d6 — see 1.e4 d6 2.f4 \( \mathcal{d}f6 \) 3.d3.

2.d4 g6 3.e3 \( \mathcal{g}7 \) 4.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) 0-0 — see 2.\( \mathcal{f}3 \).

2.g3 g6 3.\( \mathcal{g}2 \) (3.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{g}7 \) — see 2.\( \mathcal{f}3 \)) 3...\( \mathcal{g}7 \) 4.e4 (4.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) 0-0 — see 2.\( \mathcal{f}3 \)) 4...d6 — see 1.e4 d6 2.g3 \( \mathcal{f}6 \) 3.\( \mathcal{g}2 \) g6 4.f4 \( \mathcal{g}7 \).

2.e3 g6 3.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{g}7 \) — see 2.\( \mathcal{f}3 \).

2.b3 g6 3.\( \mathcal{b}2 \) \( \mathcal{g}7 \) 4.e4 (White had better refrain from this ambitious move and choose instead the more modest tries 4.\( \mathcal{d}f3 \) 0-0, or 4.e3 0-0 5.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) d6 — see 2.\( \mathcal{f}3 \).)

4...d6 5.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) 0-0. He has problems with the protection of his e4-pawn. 6.\( \mathcal{w}e2 \) (After 6.\( \mathcal{d}d3 \) \( \mathcal{c}6 \) 7.0-0 \( \mathcal{b}4 \), White’s e4-pawn is not sufficiently protected, so his bishop cannot abandon the d3-square, Berg – Giri, Malmo 2012. The e3-square would be weakened considerably following 6.d3 \( \mathcal{c}6 \) 7.\( \mathcal{e}2 \) e5 8.fxe5 \( \mathcal{g}4 \) 6...c5 7.g3 \( \mathcal{c}6 \) 8.\( \mathcal{g}2 \) \( \mathcal{g}4 \). Black’s pieces are very active. White must think seriously about his defence. 9.0-0 \( \mathcal{d}4 \) 10.\( \mathcal{w}d3 \) \( \mathcal{xf}3 \) 11.\( \mathcal{xf}3 \) \( \mathcal{d}5 \!). He is already incapable of avoiding material losses, for example: 12.\( \mathcal{c}3 \) \( \mathcal{b}4 \) 13.\( \mathcal{xb}4 \) \( \mathcal{xf}3+ \) 14.\( \mathcal{w}xf3 \) \( \mathcal{xa}1++ \) Blatny – Rausis, Czech Republic 2011.

2...\( \mathcal{g}6 \)

\[ \text{Diagram 2} \]

3.e3

About 3.d4 \( \mathcal{g}7 \) 4.e3 0-0 — see 3.e3.

3.d3 \( \mathcal{g}7 \) 4.e4 d6 — see 1.e4 d6 2.f4 \( \mathcal{f}6 \) 3.d3 g6 4.\( \mathcal{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{g}7 \).
Following 3.b3, White fails to obtain control over the e5-square. 3...\textit{g7 4.\textit{b2 0–0 5.e3 d6 6.\textit{e2 c6 7.0–0 e5 8.fxe5 \textit{g4 9.\textit{c3 dxe5 10.\textit{a3 \textit{e8 11.\textit{e4 \textit{h6=} and then f7–f5 and \textit{f7, Ostermeyer – Huebner, Germany 1980.}}}}}}}}

White’s attempt to continue in the spirit of the Leningrad variation of the Dutch Defence will lead to a position, which will be analysed in the part devoted to the Pirc Defence. 3.g3 \textit{g7 4.\textit{g2 0–0 5.0–0 d6 6.d3 c5 7.e4 \textit{c6 – see 1.e4 d6 2.f4 \textit{f6 3.d3 g6 (p. 137).}}}}

White would not obtain any edge after 3.b4 \textit{g7 4.\textit{b2 0–0 5.e3 (It is less precise for him to choose 5.g3 d6 6.\textit{c1, Larsen – Barendregt, Beverwijk 1961, 6...c6!=, followed by \textit{b6, attacking the pawn on b4 and impeding White’s castling kingside.) 5..d6 6.\textit{a3 e5 7.fxe5 \textit{g4=} Ivkov – Byrne, Vrsac 1969.}}}}

3...\textit{g7 4.d4
White places his pawns in the spirit of the “Stonewall system”.

4.\textit{e2 0–0 5.0–0 d6 6.d3 c5 7.\textit{e1 \textit{c6 8.e4=} We will analyse a similar position in the Pirc Defence (p. 138), but with an extra tempo for White, since he advances there his pawn to the e4-square at once.

4...0–0 5.\textit{d3 d6!
Black begins a fight for the e5-square.

6.0–0 \textit{c6 7.e4
Following 7.c3 e5 8.e4 exd4, White’s centre is about to crumble. 9.\textit{xd4 (9.cxd4 \textit{g4 10.\textit{e3 \textit{e8!=? 11.\textit{c3 \textit{xe4 12.\textit{xe4 d5=} – Black regains his piece and maintains better prospects.) 9...\textit{e8 10.\textit{xc6 bxc6 11.\textit{c2 c5=} White has problems with the protection of his e4-pawn. His attempt to prevent the pawn-advance c5-c4 and to develop the knight on c3 would not work after 12.c4? \textit{g4 13.h3 \textit{d4+ 14.\textit{h1 \textit{h4 15.f3 \textit{e1+ 16.\textit{f1 \textit{f2++ Berlinka – Slipak, Buenos Aires 1999.}}}}}}}}}}}}

7...e5! 8.d5 \textit{b4 9.fxe5 dxe5 10.\textit{e3
This position arose in the game Gleizerov – Das, Gurgon 2009. Black overlooked the powerful move 10...\textit{bxd5=!? With this temporary piece-sacrifice, he could have obtained the two-bishop advantage. 11.exd5 \textit{e4 12.\textit{c3 exd3 13.\textit{xd3 \textit{f5 14.\textit{c4 \textit{e8=} Black’s bishops are very powerful.}}}}}}}

23
In this chapter we will analyse only variations in which White refrains later from the pawn-advance c2-c4 (It will be analysed in the next two chapters.), or d2-d4 (see Part 2 and volume 2). In response to White’s first move, Black can simply develop his pieces in the spirit of the King’s Indian Defence (\(\textsf{\textit{g}} f6, g6, \textsf{\textit{g}} g7, 0-0, \textsf{\textit{d}} 6\)).

It is worth mentioning that White’s first moves 1.\(\textsf{\textit{f}}\) f3, or 1.c4 may create some problems for the players who like to play the Grunenfeld Defence, the Benko Gambit, the Benoni Defence and some other openings, because White may avoid these opening in this way. There are no similar difficulties for the players who choose the King’s Indian Defence.

1...\(\textsf{\textit{f}}\) f6

2.g3

2.c3 g6 3.d4 \(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 – see Chapter 7.

2.\(\textsf{\textit{d}}\) c3 g6 3.d4 (3.e4 d6 – see Chapter 11) 3...\(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 – see Chapter 7.

2.d3 g6 3.g3 (3.e4 d6 – see Chapter 10) 3...\(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 – see 2.g3.

2.e3 g6 3.b4 (3.b3 \(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 4.b2 d6 – see 2.b3; 3.d4 \(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 – see Chapter 7) 3...\(\textsf{\textit{g}}\) g7 4.b2 0–0 5.\(\textsf{\textit{e}}\) e2 (5.c4 d6 – see Chapter 4, var-
iation B1; 5.d4 d6 – see Chapter 7) 5...d6 6.c4 (6.d4 e5 – see Chapter 7) 6...e5 – see Chapter 4, variation B1.

It is a bit premature for White to play 2.b4. In this case, Black can refrain from the plan with the fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop and choose instead – 2...e6!?

3.a3. White must play now this modest move. (It will be bad for him to play 3.b5, since after 3...a6! his rook on a1 is not protected, so he cannot play a2-a4. Without this possibility, his third move would be senseless.) 3...d5 4.b2 c5 5.bxc5 bxc5 6.e3 0-0 7.c4 c6. Black completes effortlessly his development and has a very comfortable game. 8.d4 d6 9.bd2 b6 10.cxd5 exd5 11.b5 b7 12.0-0 c8 13.e2 e7 14.e1= White’s a3-pawn is weak and if he plays a3-a4, then the b4-square would be weakened, Degterev – Zhak, ICCF 2009.

2.b3. This move does not create any problems for Black. 2...g6 3.b2 g7 4.e3 (4.g3 d6 – see 2.g3; 4.e4. This seems to be much stronger on move one...! 4...0-0 5.e5 h5 6.d4 d6 – Black has good counterplay against his opponent’s pawn-centre, Kovari – Miciak, Slovakia 2000.) 4...d6 5.e2 0-0 6.0-0 (6.c4 e5 – see Chapter 4, variation A; 6.d4 bd7 – see Chapter 7, 3.e3) 6...e5 7.d3 c6 8.bd2 =e8=. followed by d6-d5. Black dominates in the centre and this guarantees equality for him.

2...g6

Now, White has a choice. He can play immediately B) 3.g2, or can at first prepare the development of his other bishop to the long diagonal A) 3.b3.

3.d3 g7 4.g2 0-0 – see variation B.

3.d4 g7 – see Chapter 9.

3.c4 g7 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

The move 3.b4 would not pro-
vide White with an advantage. 3...
\[ \text{\texttt{g7}} \]

4.\[ \text{\texttt{a3}} \]. The edge of the board is not the best place for White's knight. 4...0-0 5.\[ \text{\texttt{g2}} \] c6 6.0-0 d5 7.c4 a5 8.b5, Smyslov - Magerramov, Palma de Mallorca 1989, 8...
dxc4\[?] 9.bxc6 \[ \text{\texttt{xc6}} \] 10.\[ \text{\texttt{xc4}} \] \[ \text{\texttt{e6}}\] Black's bishops exert powerful pressure against White's queenside.

4.\[ \text{\texttt{g2}}\]? \[ \text{\texttt{d5}}\] It is amazing but this powerful move has not been tested in the tournament practice yet! White cannot protect his b4-pawn and although Black will have to lose several tempi on moves with his knight, White's compensation would be insufficient.

4.\[ \text{\texttt{b2}} \] 0-0 5.\[ \text{\texttt{g2}} \] (5.c4 d6 - see Chapter 4, variation \texttt{B2}) 5...
d6

6.d3 e5 7.0-0 a5 – see 6.0-0.
6.c4 e5 – see Chapter 4, variation \texttt{B2}.

Black obtains very good counterplay after 6.d4 \[ \text{\texttt{c6}} \] 7.b5 \[ \text{\texttt{a5}} \] 8.\[ \text{\texttt{bd2}} \] d5. Now, White will have problems to advance c2-c4 and without that his b5-pawn will need permanent protection. 9.0-0, Pareja - Ferrandis, Aragon 1996, 9...a6!?\[?\]

6.0-0 e5 7.d3 (7.c4 e4 – see Chapter 4, variation \texttt{B2}) 7...a5 8.b5. Now, Black's knight gains access to the c5-square. (White cannot obtain an advantage after 8.a3 \[ \text{\texttt{a6}} \] 9.\[ \text{\texttt{bd2}} \], Ye – Xie, Beijing 1998, 9...\[ \text{\texttt{d7}}\]?\[?] Black has protected his rook and is threatening to capture on b4. If White plays c2-c3, this would restrict considerably the scope of action of his bishop on b2.) 8...a4 9.c4 \[ \text{\texttt{bd7}} \]

10.a3. White prevents radically a4-a3, but weakens the b3-square. 10.\[ \text{\texttt{c5}} \] 11.\[ \text{\texttt{fd2}} \] \[ \text{\texttt{g4}}\] – Black's position is more active, Stripunsky - Ayrapetyan, ICC 2009.

The game would be approximately equal after 10.\[ \text{\texttt{bd2}} \] \[ \text{\texttt{c5}} \]
11...b1 12.g5 f5 = Aguetz – Smirin, Guingamp 2010.
10.e3 e8 11.a3 e4 12.e1 c5= Black’s prospects are not worse. 13.xf6 xf6 14.d4 e6 15.h4. This is an attempt by White to cover the g5-square from the penetration of his opponent’s knight, but after the energetic move 15...g5!, Black obtained good attacking prospects against the enemy king in the game Smyslov – Xie, London 1996.

A) 3.b3 g7 4.b2 d6!? Black shows immediately his intention to push e7-e5.

5.d4
White should better prevent this pawn-advance.

5.c4 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation A.

5.g2 e5 6.d3 (6.c4 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation A; 6.0–0 0–0 7.d3 c6 – see 6.d3; 7.c4 c6 – see Chapter 4, variation A) 6...0–0 7.0–0 (7.bd2 c6 8.0–0 h5 – see 7.0–0) 7.c6 8.b2 h5!? (followed by f7-f5, g6-g5-g4) and Black seizes firmly the initiative on the kingside.

5...c5
Black begins the fight against the enemy centre.

6.g2
White cannot create any problems for his opponent with 6.c3 b6!? 7.g2 b7 = Zabystrzan – Chytilek, Czech Republic 2009, as well as with 6.e3 0–0 7.g2 cxd4 8.exd4 d5 9.0–0 c6 10.e5 f5 11.e1 c8 = Raedeker – Thannhauser, ICCF 1999.

Following 6.d5 0–0 7.g2 e6 8.c4 exd5 9.cxd5 a6!? White’s pawn on d5 becomes a good target for Black’s counterplay, Di Lao – Farago, Cesenatico 2000, for example: 10.0–0 c7 and it is bad for White to play 11.c3?, because of 11...fxd5

It is not good for White to give up the centre 6.dxc5 a5+
7.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{c}5\) \(\text{f}3\) \(0-0\) 9.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 10.0-0 \(\text{h}5\) 11.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{f}5\) \(\text{c}5\)\(\text{f}5\). Had White’s pawn been on c4 and not on c2, he could have claimed an opening advantage. Here, as it is, Black’s prospects are not worse at all, Taimanov – Xie, London 1996.

7.\(\text{bd}2\) \(\text{xc}5\) 8.e3, protecting against \(\text{g}4\). (Following 8.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{a}5\) 9.\(\text{b}2\) 0-0 10.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 11.0-0, Antonenko – Bragin, ICCF 2003, Black has at his disposal the active resource 11...\(\text{h}5\)!\(\text{=}\) and then \(\text{h}3\), \(\text{g}4\).) 8...0-0 9.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{c}7\) 10.0-0 \(\text{b}6\) 11.c4 \(\text{b}7\) 12.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{bd}7\) 13.\(\text{ac}1\) \(\text{ac}8\)= Black has completed his development and has no pawn-weaknesses in his position, Ardan – Ivanchuk, Kocaeli 2002.

After 6.c4 \(\text{e}4\), White must play very carefully in order to neutralise the pressure of Black’s pieces.

(diagram)

7.\(\text{bd}2\) \(\text{a}5\) 8.\(\text{g}2\) (8.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{xd}2\) – see 7.\(\text{c}1\)) 8...\(\text{c}3\) – see 7...\(\text{g}2\) 8.\(\text{bd}2\) \(\text{c}3\).

It is not good for White to play 7.\(\text{fd}2\), because he reduces the protection of his d4-pawn. Black can counter that with 7...\(\text{g}5!\)\(\text{=}\), followed by \(\text{f}6\), \(\text{c}6\) with powerful pressure.

7.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{a}5\) 8.\(\text{bd}2\) \(\text{xd}2\) 9.\(\text{xd}2\) \(\text{d}2\) 10.\(\text{xd}2\) \(\text{d}6\) 11.e3 \(\text{g}4\) 12.\(\text{e}2\) 0-0 – The pressure against the d4-square provides Black with good counterplay, Khetsuriani – Uritzky, Rishon LeZion 1997.

7.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{a}5\)\(\text{=}\) This check is very unpleasant for White. 8.\(\text{fd}2\). He must play like this. (After 8.\(\text{bd}2\) ?! \(\text{c}3\)! 9.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{xc}3\), Black not only has the two-bishop advantage, but also a clear cut plan for actions on the dark-squares.). 8...\(\text{xd}2\) 9.\(\text{c}3\). This tactical trick is not sufficient for White even to equalise. 9...\(\text{b}6\)! This is Black’s most precise response. Now, there arise complications. 10.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xb}1\) 11.\(\text{b}7\). White cannot capture the enemy queen, because Black will collect too many pieces for it. (11.\(\text{xb}6\)? \(\text{xc}3\)\(\text{=}\) 12.\(\text{xf}1\) \(\text{xa}1\) 13.\(\text{xb}1\) \(\text{g}7\)\(\text{=}\).) 11...\(\text{b}4\)\(\text{=}\) Black evacuates his queen with tempo from the attack and deprives his opponent of his castling rights. 12.\(\text{gf}1\) \(\text{g}8\) 13.\(\text{h}6\) \(\text{a}3\) 14.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) 15.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) 16.\(\text{f}4\), D’Amore – Piscopo, Arvier 2008, 16...\(\text{a}5\)! 17.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{c}2\)\(\text{=}\) –
Black has a knight for two pawns. White has two powerful bishops indeed, but this is still insufficient for equality.

6...cxd4 7.exd4 d5
Black continues his fight for the centre.

8.0–0
8.f3 0–0 9.0–0 c6, or 8.c4 dxc4 9.0–0 (9.bxc4 0–0 10.0–0 – see 8.0–0) 9...0–0 – see 8.0–0.

8...0–0

9.c4
White must play energetically; otherwise, if Black manages to advance e7–e5, he will obtain an advantage.


9.a3 e5 10.f3 e4 11.d4 e7!? 12.c4 d8∞ – Black’s prospects are not worse.

It seems too passive for White to opt for 9.d2 e5 10.f3 (or 10.b5 a6 11.a3 c6+ and it becomes unclear what White’s knight is doing at the edge of the board) 10...e4 11.d4 bd7 12.e3 e5 13.h3, defending against g4. 13...e8+ Sadiku – Hausrath, Ohrid 2009. Black’s game is much easier. White can hardly undermine effectively the enemy centre, because the move c2–c4 would weaken the d3-square.

9.f3. This prophylactic move against e7–e5 is good only to maintain the balance. 9...c6 10. a3 (It would not be so precise for White to play 10.bd2, because after 10...f5 11.c4, Nikolac – Vukic, Brezovica 1988, Black could occupy space with the move 11...d4!?? 10...f5!? He wishes to play e4, with the idea to trade White’s powerful bishop. 11.c4 e4 12.d2 dxc4 13.xc4 xd2 14.fxd2 xg2 15.xg2 fd8 16. fd1 ac8 = – After the numerous exchanges the position has been simplified and the endgame seems to be absolutely equal, Taimanov – Polugaevsky, Moscow 1976.

9...dxc4
10.bxc4
White complies with ending up with a weak pawn hoping to exploit the powerful pressure of his bishop on g2 against Black’s queenside.

White has an interesting pawn-sacrifice, but it cannot provide him with an advantage either. 10.a3!? cxb3 11.axb3 (11.axb3, Fressinet – Mikhailovski, Berlin 2015, 11...g4!?= followed by e5 and a7-c6) 11...e5!? Black should better oust immediately the enemy knight away from the centre.

12.db5 (Following 12.xb7 xb7 13.xb7 d5 14.xd5 a5= the position is simplified, Pantsulaia – Gupta, Nakhchivan 2015.) 12...e6. Black develops his bishop with tempo. 13.c4 (13.a4? Glavina – Dziuba, Padron 2012, 13...a6! 14.xb7 db7! 15.xa8 axb5 16.axb5 xa8 17.xa8 a8= – There are so many pieces on the board that White’s passed pawn on a2 is much rather a liability than strength.) 13...bd7 14.bd6 b6. Black gradually neutralises his opponent’s pressure by exchanging pieces. 15.xe5 xc4 16.xc4 c8 17.ac1 e8 18.fd1 xc4 (It is possible that Black could have thought about obtaining more than just equality: 18...e7!? 19.f4 g4= and White must find numerous accurate moves in order to get rid of the unpleasant pin of his knight and to avoid losing material.) 19.xc4 xc4 20.xd8 xb3 21.xf6 xd8 22.xd8 xa2 23.xb7= combative – dawnjones, Internet 2011.

10...b6

11.b3

11.b5 d8 12.b3, Muse – Brener, playchess.com 2005, 12...a6!?=

11.c2 c6 12.c5 (12.xc6 bxc6 13.d2 f5 14.b3 fd8 15.c3 g4 16.xg7, Malakhov – Svidler, Krasnoyarsk 2003. After the logical move 16...xg7!??, the position would be gradually simplified. For example: 17.f3 a5 18.h3 e5 19.b2 f6 20.xe5
\[ \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}}}} \text{xe5 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}}}} \text{xe5 fxe5 22.g4} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{e}}}}} \text{e6} 23.} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}}}} \text{xc6} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{a}}}}} \text{ac8} 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d5} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{d}}}}} \text{xd5} 25.\text{cxd5} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{x}}}}} \text{xd5=}} \text{White is incapable of exploiting the weaknesses in his opponent’s pawn-structure in this endgame with four rooks.) 12...} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{a}}}}} \text{a6} 13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{d}}}}} \text{d7. Black completes the development of his pieces and the position becomes gradually equal. 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d2} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{x}}}}} \text{xd4} 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{xd4} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{a}}}}} \text{a4} 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{b3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{a}}}}} \text{ac8} 17.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{b2} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6} 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}}} \text{xc6} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6} 19.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}} \text{ac1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{f}}}}} \text{fc8} 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}} \text{c2} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{b}}}}} \text{b6= Glushenkov – Yartsev, ICCF 2012.}}}

11.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{b3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6} 12.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}} \text{c3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}}} \text{e6} 13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}} \text{a4} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c7} 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}} \text{c1, Markoja – Kudryavtsev, Lechenicher Schach-Server 2011. Now, Black must play 14...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{ad8, to be able after 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}} \text{ac5, to continue with 15...} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c8= White cannot achieve anything real out of the placement of his knight on c5, while the weakness of his pawn on c4 may become a telling factor in the future.}}}

Black can parry his opponent’s pressure after 11.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}} \text{c1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}}} \text{d8 12.c5} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a6} 13.a4 \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6} 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{b5, Dizdarevic – Biliskov, Solin 1993, 14...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}}} \text{b8?! 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d2} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}}} \text{e6=} 11...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}} \text{fd7}

Black transfers his knight to the blocking c5-square and White will have great problems to oust it from there.

12.e3

Following 12.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6, White will have to play 13.e3 (It would be bad for him to choose 13.}} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{xc6?! in view of 13...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}} \text{xb2 14.} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}}} \text{xe7+} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}}}} \text{g7 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{xc8} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{axc8 16.} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}}}} \text{xd7} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}}} \text{fd8! 17.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{xb7} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}}} \text{xb3 18.axb3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}}} \text{d1+ 19.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}} \text{f1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{xa1 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a3, Veli-ckovic – Sebenik, Bled 1999, 20...} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a6?=} \text{– White must work long and hard for a draw in this endgame.) 13...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a5 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}}} \text{xb6 axb6 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}}} \text{e5! – The weakness of White’s pawns on c4 and a2 is much more important than the vulnerability of Black’s doubled pawns on the b-file, Senlle Caride – Libiszewski, Cagliari 2012.}}

12...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}}} \text{e5!}

Black ousts the enemy knight from d4, but presents his oppo-ponent with the d5-square.

13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{b5} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c5 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}}} \text{a3} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}}} \text{c6} 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d2} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}}} \text{bd7 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}}} \text{bc3}

16.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}}} \text{b1, Nyzhnyk – Paklezan, Las Vegas 2015, 16...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}}} \text{fc8=}

16...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}} \text{fc8 17.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}} \text{d5}}

17.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}}} \text{ad1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}}}} \text{d8! 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}}} \text{a1} \text{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}}}} \text{f8=} \text{White dominates over the impor-tant d5-outpost and this compensates the vulnerability of his}}
queenside pawns, but not more than that, Loschnauer – Wilhelmi, ICCF 2011.

17...♗d8 18.♗ad1 ♗c6 19.♗b3 ♗a6 20.♗b4 ♗c8 21.♗xc5 ♘xc5= – White must play very carefully not to lose his weak pawns, Nyvlt – Oreopoulos, ICCF 2014.

B) 3.♗g2 ♗g7

4.0–0

White does not clarify yet his pawn-structure in the centre and simply completes the development of his kingside pieces.

His alternatives usually lead to transposition of moves:

4.d4 0–0 – see Chapter 9.

4.c4 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

4.d3 0–0 5.0–0 d6, or 5.♗bd2 d6 6.0–0 e5, or 5.e4 d6 6.0–0 e5 – see 4.0–0.

4.b3 d6 5.d4 (5.♗b2 e5 – see variation A) 5...c5 6.e3 (6.♗b2 cxd4 – see variation A; 6.0–0 0–0 – see Chapter 9) 6...0–0 7.♗b2 cxd4 – see variation A.

4...0–0

5.d3

White is playing the King’s Indian Defence with colours reversed and an extra tempo. This cannot provide him with an advantage in the opening.

5.c3 d6 6.d3 (6.d4 ♘c6 – see Chapter 9) 6...e5 – see 5.d3.

5.♘c3 d6 6.e4 (6.d3 e5 – see 5.d3; 6.d4 ♘bd7 – see Chapter 9) 6...♗bd7 7.d4 e5 – see Chapter 17, variation A.

5.b3 d6 6.♗b2 (6.d4 c5 – see Chapter 9) 6...e5 7.d3 ♘c6 – see variation A.

5.♗e1 d6 6.e4 (6.d4 ♗e4 – see Chapter 9) 6...e5 7.d4 exd4 8.♗xd4 ♗c6 9.♗xc6 bxc6 10.♗c3, Al Hadarani – Eid, Dubai 1995, 10...♗d7∞
5...d6
It would be simplest for Black to reply symmetrically to a certain moment. The position is closed and White's extra tempo is not so important.

6.e4
6.c4 e5 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

6.♗bd2 e5 7.e4 ♗bd7, or 6.♘c3 e5 7.e4 ♗c6, or 6.c3 e5 7.e4 a5, or 7.♗bd2 ♗bd7 8.e4 c6 – see 6.e4.

6...e5

7.♗bd2
7.a4 a5 8.♗bd2 ♗bd7 – see 7.♗bd2.

It is not good for White to play 7.♕h4, because his knight would remain at the edge of the board, while advancing f2-f4 would not be easy for him at all. 7.♘c6 8.c3 d5 9.♕a3, Carlier – Condie, London 1986. Here, the simplest for Black would be to transfer to a slightly better endgame. 9...dxe4!? 10.dxe4 ♕xd1 11.♗xd1 ♕e6\f

The position will be complicated after 7.♕e1 ♕e8 8.c4 ♘g4 9.♕h3 ♘xf3 10.♕xf3 ♘c6 11.♘c3 ♘d7∞, followed by ♘c5-e6, or ♘c5, ♘d4, c7-c6. Black has excellent outposts for his knights (d4 and c5) and this compensates White's two-bishop advantage, Komliakov – S.Kasparov, Koszalin 1999.

After 7.c3 a5 8.♗bd2 ♘c6 9.a4 ♘d7 10.♘c4 ♘c5 11.♕e3, Haas – Mossong, Luxembourg 1992, 11...b6!?= Black can play ♗a6, exerting powerful pressure on the a6-f1 diagonal.

The position would be equal after 7.♘c3 ♘c6 8.h3 ♘d7 9.♕e3 ♕c8 10.♕h2 ♕e8=. If White advances d3-d4, then after the exchange of the pawns Black's rook may be transferred to h5 (♕e8-e5-h5).

7...♗bd7
8. a4

The alternatives for White do not provide him with an advantage.

8. c4 a5 9. a4 c5 – see 8. a4.

8. e1 c6 9. d1 h6 10. h4 c7∞, followed by d6-d5, Slaven – Ezat, Dos Hermanas 2004.

8. c3 c6


9. e1 e8 10. b4 (10. d4 a5 11. c4. White wishes to exploit the vulnerability of the pawn on d6, but Black can easily protect it. 11... b6 12. cd2 a4= Bologan – Bezgodov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013) 10... d5 11. b3 b6 12. c2 b7 13. c4 dxe4 14. dxe4 c5= White can hardly make use of the weakness of the d5-square, because each one of his knights would need four moves to be deployed there. Black's knight on d7 needs only three moves in order to reach the analogous d4-square (f8-e6-d4), Tiviakov – Fridman, Netherlands 2005.

8... a5

Black should not allow the further advance of White's pawn.

9. c4 c5 10. e3

White cannot obtain an advantage if he develops his bishop to another diagonal: 10. b3 b6 11. a3 b7= Niermann – Serrer, Muenster 1992.

10... e6

Black cannot maintain the symmetry because White was threatening to win a pawn with the move fxe5.

11. h3

The attempt to advance d3-d4 with 11. e1 b6 12. d4, Kr.Georgiev – Voiteanu, Sunny Beach 2012, could have ended badly for White after 12... a6!? 13. dxe5 g4 14. fd2 xe3 15. xe3 dxe5= and Black would have a stable advantage thanks to his two powerful bishops.

11... b6

After Black's knight has been deployed on c6, his bishop has nothing to do on the c8-h3 diagonal.
1. \textit{d}f3 \textit{d}f6 2. g3 g6 3. \textit{g}g2 \textit{g}g7 4. 0-0 0-0

12. \textit{w}d2 \textit{a}a6 13. b3 \textit{h}h5 14. c3 \textit{e}e7=

White has no active prospects in this position, because after every pawn-advance (d3-d4, or b3-b4) there would appear numerous weaknesses in his camp.

15. b4?! Filip – Petrosian, Amsterdam/Leeuwarden 1956, 15...\textit{ax}b4 16. \textit{cx}b4 \textit{h}hf4\textit{+}. It turns out that White cannot accept the sacrifice of the knight, because at the end of the variation 17. \textit{gx}f4 \textit{ex}f4 18. \textit{xf}4 \textit{xc}4 19. \textit{dxc}4 \textit{xa}1 20. \textit{xa}1, Black has the double attack 20...\textit{xf}6\textit{+}+, after which he wins material.

15. d4, Urbano Lopez – Krause, corr 1981, 15...f5! Black seizes the initiative. 16. \textit{ex}f5 e4 17. \textit{h}h4 \textit{gx}f5\textit{+} – White must be on the alert about his opponent’s possibilities d6-d5 and f5-f4.
This opening was named in this way, because back in the 19th century it was often used by the champion of England at those times H. Staunton.

It did not attract followers immediately, mostly because the moves 1.e4 and 1.d4 were universally preferred. It was only during the 20th century that the opening began to be really popular thanks to the efforts of chess geniuses like Botvinnik, Smyslov, Polugaevsky, Larsen, Portisch, Kornev and some others. It was even encountered in matches for the World Championship.

The main plus of the move 1.c4 is that White avoids in this way some popular openings for Black like the Nimzowitsch Defence, the Grunfeld Defence, the Slav Defence (after 1...c6, White can play 2.e4, transposing to the Caro-Kann Defence...) and some others. We plan to analyse as our main weapon against the move 1.d4 the King’s Indian Defence, so the English Opening is not going to create great problems for us. Against it, just like after 1.Qf3, Black simply develops: Qf6, g6, g7, 0–0, d6... If White advances d2–d4, then the games transpose to the lines of the King’s Indian Defence. If White decides to play the more modest move d2–d3, then Black will advance d6–e6–e5, occupying the centre and can be optimistic about the future.

1...Qf6

The English Opening is rather complex, so there may arise numerous transpositions of moves. We need to systematise somehow the possible variations and in this chapter we will analyse the lines in which White does not develop his king’s knight on f3 (We will deal with these variations in Chapter 4).
2.\texttt{c}c3

If now, or in the next few moves, White advances d4, the arising positions will be analysed in volume 2.

About 2.b3 g6 3.\texttt{b}b2 \texttt{g}g7 4.g3 (4.\texttt{f}f3 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation A) 4...d6 5.\texttt{g}g2 0–0 – see 1.g3.

2.g3 g6 3.\texttt{g}g2 \texttt{g}g7

4.\texttt{c}c3 0–0 – see 2.\texttt{c}c3.
4.\texttt{f}f3 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

4.e4 d6 5.\texttt{c}c3 0–0, or 5.\texttt{e}e2 c5 6.\texttt{b}c3 0–0, or 6.0–0 \texttt{c}c6 7.\texttt{b}c3 0–0 – see variation B.

4.e3 0–0 5.\texttt{g}ge2 (5.\texttt{c}c3 d6 – see variation A) 5...d6 6.0–0 (6.\texttt{b}c3 e5 – see variation A) 6...e5 7.d4 (7.\texttt{b}c3 c6 – see variation A) 7...c6 8.\texttt{b}c3 \texttt{e}e8 – see Chapter 10, variation A2.

3.\texttt{g}g3

3.e4 d6 4.d4 (4.g3 \texttt{g}g7 – see 3.g3) 4...\texttt{g}g7 – see volume 2.
3.\texttt{f}f3 \texttt{g}g7 – see Chapter 4, 3.\texttt{c}c3.

3.\texttt{g}g7 4.\texttt{g}g2

White's bishop is perfectly placed here, exerting powerful pressure against Black's queenside.

4.e4 d6 5.\texttt{g}g2 0–0 – see variation B.
4.\texttt{f}f3 0–0 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

4...0–0

Now, White must make a choice about his pawn-structure. He may play B) 5.e4, restricting his own bishop on g2, but increasing the pressure against the central d5-square, or can choose A) 5.e3, preparing to develop his knight on e2 without closing the scope of action of his bishop on g2.

5.\texttt{b}b1 d6 6.d3 c6 – see 5.d3.

5.\texttt{f}f3 d6 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

5.b4. This move has the drawback that White's plans are re-
vealed a bit too early and Black may refrain from d7-d6, e7-e5 and choose the more active reaction 5...c6!? (with the idea d5), for example: 6.♗b1 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.♕f3 d4 9.♕a4 ♕d5? – Black’s prospects seem already preferable since after e7–e5, he will obviously dominate in the centre, Hausner – Mikrut, Liptovsky Mikulas 2013.

It may be also interesting for White to try here 5.d3, not defining yet the placement of the knight. 5...d6

6.♕f3 ♕c6 – see Chapter 4, variation C.

6.e3 e5 – see variation A.

6.e4 c5 – see 5.e4 d6 6.d3 c5.

6.♕g5 h6 7.♕d2 c5!? This is the simplest move for Black. He prepares ♕c6. 8.a3 (8.♕f3 ♕c6 9.0–0 ♖e6=) 8...♕c6 9.♕b1 ♖e6 10.♕h3 ♕h5 11.♕f4 ♕xf4 12.♕xf4 ♖d7 13.♕d2 ♕h3 14.0–0 ♕h7= – The pawn-structure is almost symmetrical and after the trade of the powerful bishop on g2, the chances of both sides will be almost equal, since White will hardly develop any initiative on the queenside without the support of his light-squared bishop, Ludgate – Lohmann, ICCF 2009.

Following 6.♗b1, Black has an interesting pawn-sacrifice – 6...c6 7.e4 d5 8.exd5 cxd5 9.cxd5 ♕a6 10.♕ge2, M.Gurevich – Nijboer, Antwerp 1997, 10...♕f5!?= – Black has very good compensation for the sacrificed material, because after ♕b4, White’s pawns on d3 and d5 will need protection.

After 6.♕d2, the simplest for Black would be 6...c5= and he would have no problems whatsoever. There arises a similar position to the variation with 6.♕g5, except that Black’s pawn is not on h6, but on the h7-square. This is in favour of Black, since White cannot win a tempo later by attacking the h6-pawn with the move ♖c1.

A) 5.e3 d6

6.♕ge2

6.d3 e5 7.♕ge2 c6 – see 6.♕ge2.

6...e5 7.0–0

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On this move, as well as later, the pawn-advance d2-d4 leads to the King's Indian Defence, which will be analysed in volume 2.

About 7.d3 c6 8.0–0 a5, or 8.e4 a5 9.0–0 d6 – see 7.0–0.

7.d4 c6, or 7.b3 d6 8.0–0 c6 9.d4 e4, or 8.h3 c6 9.d4 e4 – see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation A2.

7...c6

Black’s play in the next few moves is connected with the preparation of the pawn-advance d6-d5.

8.d3

8.e4 a5 9.d3 d6 – see 8.d3.

8.d4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation A2.

Following 8.b4 e6 9.d3 d5 10.cxd5 d6 11.b1 e7 12.a3 d8±, Black has excellent counter chances by playing against the enemy pawn on d3, Malakhatko – Nevednichy, Creon 2004.

8...a5!? It is useful for Black to play this move, before d6.

9.b3

After 9.e4 d6 10.h3, Black can change his plan and try to prepare not d6-d5, but the pawn-break b7-b5. 10...b8 11.g5 c7 12.d4 b5 13.cxb5 cxb5 14.c1, Ponomariov – Saric, Porto Carras 2011, 14...b4! 15.a4 e6± White’s knight is misplaced at the edge of the board, while Black has excellent counterplay in the centre.

9.e1 d6 10.a3 e8

11.h3 d5. After this thematic pawn-advance, it is only White
who may have problems. 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.d4 e4 14.d2 c7 15.a4 e6 – Black has more space, while White’s kingside has been weakened by the move g2-g3, Rozhkova – Kirillova, Dagomys 2008.

11.e4 c7 Black’s knight is very well placed on this square. It not only supports the pawn-advance d6-d5, but in some variations may go to e6, attacking the weak d4-square in the enemy camp.

9...a6 10.b2 e8 11.d2 d5=

Now, just like in many other variations which we have already analysed, you can see the basic drawback of White’s plan, begun with the move 5.e3. He does not control sufficiently the strategically important d5-square. Black has already equalised completely and can even think about fighting for the advantage. 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.h3 d7 14.f1 b8 15.a4 b6. Black does not allow c5. 16.ac3 h6 17.a3 b4. Here,
in the game Henderson – LePage, ICCF 2014, White played rather carelessly 18.xb4?!, exchanging his important dark-squared bishop and after 18...axb4 19. xd5 xd5 20.xd5 xh3 21. e4 f6 22.e3 bc8+ ended up in an inferior position.

B) 5.e4 d6

About 6.d3 c5 7.ge2 c6, or 6.h3 c5 7.ge2 c6 8.d3 a6 – see 6.ge2.

6.c5 – see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation A2.

6...c5

Now, contrary to variation A, Black should better refrain from the pawn-advance e7-e5, choosing this move. His further plan is connected with counterplay on the queenside – a7-a6, b7-b5. He must be on the alert however, about the possibility for White to advance d2-d4 at some moment.
White will become even worse after 8.dxc5, since later, he would not have compensation for the vulnerability of his d4-square. 8...dxc5 9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)g4. Black seizes completely the initiative after this pawn-sacrifice. 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)xd8 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)xd8 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)xc5 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)ge5 12.0-0. Black’s threat to check from the d3-square, forces White to part with his extra material. 12...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)xc4 13.b3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)d2 14.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)fe1 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)g4\(\text{\textit{\&}}\) – Black’s pieces are obviously much more active, Pithart – Dworzynski, Marianske Lazne 1956.

8.d5 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)a5. Black has obtained excellent counterplay against the enemy c4-pawn. 9.b3 (It would not be so good for White to play here 9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)d3, because his queen may come under attack by the enemy pieces on this square. 9...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)d7 10.f4. White defends against \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e5. 10...\texttt{a}6 11.0-0 \texttt{b}5. This Benko Gambit type of sacrifice is perfectly justified in this situation. 12.cxb5 axb5 13.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)xb5 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)a6 14.a4 c4\(\text{\textit{\&}}\), followed by \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)c5 and the penetration of the knights to the d3 and b3-squares, Lasinskas, – Antic, Kavala 2012.) 9...\texttt{a}6 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)b1 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)d7 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)d3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)b8 12.a4 \texttt{b}5! 13.axb5 axb5\(\text{\textit{\&}}\) Valdes Escobar – Casafus, Santiago de Chile 2007 (It is also good for Black to play here 13...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)g4\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)\(\text{\textit{\&}}\).)

7...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)c6

(diagram)

8.d3

About 8.h3 \texttt{a}6 9.d3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)b8, or 8.f4 \texttt{a}6 9.d3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)b8 – see 8.d3.
8.a3 a6 9.b1 (9.d3 b8 – see 8.d3) 9...g4 – see 8.b1.

It is bad for White to play here 8.d4?! since following 8...cxd4 9.xd4, Black has a standard tactical strike for similar positions – 9...xe4! 10.xc6 xc3 11.xd8 (It is better for White to opt here for 11.xe7+ xe7 12.bxc3 e6 13.b1 ab8 14.f4 fd8++, although even then, his doubled isolated pawns on the c-file will cause permanent troubles for him, Kosikov – Rymskyy, Ilichevsk 2006) 11...xd1 12.xb7 xxe7 13.xd1 (13.xb7 ab8 14. xd1 xb7 15.b1 c8 16.b3 xc4++) 13...xg2 14.xg2 fc8 15.e1 e5 16.f4 f6 17.e4 c7 18.b1 ac8 19.b3 d5++ – Black ends up with extra material.

It is interesting for White to play the move 8.b1!? Now, contrary to 8.d3, White can advance the move d2-d4 at once and Black must be well prepared for that. 8...a6 9.a3 (9.d3 b8 – see 8.d3) 9...g4!? Black must prevent his opponent’s plans. (After the careless move 9...b8, White seizes completely the initiative following 10.b4 cxb4 11.axb4 b5 12. d4!±) 10.d3 b5! This pawn-sacrifice is Black’s simplest road to equality. 11.cxb5, Tsenkov – Kund, LSS 2008, 11...ab5 12.xb5 b6 13.bc3 b8 – Black has more than sufficient compensation for the minimal material deficit. His major pieces exert powerful pressure on the a and b-files and his minor pieces are very active too.

8...a6

9.h3

This move is often played in similar positions. White not only prepares a pawn-offensive on the kingside with g3-g4, but also deprives Black of the possibility to attack White’s bishop on e3 (if it is developed there...) with the move g4.

9.f4 b8 10.h3 d7 – see 9.h3. 9.a3 b8 10.b1 b5 – see 9.b1.

9.a4 b8 10.h3 (10.b1 e8 – see 9.b1) 10...e8 – see 9.h3.
9.\texttt{xb}1 \texttt{xb}8

10.a3 b5 11.cxb5 axb5 12.b4 \texttt{a}6!? Black's position is quite acceptable, due to the vulnerability of White's backward pawn on the a-file. 13.h3 (13.f4, Miezis – Vazquez Igarza, Reykjavik 2015, 13...cxb4!? 14.axb4 e6=) 13...\texttt{d}7 14.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{d}4 15.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{b}6 16.\texttt{fc}1 \texttt{d}7 17.bxc5 dxc5 18.\texttt{d}5, Abasov – V.Onischuk, Kharkov 2008, 18...\texttt{xc}8!? 19.\texttt{xd}4 cxd4 20.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{xd}5 21.\texttt{xc}8+ \texttt{xc}8 22.exd5 \texttt{e}5?!= – With his last move, Black has prepared the transfer of his bishop to the \texttt{d}6-square and from there it will attack the weak enemy pawn on a3.

White should better play here 10.a4, preventing b7-b5. 10...\texttt{e}8 11.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{c}7

This is a standard transfer of the knight in similar positions and we are going to encounter it numerous more times. From there it not only supports the pawn-advance b7-b5, but also after \texttt{e}6 may impede White's thematic move d3-d4. 12.d4. White did not wait for \texttt{e}6 and accomplished immediately the pawn-break in the centre. 12...b6!? This is an interesting moment. In similar positions Black is most often forced to exchange on c4, but here, he can maintain the tension for a while. His idea is to advance e7-e5, after which White will fail to hold on to the important \texttt{d}4-square. 13.\texttt{wd}2 (13. \texttt{b}3, Lie – Shirov, Drammen 2004, 13...e5!? 14. dxe5 dxe5= – Both the \texttt{d}4 and \texttt{d}5-squares are equally vulnerable.) 13...e5 14.dxe5 \texttt{xe}5.

Now, this move seems even stronger than capturing with the pawn, since Black gains time in order to prepare the pawn-break b6-b5. 15.b3 b5 16.axb5 axb5 17. cxb5 \texttt{xb}5 18.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{xb}5= – White's b3-pawn is weak, so this precludes him from the possibility to fight for the opening advantage, Ribli – G.Kuzmin, Riga 1979.

9...\texttt{b}8

(diagram)

10.a4

White prevents thus reliably the pawn-advance b7-b5, but weakens the \texttt{b}4-square in the process.

After White's alternatives, Black advances b7-b5, organising
good counterplay on the queenside. For example: 10.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}3}} b5 11. b3 (White would lose a pawn after 11.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}2}?} bxc4 12.dxc4 \textit{\texttt{e}5} 13.b3 \textit{\texttt{h}3!}; the exchange of the c-pawn for the enemy a-pawn cannot be good for White: 11.cxb5 axb5 12.d4 \textit{\texttt{d}7!}) 11...b4. Black occupies space on the queenside.

12.\textit{\texttt{a}4}. The edge of the board cannot be a good place for the knight. 12...\textit{\texttt{d}7} 13.f4 \textit{\texttt{c}8} 14.\textit{\texttt{h}2} \textit{\texttt{a}5} 15.\textit{\texttt{b}1} \textit{\texttt{x}a}4. Black has succeeded in compromising his opponent’s pawn-structure on the queenside. 16.bxa4 \textit{\texttt{c}7} 17.f5 \textit{\texttt{c}6}. Black’s knight has nothing to do at the edge of the board, so it comes back closer to the central squares. 18.\textit{\texttt{f}4} \textit{\texttt{d}7} 19.g4. It looks like White’s kingside initia-

tive is becoming stronger. Still, Black organises an effective defence on the dark squares after 19...g5 20.\textit{\texttt{e}2} h6 21.\textit{\texttt{f}3} \textit{\texttt{h}7} 22. \textit{\texttt{g}2} \textit{\texttt{e}8} 23.\textit{\texttt{c}2} \textit{\texttt{c}7} 24.\textit{\texttt{h}1} e6 25.\textit{\texttt{g}3} \textit{\texttt{d}4} 26.\textit{\texttt{d}2} \textit{\texttt{e}5!}. The vulnerability of the dark squares in White’s camp hurts him, since all his pawns are deployed on light squares, Van Osmael – Achilles, ICCF 2008.

10.f4 \textit{\texttt{d}7} (Black cannot play immediately 10...b5?, because after 11.e5\textit{\texttt{+}}, he suffers material losses.)

11.a4 \textit{\texttt{e}8} 12.\textit{\texttt{e}3} \textit{\texttt{c}7} 13.d4 cxd4 14.\textit{\texttt{d}4} \textit{\texttt{e}6} 15.\textit{\texttt{d}e}2 \textit{\texttt{c}5} 16.e5, Zahilas – Kotronias, Athens 1997. Here, Black can try a very promising pawn-sacrifice: 16...b6!? 17.exd6 exd6 18.\textit{\texttt{xd}6} \textit{\texttt{e}8} 19.\textit{\texttt{f}2} \textit{\texttt{c}8} and it would be bad for White to play 20.\textit{\texttt{h}2}?, because of 20...\textit{\texttt{a}5!}

11.\textit{\texttt{e}3} b5 12.\textit{\texttt{d}2} \textit{\texttt{e}8} 13.f5 (13.\textit{\texttt{ae}1} \textit{\texttt{c}7} 14.\textit{\texttt{h}2} \textit{\texttt{d}4!} Vrkoč – Marcinkiewicz, ICCF 2004) 13...\textit{\texttt{d}4} 14.\textit{\texttt{f}4} (14.cxb5 axb5 15. \textit{\texttt{x}d}4 cxd4 16.\textit{\texttt{d}5} e6! Brodowski – A.Zhigalko, Warsaw 2008) 14... e6 15.g4, Rakhmanov – Amona-
tor, Voronezh 2010, 15...\textit{e5!?!} – It would be difficult to predict whether White’s kingside attack would be effective, because the dark squares in his camp are horribly weak.

10.\textit{\textit{e8}}

This knight follows a standard route.

11.\textit{\textit{e3}}

About 11.f4 \textit{d7} – see 10.f4 \textit{d7} 11.a4 \textit{e8}.

11...\textit{\textit{e5!?!}}

This is not Black’s most popular move in this position. Still, it solves radically the problem with White’s pawn-break d3-d4 and is Black’s simplest road to equality.

12.\textit{\textit{d5}}

12.\textit{\textit{d2}} \textit{d4=} Grant – Hebden, Isle of Man 1995.

Following 12.f4 exf4 13.gxf4 f5, White can hardly develop any initiative on the kingside and his attempt to open the centre would not achieve anything for him. 14.\textit{d4 cxd4} 15.\textit{xh4}, Claesen – Emms, Escaldes 1998, 15...\textit{fxe4?!} 16.\textit{\textit{e4}} \textit{f6} 17.\textit{\textit{xc6}} bxc6 18.\textit{\textit{xc6}} \textit{bxc6} 19.\textit{\textit{xc8}} \textit{bxc8} 20.\textit{\textit{e1}} \textit{\textit{e1}} 21.\textit{\textit{xb1}} \textit{h5=} – White has a bishop-pair indeed, but can hardly exploit it effectively, because of his numerous pawn-weaknesses and his unreliably placed king.

12...\textit{\textit{c7}}

13.\textit{\textit{b6}} \textit{\textit{e6}} 14.\textit{\textit{xc8}}, Markowski – Hebden, Cappelle la Grande 1998, 14...\textit{\textit{xc8=}}

13...\textit{\textit{xd5}} 14.\textit{\textit{xd5}} b6 15.\textit{\textit{h4}} \textit{\textit{e6}} 16.\textit{\textit{h5}} \textit{\textit{d7}} 17.\textit{\textit{h6}} \textit{\textit{h8}} 18.\textit{\textit{d2}} \textit{\textit{b7}} 19.\textit{b3} \textit{\textit{fb8=}} – White’s attempts to improve his position may lead to a rapid increase of the activity of Black’s pieces, Mercadal Benejam – Rajmaekers, ICCF 2014.
Chapter 4  1.c4 əf6 2.əf3
The English Opening

White’s knight will be much more active here than on the e2-square.

2...g6
In the variation C) 3.g3 we will analyse White’s strongest and most logical move, but before that we will have a look at the lines in which he prepares the fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop: A) 3.b3 and B) 3.b4.

3.d4 əg7 – see volume 2.

3.əc3 əg7 4.e4 (4.g3 0–0 – see variation C) 4...d6 5.əe2 (5.d4 0–0 – see volume 2) 5...0–0 6.0–0 e5 7.d4 əc6 – see volume 2.

A) 3.b3 əg7 4.əb2 0–0

5.g3
5.əc3 d6 6.d4 (6.e3 e5 – see 5.e3; 6.g3 əc6 7.əg2 e5 8.0–0 əf5 – see 5.g3). Now, Black can begin immediately to exert pressure against White’s centre. 6...əc6 7. e3 (7.d5, Stepanov – Mueller, ICCF 1995, 7...əb4! 8.a3 əa6 9. e3 c6=) 7...əf5 8.əd3. This move is necessary; otherwise, Black will play əe4 equalising completely. But even after 8.əd3, White has no chances of obtaining an advantage in the opening: 8...əxd3 9. əxd3, Navabi – Mody, Moscow 1994, 9...e5?=

5.d4 c5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

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It would not be so active for White to choose 5.e3 d6.

6.d4 e5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

6.d3 e5 7.\_\_e2 c5 – see 6.\_\_e2.

Following 6.\_\_c3, Black can begin immediately active actions in the centre: 6...e5 7.d4 exd4 8.\_\_xd4 d5 9.cxd5 dxe5 10.\_\_c1, Abel – Dinstuhl, Germany 2014, 10...c5!?=, ousting the enemy knight from the centre. Black has no problems at all.

6.\_\_e2 e5

7.d4 exd4 8.\_\_xd4 c5 9.\_\_f3 d5= Podolchenko – Areshchenko, Ohrid 2009.

After 7.0–0, Black can begin active actions with 7...e4 8.\_\_e1 c6 9.d3 d5 10.\_\_d2. White’s counterplay against the enemy centre is sufficient only for equality. 10...

6.\_\_g2

æe8 11.\_\_c2 \_\_f5 12.\_\_d1 \_\_bd7 13.\_\_xd5 cxd5 14.\_\_d4 \_\_e7∞ – Black has succeeded in preserving his powerful pawn on e4, Benko – Petrosian, Portoroz 1958.

7.d3 c5!? This is an interesting move. Black wishes to play \_\_c6 and d5, occupying the centre. 8.0–0 \_\_c6 9.\_\_c3 d5 10.\_\_xd5 \_\_xd5 11.\_\_c2 b6 12.a3 \_\_b7+ Minchev – W.Fischer, ICCF 2010. The arising position is very typical for the “hedgehog” lines. In similar situations the c3-square (The move 9.\_\_bd2 has the drawback that White’s knight does not fight for the d5-square. After 9...\_\_e8=, followed by f7-f5, Black’s prospects are not worse.) is not the best place for White’s knight, because after \_\_c8, Black creates the positional threat \_\_d4. Therefore, in the middle game White will have to lose two tempi for the transfer of his knight to d2 (\_\_e4(b1)-d2).

5...d6

6.\_\_g2
White cannot create problems for his opponent with 6.d4, since following 6...e5 7.dxe5 (7.\_g2 e4 – see 6.\_g2) Black has a very promising pawn-sacrifice – 7...dxe5!? 8.\_xd8 \_xd8

9.\_xe5?! \_c6 10.\_c3, Moroni – Brunello, Biella 2012, 10...a5!? With the threat \_b4 Black forces the move 11.a3 and after this White’s b3-pawn becomes weak. 11.\_e4 12.\_xg7 \_xg7 13.\_bd2 \_c5. The pressure against the b3-pawn is very unpleasant for White, moreover that Black can increase it by transferring his rook on a8 to b6: 14.\_g2 \_a6 15.0–0 \_b6 16.\_ab1 \_f5??

9.\_xe5 \_a6 10.\_d3 \_f5. White’s knight on d3 restricts considerably the opponent’s knight on a6, preventing it from going to b4 and c5. Accordingly, Black’s desire to trade it is easily understandable. 11.\_c3 \_xd3 12.exd3 \_b4 13.0–0–0 \_g4 14.\_d2 \_e8 15.\_e2 (White will have to part with his extra pawn, since he cannot play 15.\_g2?, due to 15...\_xf2!–+) 15...\_xf2 16.\_f1 \_fxd3+ 17.\_xd3 \_h6 18.\_d1 \_ad8 19.\_d5 \_xd2. White must end the game with a perpet-

ual check; otherwise, he would lose material 20.\_f6+ \_f8 21.\_xh7+ \_g8 22.\_f6+ \_f8 23.\_h7+ \_g8, draw, Panarello – Conde Poderoso, ICCF 2015.

6...e5 7.0–0

7.d3 \_c6 8.0–0 \_f5, or 7.\_c3 \_c6 8.0–0 \_f5, or 8.d3 \_f5 9.0–0 \_d7 – see 7.0–0.

It seems premature for White to choose here 7.d4, because after 7...e4 8.\_fd2 e3!? 9.\_xe3 \_e7 10.\_e4, Blatny – M. Marin, Haifa 1989, 10...\_c6!?? he has an extra pawn indeed, but can hardly manage to parry his opponent’s numerous threats, for example: 11.e3 \_g4 12.\_e2 \_b4 13.\_a3 \_g5?? and the activity of Black’s pieces increases with every move.

7...\_c6

8.d3

8.\_c3 \_f5 9.\_e1 (9.d3 \_d7 – see 8.d3; 9.h3 \_d4?? Khismatullin – I.Kurnosov, Khanty-Mansiysk
2013) 9...\(\text{\#d7}\) 10.\(\text{\#d5 h3}\) 11. \(\text{e6+ xf6=}\) — There has arisen an approximately equal position. Later, White will try to centralise his knight (\(\text{e1-c2-d5}\)), while Black will try his chances by advancing his kingside pawns, Ein- gorn – Troyke, Berlin 1995.

Following 8.d4 e4, White fails to exploit the exposed position of the enemy pawn on e4, since Black can always sacrifice it with the move e4-e3.

9.\(\text{bd2}\)

9.\(\text{c3 \#d7}\) 10.\(\text{d5}\) (10.\(\text{c1 h3=}\) Spiridonov – Honfi, Budapest 1976; It would be worse for White to play here 10.d4?!., because after the forced line: 10... \(\text{xd4}\) 11.\(\text{xd4 exd4}\) 12.\(\text{xd4 e4}\) 13.\(\text{e3 xc3}\) 14.\(\text{xc3 e8}\) 15. \(\text{d2 xc3}\) 16.\(\text{xc3 xe2}\) 17.\(\text{xb7}\), he would have avoided the material losses indeed, but following 17...c6, his bishop would be cut off from the rest of his forces. 18.\(\text{f3 e4!}\) 19.\(\text{a6 e8=}\) Grischuk – I.Popov, Moscow 2013) 10...\(\text{h3}\) 11.e4 \(\text{xf2}\) 12.\(\text{xf2 e8}\) 13.\(\text{h3 xd5}\) 14.\(\text{xd5 d8}\) 15.b4 c6?! = — Black eliminates the cramping enemy pawn on d5 and obtains a very good position, Egelhof – Eger, Email 2007.

8...\(\text{xf5}\)

Black bishop is better placed here than on the e6-square, be-
14.\texttt{Wc2} \texttt{\texttt{Dh5}} 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{\texttt{De6}} 16.\texttt{e3} \texttt{f5} – The prospects for a successful kingside attack for Black are much more real than White’s queenside activity, Speelman – Gelfand, Las Vegas 1999

**B) 3.\texttt{b4}**

White not only prepares the development of his bishop on b2, but also occupies space on the queenside.

3...\texttt{\texttt{Dg7}} 4.\texttt{\texttt{Bb2} 0–0}

![Chess Diagram]

We will deal now with **B1) 5.\texttt{e3}** and **B2) 5.\texttt{g3}**.

5.\texttt{d4} \texttt{d6} – see volume 2, Chapter 6.

Following 5.d3, Black can play in the style of the Gruenfeld Defence – 5...d5?! and White turns out to be not so well prepared for the opening of the game in the centre. 6.\texttt{\texttt{Dbd2}} (6.cxd5 \texttt{\texttt{Dxd5}} 7.\texttt{\texttt{Dxg7}} \texttt{\texttt{Dxg7}} 8.\texttt{\texttt{Wb3}} a5 9.b5 c6\texttt{∞} The considerable lag of development of White’s kingside pieces is quite obvious even to the naked eye,

Wahls – Langheimrich, Germany 2001) 6...\texttt{Dxc4} 7.\texttt{Dxc4} \texttt{c5}! This move is energetic and strong. 8.\texttt{b5} \texttt{\texttt{Da5}} 9.\texttt{\texttt{Wb3}} \texttt{\texttt{De4}} 10.\texttt{\texttt{Dxg7}} \texttt{\texttt{Dxg7+}}, followed by \texttt{\texttt{Dd8}} and a7-a6, Helmer – Trani, Email 2007. The pin of the knight on d2 is very unpleasant for White and he is unlikely to complete his development without material losses.

**B1) 5.\texttt{e3} \texttt{d6}**

6.\texttt{\texttt{De2}}

6.\texttt{d4} \texttt{e5} – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

6.\texttt{\texttt{Cc3}} \texttt{e5} 7.\texttt{\texttt{De2}} (7.d3 \texttt{a5} – see 6.d3) 7...\texttt{e4} – see 6.\texttt{\texttt{De2}}.

6.\texttt{d3} \texttt{e5}

![Chess Diagram]
7.\(\text{\varepsilon}e2\) a5 – see 6.\(\text{\varepsilon}e2\).
7.\(\text{\varepsilon}b2\) a5 8.a3 \(\text{\varepsilon}a6\)\(\varepsilon\)
7.\(\text{\varepsilon}c3\) a5 8.b5 \(\text{\varepsilon}d7\). Black’s knight is headed for the wonderful c5-square. 9.\(\text{\varepsilon}e2\) \(\text{\varepsilon}c5\) 10.d4 exd4 11.\(\text{\varepsilon}xd4\), Gelashvili – Sergeev, Bucharest 2008, 11...a4!?\(\varepsilon\)
Black’s counterplay is quite sufficient to maintain the equality in both variations.

6...e5

7.d3
White prevents e5-e4.
7.d4 exd4 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.

After 7.\(\text{\varepsilon}c3\), Black can oust the enemy knight from the centre 7...e4 8.\(\text{\varepsilon}d4\) c5 9.bxc5 dxc5 10.\(\text{\varepsilon}b3\) \(\text{\varepsilon}e7\) 11.0–0 \(\text{\varepsilon}d8\) 12.f3 \(\text{\varepsilon}f5\) Polugaevsky – I.Gurevich, Hastings 1992.

If White allows his opponent to play e5-e4, then he may end up in a worse position is some variations. 7.0–0 e4 8.\(\text{\varepsilon}e1\) (8.\(\text{\varepsilon}d4\) c5 9.bxc5 dxc5 10.\(\text{\varepsilon}b3\) \(\text{\varepsilon}e7\) 11.\(\text{\varepsilon}c3\) \(\text{\varepsilon}d8\) – see 7.\(\text{\varepsilon}c3\)) 8...\(\text{\varepsilon}c6\) 9.a3 a5 10.b5 \(\text{\varepsilon}e5\) 11.f4. White should better oust immediately the enemy knight from the centre (11.f3?! \(\text{\varepsilon}e6\) 12.\(\text{\varepsilon}c2\) exf3 13.gxf3 \(\text{\varepsilon}e8\) and in the forthcoming middle game White’s king may be vulnerable, Sydor – Vasiukov, Cienfuegos 1975) 11...\(\text{\varepsilon}ed7\) 12.\(\text{\varepsilon}c3\), Conquest – Moskalenko, Greece 1995, 12...\(\text{\varepsilon}b6\)\(\varepsilon\) – Black has very good counterplay against White’s weak c4-pawn.

7...a5
Black begins immediate active actions on the queenside.

8.a3

8.b5 e4!? This is the simplest road to equality (It is also possible for him to play here 8...\(\text{\varepsilon}bd7\)) 9.dxe4 \(\text{\varepsilon}xe4\) 10.\(\text{\varepsilon}xg7\) \(\text{\varepsilon}xg7\) 11.0–0 (11.\(\text{\varepsilon}d4\) + \(\text{\varepsilon}f6=\)) 11...\(\text{\varepsilon}d7\) 12.\(\text{\varepsilon}d4\), Mirzoev – Dastan, Ankara 2010, 12...\(\text{\varepsilon}f6=\) – After the trade of the queens there arises an approximately equal endgame.

8...e4

This pawn-break in the centre
leads to numerous exchanges and simplification of the position.

9.\textit{dxe4}

It seems less adequate for White to opt here for 9.\textit{d}d4 exd3 10.\textit{w}xd3, Panno – Kavalek, Las Palmas 1973. Here, Black could have exploited the exposed placement of the enemy queen with the line: 10...axb4!? 11.axb4 \textit{e}xa1 12.\textit{d}xa1 c5 13.\textit{b}b5 \textit{a}f5†

9...\textit{dxe4} 10.\textit{xf}g7 \textit{xf}g7 11.\textit{d}d4+ \textit{f}6

12.\textit{x}f6+

Following 12.\textit{d}d2 \textit{c}c3 13.b5 \textit{w}xd4 14.\textit{d}xd4 \textit{d}7, White must not only forget about obtaining an advantage, but must play very carefully not to end up in an inferior position. 15.\textit{c}c1 \textit{xe}2 16.\textit{xe}2 b6 17.\textit{h}d1 \textit{b}7 18.\textit{f}f3 \textit{ae}8† Csom – Mortensen, Esbjerg 1980

12...\textit{xf}6 13.b5 \textit{d}7. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to b6 and it will exert pressure there against the weak c4-pawn. His other knight will have a wonderful square on c5. 14.\textit{d}d4 \textit{b}6 15.\textit{d}d2 \textit{c}5 16.0–0 \textit{e}6. Black increases the pressure. 17.\textit{ac}1 \textit{e}7 18.\textit{f}f3 \textit{f}5=. Petrosian – Kavalek, Skopje 1972. Black has even a slight edge here, because White’s pawns on c4 and b5 are placed on squares with the same colour as his bishop. Still, breaking White’s defensive resources would not be an easy task at all.

B2) 5.g3 \textit{d}6

6.\textit{g}2

Now, contrary to variation B1, White’s light-squared bishop has been developed to a more active position.

The move 6.d4 is premature here, because White’s control over the e5-square is just an illusion. 6...e5 7.dxe5 \textit{d}xe5?! This is the simplest. Black is not afraid to sacrifice a pawn, since he can rely on his advantage in development and the tactical motives on the a1-
h8 diagonal. 8.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}}x8 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_8\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}} 9.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xe5 (It is bad for White to play 9. \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xe5? \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c6 10.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_e4 11.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xb4=++, followed by \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg7. Black restores the material balance, while White must still work hard in order to complete his development without material losses.) 9... \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_g4 10.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_d3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xb2 11.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xb2 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c6 12.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c3 (12.a3? \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_d4=+) 12... \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xb4=++, In this endgame White must be very careful about his weak queenside pawns, because they may turn into an easy prey for Black’s pieces.

6...e5

If White is not interested in the centre Black would not mind occupying it.

10.d3 d5 11.cxd5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xd5 12.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_b3, Sahovic – Jansa, Bor 1984. Here, Black could have simply exchanged two couples of minor pieces. 12...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xc3!? 13.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xc3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xc3 14.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xc3 and follow that with 14... \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_g4=, creating unpleasant pressure against the e2-square.

After 7.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c6 8.b5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_d4 9. 0–0 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_g4 10.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_e1 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c8 11.f3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_h3 12.e3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg2 13.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg2 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_e6=++, Black manages to provoke some weakening of his opponent’s kingside and this promises good attacking chances to him in the forthcoming middle game, Polugaevsky – Van Wely, Groningen 1993.

7...a5

8.b5

After this pawn-advance Black’s knight gains access to the wonderful c5-square.

It would not be better for White to choose here 8.a3 e4· 9.dxe4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xe4 10.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xg7 11. \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_d4+ \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_f6 12.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_bd2 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_c3!? 13. \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xf6+ \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{j}}}}}_xf6. Now, in order not to
present the a-file to his opponent, he would need to weaken the c5-square anyway: 14.b5 \(\Box d7=\)

8...e4 9.dxe4 \(\Box xe4\) 10.\(\Box xg7\) \(\Box xg7\)

![Chess diagram]

Black has established firm control over the c5-square.

There has arisen a position similar to variation B1, but with the difference that White’s bishop is on g2 and not on e2. This does not change the evaluation of the position. Just like in the previous variation, it is White who should be very careful not to get worse.

11.\(\Box d4\)

11.\(\Box d4+\) \(\Box f6\) 12.\(\Box xf6+\) \(\Box xf6\) 13.\(\Box c3\) \(\Box bd7=\) Ishkanov – Matikozian, Los Angeles 2012.

11.\(\Box bd2\) \(\Box c5\) 12.\(\Box b3\) \(\Box bd7=\) Vazquez Igarza – Cuenca Jimenez, Linares 2015

11...\(\Box c5\) 12.0–0

It seems premature for White to play 12.\(\Box c3\), because after 12... \(\Box e6\), he turns into the defending side. 13.\(\Box xe6+\) \(\Box xe6\) 14.\(\Box d4+\) \(\Box f6\) 15.\(\Box xf6+\) \(\Box xf6\) 16.\(\Box e4+\) \(\Box xe4\) 17.\(\Box xe4\) \(\Box a7=\) – He must play very energetically in the arising endgame, because if Black manages to transfer his knight to c5 (\(\Box b8-d7-c5\)) and to activate his rook on a7 (\(\Box a7-a8-e8\)), he will maintain the advantage.

12...\(\Box bd7\) 13.\(\Box c3\) a4 14.f4 \(\Box b6=\) – In this complicated position Black’s counterplay against the weak c4-pawn compensates fully White’s kingside activity, Conquest – Mikhailovski, Albufera Algarve 1999.

C) 3.g3

White wishes at first to develop his kingside pieces and does not determine yet his queenside pawn-structure.

3...\(\Box g7\)

4.\(\Box g2\)

4.d4 0–0 – see volume 2, Chapter 2.
4.\textit{c}c3 0–0 5.d4 (5.\textit{g}g2 d6 — see 4.\textit{g}g2) 5...d6 6.\textit{g}g2 \textit{c}c6 — see volume 2, Chapter 2.

4...0–0

5.0–0

5.d4 d6 — see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation B.

5.\textit{c}c3 d6

6.d4 \textit{c}c6 — see volume 2, Chapter 2.

6.0–0 \textit{c}c6 — see 5.0–0.

Kamsky played very originally in this opening in the game Kamsky – Sjugirov, Moscow 2013: 6.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}c6 7.\textit{b}b1 (7.0–0 e5 — see 5.0–0) 7...a5 8.h4 h6 9.\textit{d}d2 e5 10.\textit{a}3. Still, originally does not nec-

5...\textit{d}6

6.\textit{d}d3

6.\textit{c}c3

6.d4 \textit{c}c6 — see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation B.

6.b3 e5 7.\textit{b}b2 \textit{c}c6 — see variation A.

6.d3 e5 7.\textit{c}c3 \textit{c}c6 — see 6.\textit{c}c3.

6...\textit{c}c6

7.d3
White shows his intentions to follow the route of the English Opening.

7.d4 a6 – see volume 2, Chapter 2.

7.b3 e5 8...b2 f5 – see variation A.

7.e4. This move is premature, because it weakens the d4-square. 7...e5 8.d4 (8.d3 g4 – see 7.d3) 8...exd4 9...xd4 dxe4 10...xd4 g4. Black is transferring his knight to e5 in order to provoke the move b2-b3, weakening the long diagonal. 11...d2 e5 12.b3 f6 13...b2?! This move looks very risky (It would be more reliable for White to continue here with 13.f4!? d3 14...xd3 xc3 15...xc3 xc3=). 13...f3+ 14...xf3. Now, White is forced to part with his powerful bishop on g2. 14...xf3 15...d1 g4 16...xf3 xf3= Kijajkin – Onischuk, Alushta 2010.

7...b1 a5 8.a3 (Here, as well as on the next move, it is better for White to play d3 – see 7.d3.) 8...e5 9.b4 (9.d3 g8 – see 7.d3.) 9...axb4 10.axb4 e4 11.f1 e6!? 12.b5 a5 13.d3 exd3 14.exd3 d5= White’s attempt to save a tempo for the move d2-d3 has not ended well for him, because Black has managed to organise counterplay against the c4-pawn and this promises him at least equality.

7...e5
8.e4. This move cannot provide an advantage to White, since it weakens the d4-square. 8...æg4 9.h3 æxf3 10.xf3. Black has traded an important defender of the d4-square. White’s two-bishop advantage is not important here, because the position is closed. 10...æd7 11.æg2 a6, Black is preparing the advance b7-b5 at an opportune moment. 12.æe3 Æd4 13.Æd2 c6=, followed by b7-b5, seizing the initiative on the queenside, Lisitsin – Spassky, Moscow 1955.

It seems too passive for White to choose here 8.æd2 Æe8 9.æc1 æd4 10.e3 Æxf3+ 11.Æxf3, Antoine – Quinio, France 2000. Now, Black has a surprising tactical strike 11...e4 12.Æxe4 (but not 12.dxe4?, in view of 12...æg4 13.Æf4 Æe5+ and White’s queen will be endangered) 12...Æxe4 13.dxe4 Æxb2+.

The move 8.æg5, as a rule, transposes to variation C1. 8...h6 9.Æxf6 (9.æd2 Æe8 10.e4 Æg4=) 9...Æxf6 10.Æd2 (10.Æb1 a5 11.a3 Æg7 – see 8.Æb1; 11.Æd2 Æg7 – see 10.Æd2) 10...Æg7 11.Æb1 a5 12.c5. After this move the position is opened and this may turn out to be in favour of Black due to his two-bishop advantage. (It would be more reliable for White to choose here 12.a3 Æe7 – see 8.Æb1.) 12...Æe6 13.cxd6 cxd6= Narciso Dublan – Sebag, Cappelle la Grande 2006.

8...æa5

White will increase his pressure on the queenside in the future, so Black should better get rid of the a-pawn, exchanging it on b4 (after b2-b4), since it might become a target for an attack later.

We will analyse now C1) 9.æg5 and C2) 9.a3.

9.æd2 Æe8 10.a3 Æe6 – see 9.a3.

9.h3 h6 10.e4 (10.a3 Æe8 – see 9.a3) 10...Æh7?=, preparing Æg5, or f7-f5, Just – Hauff, Email 2010.
Chapter 4

After 9.e3, Black’s best choice would be 9...\textit{\texttt{#f5}}, eyeing the weak enemy d3-pawn. 10.e4. White solves radically the problem with his vulnerable d3-pawn. He weakens the d4-square, however. 10...\textit{\texttt{#g4}} 11.h3 \textit{\texttt{#xf3}} 12.\textit{\texttt{#xf3}} \textit{\texttt{#d4}} 13.\textit{\texttt{#g2}} \textit{\texttt{#d7}} 14.\textit{\texttt{#e2}} \textit{\texttt{#xe2}}+ 15.\textit{\texttt{#xe2}} \textit{\texttt{#b8}}?! =, followed by \textit{\texttt{c6-d4}}.

There have been played games in which White did not follow the plan with the advance of his queenside pawns in favour of active actions in the centre. Still, Black has defended successfully. 9.b3 \textit{\texttt{h6}} 10.\textit{\texttt{#b2}} \textit{\texttt{e8}} 11.h3 (11.\textit{\texttt{#e1}} \textit{\texttt{e6}} 12.e4 \textit{\texttt{d4}}= Karlsson – Boey, Paris 1983) 11...\textit{\texttt{e6}} 12.e4 \textit{\texttt{d7}} 13.\textit{\texttt{b5}} \textit{\texttt{c5}} 14.d4 exd4 15.\textit{\texttt{fxd4}}. White has managed to advance d4, but Black maintains the balance by exchanging pieces. 15...\textit{\texttt{d7}} 16.\textit{\texttt{xc6}}, Morozevich – Tomashevsky, Tromsoe 2013, 16...\textit{\texttt{bxc6}}!? 17.\textit{\texttt{xc7}} \textit{\texttt{xc7}} 18.\textit{\texttt{d4+}} \textit{\texttt{g8}} 19.\textit{\texttt{c3}} \textit{\texttt{e6}} 20.\textit{\texttt{e3}} \textit{\texttt{g5}} 21.f4 \textit{\texttt{c5}} = – In this endgame Black’s counterplay on the dark squares would compensate the slight weakening of his queenside pawn-structure.

\textbf{C1) 9.\textit{\texttt{g5}}}

I do not like this move, because White presents deliberately his opponent with the two-bishop advantage.

\textit{\texttt{h6}} 10.\textit{\texttt{xf6}} \textit{\texttt{xf6}} 11.a3

11.\textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{g7}} 12.a3 \textit{\texttt{e7}} – see 11.a3.

\textbf{11...\textit{\texttt{g7}}}

It is best for Black to remove immediately his bishop from the possible attacks of White’s knights (\textit{\texttt{d5}}, or \textit{\texttt{f3-d2-e4}}). Black’s later plan is connected with the future occupation of the centre with \textit{\texttt{c6-e7}}, c7-c6 and d6-d5.

11...\textit{\texttt{e8}} – see variation \textbf{C2}.

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

\textbf{12.b4}

After White’s alternatives he even fails to equalise, for example: 12.\textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{e7}}.

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

13.\textit{\texttt{d5}} c6 14.\textit{\texttt{xe7+}} \textit{\texttt{xe7}}
15.b4 axb4 16.axb4 \textit{\texttt{e6}} 17.\textit{\texttt{b3}}


This tactical strike is typical for similar positions and we will encounter it numerous more times. 15.\textit{\textit{c2}}. It does not matter with which knight White will recapture on e4, since after f7-f5 he loses a piece anyway. (It will be worse for White to choose here 15.d4, because after this move the position will be opened and it is well known this is always in favour of the side with the bishop-pair. 15...\textit{\textit{dxe4}} 16.\textit{\textit{dxe4}} \textit{\textit{g7}} 17. \textit{\textit{d5}} \textit{\textit{dxe5}} 18.\textit{\textit{xd5}}, Rotstein – Herndl, Werfen 1989, 18...\textit{\textit{d8}}!?) 15...\textit{\textit{xd3}} 16.\textit{\textit{xd3}} \textit{\textit{c6}} 17.\textit{\textit{b5}}, Flores – Real de Azua, Moron 2012, 17...\textit{\textit{e5}}!?) – White will hardly manage to find good squares for his two knights in the forthcoming middle game.

It would be worse for White to opt here for 14.\textit{\textit{d5}} \textit{\textit{xd5}} 15.\textit{\textit{xd5}} \textit{\textit{f6}} – and Black would have the initiative, Minasian – Sutovsky, Fuegen 2006.

14.\textit{\textit{d2}} e4! – see 12.\textit{\textit{d2}}.

White protects his knight on c3 and deprives his opponent of the tactical chances, connected with the pawn-advance e5-e4.

14.\textit{\textit{d2}} e4! – see 12.\textit{\textit{d2}}.

14.b5 c6 15.\textit{\textit{b3}} (15.\textit{\textit{c2}} d5 – see 14.\textit{\textit{c2}}; 15.\textit{\textit{d2}} e4!= Bachmann – Butti, Asuncion 2013) 15...\textit{\textit{e6}} 16.\textit{\textit{d2}} d5 17.\textit{\textit{bc6}} \textit{\textit{bxc6}} 18.\textit{\textit{c2}} \textit{\textit{f5}} – It is only White who may have problems in this position, Sargissian – R.Mamedov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013.

14...c6 15.b5 d5 16.\textit{\textit{d2}} h5 17.\textit{\textit{bc6}} \textit{\textit{bxc6}}= Black has succeeded in advancing the thematic move d6-d5 and his play will be much easier in the forthcoming complicated middle game. For ex-
ample: 18.b3 h4 19.cxd5 cxd5 20.c5 h3! 21.h1 g4! – Black's piece-activity increases with every move and White will have great difficulties to neutralise it, Krakovsky – Knittel, FICGS 2013.

C2) 9.a3 e8!? 

Black is preparing e5-e4. His idea is either to force the retreat of White's knight from the f3-square, or to provoke 10.g5, after which he will obtain the two-bishop advantage with the move h7-h6.

In his book devoted to the King's Indian Defence, Viorel Bologan recommended as the main line for Black here the move 9...d4=. It has the drawback however that it would be very difficult for Black later to fight for the initiative.

In the contrary, the plan, beginning with 9...h6, seems too active, because after 10.b4 axb4 11.

axb4 e6 12.b5 e7 13.b2, White seizes firmly the initiative on the queenside, while Black's kingside counterplay (d7, h3) would be a bit slow.

10.g5

White prevents the pawn-advance e5-e4, but at the price of the exchange of his powerful dark-squared bishop.

After White's alternatives, Black solves his opening problems as well.


10.e3. One of the defects of this move is that it does not prevent the enemy pawn-advance e5-e4. 10...e4!? 11.dxe4 xxe4 12. xe4 xe4=

10.e1. White's knight will be very passive on this square. 10...d4. From here, Black's knight may go to e6 and later to g5, from where it will exert powerful pressure against the position of White's monarch. 11.e3 e6 12.b4 axb4 13.axb4, Clemens – Bach, Bad Pyrmont 1976, 13...g5±

10.e4. White solves radically the problem with the enemy pawn-advance e5-e4, but weakens the d4-square. 10.g4 11.h3 xf3 12.xf3 d7 13.e3 (follow-
ing 13.b4, Black’s knight might come to e6, via the f8-square: 13... axb4 14.axb4 9f8= 15c5 14.b4 axb4 15.axb4 9e6= Csom – Hansen, Esbjerg 1984.

It seems too straightforward for White to play here 10.b4, because he must not only follow his own plans, but must watch carefully what the opponent is doing. 10...axb4 11.axb4 e4 12.dxe4 9xe4 13.9xe4 Exe4

14.9d2 9e8 15.b5 9e5 16.9b2 9f5 17.e4 9e6= – Now, White must be on the alert, because the vulnerability of his c4-pawn may hurt him in the future, Bergstrom – Beckemeier, Muerren 1979.

14.b5 9a5!? Black’s knight is well placed here, since it exerts pressure against the enemy c4-pawn. 15.9d2 (15.9g5 9e8= Morchiashvili – N.Mamedov, Baku 2007) 15...9e8 16.9b2 9f5 17.e4 9e6 18.9xg7 9xg7= Souza Filho – Lahud, Vitoria 1999. Black has solved completely his opening problems. Later, he should try to exchange the queens, because he would have an advantage in the endgame due to the weakness of White’s pawns on c4 and d5.

10.9d2 9e6. White has succeeded in preventing e5-e4 indeed, but Black will be threatening d6-d5. 11.b4 (11.9d5 9d7 12.9xf6+ 9xf6 13.9e4, Raab – Marek, Zeilsheim 2000, 13...9g7?! 14.9g5 9f5 15.e4 9g4 16.f3 9e6 17.9xe6 9xe6= – The vulnerability of the d4-square balances White’s two-bishop advantage.) 11...axb4 12.axb4 d5 13.b5 9e7 14.9b2 (14.9xd5 9exd5 15.9b2 9xc3 16.9xc3 9d5 17.9b2, Qurbanboeva – Dauletova, Tashkent 2011, 17...9a5!? 9e6= and Black exerts rather unpleasant pressure against the b5-pawn.) 14...c6 15.bxc6 (following 15.9a1 9xa1 16.9xa1, Ftačnik – Chaves, Groningen 1976, Black obtains good counterplay on the kingside with 16...9h5!? 9e6=, followed by 9f5 and h5-h4) 15...bxc6 16.9c2 9f5 9b5 Zarkua – Lomineishvili, Poti 2012

10...9h6 11.9xf6 9xf6

12.b4
12.\(\text{c}d5\) \(\text{g}7\) 13.b4 axb4 14.\(\text{d}x\text{b}4\) \(\text{c}e7\)= Varga – Kukula, Katowice 2015.

12.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{g}7\) 13.e3 (13.\(\text{c}e1\) \(\text{c}e7?!\) 14.\(\text{c}c2\) c6=) 13...\(\text{c}e7\) 14.b4
\(\text{d}x\text{b}4\) 15.\(\text{d}x\text{b}4\) e4! 16.d4 f5 17.\(\text{e}a1\) \(\text{e}6\) 18.\(\text{x}a8\) \(\text{x}a8\)= – Black can be very optimistic about the future thanks to his two-bishop advantage, Heberla – Gleizerov, Jurmala 2015.

12...\(\text{a}x\text{b}4\) 13.\(\text{a}x\text{b}4\) \(\text{g}7\)

Black’s bishop not only avoids the possible enemy attack after \(\text{d}d5\), but frees the way forward of his \(f\)-pawn.

14.b5

14.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{e}7\) 15.\(\text{c}2\) c6 16.b5 d5 – see 14.b5.

It is not good for White to play here 14.\(\text{d}2\)?!. After 14...e4, he cannot even equalise. 15.b5, Suba – Sznapik, Baile Herculane 1982 (15.\(\text{d}5?!\) exd3 16.exd3 \(\text{f}5\) 17.\(\text{d}4\), followed by c7-c6 and a removal of White’s knight from the centre, Andres Gonzalez – Marholec, Montpellier 2005) 15...

15.\(\text{b}3\)

After this move, White at least should not worry about the enemy pawn-advance e5-e4.

After 15.\(\text{e}1\) c6 16.\(\text{c}2\) (White is worse following 16.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{f}3\) d5=) 16...d5= White must play carefully in order not to end up in an inferior position. 17.\(\text{bxc}6\) \(\text{bxc}6\) 18.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{f}5\)- – Black has seized completely the initiative, Rotstein – Bezler, Triesen 2004.

White is worse after 15.\(\text{d}2\) e4!

16.\(\text{c}2\) (16.\(\text{c}1\) exd3 17.exd3, Suba – Sznapik, Baile Herculane 1982, 17...c6?!)=) 16...e3! Black begins active actions on the dark squares.
The absence of White's dark-squared bishop hurts him horribly. 17.fx e3 Qf5 18.Qd1 (But not 18.Rxf5 Qxf5 19.Rx b7 Qxe3+ and White must comply with the loss of the exchange, because after 20.Qxa8?!), his light squares would be irrevocably weakened. 20... Qxa8 21.Qde4 Qd4 22.Qf2 Qxc3 23.Qxc3 Qxe2 24.Qe1. Here, Black has the tactical strike 24... Qxd3!! (+ and he will have not only an extra pawn, but a better position as well.) 18...Qxe3 19.Qxe3 Qxe3+ Karavade – Wang, Calicut 2003.

15.Qc2 Qe6 16.Qd2 c6 17.bxc6 (following 17.Qfc1, the simplest reaction for Black would be 17... Qd7, covering the b7-square from the possible penetration of White's rook. 18.e3 Qa5= Marko – Lara Ruiz, ICCF 2012) 17...bxc6. White is incapable of preventing d6-d5. 18.Qb7 (It is best for him to choose here 18.Qa1 d5= and at least White would not be worse, Timofeev – R.Mamedov, Khanty-Mansiyk 2014.) 18...d5 19.Qfb1 Qf5 20. cxd5 cxd5 21.Qb5 Qd6 22.Qxd6 Qxd6+ – Now, White must already think about equalising, since Black has a powerful pawn-centre and a bishop-pair, Cox – Hebden, Southport 1983.

15...Qe6 16.Qd2

16.Qd5. This move only simplifies Black’s task. 16...c6 17. Qxe7+ Qxe7 18.Qe1 d5+ V.Georgiev – Antonio, Bled 2002.

16...c6 17.Qfc1

17.bxc6 bxc6 18.Qfc1 f5 – see 1...Qfc1.


White would not achieve much with 17.Qa1, since after 17...Qxa1 18.Qxa1 d5, the penetration of his rook on the a-file is harmless for Black. 19.Qa7 e4! Meyer – Werner, Germany 1986. This is the point. Black does not need to waste time for the protection of his b7-pawn. Now, White cannot play 20.Qxb7?! , because of 20... dxc4 and White would suffer material losses: 21.Qxc4 exd3 22. Qxc6 Qxc6 23. Qxc3 dxe2 24.Qe3 Qd1++

17...f5!? Before advancing d6-d5, Black pushes forward his f-pawn. 18.Qa1 (18.bxc6. White should better not be in a hurry to open the b-file. 18...bxc6 19.Qc2 Qc7 20.Qb3 Qeb8= Wirthensohn – Smyslov, Graz 1984.) 18...Qd7 19.Qa4 d5 20.Qa2 Qxa4 21. Qxa4 Qa8 22.Qc2 Qd6= – In this complicated position White has the initiative on the queenside, but Black's pawn-centre and his two powerful bishops compensate this.

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Part 2. Queen’s Pawn Games
1.d4 ¤f6

The second part of our book will be devoted to variations in which White plays 1.d4, but then he either refrains completely from playing c2-c4, or postpones for a long time this typical move for the closed openings.

This part of the book will consist of 5 chapters. In Chapter 5 we will analyse the move 2.g3. Chapter 6 will be devoted to the Trompovsky Attack (2.¤g5), while in Chapters 7-9 we will analyse the move 2.¤f3, which will be countered by Black with 2...g6. At first we will analyse the development of White’s dark-squared bishop to the f4-square (Chapter 7) and later to g5 (Chapter 8). In Chapter 9 we will deal with systems in which White fianchettoes his light-squared bishop (3.g3).

Still, before everything else, we will analyse in short some other not so popular moves for White.

About 2.¤d2 d6 3.e4 g6 – see Chapter 12.

2.f4 – see Chapter 1 1.f4 ¤f6 2.d4.

2.e3 g6 3.¤d3 (3.f4 ¤g7 4.¤f3 – see Chapter 1, variation C; 3.¤f3 ¤g7 – see Chapter 7, 3.e3) 3...¤g7 4.c3 (4.f4 0–0 5.¤f3 d6 – see Chapter 1, variation C) 4...0–0 5.f4 d6 6.¤f3 ¤c6 7.0–0 e5 – see Chapter 1, variation C.

2.¤f4 g6 3.e3 (3.¤f3 ¤g7 – see Chapter 7; 3.¤c3 ¤g7 – see 2.¤c3; 3.c3 ¤g7 – see 2.c3; 3.¤d2 ¤g7 4.e4 d6 5.¤gf3 0–0 – see Chapter 7, variation A) 3...¤g7 4.h3 (4.¤f3 0–0 – see Chapter 7, variation B) 4...0–0 5.¤f3 d6 – see Chapter 7, variation B1.

Following 2.¤c3 g6, there arises most often the Pirc Defence.

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3.e4 d6 – see Chapters 15-26.
3...\textit{c5} 4.e4 d6 – see Chapter 18.
3...\textit{c6} 4.d5 \textit{c6} (4...d6 – see Chapter 7; 4.e4 d6 – see Chapters 21-23) 4...0–0 5.e4 d6 – see Chapter 21.
3...\textit{c7} 4.d4 \textit{d5} (4...\textit{c6} – see Chapter 7; 4.e4 d6 – see Chapters 21-23) 4...d6 5.d4 \textit{d5} 6.exd5 c6 7.e4 \textit{a6} 5 – see Chapter 19.

It seems rather dubious for White to sacrifice a pawn 2.g4?! \textit{xg4} 3.e4 d6 4.dxe5 (4.f3 \textit{d6} 5.\textit{dxe5} \textit{dxc6} 6.dxc3 \textit{e5}†) 4...\textit{dxe5} 5.\textit{dxe5} \textit{d6} 6.dxc3 \textit{xc6}† – Black forces the move after which White cannot castle queenside and will have problems to find a safe haven for his king. 7...\textit{g6}† – White’s compensation for the sacrificed pawn is insufficient, Gradowski – Jeuthe, ICCF 1990.

Following 2.f3, the simplest move for Black would be 2...d6, after which White cannot even transpose to the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, which would have been possible after 2...d5 3.e4?! dxe4 4.dxc3. 3.e4 \textit{c5} – see Chapter 14.

White plays sometimes 2.f3 g6 3..\textit{b2} \textit{g7} 4...\textit{c3}. This extravagant line was used several times by B.Jobava. He was not so successful through... (It may be possible that White’s best reply is 4...\textit{f3}, transposing to some more natural schemes – see 2...\textit{f3} g6 3.b3 \textit{g7} 4...\textit{b2}, Chapter 7) 4...\textit{c5}. Black begins to fight for the initiative. 5.e3 \textit{cxd4} 6.e\textit{d4} \textit{d5} 7.\textit{d2} \textit{c6}

8.f3 (In this position it would be too risky for White to castle queenside, since his king would not be safe there. 8.0–0–0, Jobava – Mamedyarov, Tbilisi 2015, 8...\textit{d5}†! 9.db1 \textit{d8}† – with rather unpleasant pressure on the semi-open c-file.) 8...\textit{h5}. Black prevents g2-g4. 9.db5 \textit{d6} 10.\textit{dxe2}, Jobava – Carlsen, Wijk aan Zee 2015, 10...\textit{d5}† – Black’s position seems slightly preferable, since White has lost two tempi to fianchetto his dark-squared bishop, which would be much better placed on the c1-h6 diagonal.
After 2.\textit{c3 g6}, White can hardly continue the game without developing his knight to the f3-square, after which there would arise positions, which we analyse in Chapters 7 and 8. Here, we will deal only with variations which lead to original positions. 3.\textit{\texttt{d}g5} (3.\texttt{\texttt{d}}f3 – see 2.\texttt{\texttt{d}}f3 \texttt{g6} 3.\texttt{c}3; 3.\texttt{\texttt{d}}f4 \texttt{g7} 4.\texttt{\texttt{d}}d2 0–0 5.e4 \texttt{d}6 6.\texttt{gf3} – see Chapter 7, line A) 3...\texttt{\texttt{g}7}

4.\texttt{\texttt{d}d2} (4.e3 0–0 5.\texttt{\texttt{d}}d3 \texttt{d}6 6.\texttt{e}2. As a rule, White’s knight is not so well placed here in comparison to the f3-square in the opening. 6...\texttt{b}bd7 7.\texttt{\texttt{d}d2} \texttt{b}6 8.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{b}7 9.0–0 e5= – White’s knights are very passive on d2 and e2, Malakhatko – Areshchenko, Port Erin 2005.) 4...0–0 5.e4 (5.e3 \texttt{d}6 6.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{b}bd7 7.\texttt{e}e2 – see 4.e3) 5...\texttt{d}6 6.\texttt{f}4. This move seems very risky, because White lags in development and will have problems to hold his seemingly beautiful, but not so stable pawn-centre. (Following 6.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}3 \texttt{h}6 7.\texttt{h}4 c5 8.\texttt{e}e2 cxd4 9.cxd4, Rigg – Dobosz, Bregenz 2015, the simplest for Black would be to obtain the two-bishop advantage: 9...\texttt{g}5!? 10.\texttt{\texttt{g}3 \texttt{\texttt{d}h}5\texttt{\texttt{f}}} 11.\texttt{\texttt{d}c5}) 6...\texttt{c}5

Black inflicts an immediate strike against his opponent’s centre. 7.\texttt{\texttt{d}xc5}. This move is forced; otherwise, White cannot hold the d4-square. 7...\texttt{\texttt{d}xc5} 8.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}4 (8.\texttt{\texttt{g}f3} \texttt{c}6 9.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}4 – see 8.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}4) 8...\texttt{\texttt{c}e}6 9.\texttt{\texttt{g}f3} \texttt{\texttt{a}a}5 10.\texttt{\texttt{e}e}2 (The move 10.\texttt{xf6} cannot be recommended, because after 10...\texttt{\texttt{g}4} 11.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}5 \texttt{c}7 White would have no compensation at all for Black’s two powerful bishops, Yuferov – Tal, Moscow 1990.) 10...\texttt{\texttt{g}4}. Black exploits the fact that White’s bishop is cut off from the e3-square by his own pawn on f4. 11.\texttt{\texttt{c}f1} \texttt{\texttt{b}6} 12.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}1 \texttt{c}4 13.\texttt{\texttt{h}4} \texttt{e}5 14.\texttt{\texttt{h}3} \texttt{\texttt{f}6} 15.\texttt{\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 16.\texttt{fxe5}. White has managed to win a pawn, but the dark squares in his camp are horribly compromised. 16...\texttt{\texttt{e}7} 17.\texttt{\texttt{f}4} \texttt{\texttt{c}6} 18.\texttt{\texttt{e}3} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5=}. Here, it would be too risky for White to opt for 19.\texttt{\texttt{d}xc4}?! in view of 19...\texttt{\texttt{xf3} 20.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{\texttt{d}e}6\uparrow and Black has very powerful initiative for the sacrificed pawn, Klaric – Kasparov, Graz 1981.)
White is not in a hurry to develop his knight on f3. He wishes to be able to advance later e2-e4 (after the preliminary move g2). Black should not be afraid of this, because there would most often arise positions from the Pirc Defence (if White develops his knight on c3, after he advances e2-e4). In this chapter, we will analyse only the variations in which White does not transpose to the Pirc Defence.

2...g6
In principle, Black equalises even simpler with the move 2...d5. Still, I think that the move 2...g6 is better from the practical point of view, since Black follows the schemes with the fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop, which we analyse in this book.

3.g2
3.d3 g7 – see Chapter 9.
3.c4 g7 – see volume 2, Chapter 1.

3...g7

4.e4
4.d3 0-0 – see Chapter 9.
4.c4 0-0 – see volume 2, Chapter 1.

4...d6 5.e2

5.c4 0-0 – see volume 2, Chapter 1.

5.c3 0-0 or 5.f4 0-0 6.c3 e5 – see Chapter 17.
Chapter 5

5.h3 0–0 6.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2\) e5, or 5.c3 0–0 6.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2\) e5 – see 5.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2\).

5...0–0 6.0–0

6.c3 e5 7.0–0 c6 – see 6.0–0.
6.c4 c5 – see volume 2, Chapter 1.
6.h3 e5 7.0–0 (7.\(\text{\textcopyright}bc3\) c6 – see Chapter 17) 7...\(\text{\textcopyright}c6\) – see 6.0–0.

6...e5

7.h3

White does not determine yet his pawn-structure in the centre.

It would be absolutely harmless for Black if White chooses 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3\) (8.\(\text{\textcopyright}xd8\) \(\text{\textcopyright}xd8\)
9.\(\text{\textcopyright}bc3\) \(\text{\textcopyright}e6\) 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}g5\) h6 11.\(\text{\textcopyright}xf6\) \(\text{\textcopyright}xf6\) 12.\(\text{\textcopyright}d5\) \(\text{\textcopyright}xd5\) 13.\(\text{\textcopyright}xd5\) \(\text{\textcopyright}d7!? =\) )
8...\(\text{\textcopyright}e7\) 9.\(\text{\textcopyright}g5\) c6 10.h3, Bruhn – Kiehhaber, Germany 1994, 10...
\(\text{\textcopyright}bd7!? =\) with idea \(\text{\textcopyright}c5\)-e6.

The reduction of the tension in the centre with the move 7.d5 leaves Black’s hands free for the organisation of his counterplay on the kingside. 7...\(\text{\textcopyright}h5\) 8.c4 f5 9.exf5 \(\text{\textcopyright}xf5\) 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}bc3\) f4?? Koopmanschap – Wieringa, Netherlands 1996.

It seems a bit artificial for White to choose here 7.c3, because he cannot develop his knight on this square any more. 7...c6 8.\(\text{\textcopyright}d2\) \(\text{\textcopyright}bd7\) 9.\(\text{\textcopyright}c2\) (Following 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}c4\), Khote-

nashvili – Huang, Sochi 2015, White cannot exploit the d6-
square so effectively, because his pieces cannot assist quickly his

knight on this square. 10...b5!? 11.\(\text{\textcopyright}d6\) \(\text{\textcopyright}a6?? – Black is even better here, because of White’s horri-

bly placed knight on e2, which has no moves at all.) 9...\(\text{\textcopyright}c7\) 10.
\(\text{\textcopyright}d1\), Bitoon – Wang, Vietnam 2011, 10...a5!? 11.a4 \(\text{\textcopyright}e8\) – There has arisen a double-edged posi-
tion with mutual chances in which White must be permanently on

the alert about the possibility d6-
d5.

Following 7.c4, Black can exert pressure against his opponent’s centre with the line: 7...exd4 8.
\(\text{\textcopyright}xd4\) \(\text{\textcopyright}c6\).

It is not good for White to try 9.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2\) \(\text{\textcopyright}e6\) 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}d2\), Csom – Mortensen, Kiel 1978, 10...\(\text{\textcopyright}e8?!?? – The d2 and e2-squares are not

good for White’s knights and
Black’s prospects seem already preferable.

9.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c2 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e6 10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e5. White has more space, but Black’s minor pieces have occupied active positions. 11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}a3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}fg4 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5 c6 13. \texttt{\textasciitilde}f4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}c8 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}d2 f5\texttt{\textasciitilde} – Black has seized the initiative, Fine – Boleslavsky, radio 1945.

9.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc6 bxc6 10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}g4!? This is a seldom played move for Black, but it is very good. He wishes to force the advance of White’s kingside pawns and thus to compromise the shelter of his monarch. 11.f4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}b8 12. h3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}f6 13. \texttt{\textasciitilde}c2 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e8 14.b3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4. This is the simplest road to equality for Black. 15.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xc3 16. \texttt{\textasciitilde}xc3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4 17.\texttt{\textasciitilde}b2 f6. The battery of White’s pieces on the long diagonal may look very threatening, but it does not promise to him more than regaining his pawn. 18.g4 c5 19.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ae1 \texttt{\textasciitilde}b7 20.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4 21.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e7 22.f5 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e8 23. fxg6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xg6 24.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe7, Balutescu – Binder, ICCF 2014, 24...\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe7 25.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xf6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e2=

Black wishes to force the pawn-advance d4-d5, in order to stabilise the situation in the centre and to begin active actions on the kingside.

8.d5

This looks like a principled move, because White occupies space with tempo.

He can hardly obtain an advantage in the opening after his alternatives.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e7 10. \texttt{\textasciitilde}bc3 \texttt{\textasciitilde}d8 11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c1 \texttt{\textasciitilde}d4= – Black’s prospects are not worse at all, Giardelli – Flores, Olavarria 2004.

8.c3 a5 9.f4, Miron – Kashlinskaya, Pardubice 2010, 9...\texttt{\textasciitilde}e7!?\texttt{\textasciitilde} – White may have problems later with the protection of his e4-pawn.

The careless move 8.\texttt{\textasciitilde}bc3 can be countered by Black with a tactical strike after 8...exd4 9.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4! Now, White must forget about his ambitious plans and begin a fight for a draw. 10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc6 (Or 10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4 11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}g5 f6 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}h6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}f7\texttt{\textasciitilde} and White has no compensation for the pawn.) 10...\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc3 11. \texttt{\textasciitilde}xd8 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xd1 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xb7 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xb2 13.\texttt{\textasciitilde}b1 (13.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xb2 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xb2 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ab1 \texttt{\textasciitilde}c3 15. \texttt{\textasciitilde}xd6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xh3 16.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xh3 exd6\texttt{\textasciitilde} – Black will have serious problems to realise his extra pawn in this position; nevertheless, he will at least have chances of tormenting
his opponent in this ending...) 13...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{\text{a4}}}}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{cxd6}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{h3}}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{xh3}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{cxd6}}}\) – White has two powerful bishops in an open position, but this hardly compensates fully his sacrificed pawn.

After 8.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{e3}}}\), Black has the argument 8...d5!? and he is at least as well prepared as his opponent for the opening of the game in the centre.

9.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{dxe5}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xe4}}}\) 10.f4 (It is worse for White to play 10.f3, because of 10...d4! 11.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{c1}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{c5}}}\) 12.f4 f6 13.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{exf6}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xf6}}}\) – Black has succeeded in exchanging the e5-pawn, which cramped his position, and now, his prospects seem even preferable, Najer – I.Zaitsev, Moscow 1996.) 10...f6 11.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{exf6}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xf6}}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{bc3}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xc3}}}\) 13.bxc3.

In this position, Black’s king seems a bit more vulnerable than its counterpart, because it is protected by only two pawns, while White’s monarch is defended by three. Still, his weakened queenside pawn-structure precludes him from obtaining an edge. 13... \(\text{\textit{\textbf{e8}}}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{f2}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{e6}}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{d4}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}}\) 16.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}}\) c6 17.g4 \(\text{\textit{\textbf{f7}}}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{b1}}}\) b6 19.f5 g5 20.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{d2}}}\), Burmakin – Beim, Oberwart 1996, 20...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{d6}}}\)! 21.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{be1}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xe1}}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{exe1}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{e8}}}\) 23.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{exe8+}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{xe8}}}\) – After the exchange of all the rooks White cannot exploit the somewhat weakened position of Black’s king.

8...\(\text{\textit{\textbf{e7}}}\)

9.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{c4}}}\)

The arising pawn-structure is typical for the King’s Indian Defence. Well, there White’s knight is placed on f3 and not on e2. This circumstance seems to be in favour of Black, since White does not have the important manoeuvre \(\text{\textit{\textbf{f3-e1-d3}}}\). From the d3-square, the knight may support his initiative on the queenside with c4-c5, as well as on the kingside with f2-f4.

The move 9.\(\text{\textit{\textbf{bc3}}}\) has the drawback that White’s pawn on c2 cannot participate in the fight for the strategically important d5-square. Black can exploit this circumstance immediately with the move 9...c6
It is possible that White’s best line here is: 10.a4 cxd5 11.exd5 \d7 12.\b5 \e8 13.c4 \c8 14. \h2 \xc4∞ – and he has sufficient initiative to maintain the balance as compensation for the sacrificed pawn, Rashkovsky – Shchekachev, Moscow 1992.

9...\d7 10.\bc3 f5 11.\e3 \f6

12.f3

White establishes reliable control over the strategically important e4-square, but weakens his g3-pawn. (After 12.\d2 \xe4 13.g4 \h5 14. g5 \h7 15.\xe4 \f5?, the advance of White’s pawn from g3 to g5 has led to the weakening of his king’s shelter and may be worrisome for him in the future, Bocharov – Smirin, Minsk 2015. 12...\h5. Black wishes to provoke the move g3-g4, in order to be able to attack this pawn later with h7-h5. 13.g4 \f6 14.b4, Petran – Nickl, Graz 1992, 14...f4!? 15.\f2 g5 16.c5 \g6?, followed by h7-h5, \f7, \h8 and after the exchange on g4 – \h4.}
Chapter 6 1.d4 .gf6 2.g5
The Trompowsky Attack

This opening was named after the Brazilian chess player Octavio Trompowsky. White develops early his dark-squared bishop and avoids the well analysed opening schemes arising after 2.c4, or 2.gf3. It is understandable that he can hardly rely on obtaining an opening advantage like this, because following 2.g5 his bishop often comes under attack with tempi in numerous variations.

2...ge4

This move is forced, because Black cannot fianchetto comfortably his dark-squared bishop.

After 2...g6 3.xf6 exf6, Black’s compromised kingside pawn-structure may tell in the future, while his two-bishop advantage is not so important.

White has a choice now. He can retreat his bishop: B) 3.h4, or C) 3.f4, or can protect it with his pawn A) 3.h4.

A) 3.h4

This somewhat extravagant move was the favourite of GM R. Rapport whose rating overpassed recently the 2700 mark. Still, despite this, the move 3.h4 cannot be recommended, since White is deprived of the basic idea of the Trompowsky Attack – to oust Black’s knight from the centre.
with tempo with the moves f2-f3 and e2-e4. The opening of the h-file, after \( \text{xg5} \), is not so advantageous for White as it may seem at first sight.

3...c5

Black inflicts an immediate strike against the enemy centre and prepares the development of his queen to the b6-square.

4.d5
White occupies space.

It does not seem so reliable for White to play 4.dxc5, since Black can counter this with 4...d5?!, without being afraid of the capturing en passant. 5.\( \text{d2} \) (After 5.cxd6?! \( \text{b6} \) 6.e3 \( \text{xb2} \) 7.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 8.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{cxd4} \) 9.\( \text{c6}\) – Black will have a superior pawn-structure in the endgame.) 5...\( \text{xc5} \) 6.e4 (It would be too passive for White to choose here 6.e3?! f6 7.\( \text{f4} \) e5 8.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{c6}\) – Black has occupied the centre completely with his pawns, while White’s bishop on g3 is passive, being restricted by the enemy pawn on e5, Pizarro – Mikhalevski, ICC 2000.) 6...h6

7.\( \text{e3} \) d4 8.\( \text{h5+} \) \( \text{c6}= \) – Black’s prospects are not worse at all in this position, which has not been analysed extensively yet, Hemmerling – Hoegerl, Email 2004.

4.e3 \( \text{b6} \) 5.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{xc3} \) 6.bxc3 d5= Jung – Llorente, IECC 2013.

4...\( \text{b6} \)

5.\( \text{d2} \)
White sacrifices a pawn fighting for the initiative. After his alternatives, he will have problems with the protection of his central d5-pawn, because Black can create the threat of a checkmate in one by playing c5-c4, depriving thus his opponent of the possibility to support the d5-pawn with his c2-pawn.

5.\( \text{c1} \) e6 6.\( \text{f3} \) c4! 7.e3 \( \text{a5}\) West – Machado, Thessaloniki 1988.

5.\( \text{c1} \) c4! 6.e3 \( \text{a5+} \) 7.\( \text{d2} \) f6 8.\( \text{f4} \) e5. With this move Black allows his opponent to get rid of his weak d5-pawn, but acquires a
huge lead in development. 9.dxe6 c3 10.bxc3 a3 11.wd1 xdx2, Sladek – Thompson, ICCF 2013, 12.exd7+ xdx7 and White is forced to capture with his king, since he loses after 13.wxd2??, due to 13...b2++

5...xg5 6.hxg5 wb2

This is a principled move; otherwise, it becomes unclear why Black’s queen has been developed to the b6-square in the first place.

7.g6

This seemingly strong and energetic move would not even equalise for White.

He should probably choose instead 7.e4, but even then the activity of White’s pieces would be sufficient only to maintain the balance. 7...g6 8.b1 g7! 9.wf3 (Following 9.wb3 d6 10.b5+ df8!, Black’s king is quite comfortable in the centre of the board and he has an extra pawn after all. 11.gf3, Breutigam – Solleveld, Germany 2010, 11...a6!? 12.wb2 df7++) 9...h6. Black gets rid of his backward pawn on the h-file. 10.gxh6 xh6 11.wxh6 wxh6∞ Thistlewood – Grobler, ICCF 2014.

7...wf6

The queen comes back to assist in the defence of Black’s king. It would be useless for him to win a second pawn, since his lag in development may become catastrophic.

8.gxf7+

After 8.wxh7 xh7 9.gxh7 wh4+, Black succeeds in holding the dangerous enemy pawn just a step before promotion.

8...wxf7 9.e4

9...g5!? Black lags in development, but can afford to make this pawn-advance, because after 10. wb2, he has the cold-blooded resource 10...wd8, parrying his opponent’s threat to trap the queen. 11.wb1 wg7. White leads in development indeed, but cannot attack the enemy king successfully, because his dark-squared bishop is missing and he can hardly ad-
vance e4-e5. 12. Tmp3 h6 13.0-0
d6 14. Tcp4 Td7. Black increases
his control over the strategically
important e5-square. 15. Tg4 b6
16. Te2 Td4 17.a4 Tb8? – Black
not only has an extra pawn, but a
clear-cut plan for actions over the
vulnerable dark squares, Sedlbceck –
Genchev, ICCF 2014.

B) 3.Th4
The defect of this move is that
White cannot avoid the exchange
of his important dark-squared
bishop.
3...c5

4.f3
White is trying to oust immedi-
ately the enemy knight away
from the centre of the board.

4.dxc5. This voluntary ex-
change of a central pawn for a
flank pawn can hardly be recom-
mended. 4...Txc5 5.Tc3 Tc6 6.e4
g6 7.Tb5 Tg7 8.Tge2 a6 9.Txc6
bxc6 10.0-0 0-0 11.f3 d6 12.f2
Td7 13.Tb1 Tc7= – Black has a
powerful bishop-pair and his
prospects are at least equal, Szash-
now – Bocharov, Tomsk 2006.

The position would be bad for
White after 4.d5 Tb6 5.Tc1 (He
loses after 5.b3 Tb5 6.e3 g5 7.
Tg3 Tg7++ and White cannot
hold the c3-square.) 5...g5 6.Tg3
d6!? Black deprives the enemy
bishop of the e5-square and of the
possibility to be exchanged for the
knight on b8. 7.c3 h5! 8.f3 h4?-
Black’s pawns have managed to
attack the bishop on g3. Now,
White must begin defending,
since the straightforward ap-
proach 9.fxe4? hxg3 10.h3 Td7++
would lead to a strategically hope-
less position for him due to the
catastrophic weakness of his dark
squares.

Following 4.e3 Tb6 5.Tc3
Txc3 6.bxc3, White’s queenside
pawn-structure is compromised.
6...d5 7.Tf3 Tb2 8.Td2 Td7 9.a4
c4 10.a5 Tb5 11.Tb1 Tc6 12.Tb2
Tf6 13.Txf6 exf6 14.g3 Te7 15.
Tg2 0-0? – Black’s bishop-pair
and the vulnerability of White’s
doubled pawns on the c-file are a
more important factor than
White’s play against the enemy
d5-pawn, Sedlbceck – Petersens,
ICCF 2014.

White cannot harm his oppo-
nent with 4.Td2 Ta5 5.c3 Txd2
6.Txd2 cxd4 7.cxd4 (It seems less
reliable for him to opt for 7.Txd4,
because after 7...Tc6 8.Td2 d5
9.Tf3 e5??, Black succeeds in oc-
ocupying the centre with his pawns, Reichert – Koronowski, Germany 1996.) 7...\textbf{\textit{x}}xd2+ 8.\textit{x}xd2. There has arisen an approximately equal endgame on the board and neither side has any active prospects. 8...d5 9.e3 \textbf{\textit{c}}c6 10.\textit{c}e2 \textbf{\textit{f}}5 11.\textit{c}c3 e6 12.\textbf{\textit{a}}b5 h5. Black occupies space on the kingside. 13.a3 f6 14.f3 \textbf{\textit{f}}7= Lain – Zakharov, ICCF 2013.

\textbf{4...g5}
This is the point!
\textbf{5.fxe4 gxh4}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
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\end{center}

Now, White must play very precisely; otherwise, the vulnerability of his dark squares may prove to be fatal for him in the future.

\textbf{6.e3}
White prepares the development of his light-squared bishop.

The move 6.\textit{f}3 should not be even considered by White, since after 6...cxd4, his pawn-centre just disappears. 7.\textit{x}xd4 \textbf{\textit{g}}8 8.\textit{c}c3 (8.e5 \textit{c}6 9.\textbf{\textit{e}}4 \textit{b}6+ A. Moskalenko – Shomoev, chessassistantclub 2004) 8...\textit{c}6 9.\textbf{\textit{d}}2 \textit{g}7 10.\textbf{\textit{x}}h4. Winning a pawn is only small consolation for White. 10...d6 11.e3 \textbf{\textit{b}}6 12.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}4 13.\textit{xb}4 \textbf{\textit{x}}xb4 14.\textit{d}2 \textbf{\textit{d}}7 15.\textit{c}3, Naess – Albesa, LSS 2009. He has exchanged the queens and can hardly be checkmated in the middle game, but White has no chances of equalising in the endgame. 15...\textbf{\textit{c}}8!? 16.g3 \textbf{\textit{x}}c3+ 17.bxc3 \textbf{\textit{c}}6+ – There are so many weaknesses in White’s position that his extra pawn is absolutely irrelevant.

Following 6.\textbf{\textit{c}}3, just after 6.\textbf{\textit{f}}3, White relies on the quickest possible development of his pieces. His temporary initiative just ebbs away however, while his pawn-weaknesses remain on the board. 6...cxd4 7.\textbf{\textit{xd}}4 \textit{g}8 8.e5 \textbf{\textit{c}}6

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
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\end{center}

9.\textbf{\textit{e}}4 (9.\textbf{\textit{xe}}4 \textbf{\textit{xe}}5 10.0–0–0, Teske – Kocwin, Guben 2008, 10...\textbf{\textit{b}}6!? Black creates the powerful threat \textit{h}6 with a transfer to a better endgame. 11.e3 \textbf{\textit{xe}}3+ 12.\textbf{\textit{b}}1 \textit{g}4. He gives back his extra pawn, but manages to exchange advantageously the queens.

13.\textbf{\textit{xe}}7 \textit{h}6 14.\textbf{\textit{xe}}6 \textbf{\textit{xe}}6+ –
Black has the two-bishop advantage in this endgame and his pawns dominate in the centre. White must work long and hard for a draw.) 9...\text{g7} 10.\text{f3} \text{xe5}. Black sacrifices temporarily a piece and seizes the initiative. 11.\text{xe5} \text{a5} 12.\text{c4} (After 12. \text{h7} \text{f8} 13.0-0-0, Neborak – Csernyik, ICCF 2009, the simplest reaction for Black would be 13...\text{xe5}!? 14.\text{h4} d6\# and his superior pawn-structure and the two powerful bishops more than compensate his minimal material deficit.) 12...\text{xc3}+ 13.\text{d1} \text{g5} 14.\text{d6}+ \text{f8} 15.\text{xc3} \text{exd6} \# Voveris – Clancey, ICCF 2013. The tactical complications have ended and Black has succeeded in regaining his piece. His prospects seem to be slightly preferable in this position with mutual pawn weaknesses all over the board.

6...\text{h6}

Black attacks immediately the most vulnerable point in his enemy’s position – the e3-pawn.

7.\text{f2}

White follows the advice of the World Champion number 1 – Wilhelm Steinitz that the king is a powerful piece and protects his pawn with it.

White’s attempt to get rid of the weak pawn would not be sufficient even for equality. 7.\text{a3} \text{xe3} 8.d5 d6 9.\text{h5} \text{d7} 10.\text{c4} \text{g1} 11.\text{g1} b5 12.\text{d2} \text{a5} 13. \text{h4}, Halkias – Tsanas, Athens 2004, 13...c4!? 14.\text{g3} \text{c5}\# – with initiative for Black on the queenside. White has problems to find a safe haven for his king.

7.d5 \text{b6} 8.\text{d2} (8.\text{c1}?! \text{c4} 9.\text{f2} d6\# Zay Valero – Ruiz Jarabo Pelayo, ICCF 2010) 8...\text{xb2}. Winning this pawn seems to be very attractive for Black, moreover that White’s weakness on e3 remains. 9.\text{b1} \text{f6}\# Godart – Zhou, Prague 2012.

White’s queen-sortie, with the idea to capture the c5-pawn, seems to be very risky. 7.\text{h5} \text{b6} 8.\text{xc5} (8.\text{d2} \text{xe3} 9.\text{c4} \text{h6} 10.\text{xc5} \text{c6}\# Zweschper – Schlichter, Hofbiber 1996) 8...\text{xc5} 9.\text{dxc5} \text{xe3} 10.\text{d3} \text{xc5} 11.\text{d5} \text{d8} 12.\text{f3} e6 13.\text{e5} \text{f8}\# – Black has succeeded in parrying the activity of White’s knights and has preserved all the pluses of his position. He has the two-bishop advantage and an extra pawn, despite its being doubled, on the h-file, Meier – Tucci, ICCF 1997.
Following 7.\(\text{c}d2\), White does not obtain sufficient compensation. 7...\(\text{x}e3\) 8.d5 d6 9.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{d}d4\) 10.c3 \(\text{f}f6\) 11.\(\text{h}h5\) (After 11.a4, White’s initiative reaches gradually its dead end. 11...\(\text{d}d7\) 12.\(\text{h}h5\) \(\text{f}f8\) 13.e5 dxe5 14.\(\text{x}e5\) \(\text{g}g6\) 15.\(\text{b}b5+\) \(\text{f}f8\) 16.\(\text{g}f3\), Van Ruijtenburg – Rogers, Hoogeveen 2005, 16...\(\text{c}c7!?\)) 11...\(\text{g}g8\) 12.e5 dxe5 13.\(\text{x}h7\) \(\text{g}g7\) 14.\(\text{x}h8+\) \(\text{d}d7\). Black’s king is headed to the b8-square, where it would be completely safe. 15.\(\text{h}h6\) \(\text{c}c7\) 16.\(\text{d}d1\) \(\text{d}d7\) 17.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{b}b8\) 18.\(\text{e}e3\) a5. Black brings his rook on a8 into the actions. 19.\(\text{e}e4\) \(\text{a}a6+\) Fernandez – Langer, Lechenicher SchachServer 2013.

Black can counter 7.\(\text{c}c4\) with the energetic pawn-sacrifice – 7...d5?!

8.\(\text{x}d5\) (8.\(\text{x}d5?!\) \(\text{x}e3\) 9.\(\text{d}xc5\) \(\text{a}a5+\) 10.\(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{xc}5\) – The position is being opened and Black’s two-bishop advantage may play later a decisive role, Kharitonov – Novikov, Moscow 2003) 8...e6 9.\(\text{b}b3\) \(\text{x}e3\) 10.\(\text{f}f3\) cxd4 11.\(\text{b}d2\) b5!? 12.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{b}b6\) Black has an extra pawn and his bishop on e3 is very powerful. White’s lead in development is insufficient to even maintain the balance.

After 7.\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{c}c6\) 8.c3 d5, White is likely to fail to hold his pawn-centre. 9.\(\text{d}d2\) (It would be too precarious for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice: 9.\(\text{d}xc5\) dxe4 10.\(\text{x}e4\) \(\text{e}e6\) 11.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{d}d7\) 12.\(\text{g}f3\) 0–0–0\(+\) Guercia Sammarco – Van Rossum, IECG 2000.) 9...cxd4!? 10.\(\text{e}d4\) e5\(+\) Wicklund Hansen – Laine, LSS 2007.

7...cxd4

After White’s king has been placed on f2, Black can forget about the plan to exert pressure against the e3-pawn. His further plan should be connected with the quickest possible castling kingside and the preparation of the opening of the game in order to organise an attack against the enemy king.

8.\(\text{e}d4\) \(\text{c}c6\) 9.\(\text{c}c3\)

About 9.\(\text{f}f3\) 0–0 10.\(\text{c}c3\) d6 – see 9.\(\text{c}c3\) d6 10.\(\text{f}f3\).

9...d6
10.\textbf{c4}

10.b5 0-0 11.f3 – see 10.f3.

10.f3 0-0 11.b5 b8 (11... h8!?) 12 wd3 h8 13.hf1 h3 14.g3 g4 15.xc6 bxc6 – Black’s bishops are obviously stronger than White’s cavalry, Signes Almodovar – Ulasevich, Lechenicher SchachServer 2012.

10...0-0 11.h5

11.f3 h8 12.f1 h3 Schubert – Fels, BdF 2007.

11...g7

12.f3

White wishes to begin an attack, but the insufficient protection of his d4-pawn is detrimental to his plans in numerous variations. 12.e6 13.d5 xd4 14.d3 f5 15.he1 xf3 16.gxf3 e5 17.g1+ h8 – It would be very difficult for White to exploit the unsafe placement of the enemy king, because his own king also needs protection, Signes Almodovar – Bernal Varela, Lechenicher SchachServer 2011.

\textbf{C) 3.f4}

This is the best move for White. His bishop can hardly be attacked by Black on this square.

3...d5? This is the most reliable move. Black prevents the occupation of the centre by the enemy pawns (f2-f3 and e2-e4).

White has the choice between four main lines in this position: 
\textbf{C1) 4.f3, C2) 4.d2, C3) 4.f3 and C4) 4.e3.} 

It is premature for White to play here 4.c4, because Black can
try the energetic pawn-sacrifice 4...e5! With the idea to exploit the weakening of the e1-a5 diagonal. 5.dxe5 ♞c5 6.e3 ♙b4+ 7.♗e2 ♙h4. White’s king has lost its castling rights and has turned into an excellent target for Black’s pieces. 8.g3 ♙h5+ 9.f3 g5 10.♕xd5 gxf4 11.♕xe4 fxg3 12.e6 ♙xe6 13.♗h3, Fels – Petters, LSS 2007. Black had to prepare castling queenside with 13...♗d7!–+. Following 0–0–0, ♗c5, his attack would have been impossible to parry.

After 4.c3, Black would have the active response 4...g5?!, for example: 5.♖c1 – It is essential for White to prevent the exchange of his bishop. (It is bad for him to play 5.♗g3, due to 5...h5 6.f3 ♘xg3 7.hxg3 ♙d6 8.♖f2 h4 9.gxh4 ♘xh4+ – and White’s dark-squared bishop would be badly missed in the forthcoming battle, Klinger – Ragger, Austria 2006) 5...h6 6.e3 ♘g7 7.♗d3, Van der Wiel – Comp Fritz, Rotterdam 2000, 7...♗c6?! 8.♗e2 0–0∞ – Black’s pieces are very active and compensate fully his slightly weakened kingside pawn-structure.

C1) 4.♗f3

This seemingly logical move has the drawback that White cannot attack the exposed enemy knight with tempo after f2–f3.

4...e5

Black attacks the enemy centre and prepares the development of his queen to the b6-square.

5.e3

It is just bad for White to give up the centre with 5.♗bd2 cxd4?! 6.♖xd4 ♙d7 7.♗xe4 dxe4 8.♗b3 e5! Kiratzopoulos – Nikolaidis, Leros 2009.

Or 5.dxc5 ♙c6 6.♗bd2 (6.e3 f6??, followed by e7–e5) 6...♗c5 7.e3 (7.c3 g6 8.♗e3, Miladinovic – Boudriga, Monastir 2012, 8...e5??) 7...f6 8.♗g3 e5 9.c3 ♙f5 10.♗h4 ♙e6+ – Black has a powerful pawn-centre, while White’s bishop on g3 is very passive, Weggen – Lipecki, ICCF 2014.

5.♗c3 ♙xc3 6.bxc3 ♙c6 7.e3 e6= – Black lags slightly in development indeed, but this is compensated by White’s compromised queenside pawn-structure, Ntoutsoulis – Tepelenis, Porto Rio 2014.

There arises a pawn-structure, typical for the exchange variation of the Slav Defence after 5.c3 cxd4 6.cxd4 ♙c6 7.♗c3 ♙a5. Black wishes to exploit the weakening of
the a5-e1 diagonal. He is even ready to sacrifice a pawn in order to do that. 8.♗b3 e5!? 9.♗xe5 ♙b4 10.♗c1 ♙xe5 11.♗xe5 ♙e6 12.♗d3 ♙xc3+ 13.bxc3 ♙c8 14.♗b4 0–0 15.e3 ♙c7 16.♗d3 ♙fc8 17.♗xe4 dxe4 18.d5, Ayesta Perojo – Segovia Sanchez, Bizkaia 2004, 18...♗d7?! 19.0–0 ♙c5= – Black’s counterplay against the weak pawns on a2 and c3 is sufficient to maintain the balance.

5...♗b6

6.♗c1

White’s position would be worse after 6.♗bd2 ♙xd2 7.♗xd2 (7.♗xd2 cxd4 8.exd4 ♙xb2= – he can hardly obtain any compensation for the sacrificed pawn, because Black’s position does not have any pawn-weaknesses.) 7...♗xb2 8.♗c1 c4 9.♗e2 e6= – White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient, Berend – Kappler, Dijon 1994.

White’s pawn-structure would be weakened after 6.♕c3 ♙a5 7.♗xb8 ♙xc3 8.♕d2 ♙xb8 9.♕xc3 (9.bxc3 c4?) 9...♕xc3+ 10.bxc3 c4 11.♗b1 e6 12.e4 b5 13.♗e2 ♙d6 14.exd5 exd5 15.♗e5 ♙e6 16.0–0 0–0= – White must fight long and hard for a draw in this endgame, because Black has a superior pawn-structure and the two-bishop advantage, Kmiecik – Tinture, ICCF 2010.

6...♕c6 7.c3 f6

This is a multi-purpose move. Black not only prepares g7-g5, h7-h5, beginning to chase the enemy bishop, but also may advance e7-e5 at an opportune moment.

8.♕fd2

It would be hardly preferable for White to opt here for 8.♗bd2 g5 9.♗g3 (9.dxc5 ♙xc5 10.♗f5 11.♗b3 ♙xb3 12.axb3 ♙xb3= – his compensation for the sacrificed pawn is insufficient, Jacquin – Schuster, ICCF 2009) 9...h5 10. dxc5 ♙xc5 11.♕c2 h4 12.♕c7, Jacquin – Joao, ICCF 2008. Here, Black’s simplest reaction would be 12...e5!?=, cutting off the ene-
my bishop on c7 from the rest of his forces.

8...e5 9.\( \Delta \)xe4 cxd4 10.cxd4 exf4 11.\( \Delta \)ec3 \( \Delta \)e6 12.\( \Delta \)d2 \( \Delta \)d6†
- White has no compensation for Black’s two powerful bishops. In
addition, White lags slightly in development, Lange – Schaefer,
desc-online.de 2012.

C2) 4.\( \Delta \)d2

4...c5?  
This is not Black’s most popular move in this position, but it is
not bad at all. He is trying to create counterplay and would not
mind having doubled pawns on the e-file.

There would arise an approximately equal position after the
calmer line: 4...\( \Delta \)f5 5.e3 e6 6.\( \Delta \)d3
\( \Delta \)xd2 7.\( \Delta \)xd2 \( \Delta \)xd3 8.\( \Delta \)xd3 c5=

5.\( \Delta \)xe4

5.e3 \( \Delta \)xd2 – see variation C4.

5...dxe4 8.\( \Delta \)a4+

6.dxc5

After 6.e3, Black can try to develop his bishop to the long diagonal. 6...g6!? 7.c3 (White will not
obtain an advantage if he tries to impede the appearance of the en-
emy bishop on g7. 7.\( \Delta \)e5 f6 8.\( \Delta \)xb8 \( \Delta \)xb8 9.dxc5 \( \Delta \)xd1+ 10.\( \Delta \)xd1
e6 11.b4 b6= – Black’s prospects are not worse in this endgame
thanks to his powerful bishops.) 7...\( \Delta \)g7 8.f3 exf3 9.\( \Delta \)xf3 0–0∞

6...\( \Delta \)a5+

Black regains immediately his pawn.

7.c3 \( \Delta \)xc5
It would be too risky for White to win a pawn here 8.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}\)xb8 9.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xe4, Donka – Molnar, Hungary 1995, since after 10...b4!? Black would seize completely the initiative. For example after 11.c4, Black will follow with 11...g6 12.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)d5 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)d5 13. cxd5 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)g7 – regaining the sacrificed pawn. He will have two powerful bishops, while White lags in development, so Black’s advantage would be doubtless.

Following 8.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)d4 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)d4 9.cxd4 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)c6 10.0–0–0, Mikhailovsky – Tseitlin, Beersheba 1996, Black could have obtained a better position by transferring his knight to d5: 10...\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)b4!? 11.a3 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)d5?

\textbf{\texttt{8...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)c6 9.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xc6+ \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)}xc6}}}}

\textbf{10.f3}

10.e3 e5 11.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)g3 \(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)e6. White will be forced to weaken his pawn-structure in order to activate his passive dark-squared bishop. 12. f3 exf3 13.\(\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xf3 f6? Barbero – Pelletier, Switzerland 1998.

\textbf{10...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)e5 11.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)e3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)f5 12.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)g4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)e6 13.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)h3, Tunik – Avrukh, Beersheba 1996. Here, Black could have tried to obtain an advantage by playing 13...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xf3!? 14.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xf3 f6?}, trying later to exploit White’s weakened kingside pawn-structure with g7-g5 and h7-h5.

\textbf{C3) 4.f3}

This is an aggressive move. White wishes to advance e2-e4, even at the price of sacrificing material.

\textbf{4...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)f6}}

\textbf{5.e4!?}

About 5.e3 c5 – see variation \textbf{C4}.

\textbf{5.c4 e6 6.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)c3 c5! 7.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)b5 (7. \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)cxd5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xd5 8.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)xd5 exd5 9.a3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)c6= Rebscher – Grafl, Bayern 1998; 7.e3 cxd4 8.exd4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)e7=} 7... \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}}}}\)a6= and the move f2-f3 impedes the harmonious development of the knight on g1.}

It deserves attention for White
to try here 5...c3, with the idea to advance e2-e4 without material sacrifices. 5...e6 6.e4 (After 6. \( \text{d}d2 \), Black can follow a very unpleasant plan for his opponent, connected with an immediate pawn-offensive on the queenside: 6...c5 7.e3 a6!? 8.\( \text{c}e2 \), Rusanov – Yemelin, St Petersburg 1998, 8...b5?! 6...a6 7.\( \text{d}d2 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 8.exd5 (8.g4 b5\( ^{\infty} \) Kanep – Zjukin, Tallinn 2006) \( \text{x}d5 \) 9.\( \text{x}d5 \) exd5 10. \( \text{d}3 \), Andreikin – Kuzubov, Lubbock 2009, 10...0-0?! The arising pawn-structure is typical for the exchange variation of the French Defence, or of the Petroff Defence (in these openings White’s pawn is on f2 and not on f3...). Both lines are well known for the drawish tendencies in them.

5...dxe4
Black accepts the challenge.
6.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{exf}3 \) 7.\( \text{xf}3 \) g6 8.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{g}7 \)

9.\( \text{e}2 \)
White prepares castling queenside. He must act energetically, since he is a pawn down and if Black succeeds in completing his development, he will have the advantage.

The trade of the knights in the following line is not in favour of White 9.\( \text{e}5 \) 0-0 10.0-0 \( \text{c}6 \) 11. \( \text{x}c6 \) bxc6\( ^{\infty} \) Cooper – Noble, ICCF 2014.

Still, it would be interesting for him to try 9.0-0 0-0 10.\( \text{d}2 \), I.Sokolov – Hellers, Malmo 1997, 10...\( \text{c}6\infty \)

9...0-0 10.0-0 \( \text{c}6 \) 11.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{b}6 \)

12.d6
White’s initiative may seem threatening, but he cannot do anything meaningful.

12...\( \text{exd}6 \) 13.\( \text{xd}6 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 14. \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{g}4 \) 15.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}4\infty \) – No doubt, White has some compensation for the pawn, but it is sufficient only to maintain the balance, Bobel – Ould Ahmed, ICCF 2010.
C4) 4.e3
dxc5 seems dubious for White 5...\(\text{c}6 6.\text{f}3 \text{f}6 7.\text{c}4 \text{e}5\) Hulak – Sosonko, Hoogovens 1987.

It is not good for White to play 5.f3, because after 5...\(\text{f}6\), there arises a position similar to the main line, except that instead of \(\text{d}3\), White has played the not so useful move f2-f3. 6.c3 (Following 6.\(\text{c}3\), Black’s simplest decision would be 6...a6!? , not only defending against \(\text{b}5\), but also preparing a pawn-offensive on the queenside. 7.\(\text{d}2\) e6 8.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.g4 b5 10.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{b}7\) 11.0-0 h6\(\text{f}\) Mika – Vesely, ICCF 2010) 6...\(\text{c}6\) 7.\(\text{d}2\) e6 8.\(\text{g}5\). White defends against \(\text{h}5\), which would have provided Black with the two-bishop advantage. 8...e5 9.dxe5 \(\text{xe}5\) 10.e4. White must play actively; otherwise, the vulnerability of his e3-pawn may harm him in the future. 10...\(\text{e}7\) 11.f4 \(\text{c}6\) 12.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) = M.Gurevich – Cvitan, Vrsac 1985.

There arises an approximately equal position after the solid line for White: 5.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{xd}2\) 6.\(\text{x}d2\) \(\text{c}6\) 7.\(\text{f}3\) (7.c3 \(\text{xd}4\) 8.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 9.\(\text{f}3\) e6 – see 7.\(\text{f}3\)) 7...\(\text{xd}4\) 8.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 9.c3 e6 10.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{x}d3\) 11.\(\text{x}d3\) \(\text{d}6\) 12.\(\text{g}3\) (The character of the position remains more or less the same after 12.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) 13.0-0 \(\text{h}6\) 14.\(\text{ae}1\) 0-0= Tomazini – Frank, Austria 2015.) 12...\(\text{h}6\)!?= – Black should not be in a hurry to castle kingside, because White will counter this with with
an exchange on d6, followed by \( \text{Q}g5 \), provoking a weakening of his opponent's kingside pawn-structure, Gazi – Grammatica, FICGS 2014.

It looks rather slow for White to play here 5.c3, since following 5...\( \text{b}b6 \) 6.\( \text{b}b3 \), Black can occupy space on the queenside with tempo. 6...c4 7.\( \text{c}c2 \) (The exchange of the queens 7.\( \text{xb}6 \) leads to the opening of the a-file, which is advantageous for Black. Later, he would maintain an edge by preparing a pawn-offensive on the queenside with b6-b5-b4. 7...\( \text{xb}6 \) 8.f3 \( \text{f}6 \) 9.e4 b5 10.\( \text{d}d2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 11. a3 b4\( \text{f}5 \) – Sambojlova – Ribli, Slovenia 2005.) 7...\( \text{f}5 \) 8.f3 (8.\( \text{c}1?! \) g5! 9.\( \text{xb}8 \) \( \text{xb}8 \) – with the two-bishop advantage for Black, Dya- chkov – Taleb, Halle 1995) 8...e5. There arise complications after this move (Black can also try the more solid line: 8...\( \text{d}d6?! \) 9.e4 \( \text{g}6 \) =). 9.\( \text{xe}5 \) \( \text{g}3 \) 10.e4 \( \text{xh}1 \) 11. \( \text{xf}5 \), Stefanova – Gonzalez de la Torre, Andorra 2000, 11...\( \text{d}7 \)?= \( \text{??} \) The arising position is rather difficult to be evaluated properly. Black has the exchange for a pawn, moreover that White will have problems to evacuate his king away from the centre. Still, Black's knight on h1 is not to be envied...

5...\( \text{f}6 \)?

This is Black's most reliable move. It is better for him to lose a tempo for the retreat of his knight than to allow capturing on e4.

Following 5...\( \text{c}6 \) 6.\( \text{xe}4 \) dxe4 7.d5, White seizes the initiative. 7...\( \text{b}4 \) 8.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 9.a3 \( \text{a}6 \) 10.f3 \( \text{xf}3 \) 11.\( \text{x}f3 \) g6 12.e4 = – He has a powerful centre and more harmoniously developed pieces, Kornev – Prokopchuk, Nefteyugansk 2002.

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6.c3

After 6.\( \text{f}3 \), before playing e7-e6, Black develops his bishop to the g4-square and solves all his opening problems. 6...\( \text{g}4 \) 7.\( \text{bd}2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 8.\( \text{h}3 \) \( \text{h}5 \) 9.c3 e6 10. 0–0 \( \text{e}7 \) 11.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 12.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) = Teske – Satyapragyan, Pardubice 2014.

Accepting the pawn-sacrifice 6.\( \text{xc}5 \) would lead to double-edged positions with mutual chances. 6...\( \text{c}6 \)

(diagram)

After 7.\( \text{f}3 \), Black's light-squared bishop may find a more favourable placement than after the move 7.\( \text{b}5 \). 7...\( \text{g}4 \) 8.\( \text{b}5 \) e6 9.b4 a5 10.c3 \( \text{d}7 \) 11.\( \text{g}3 \) (11.a3, Ovod – Petrukhina, Moscow
2015, 11...g5!? 12.\textit{g}g3 \textit{g}g7\textsubscript{f} 11...axb4 12.\textit{xc}6 bxc6 13.\textit{xb}4, Ohtake – Lelenko, ICCF 2001, 13...e5!? 14.\textit{xc}2 \textit{xf}3 15.\textit{gx}f3 \textit{e}7=, followed by 0–0, f7-f5-f4. Black has very good compensation for the pawn.

7.\textit{b}5 e6 8.\textit{b}4 a5 9.c3 (9.\textit{xc}6+ bxc6 10.c3 \textit{a}6=) – Black has the two-bishop advantage and excellent prospects for actions on the weakened light squares in White’s camp, Aronian – Short, Reykjavik 2004) 9...\textit{d}7

10.\textit{e}2 axb4 11.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 12.\textit{xb}4 d4 13.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}5 14.0–0 dxe3\textsubscript{f} Savchenko – Motylev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007.

10.a4 axb4 11.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 12.\textit{xb}4 b6 13.\textit{d}2 bxc5 14.b5 \textit{b}7= Gustafsson – Avrukh, Plovdiv 2003. Black has succeeded in regaining his pawn. Later, he must be on the alert about his opponent’s possibility a4-a5, because he must not allow the further advance of White’s queenside pawns.

There arises a very complicated position after 10.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}4 11.f3 (11.\textit{e}2 g5+ Karjakin – Gajewski, Berlin 2015) 11...e5 12.\textit{xe}4 \textit{exe}4 13.\textit{xe}2 \textit{h}4+ 14.g3 \textit{fxg}3 15.\textit{xg}3 dxe4 16.0–0 \textit{e}6 17.\textit{a}4 \textit{c}8\textsubscript{f} – White’s king is almost deprived of any pawn-shelter and that may tell in the future, Maotre – Sanner, ICCF 2014.

6...\textit{b}6!?

Black should not be in a hurry to develop his knight to c6, since in some variations it would be much better placed on d7, from where, just like from c6, it would support the pawn-advance e7-e5. It would be however, more stable on d7, since White would not have the possibility to attack it with b2-b4-b5 (after the preliminary exchange on c5).

7.\textit{c}2
Following 7.\texttt{\textcopyright}c1 \texttt{\textcopyright}h5 8.\texttt{\textcopyright}g3 \texttt{\textcopyright}c6 9.\texttt{\textcopyright}f3 \texttt{\textcopyright}xg3 10.hxg3, White fails to exploit his opponent’s slight lag in development, while Black’s two-bishop advantage would be an important long-term positional factor. 10...g6 11.\texttt{\textcopyright}bd2 \texttt{\textcopyright}g7 12.\texttt{\textcopyright}c2 0–0 13.dxc5 \texttt{\textcopyright}xc5\texttt{\textcopyright} Schubert – Wolkowski, Email 2008.

7.\texttt{\textcopyright}d2. This sacrifice is recommended by R. Pert in his book about the Trompovsky Attack. 7...\texttt{\textcopyright}xb2 8.\texttt{\textcopyright}e2 c4. Black lags in development indeed, so it is essential for him to keep the position closed for as long as possible. 9.\texttt{\textcopyright}c2 \texttt{\textcopyright}c6 10.0–0 \texttt{\textcopyright}a3 11.e4 e6\texttt{\textcopyright} White has the initiative, but it may be only sufficient to maintain the equality.

7...g6 8.dxc5 \texttt{\textcopyright}xc5

Black develops his forces analogously to the popular variation of the Slav Defence (1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\texttt{\textcopyright}f3 \texttt{\textcopyright}f6 4.\texttt{\textcopyright}b3 dxc4 5.\texttt{\textcopyright}xc4 \texttt{\textcopyright}f5 6.g3).

9.\texttt{\textcopyright}f3 \texttt{\textcopyright}bd7 10.\texttt{\textcopyright}bd2 \texttt{\textcopyright}g7 11.\texttt{\textcopyright}b3 \texttt{\textcopyright}b6 12.h3 a5

It would be useful for Black to provoke the move a4, so that White’s queen would be forced to protect the knight on b3.

13.a4 0–0 14.0–0 \texttt{\textcopyright}e4 15.\texttt{\textcopyright}ad1 e5 16.\texttt{\textcopyright}h2 \texttt{\textcopyright}d6 17.\texttt{\textcopyright}e2 \texttt{\textcopyright}c6\texttt{\textcopyright}

White’s pieces exert some pressure against his opponent’s centre, but this is obvious insufficient to fight for the advantage in the opening, Cruzado Duenas – Stephan, ICCF 2013.
3.\textbf{\textit{f4}}

In this chapter we will analyse this seemingly harmless variation for Black. At first sight, he should not have any problems, because he advances with tempo e7-e5, attacking White’s bishop (\textit{\textit{g7}}, 0-0, d6, \textit{\textit{bd7}, \textit{e8}, e7-e5}). Still, things are far from simple. The move 3.f4 has venom, because in numerous variations White’s dark-squared bishop may exert powerful pressure on the h2-b8 diagonal and this forces Black to play precisely.

As a rule, White’s alternatives transpose to variations from other chapters of our book.

About 3.c3 \textit{\textit{g7}} 4.\textit{\textit{g5}} (4.f4 0-0 – see 3.f4; 4.bd2 0-0 – see 3.bd2; 4.h3 0-0 – see 3.h3) 4...0-0 – see Chapter 8.

3.bd2. White is preparing e2-e4. 3...\textit{\textit{g7}} 4.c3 (4.e3 0-0 – see 3.e3; 4.e4 d6 – see Chapter 12) 4...0-0 5.e4 d6 – see Chapter 12.

3.c3 \textit{\textit{g7}} 4.e4 (4.f4 d6 – see 3.f4; 4.g5 d6 – see Chapter 8) 4...d6 – see Chapters 21-23.

3.h3 \textit{\textit{g7}} 4.f4 0-0, or 4.c3 0-0 5.f4 d6 – see 3.f4.

3.b3. This move, as a rule, transposes to other variations. 3...\textit{\textit{g7}} 4.b2 (4.e3 0-0 – see 3.e3) 4...0-0

5.c4 c5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.
5.e3 d6 – see 3.e3.
5.g3 c5 6.c4 (6...g2 cxd4 – see Chapter 9) 6...cxd4 7.d4 d5 8.
8.g2 e5 9.f3 d4= Mufic – Vlasak, Marianske Lazne 2011.
5...d2 d6 6.e4 (6.e3 c5 7.e2
8...cxd4 8.exd4 c6 9.0–0 d5.
Black’s knight is transferred to the f4-square and from there it
will exert powerful pressure against the enemy position. 10.
c4 c4 f4 11.d5 xxb2 12.xb2 b4
13.c4, Breustedt – Zunker, Weil-
burg 1998, 13...e5? =) 6...c5 7.
x5 dxc5 8.e4 dxc6 9.0–0 c7 10.e1
8d8? = -- Black has no
pawn-weaknesses in his position
and his pieces are very actively
placed, Deshpande – Semcesen,
Mumbai 2015.

3.b4. White prepares the fian-
chetto of his dark-squared bishop
and occupies space on the queens-
side. He can hardly continue the
game without the move e3, so af-
ter that will arise, by trans-
position, variations analysed after
3.e3. 3...g7

4.e3 0–0 – see 3.e3.
4.c4 0–0 – see volume 2,
Chapter 6.

Following 4..bd2, Black has
the interesting move 4...d5!?
Now, in order not to lose a pawn
and to defend against the threat
c3, White must develop his
bishop to an unfavourable posi-
tion. 5.a3 a5 6.bxa5 c3!? 7.wc1
d6 8.e3 0–0 9.d3 c5= – Black
will regain easily his pawn and his
initiative will be rather difficult
for White to neutralise.

4..b2 0–0 5..bd2 (5.c4 d6 –
see volume 2, Chapter 6; 5.e3
d6 – see 3.e3) 5...d6 6.e4. After this
move, there arises an original po-

dition. (6.e3 bd7 – see 3.e3.) 6...
bd7 7..e2 (It would be worse for
White to choose here 7..d3, be-
cause Black’s transfer of the knight
to the f4-square would be very
strong. 7...h5 8.0–0, Arkell –
Franklin, Purley 2013, 8..f4?)
7..e5 8.dxe5, Mateuta – Jianu,
Tusnad 2004. Here, the simplest
road for Black to equality would
be 8..xe5!? 9.xe5 dxe5= He
does not have any problems what-
soever, because it would be very
dangerous for White to accept the
pawn-sacrifice. 10.xe5? e7! 11.
f4 d8 12.d3 a5! This is a fight
for the c5-square. Black’s initia-
tive is very powerful. It is bad for
White to opt here for 13.b5?!, be-
cause of 13...g4 14.c1 c5 15.
b3 b6= and he would hardly
manage to evacuate his king away
from the centre without material
losses.

3.e3 After this move we will
analyse only variations in which
White does not play c2-c4, since that would transpose to the King’s Indian Defence. 3...\(\text{g}7\)

4.c4 0–0 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.

4.b3 0–0 5.\(\text{b}2\) (5.\(\text{e}2\) d6 – see 4.\(\text{e}2\) 5...d6 6.\(\text{e}2\) (6.c4 e5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A) 5...d6 6.\(\text{bd}2\) – see 4.\(\text{e}2\).

4.\(\text{bd}2\) 0–0 5.b4 (5.\(\text{e}2\) d6 – see 4.\(\text{e}2\); 5.\(\text{d}3\) d6 – see 4.\(\text{d}3\) 5...d6 6.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{bd}7\) – see 4.b4.

It would be too passive for White to choose here 4.c3 0–0 5.\(\text{d}3\) (5.\(\text{e}2\) d6 6.0–0 \(\text{bd}7\)) 5...d6 6.0–0 \(\text{bd}7\) 7.\(\text{bd}2\) e5 8.e4 exd4!? 9.cxd4 c5 10. d5 (10.\(\text{b}3\) cxd4 11.\(\text{fxd}4\) d5\(\uparrow\) Diaz Velandia – Esplugas Esteve, Amposta 2015) 10...\(\text{g}4\)\(\uparrow\)

4.\(\text{d}3\) 0–0 5.0–0 (5.c3 d6 – see 4.c3; 5.\(\text{bd}2\) d6 6.0–0 \(\text{bd}7\) – see 5.0–0) 5...d6 6.\(\text{bd}2\) (6.c3 \(\text{bd}7\) – see 4.c3) 6...\(\text{bd}7\) 7.\(\text{b}3\) (7.c3 e5 8.e4 – see the Pirc Defence, but with an extra tempo for Black.) 7...e5 8.\(\text{b}2\). It seems more reasonable to fianchetto this bishop with the other bishop placed on e2 and not on d3. 8...\(\text{e}8\) 9.dxe5 \(\text{g}4\) 10.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{g}xe5\) 11.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 12.\(\text{e}2\), Petersen – Nielsen, Randers 1970, 12...

4.b4 0–0 5.\(\text{b}2\) (5.\(\text{e}2\) d6 – see 4.\(\text{e}2\); 5.c4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A) 5...d6 6.\(\text{bd}2\) (6.\(\text{e}2\) e5 – see 4.\(\text{e}2\); 6.\(\text{c}4\) e5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A) 6...\(\text{bd}7\)

7.c4 e5 8.dxe5 \(\text{g}4\) 9.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{gxe}5\) 10.\(\text{b}3\) a5 11.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 12.a3, Geiser – Kr.Georgiev, Cannes 1990, 12...\(\text{g}5\)\(\uparrow\)

7.\(\text{e}2\) e5 8.dxe5 \(\text{g}4\) 9.\(\text{d}4\), Larsen – Bielicki, La Plata 1997 (9.c4 \(\text{gxe}5\) – see 7.c4) 9...\(\text{gxe}5\)\(\uparrow\)

7.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{e}8\) 8.\(\text{c}4\) b6 9.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{b}7\) 10.0–0 c5= Arkell – Rowson, Edinburgh 1996.

4.\(\text{e}2\) 0–0

5.c4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.
Chapter 7

5. \( \text{b}2 \) d6 6.0-0 \( \text{bd}7 \) – see 5.0-0.

5.b3 d6 6.0-0 \( \text{bd}7 \), or 6.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{bd}7 \) 7.0-0 e5, or 7.c4 b6 8.0-0 \( \text{b}7 \) – see 5.0-0.

5.b4 d6 6.\( \text{b}2 \) (6.0-0 e5 – see 5.0-0) Black exploits the defencelessness of the enemy bishop on b2 and advances immediately 6...e5, equalising completely. 7.dxe5 (7.c4 exd4 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A) 7...\( \text{fd}7 \) 8.c4 \( \text{c}6 \) 9.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{dxe}5 \) 10.\( \text{xe}5 \) \( \text{xe}5= \) Mrkonjic – Nurkic, Tuzla 2010.

5.0-0 d6

6.c4 \( \text{bd}7 \) – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

Following 6.\( \text{bd}2 \) \( \text{bd}7 \) and then e7-e5, Black at least equalises.

6.b4 e5 7.\( \text{b}2 \) exd4 8.exd4 \( \text{d}5= \) Scholbach – Hillmann, Leipzig 2004.

6.b3 \( \text{bd}7 \) 7.\( \text{b}2 \). White is trying to prevent e7-e5, but Black can change his plan a bit by playing at first 7...b6, with the idea \( \text{b}7 \), \( \text{e}4 \) and advance e7-e5 only later. 8.c4 \( \text{b}7 \) 9.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{e}4 \) 10.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{xc}3 \) \( \text{xe}3 \) 11.\( \text{xc}3 \) e5 12.dxe5 (12.d5, Eliskases – Seitz, Zuerich 1935, 12...a5!?=) 12...dxe5 13.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 14.b4 \( \text{fd}8= \) – Black has obtained

an excellent position and his later plans include c7-c5 and e5-e4, occupying additional space and beginning a fight for the advantage, Gedevanishvili – Gufeld, Kutans 1978.

3...\( \text{g}7 \)

Now, White has a choice between A) 4.\( \text{bd}2 \), preparing e2-e4, and the more logical move B) 4.e3.

About 4.c4 0-0 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.

The move 4.\( \text{c}1 \) was played once by World Champion number 2 – Emanuel Lasker and was tried sometimes after that too. White trades the dark-squared bishops indeed, but loses too much time in the process and Black equalises effortlessly. 4...0-0 5.\( \text{h}6 \) d5 6.\( \text{x}7 \) \( \text{xg}7 \) 7.e3 c5 8.e2 \( \text{c}6= \) Kishazi – Janvari, Hungary 1997.

4.h3 0-0 5.e3 (5.c3 d6 – see 4.c3; 5.\( \text{bd}2 \) d6 – see variation A) 5...d6 – see variation B1.

4.c3 0-0 5.h3 (5.\( \text{bd}2 \) d6 – see variation A; 5.e3 d6 – see var-
1.d4  \( \text{\#f6} \) 2.e3 g6 3.d3g6 4.e3 4.c3 5.d6 6.e3 (6.e3 \( \text{\#bd2} \) \( \text{\#bd7} \) – see variation A) 6..\( \text{\#bd7} \) – see variation B1.

4..\( \text{\#c3d6} \) 5.d6 (5.e4 0–0 – see Chapter 21) 5..\( \text{\#g4} \)? 6.e6 \( \text{\#h6} \) \( \text{\#xh6} \) 7.d6 \( \text{\#xf3} \) 8.exf3, Kluger – Bujan, Prague 1954, 8..d5= Black evacuates his king to the queenside: a7-a6, \( \text{\#d6} \), \( \text{\#c6} \) (or \( \text{\#bd7} \)), 0–0–0 obtaining a quite acceptable position.

A) 4.e3 0–0

\[ \]

5.c3

5.e3 d6 – see variation B.

5.h3 d6 6.e4 (6.e3 \( \text{\#bd7} \) – see variation B1; 6.c3 \( \text{\#bd7} \) – see 5.c3) 6..c6 – see 5.e4.

5.e4 d6

6.e4

White has occupied the centre with his pawns, but this is not a great achievement, because Black advances e7-e5 effortlessly and equalises completely.

6.e3 \( \text{\#bd7} \) – see variation B.

6.h3 \( \text{\#bd7} \) 7.e4 (7.e3 \( \text{\#e8} \) – see variation B1) 7..e5 – see 6.e4.

6..\( \text{\#bd7} \)
7.\textit{\textbf{c4}}

7.\textit{\textbf{xe2}} 8.0-0 \textit{\textbf{e5}} 9.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}} dxe5= Hronik – Valenta, Tatranske Zruby 2010.

After the slow move 7.h3, White may even fail to equalise. 7...\textit{\textbf{e5}}! Black exploits the insufficient protection of the e4-pawn and can accomplish this thematic pawn-advance even without the preparatory moves \textit{\textbf{e8}}, or \textit{\textbf{e8}}. 8.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}} dxe5

After 9.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}}, White cannot hold on to his extra pawn. 9...\textit{\textbf{e8}} 10.\textit{\textbf{xd7}} \textit{\textbf{xe4}} 11.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{xe4}}+ 12.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{xd7}}. Black has restored the material balance. His lead in development enables him to even fight for the opening advantage.

13.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 14.\textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{e6}} 15.0-0 \textit{\textbf{d8}} 16.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{c6}}\textsuperscript{=} White has evacuated his king away from the centre, but he is too far from complete equality, because Black’s pieces are much more actively placed.

9.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 10.\textit{\textbf{c4}} b6 11.0-0 \textit{\textbf{b7}} 12.\textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{c5}}. Black exerts pressure against the e4-pawn and forces White to part with his powerful dark-squared bishop. 13. \textit{\textbf{xc5}} \textit{\textbf{xc5}} 14.b4 \textit{\textbf{e7}} 15.a4 a5\textsuperscript{=} – Black’s bishop-pair provides him with better prospects, Kamsky – Guseinov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013.

7...\textit{\textbf{e5}}!?

Thanks to this tactical possibility, connected with \textit{\textbf{f6xe4}}, Black can accomplish this pawn-break without preparation and equalise completely.

8.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}}

9.\textit{\textbf{xex5}}

9.\textit{\textbf{g5}}?! h6 10.\textit{\textbf{xf6}} \textit{\textbf{xf6}} 11.0-0 b6\textsuperscript{=} – White does not have any compensation for his opponent’s two-bishop advantage, Bellin – Emms, England 2010.
9...\(\textit{dxe5}\) 10.\(\textit{dxe5}\) \(\textit{dxe4}\) 11. \(\textit{dxg7}\) \(\textit{fge8}\) 12.\(\textit{dxe4}\) \(\textit{dxe4}\)+ 13.\(\textit{f1}\) \(\textit{xd1\#}\) 14.\(\textit{xd1}\) \(\textit{xdg7}\)= – The tactical complications are over. The position has been simplified considerably. Black has regained the sacrificed pawn and the most likely outcome of the game would be a draw.

B) 4.e3

This plan seems to be more reliable than advancing e2-e4, because White protects his d4-pawn and this is quite reasonable.

4...0–0

We will analyse in details now:

B1) 5.h3 and B2) 5.\(\textit{xe2}\).

About 5.c4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

5.c3 d6 6.\(\textit{bd2}\) (6.\(\textit{xe2}\) \(\textit{bd7}\) – see variation B2); 6.h3 \(\textit{bd7}\) – see variation B1) 6...\(\textit{bd7}\) 7.\(\textit{c4}\) (7.h3 – see 5.h3) 7...\(\textit{e8}\). Black accomplishes effortlessly the thematic pawn-advance e7-e5 and obtains an excellent position. 8. 0–0 e5 9.\(\textit{g5}\) a6 10.a4 b6 11.\(\textit{xe1}\) \(\textit{b7}\)= Black’s game is easier, because he has the possibility to decide when to push e5-e4, occupying space and beginning active actions in the centre and on the kingside, Nogueiras – Jimenez Fraga, Ciego de Avila 2010.

After 5.\(\textit{bd2}\), Black should also prepare \(e7\)-e5. 5...d6

6.c3 \(\textit{bd7}\) – see 5.c3.
6.h3 \(\textit{bd7}\) – see variation B1.
6.\(\textit{xe2}\) \(\textit{bd7}\) – see variation B2.

6.\(\textit{c4}\) \(\textit{bd7}\) 7.0–0 (7.\(\textit{c3}\) \(\textit{e8}\) – see 5.c3; 7.h3 \(\textit{e8}\) – see variation B1) 7...\(\textit{e8}\) 8.e4 (8.c3 e5 – see 5.c3; 8.h3 e5 – see variation B1) e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\(\textit{g3}\) \(\textit{h5}\) 11.c3 a5 12.\(\textit{e1}\) \(\textit{b6}\) 13.\(\textit{f1}\) \(\textit{xg3}\) 14.hxg3, Appel – Vaganian, Germany 1994, 14...\(\textit{e6}\)! – Black’s powerful bishop-pair provides him with better chances.

B1) 5.h3

In this pawn-structure White plays this move very often. Now, he should not be afraid that after \(\textit{h5}\) he might need to part with
his powerful dark-squared bishop.

5...d6

6.c3

This move is solid, but somewhat passive. The point is that after Black advances e7-e5, in order for White to create some pressure on the h2-b8 diagonal, he would need to advance his c-pawn (c2-c4-c5), in order to attack the enemy d6-pawn. With a white pawn on c3, this important pawn-advance would be connected with a loss of a tempo.

It is better for White to play here 6.&e2 &bd7 – see variation B2.

6.c4 c5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

6.&bd2 &bd7 7.&e2 (7.c3 &e8 – see 6.c3) 7...&e8 – see variation B2.

White cannot create any problems for his opponent with 6.&c4 &bd7 7.&bd2 (7.c3 &e8 – see

6.c3; 7.0-0 &e8 8.&bd2 e5 – see 7.&bd2; 8.c3 e5 – see 6.c3) 7...&e8 8.0-0 e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.&&h2 Black’s plans include e5-e4 and &e5, but before that it would be useful for him to play &e7. 11.&e2 e4 12.&d4 &e5 13.a4 Calvo Minguez – Weidemann, Germany 1985 13...&d8!= Black has obtained a very good position. Later, he can play c7-c5, ousting the enemy knight away from the centre, or can exchange on c4, obtaining the two-bishop advantage.

6...&bd7

7.&c4

7.&e2 &e8 – see variation B2.

7.&h2 &e8 8.&e2 e5 – see variation B2.

After 7.&d3, White covers the d-file and in order to advance e7-e5, Black can also play 7...&e8!?, for example: 8.&g5 e5= Tribuiani – Chatalbashev, San Benedetto 1999.
Black can react in the same way after 7.\textit{\u0107}bd2 \textit{\u0107}e8.

Following 8.\textit{\u0107}c4, it will not be easy for White to increase the pressure against the f7-square. 8...e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\textit{\u0107}h2 h6 11. \textit{\u0107}c2 e4 12.\textit{\u0107}d4, Steinhoff – Vescovi, Guarapuava 1992, 12...\textit{\u0107}e5!?

8.\textit{\u0107}h2 e5 9.dxe5 \textit{\u0107}xe5 10.\textit{\u0107}xe5 dxe5 11.\textit{\u0107}f3 \textit{\u0107}d7 12.\textit{\u0107}e2 \textit{\u0107}e7 13. 0–0 a5\textsuperscript{+} – Black’s pawn on e5 restricts considerably White’s knight and bishop, Zhou – Lou, China 2015.

8.\textit{\u0107}c4, Bronstein – Kremenietsky, Tallinn 1980. White prevents e7-e5. It is however understandable that the placement of the knight on c4 is not stable. 8...b5!? Black ousts immediately the enemy knight from its active position. 9.\textit{\u0107}cd2 \textit{\u0107}b8 10.\textit{\u0107}e2 e5= – Black’s pieces are active, while White is incapable of exploiting the weakening of Black’s queenside pawn-structure.

7...\textit{\u0107}e8

After Black advances e7-e5, he usually follows this with \textit{\u0107}e7 and it may seem that the move 7...\textit{\u0107}e8 loses a tempo. He has to do this however, since he cannot advance e7-e5 without it, because the move 7...\textit{\u0107}e8?? loses due to 8. \textit{\u0107}xf7+! \textit{\u0107}xf7 9.\textit{\u0107}g5+ \textit{\u0107}g8 10. \textit{\u0107}e6++ and Black must part with his queen.

8.0–0

8.\textit{\u0107}h2 e5 9.0–0 a6 – see 8.0–0.

8...e5

9.\textit{\u0107}h2

White should better not exchange on e5.

Or 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\textit{\u0107}h2 \textit{\u0107}e7 11. \textit{\u0107}bd2 e4 12.\textit{\u0107}d4 \textit{\u0107}e5 13.\textit{\u0107}e2 c5\textsuperscript{+} and Black ousts the enemy knight from the centre, Truskavetsky – Kovytev, Kharkov 2004. He has more space and the weak d3-square in White’s camp may hurt him in the future.

9...a6 10.a4

White should better prevent the pawn-advance b7-b5.

Following 10.\textit{\u0107}bd2, Black can occupy advantageously additional
space in the centre and on the queenside with 10...e4 11...e1 b5 12...e2 d6
tion Black could have tried to play for a win: 14...b8!? 15...c2
d8??, followed by h7-h5, d8-h7-g5 with good attacking possibilities.

10...b6

Black’s knight on d7 must protect the e5-pawn and impedes the development of the bishop on c8, so he must make this move in order to prepare the development of his bishop on b7. Its placement there is not bad at all, since it will support the pawn-advance e5-e4.

11...e2 b7 12...d1 e7

White prepares castling kingside.

5...d6 6.h3

In this variation the best square for White’s dark-squared bishop is h2.

6...e2 b8 – see 6.h3.

6...e4 5 – see volume 2, Chapter 6, variation A.

6...d2 b7 7.h3 (7.0–0 e8 – see 6.0–0) 7...e8 – see 6.h3.

White’s attempt to continue the game without the move h3 will not be successful. 6.0–0
d2 7.e4 (7.h3 e8 – see 6.h3; 7...d2 e8=, followed by e7-e5.)
7...e5! This move equalises immediately. 8.dxe5 dxe4 9...c2 dxe5=

14...e1, Mokry – Ceschia, Reggio Emilia 1982. In this posi-
Now, White must comply with an equal position, since his attempt to win a pawn may end in a disaster: 10.\textit{ex}e5?! \textit{ex}e5 11.\textit{fx}e4 \textit{fx}e5 12.\textit{xd}d5 \textit{xd}d3\texttt{=} – Black’s pieces are tremendously active, Hickl – Kasper, Email 2009.

\textit{6...\texttt{bd}7}

\textit{7.0–0}

7.\textit{h}h2 \textit{e}8 8.c4 (8.0–0 \textit{e}5 – see 7.0–0; 8.c3 \textit{e}5 – see 7.c3) 8...\textit{e}4 9.0–0 \textit{e}5 – see 7.0–0.

After 7.c4, Black equalises immediately with 7...\textit{e}5! 8.dxe5 \textit{e}4= Matzdorf – Pieper, Wuertemberg 1996.

7.c3 \textit{e}8 8.\textit{h}h2 (8.0–0 \textit{e}5 – see 7.0–0; 8.\textit{c}2 \textit{e}5 9.\textit{h}h2 \textit{b}6 – see 8.\textit{h}h2) 8...\textit{e}5 9.\textit{c}2 (9.0–0 \textit{e}7 – see 7.0–0) 9...\textit{b}6 10.0–0 \textit{xb}7 11.a4 \textit{a}6 12.b4 \textit{e}7 13.\textit{d}d1 \textit{e}4\texttt{=} – Black’s pieces are harmoniously developed and he has excellent prospects for active play on the kingside with f7–f5, Speelman – Howell, England 2006.

Following 7.\textit{bd}2, Black can prepare \textit{e}7–\textit{e}5 with the move 7...\textit{e}8?!?

\textit{8.\textit{h}h2 \textit{e}5 9.dxe5 \textit{xe}5 10.\textit{xe}5 (10.0–0 \textit{xf}3+ 11.\textit{xf}3 \textit{d}5 12.c3 \textit{c}6= Nguyen – Wang, Budapest 1999) 10...dxe5 11.\textit{c}4, Nguyen – Szuk, Hungary 2000. White is trying to create pressure against the enemy \textit{e}5-pawn. Still, Black should not be afraid of this, since he can simply sacrifice it. 11...\textit{e}7?!= Now, it would be horribly risky for White to capture on \textit{e}5. 12.\textit{xe}5 (12.\textit{xe}5?! \textit{b}5 13.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 14.\textit{d}d2 \textit{xb}2 15.\textit{b}1 \textit{c}3\texttt{=} – Black’s bishops are very dangerous and the pin of the knight on \textit{d}2 will cause great troubles for White.) 12...\textit{e}4 13.\textit{d}3 \textit{xb}2! After this simple tactical operation Black regains the sacrificed pawn 14.\textit{xb}2 \textit{b}4+ 15.\textit{f}1 \textit{xb}2\texttt{=} – He has a superior development and a better pawn-structure.

7...\textit{e}8

\textit{8.c}4

(diagram)

This is White’s most ambitious move.
10.a4 \(\text{Qe}4\) 11.\(\text{Qbd}2\) \(\text{Qxd}2\) 12.\(\text{Qxd}2\), A.Hoffman – Epishin, Oviedo 1991, 12...a5!?=, followed by b7-b6, \(\text{b7}\). Black’s position is very solid.

8...e5 9.\(\text{Sh}2\)

9...\(\text{De}4!\)?

This is an important moment. Black should not allow the development of the enemy knight to the c3-square.

Black’s difficulties and White’s basic plans after 9...\(\text{We}7\) can be well illustrated by the game Spassky – Bukic, Bugojno 1978. 10.\(\text{Dc}3\) e4?! This is a mistake. Black only enlarges the scope of action of the bishop on h2. 11.\(\text{Qd}2\) \(\text{We}8\) 12.\(\text{Qb}5\) \(\text{Wd}8\) 13.c5! After this move Black fails to hold on to his pawn-barrier on the h2-b8 diagonal. 13...a6 14.cxd6! White sacrifices a piece and seizes firmly the initiative. 14...\(\text{axb}5\) 15.\(\text{dx}c7\) \(\text{Wc}7\) 16.\(\text{Exb}5\)± White has three pawns for the sacrificed knight and what is most important – his c7-pawn is just a square away from promo-
tion and his d-pawn may come to its help at any moment (d4-d5-d6).

10.\textit{bd2}
White must comply with the exchange of the knight and this would facilitate Black's defence considerably. After White's alternatives, Black would not have any problems at all.

10.a4 f5 11.a5 \textit{h8} 12.\textit{a}3, Hasangatin – Tomilova, Pardubice 2007, 12...a6!?∞

10.\textit{a}3 a6 11.\textit{c}2 f5 12.\textit{ab}1, Rosso – Marcinkiewicz, IECG 2007, 12...b6!?∞, and in both variations the edge of the board is not a good place for White's knight.

Following 10.\textit{c}2 f5 11.a4 (After 11.\textit{c}3 \textit{xc}3 12.\textit{xc}3 \textit{h}8 13.\textit{ad}1 b6= White can hardly break his opponent's solid position, Haubner – Woestmann, Email 2008.) 11...a5 12.\textit{a}3 c6 13.\textit{fe}1 \textit{d}8 14.\textit{ad}1 \textit{e}8 15.\textit{d}3 \textit{g}5 16.\textit{g}5 \textit{xd}5∞ – Black has excellent prospects on the kingside, while White must lose time in order to activate his knight on a3, Hagberg – Sutkus, ICCF 2012.

It would be just bad for White to play 10.\textit{c}3, because of 10...\textit{xc}3 11.bxc3 b6! This is the most precise move for Black. He does not allow the pawn-break c4-c5. 12.a4 a5 13.\textit{d}2 f5 – White has no compensation for his doubled c-pawns, Anastasian – Gligoric, Yerevan 1989.

10...\textit{xd}2 11.\textit{xd}2

11...\textit{e}7!?∞
This is the most reliable move for Black. He keeps the e5-pawn as a barrier against the enemy bishop on h2.

Still, it is possible for Black to try the riskier line: 11...e4 12.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}7 13.\textit{c}2 f5 14.b4 g5 15.c5 \textit{f}6∞ and in this complicated position with mutual chances Black’s play on the kingside is connected with the pawn-break
Chapter 7

f5-f4, followed by g5-g4, Jussupow – Tukmakov, Ashkhabad 1978.

12.\texttt{B}\texttt{fd}1

12.\texttt{B}\texttt{ad}1 a5 13.\texttt{B}\texttt{b}3 \texttt{B}\texttt{e}8= Vifian – Epishin, San Bernardino 1992.

12...a5

With this and his next move, Black takes precaution against the enemy possibilities b2-b4 and c4-c5.

13.\texttt{B}\texttt{ac}1 b6 14.\texttt{dxe}5

White would not achieve much with the move 14.\texttt{b}3, Cherednichenko – Makropoulou, Rijeka 2010, 14...\texttt{B}\texttt{e}8!?

14...\texttt{dxe}5= Beavan – Sesko, ICCF 2011.

Black does not have any pawn-weaknesses, while White’s knight on f3 and his bishop on h2 are restricted by the e5-pawn. After the seemingly active move 15.\texttt{B}\texttt{d}5, White would not obtain anything, because of Black’s simple response 15...\texttt{B}\texttt{b}8\texttt{#}
Chapter 8  
1.d4 őf6 2.őf3 g6 3.őg5  
The Torre Attack  

In this chapter we will analyse this solid and reliable move for White. He is not trying to refute immediately Black's set-up, connected with the fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop. White's basic task is to play safe against Black's possible counterplay. It is worth mentioning that this particular set-up (with colours reversed) is considered to be one of the best for Black against the Reti Opening: 1.őf3 d5 2.g3 őf6 3.őg2 őg4. Still, when you play with the White pieces, you should try to obtain an advantage in the opening and not just a solid position. Therefore the move 3.őg5 is not encountered so often in the tournament practice for White as some other moves. It is usually chosen in two particular cases: 1) When the player with White considers that his opponent is superior to him in tactics and the calculation of variations. 2) When White wishes to avoid entering theoretical disputes in the King's Indian Defence, or in the Gruenfeld Defence.  

3...őg7  

4.őbd2  
White can hardly continue the game without this move.  
4.c4 0–0 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.  
4.őc3 d6 5.e4 0–0 – see Chapter 21.
Chapter 8

4.c3 0–0 5.\(\text{\$d}2\) (5.e3 d6 – see 4.e3) 5...d6 – see variation C.

4.e3 0–0

5.c4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 6.

5.\(\text{\$d}2\) d6, or 5.c3 d6 6.\(\text{\$d}2\) c5, or 6.\(\text{\$c}2\) b6 7.0–0 \(\text{\$b}7\) 8.\(\text{\$d}2\) c5 – see variation A.

5.\(\text{\$e}2\) c5 6.0–0 (6.\(\text{\$d}2\) d6, or 6.c3 d6 7.\(\text{\$d}2\) b6, or 7.0–0 b6 8.\(\text{\$d}2\) \(\text{\$b}7\) – see variation A) 6...d6 7.c3 (7.c4 \(\text{\$e}4\) 8.\(\text{\$h}4\) cxd4 – see volume 2, Chapter 6) 7...b6 8.\(\text{\$d}2\) \(\text{\$b}7\) – see variation A.

5.\(\text{\$d}3\) d6 6.0–0 (6.\(\text{\$d}2\) c5 – see variation A) 6...c5 7.c3

Now, White is faced with a choice. He may play A) 5.e3, refraining from the immediate occupation of the centre with the move B) 5.e4, which, as you will see later, is somewhat premature, or can choose the elastic move C) 5.c3, preserving the possibility to follow with e2-e3, as well as with e2-e4.

A) 5.e3

This is a reliable move, but somewhat passive. White thinks
at the moment about the protection of the key d4-square. It is understandable however, this is not the way to fight for the opening advantage.

5...d6

Black’s further plan is connected with the undermining of White’s centre with c7-c5, or e7-e5 and also with the fianchetto of Black’s light-squared bishop.

White must make up his mind about where to develop his light-squared bishop. All his possibilities – to d3, c4, or e2 have their merits as well as drawbacks.

6.\textd3

It seems a bit slow for him to opt for 6.h3 – White takes precautions against h7-h6, g6-g5, \texth5, but Black did not intend to play like this in the first place. 6...c5 7.c3 b6 8.a4 \textc6 9.\textd3 \textb7 10.0-0 \textc7 11.\texte2 e6∞ Levin – Chigaev, St Petersburg 2014.

6.\textc4. White’s bishop looks active here, but does not participate in the fight for the e4-square.

Therefore, Black’s further plan is connected with the preparation of e7-e5 and eventually e5-e4. 6...\textbd7 7.0-0 (7.c3 c5 – see 6.c3) 7...h6 8.\texth4 \texte8 9.c3 e5

10.e4. White loses a tempo, but prevents e5-e4. (It would not be so reliable for him to opt for 10.b4, Rozentalis – Avrukh, Belgrade 1999, because of 10...e4!? 11.\texte1 \textb6 12.\texte2 \textfd5!+ Later, Black will have a choice between numerous active plans. He can play on the queenside with a7-a5, or can prepare an offensive on the kingside: g6-g5, f7-f5-f4.). 10...\texth5 11.\texte1 (11.dxe5 dxe5 12.\texte1 \textb6= Deviatkin – Kokarev, Voronezh 2011) 11...\textb6 12.\textb3 \textg4 13.h3 \textd7 14.a4 a5= Speelman – Ye, Beijing 1997. White has a pawn-centre indeed, but he can hardly achieve anything real, since Black has no pawn-weaknesses in his camp and has good chances of creating counterplay, connected with pressure against the enemy pawns on a4 and e4, as well as with the penetration of his knight to the f4-square.

6.c3. White is not in a hurry to
choose a square for the development of his bishop on f1. 6...c5

\[ \text{Diagram 1} \]

7.\(\text{d}3\) b6 – see 6.\(\text{d}3\).
7.\(\text{e}2\) b6 – see 6.\(\text{e}2\).

It is not good for White to play 7.\(\text{xf}6\), because after 7...\(\text{exf}6\)? 8.\(\text{d}3\) f5 9.0–0 b6 10.a4 d5\(\text{=}\), Black will have the two-bishop advantage and a very comfortable game, Hernando Rodrigo – Jones, La Laguna 2007.

7.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{bd}7\) 8.0–0 b6. Black has already played c7-c5, so he cannot choose any more the plan, connected with the preparation of the pawn-advance e7-e5, since this would lead to the weakening of the d5-square. Still, the plan with the fianchetto of Black’s light-squared bishop is not bad at all in this position. 9.a4 a6 10.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{b}7\) 11.\(\text{h}4\), Malaniuk – Markowski, Katowice 1993. Here, the simplest way for Black to obtain an acceptable position would be 11...d5!? 12.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{e}8\) 13.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{h}5\)\(\text{=}\) and later \(\text{ex}g3\) and e7-e5. Now, White should be careful not to end up in an inferior position.

It would be a bit passive for White to continue here with 6.\(\text{e}2\) c5 7.\(\text{c}3\) (7.0–0 b6 8.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{b}7\) – see 7.\(\text{c}3\)) 7...b6 8.0–0 \(\text{b}7\)

\[ \text{Diagram 2} \]

9.b4 \(\text{bd}7\) 10.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}7\) 11.\(\text{fc}1\), Miles – Gulko, Groningen 1994. Now, after 11...a5\(\text{=}\), Black would have excellent counterplay on the queenside.

9.a4 \(\text{c}6\) Black’s knight is better placed here, than on d7, because it prevents the pawn-advance a4-a5 and after eventual pawn-exchanges in the centre – cxd4 cxd4, may fight for the important b4-square.

\[ \text{Diagram 3} \]

10.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}7\) 11.\(\text{h}4\) (11.\(\text{fc}1\) e5 12.\(\text{dxc}5\), Ftacnik – Bekker Jensen, Hamburg 1999, 12...\(\text{bxc}5\)\(\text{=}\) – It would not be easy for White to exploit the vulnerability of the d5-square, while Black’s pawn-majority in the centre may be a telling factor in the future.) 11...\(\text{e}5\).
He is not afraid of the weakening of the d5-square, because after 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.e4?! ∆a5=, Black seizes completely the initiative, Spraggett – Rodriguez Lopez, Seville 1994.

White cannot harm his opponent with 10.Śb1 h6 11.Śh4 cxd4 12.cxd4 ∆b4= and the powerful placement of Black’s knight on the b4-square provides him with equality, Kholmov – Gleizerov, Warsaw 1991.

10.Śe1 10...h6 11.Śh4 Śc7 12.Śf1, Malaniuk – Krapivin, Russia 1998 (12.h3 Śe8=). Here, Black has the elastic move 12...e6!?avourites, covering reliably the d5-square and also preparing ∆c6-e7-f5 exchanging Black’s important dark-squared bishop.

6...c5

White’s other possible plan is to begin immediate active actions on the queenside. 9.b4 ∆bd7 10. bxc5 bxc5 11.Śb1 Śc7 12.Śa4 ∆c6 13.Śa3 Śab8= – but Black can hold this position, because he is likely to manage to exchange the rooks on the open b-file, Ryan – Rajmaekers, ICCF 1991.

9.Śe2

This is the best square for White’s queen in this system. From here it will support later the pawn-advance e3-e4.

9.h3 ∆c6 10.Śe1 Śc8 – see 9.Śe1.

White can advance b2-b4 a bit later. 9.a4 ∆c6 10.Śb1 cxd4 11. exd4 Śc7 12.Śa2, Psakhis – Oratoysky, Tel Aviv 1994. But even then, after 12...e6!? White can hardly find an active plan for his further actions, because the ad-
the advancing of his queenside pawns with b2-b4 would lead to the formation of a weakness on c3. If White advances his c-pawn (c3-c4), then the d4-pawn will be weakened.

9.\textit{Be}1 \textit{Qc}6 10.a4 (10.h3 \textit{Bc}8 11.a3 \textit{Bc}7= Sergeev – Kislinsky, Martin 2011) 10...\textit{Bc}7 11.\textit{Be}2 a6= – It is now far from clear what White is supposed to do next, because the pawn-advance e3-e4 would weaken the d4-pawn and also (after the exchange of pawns on d4) to the weakening of the b4-pawn, Chloupek – Babula, Czech Republic 2002.

9...\textit{Qc}6 10.\textit{Bf}d1 \textit{cxd}4 11.\textit{cxd}4 h6 12.\textit{Bh}4

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

12...\textit{Qb}4

Black wishes to oust the enemy bishop from the d3-square. His purpose is to fight for the d5 and e4-squares.

13.\textit{Bc}4 a6 14.\textit{Bb}3 \textit{Ec}8 15.\textit{Ec}1 b5 16.a3 \textit{Bbd}5 17.\textit{Qe}1 \textit{Ed}7 18.\textit{Qd}3 \textit{Ec}1 19.\textit{Ec}1 \textit{Ec}8 20.\textit{Ec}8+ \textit{Bxc}8= Hort – Smyslov, Wijk aan Zee 1972. After the trade of all the rooks on the c-file, the position has been simplified considerably. Black’s knight is very powerful in the centre of the board. White’s attempt to oust it from there with the move e3-e4 would lead to the weakening of his d4-pawn.

\textbf{B) 5.e4}

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

This seemingly strong and logical move does not create any problems for Black, because he can counter it with an energetic strike in the centre.

5...\textit{d}5!?

Now, White has a choice between numerous moves, but not only he has no chances of obtaining an opening advantage, but he must play very accurately in order not to end up in an inferior position.

6.\textit{Exd}5

White gives up immediately the centre.

He has also tried in practice
the move 6...\texttt{exf6}, but this exchange of his powerful bishop for the enemy knight cannot be recommended. 6...\texttt{exf6} 7.\texttt{exd5 \texttt{exd5}}. Black’s doubled f-pawns are not important at all. His two bishops are very powerful. 8.\texttt{\texttt{e2 c5}}. Black must try to open the position with his bishop-pair. 9.c4 (9.dxc5 \texttt{\texttt{xc5}} 10.0-0 f5= Shalimov – Sjugirov, Kharkov 2007) 9...\texttt{d8} 10.d5 f5 11.\texttt{\texttt{c2 e8+}} – The vulnerability of the dark squares in White’s camp is hurting him, moreover that he has problems to evacuate his king away from the centre, Rozentalis – Thiede, Berlin 1999.

Following 6.\texttt{\texttt{d3 dxe4 7.xe4}} \texttt{\texttt{xe4 c5}}, Black has an excellent position.

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

9.c3 \texttt{\texttt{xd4 a5}} 10.\texttt{\texttt{e3 e5}} 12.\texttt{\texttt{b3 c7}} 13.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{d7}} 14.\texttt{\texttt{f3}}. Guimard – R.Garcia, Buenos Aires 1964, 14...\texttt{\texttt{b6!}}=, followed by \texttt{\texttt{c4}} and eventually advancing his pawns in the centre and on the kingside: f7-f5, e5-e4.

9.dxc5 \texttt{\texttt{c7}} 10.c3 \texttt{\texttt{a6}} 11.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{xc5}}. Black has regained his temporary pawn-sacrifice and White is incapable of keeping his bishop on the long diagonal. 12.\texttt{\texttt{c2 b6}}. Black prepares the fianchetto of his second bishop too. 13.\texttt{\texttt{c1 b7}} 15.\texttt{\texttt{e3}}, Sideifzade – Cheparinov, Kocaeli 2015, 15...f6!?= This is his most reliable move. Now, Black will not have any problems with the protection of his central pawn, but also his pawns on f6 and e5 will restrict considerably the enemy knight on f3 and the bishop on g5.

6.e5. This move is too ambitious. Later, White cannot hold on to his centre, because Black can undermine it with f7-f6 and c7-c5. 6...\texttt{\texttt{e4}}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Diagram 2}
\end{center}

7.h4 c5 8.c3 \texttt{\texttt{c6}} 9.\texttt{\texttt{d3 cxd4}} 10.cxd4, Forchert – Roiz, playchess.com 2004, 10...\texttt{\texttt{g4!}}= – Black’s pieces exert powerful pressure against the enemy centre.

White can try to save some time for the retreat of his bishop, but this will not end well for him.

7.\texttt{\texttt{d3 xg5}} 8.\texttt{\texttt{xg5 c5}} 9.h4 h6= Now, White should better retreat his knight, complying with an inferior position, because his compensation would be insufficient if
he would sacrifice a piece. After 10.h5?! h×g5 11.h×g6, Black has the powerful resource 11...g4+ Kalashnikov – Chernyshov, corr. 2002. White’s queen will hardly have an access to the h-file anytime soon and without that his attack has no chances of success at all.

7.∞e3 c5 8.c3. White is trying to preserve his d4-pawn. (8.dxc5 9.∞c7 9.c4, Al Tarbosh – Ramnath, Dubai 2011, 9...∞e6!? 10.cxd5 9∞x4 11.∞xe4 12.∞g5 9∞xe5 13.∞xe4 9∞xe4+ – Black leads in development and his dark-squared bishop exerts pressure against the enemy b2-pawn, so his prospects are preferable, despite White’s bishop-pair.) 8...cxd4 9.cxd4 9∞c6 10.∞e2 f6 11.exf6 exf6 12.0–0 f5+ – Black’s pieces are much more active, Richards – Debevec, ICCF 2006.

6...∞xd5

7.∞c4?! Agzamov – Watson, Frunze 1985, 7...c5?!

White’s attempt to oust immediately the enemy knight from the centre with the move 7.c4 provides Black with good counterplay following 7...h6!? 8.∞h4 9.d4 9.g3, Babujian – Konguvel, Kolkata 2013, 9...∞h5!=, exchanging the important enemy bishop.

After 7.∞c4 c5, White must work hard in order to neutralise his opponent’s initiative. 8.∞b3 (8.c3 cxd4 9.∞xd4 h6 10.∞h4 9∞b6+ Plachetka – Roca, Bled 2002. Both sides have pawn-majorities on the flanks. Black has the advantage, because his pawns in the centre and on the kingside are more mobile.) 8...cxd4 9.∞bxd4 h6 10.∞h4, Brousek – Sauberli, IECC 1999, 10...∞c6!? 11.∞xc6 bxc6+ The weakness of the c6-pawn is not so important, because White will have problems to parry his opponent’s threats on the long diagonal and must still worry not to lose his bishop on h4 (f7-f5, g6-g5, f5-f4).

7.∞b3 a5!? It would be useful for Black to provoke the pawn-advance a4. 8.a4 9d7!? From this square the knight will support both pawn-advances c7-c5, as well as e7-e5. 9.∞d3 h6 10.∞d2 (10.∞h4 9f4+?) 10...e5= – After this freeing move, the prospects of both sides are equal.

7...∞d7 8.∞c4 9∞b6 9.∞b3
It may look that Black will have difficulties advancing c7-c5, because his knight is not on the d7-square. Still, it turns out that his rook on a8 can support this pawn-advance too. In order to do this, Black must play a7-a5-a4 and f3a5.

9...a5 10.a3

Following 10.a4 h6 11.h4, Black may decide not to try to advance c7-c5 and go instead after the enemy bishop on h4. 11...f5!?= Sambuev – Howell, Tromso 2014.

10...a4 11.c2, Popchev – V.Dimitrov, Elenite 1994.

11...f5!? 12.0-0 c5∞ – In this complicated position, Black’s prospects are at least equal.

White postpones for a move the pawn-advance e2-e4.

5...d6 6.e4

Now, it is possible.

6.e3 c5 – see variation A.

After 6.e4, Black can exchange the enemy bishop on g5. 6...h6 7. h4 g5 8.g3 h5 9.e4 e6 10.f1 g3 11.xg3, Kosic – Saric, Dresden 2008, 11...d7!?∞ – Black’s two-bishop advantage compensates his slightly weakened kingside pawn-structure.

6...c5

Now, White can choose with
what pawn-structure to play later. He can acquire more space with \textbf{C1}) 7.d5, or can opt for the more reliable line: \textbf{C2}) 7.dxc5.

After his alternatives White will become the defending side.

For example the move 7.h3 is too passive. 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 d5!? Black begins an attack against the enemy centre. 9.e5 \(\text{\varnothing}e4\) 10.\(\text{\varnothing}e3\) \(\text{\varnothing}c6\) 11.\(\text{\varnothing}d3\) f5 12.\(\text{\varnothing}b3\), Kovacevic – Fercec, Pula 1996, 12...a5!? – Now, White is faced with a rather unpleasant choice. He must either allow a5-a4, or play a2-a4 himself, which would lead to the weakening of the b4-square.

7.\(\text{\varnothing}e2\) cxd4. In this pawn-structure, this exchange is good only if White’s knight is on d2. If it is still on b1, then an exchange like this is bad, because it presents White’s knight with the wonderful c3-square. 8.cxd4 h6

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{ch8-7.png}
\end{center}

The move 9.\(\text{\varnothing}f4\) does not provide White with the control over the e5-square. 9...e5! 10.dxe5 \(\text{\varnothing}h5\) 11.\(\text{\varnothing}e3\) dxe5 12.0–0 \(\text{\varnothing}c6=\) – In this position he must be on the alert about the possible penetration of Black’s knights on the f4 and d4-squares, Davies – Bates, Sunningdale 2008.

9.\(\text{\varnothing}h4\) d5. Now, just like in variation \textbf{B}, this strike in the centre, despite the fact that it is made in two moves and not at once, provides Black with a very good game. 10.\(\text{\varnothing}xf6\). Black will have the two-bishop advantage after this move. (It is hardly any better for White to opt for 10.e5 \(\text{\varnothing}e4\) 11.0–0 \(\text{\varnothing}c6\) – and his d4-pawn will need a permanent protection. For example, after the careless line: 12. \(\text{\varnothing}d3\) g5 13.\(\text{\varnothing}g3\), De la Fuente Gonzalez – Ballestros Gonzalez, Madrid 2005, Black would end up with an extra pawn: 13...g4!? 14. \(\text{\varnothing}h4\) \(\text{\varnothing}xg3\) 15.hxg3 \(\text{\varnothing}xh4\) 10... exf6 11.exd5 \(\mathbb{W}xd5\) 12.0–0 f5 13. \(\text{\varnothing}c4\) \(\mathbb{W}d6\) 14.\(\text{\varnothing}e1\) \(\text{\varnothing}c6\) – Black’s two-bishops may turn out to be very powerful in this open position, Espig – Casper, Fuerstenwalde 1981.

7.\(\text{\varnothing}d3\). White’s bishop is better placed here than on e2; nevertheless, Black will still have the initiative. 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 (It is possible that White should better forget about his ambitions and begin to play for equalising: 8.\(\text{\varnothing}xd4\) \(\text{\varnothing}c6\) 9.\(\text{\varnothing}xc6\) bxc6 10.0–0 a5+ Popchev – Antic, Vrnjaca Banja 1999.) 8...h6 9.\(\text{\varnothing}h4\) \(\text{\varnothing}h5\). White has already difficulties to parry his opponent’s developing initiative (g6-g5, \(\text{\varnothing}f4\), \(\text{\varnothing}c6\)). 10.0–0 g5 11.\(\text{\varnothing}g3\) \(\text{\varnothing}c6\) 12.d5 Now, White does not need to worry about the protection of his d4-pawn any

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more, but his dark squares are weakened. 12...\textit{b}4 13.\textit{e}2 a5 14. \textit{b}3 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{a}c1 \textit{b}8 16.\textit{c}4 b5 17.\textit{e}3 \textit{b}6 18.\textit{f}e1 \textit{f}e8\textsuperscript{†} — Black’s position is more active and he can at least obtain the two-bishop advantage after \textit{g}3, Hebels – Shields, ICCF 2012.

12.\textit{w}e2 \textit{g}7 13.\textit{f}e1 \textit{c}7\textsuperscript{=} and later, he must be very careful, because if the position is opened Black’s bishops will turn into powerful force, Emde – Maugg, Obertsdorf 2003.

\textbf{8...e6}

\textbf{9.dxe6}

This move does not look so convincing, because White cannot support his pawn on d5 in the way, which is typical for the Closed Openings – (c4, \textit{c}3), so he will have great problems to counter Black’s plan, connected with e7-e6.

\textbf{7...h6}

It is useful for Black to include this move.

\textbf{8.\textit{h}4}

Now, he will have the possibility to out the enemy bishop at any moment with the move g6-g5.

White would not achieve anything much with 8.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 9. \textit{c}4 \textit{d}7 10.0–0 a6 11.a4 b6

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{9...\textit{xe}6 10.\textit{c}4}
  \begin{itemize}
    \item About 10.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 11.\textit{c}4,
Villamayor – Paragua, Makati 2002, 11...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}8\) – see 10...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\).

It would not be so good for White to play here 10...\(\textit{\text{b}}\text{b}5\), Kamsky – Jovanovic, Mainz 2009, because after 10...\(\textit{\text{g}}\text{g}5!\)? 11...\(\textit{\text{g}}\text{g}3\) \(\textit{\text{w}}\text{b}6\)†, the lack of protection of his b2-pawn would be hurting him.

Black will not have any problems after 10...\(\textit{\text{d}}\text{d}3\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\), 11.0–0 \(\textit{\text{w}}\text{d}7\) 12...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}1\) \(\textit{\text{h}}\text{h}5\)\(\text{a}2\) Macieja – Ju. Polgar, Budapest 2002, as well as following 10...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\), 11.0–0 \(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}8\) 12...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}1\) a6 13...\(\textit{\text{a}}\text{a}4\) \(\textit{\text{b}}\text{b}8\) 14...\(\textit{\text{f}}\text{f}1\) b5= Dvoiry – Tseitlin, St Petersburg 2000.

10...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}8\)

11...\(\textit{\text{x}}\text{xf6}\)

After 11.0–0 \(\textit{\text{b}}\text{b}7\) 12...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}1\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) 13...\(\textit{\text{g}}\text{g}3\) \(\textit{\text{h}}\text{h}5\), Black exchanges advantageously his knight for the enemy bishop. 14...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}2\) \(\textit{\text{x}}\text{g}3\) 15...\(\textit{\text{h}}\text{h}xg3\) \(\textit{\text{f}}\text{f}6\) 16...\(\textit{\text{a}}\text{a}d1\) a6 17...\(\textit{\text{a}}\text{a}4\) \(\textit{\text{a}}\text{a}d8\)† – threatening d6-d5. Black wishes to force the exchange on e6 after which he will manage to double his rooks on the e-file, exerting powerful pressure against the e4-pawn, Carrasco Martinez – Matamoros Franco, Seville 2006.

11...\(\textit{\text{x}}\text{xf6}\) 12.0–0 \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\) – The vulnerability of the d6-pawn is just symbolic, because White cannot exploit this at all, Hug – Jovanovic, Chur 2010.

C2) 7...\(\textit{\text{d}}\text{xc5}\) \(\textit{\text{d}}\text{xc5}\)

Now, White must choose a square for his bishop: C2a) 8...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\), or C2b) 8...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\).

8...\(\textit{\text{h}}\text{h}3\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\) 9...\(\textit{\text{w}}\text{c}2\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{w}}\text{c}2\) (9...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\); 9...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\).

8...\(\textit{\text{w}}\text{c}2\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\) 9...\(\textit{\text{h}}\text{h}3\) (9...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\); 9...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}7\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}4\)) 9...\(\textit{\text{w}}\text{c}7\) 10...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\) \(\textit{\text{d}}\text{d}8\) – see 8...\(\textit{\text{e}}\text{e}2\).

Following 8...\(\textit{\text{a}}\text{a}4\) \(\textit{\text{c}}\text{c}6\) 9...\(\textit{\text{b}}\text{b}5\) \(\textit{\text{d}}\text{d}7\) 10.0–0, Sergeev – Markowski, Warsaw 2008, 10...\(\textit{\text{d}}\text{d}8\)!\(\text{a}\)∞, Black’s prospects are not worse at all.
1.d4 ½f6 2.½f3 g6 3.½g5 ½g7 4.½bd2 0-0 5.c3 d6 6.e4 c5

C2a) 8.½e2 ½c6

Black’s further plan is connected with the fight for the d-file: ½c7, ½d8.

9.0–0

White can hardly continue the game without castling.

9.½c2 ½c7 10.0–0 ½d8 – see 9.0–0.

9.h3 ½c7 10.½h2 (10.0–0 ½d8 or 10.½c2 ½d8 11.0–0 ½h5 – see 9.0–0) 10...½d8!? After the rather original transfer of White’s knight to the h2-square, Black can counter that with the not less original transfer of his own knight to e6 with the idea to place it later on the f4-square. 11.½e3 ½e6= Sharif – A.Kuzmin, Doha 1993.

9...½c7 10.½c2

About 10.½e1 ½d8 11.½c2 h6, or 10.h3 ½d8 11.½c2 ½h5 – see 10.½c2.

10...½d8

Placing the other rook on d1

11.½fe1

11.h3 ½h5. This is a standard manoeuvre for similar positions. From here, Black’s knight may go later to f4 with the support of his queen from the c7-square. 12.½e3 ½f4 13.½b5, Miles – Konopka, Biel 1995, 13...½d7!?= This is the simplest. It would be too risky for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice. 14.½xc5?! ½b4! 15.½xb4 ½xb5 16.c4 ½c6= – Black’s active pieces and his two powerful bishops are more than enough to compensate his minimal material deficit.

11.½ad1 h6 12.½h4 (12.½xf6. After this exchange, White cannot even dream about an opening advantage. 12...½xf6 13.½c4 ½g4 14.½e3 ½xf3 15.½xf3 e6=, Black covers reliably the d5-square and equalises completely, Flores – Rinesi, ICCF 2004.) 12...½h5 13.½c4 ½e6 14.½e3 ½f4= – The powerful placement of the knight on f4 provides Black with a very good position, Andersen – Rakovic, IECG 2000.

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cannot bring anything special to White. 11...f6 12...h4 g5. The readers have already seen that Black’s game is very simple in this variation. He should simply transfer his knight to the f4-square. 13...f1 e6 14...e3 f4 15...g3 xxe2+. It is always good to have the two-bishop advantage. 16.xxe2 xa5 17.d5 xg7= – White’s knight is very powerful in the centre indeed, but Black’s bishop-pair compensates this fully, Benassi – Esses, IECG 2000.

11...h6 12...h4

After 12...e3, Kovacevic – Cifuentes Parada, Spain 1997, Black has at his disposal a very promising pawn-sacrifice. 12...g4!? 13...xc5 b6 14...e3 (Now, White is forced to control the d4-square, because after 14...a3, Black has the powerful resource 14...d4†) 14...xe3 15.fxe3 b7= White has two powerful bishops, while White’s pawn-structure has been weakened. All this promises Black with more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

12...h5 13...c4

White cannot equalise with 13...g3 xg3 14.hxg3 e6 15...c4 xfc4 16.xxc4 b5 17...e3 e6 18...d1 c4+ Hobber – Lie, Trondheim 2014. Black has occupied space on the queenside. Later, White must be on the alert about the possible transfer of Black’s knight to the d3-square (c6-e5-d3), as well as of his bishop to c5 (g7-f8-c5).

13...e6 14...e3

After 14.a4 g5 15...g3 xg3 16.hxg3, Ogaard – Djurhuus, Oslo 1998, Black may part with his two-bishop advantage, but will occupy additional space on the queenside. 16...xc4!? 17.xxc4 g4 18...d2 e5 19...e2 c4 20.a5 b5 21.axb6 axb6 22.xa8 xxa8† – Black has an edge with his powerful knight deployed at the centre of the board.

14...d7 15...d1 d8 16...d7 d7

White’s defence has not been
facilitated by the trade of a pair of rooks.

17.\textit{\textbf{c}4} \textit{\textbf{xc}4} 18.\textit{\textbf{xc}4} \textit{\textbf{b}5}  
Black occupies space. His plans include c5-c4, followed by the transfer of his knight to d3.

19.\textit{\textbf{e}3} \textit{\textbf{e}6}  
Naturally, Black should not allow the enemy knight to the d5-square.

20.\textit{\textbf{a}4} \textit{\textbf{a}6} 21.\textit{\textbf{ax}b}5 \textit{\textbf{ax}b}5 22.\textit{\textbf{d}1} \textit{\textbf{c}4} 23.\textit{\textbf{g}3} \textit{\textbf{xd}3} 24.\textit{\textbf{hx}g}3,  
Berthelsen – Romizin, ICCF 2006. Here, Black had to continue with 24...\textit{\textbf{b}8}?!?, sending his knight to the d3-square on the route a6(d7)-c5-d3.

C2b) 8.\textit{\textbf{c}4}  
White’s bishop is more actively placed here than on e2, but its position is more vulnerable. Later, Black can oust it from there with the move \textit{\textbf{c}6-a5}.

8...\textit{\textbf{c}6}  

\textbf{9.0-0}  

9.\textit{\textbf{c}2} \textit{\textbf{c}7} 10.0-0 \textit{\textbf{a}5}, or 9.\textit{\textbf{a}4} \textit{\textbf{c}7} 10.0-0 \textit{\textbf{h}6} – see 9.0-0.

9.\textit{\textbf{h}3} \textit{\textbf{c}7} 10.\textit{\textbf{e}2} (10.0-0 – see 9.0-0) 10...\textit{\textbf{a}5} – see 9.\textit{\textbf{e}2}.

9.\textit{\textbf{e}2} \textit{\textbf{c}7}  

10.0-0 \textit{\textbf{d}a}5 – see 9.0-0.  
10.\textit{\textbf{e}3} \textit{\textbf{d}a}5 11.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3 \textit{\textbf{e}6}= Roberts – Hebden, Cardiff 2014.

10.\textit{\textbf{h}3} \textit{\textbf{d}a}5 11.\textit{\textbf{d}d}3 \textit{\textbf{e}6} 12.0-0 \textit{\textbf{f}d}8= Manolache – Sandor, Galatzi 2007.

10.\textit{\textbf{e}5}. White has saved a tempo for castling and has advanced e4-e5. Still, this attempt to seize the initiative is harmless for Black. 10...\textit{\textbf{h}5} 11.\textit{\textbf{e}6} \textit{\textbf{f}6} 12.\textit{\textbf{e}3} \textit{\textbf{a}5} 13.0-0 \textit{\textbf{f}5} 14.\textit{\textbf{d}d}1 \textit{\textbf{c}xc}4 15.\textit{\textbf{w}xc}4 \textit{\textbf{b}6}= – Black has the two-bishop advantage, while White’s pawn on e6 may turn out to be a weakness and not only strength, van Hooff – Pepermans, Lechenicher SchachServer 2013.

9...\textit{\textbf{c}7} 10.\textit{\textbf{e}2}  
White’s queen will support the pawn-advance e4-e5 from this square, but naturally, Black is not forced to allow that.

After White’s alternatives, it is only Black who can fight for the advantage.
10.a4 h6 11.\h4 \h5. Black's knight is following a route, which we know from the variation C2a. 12.\e1 \g4 – see 10.\e1.

10.h3. This move seems a bit slow. 10...h6 11.\e3 \d8 12.\w c2 b6 13.\e ad1 (13.\e e2 \b7 14.b4 cxb4 15.\w cxb4 \e ac8 16.\w ac1 \w d6\f6 – Black's pieces have been more harmoniously deployed, Doppelhammer – Rada, ICCF 2014) 13...\b7 14.\w e1 e6 15.\w f1 \e ac8 16.\d c4, A.Onischuk – Smirin, Tashkent 2015. Here, Black has an interesting idea 16...g5?!\f7, followed by a transfer of his knight to g6. White must be also on the alert about Black’s possibility g5–g4.

White can hardly equalise after 10.\w c2 \a5 11.\w e2 h6 12.\h4 \h5 13.\w e f1 \w f4 15.\g3 \w e2+ 16.\w e2 \w b6\f6 – Black's bishop-pair provides him with a slight but stable advantage, Niebrauer – Krueger, Berlin 2008.

10.\e1 h6 11.\h4 \h5

White's position is not good after 12.\w e2, since following 12...\a5 13.\w b5 a6 14.\w a4 b5 15.\w c2, Carlsen – Inarkiev, Baku 2008, 15...\w f4?! 16.\w e3 e5\f6, Black seizes completely the initiative.

12.\w c2 \g4 13.\w g3 (13.\w a4 \w ad8 – see 12.a4) 13...\w xg3 14.\w xg3 Black has a very pleasant choice in this position. He can prepare the development of his bishop on h6, or can seize additional space on the queenside with 14...a6 (14...h5 15.\w h4 \w f 5\f7 Vitiugov – Safarli, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013; 15.\w f1 \w f6\f7 Burmakin – Kurnosov, Ulan Ude 2009) 15.\w e2 b5\f7, and in both lines his bishop-pair provides Black with superior chances, Salov – Chiburdanidze, USSR 1982.

12.a4 \g4 13.\w c2 \w ad8 14.\w g3 (14.\w e3 \a5 15.\w f1, Jadrijevic – Bukal, Zagreb 2007, 15...\w e6!\f7) 14...\w xg3 15.\w xg3 \a5 16.\w a2 c4\f7 Kovacevic – Chiburdanidze, Vinkovci 1982.

It is possible that White would have more chances of equalising after 12.\w f1 \w d8?! 13.\w c2 \w g4\f6

10...\a5 11.\a3

11.e5 \w x c 4 12.\w x c 4 \w d 5 13.\w e4 \w e6= – White's e5-pawn restricts his opponent's bishop on g7; nevertheless, Black's bishop-pair provides him with at least equal chances, Carlsen – Gelfand, Zurich 2014.

11...h6

12.\b3 \g4\f6 Itkis – Aronian, Bucharest 1999.
Black wishes to eliminate White’s bishop from the protection of the f4-square.

12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}}4}

After 12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}}3} \textit{\textbf{g}4} 13.\textit{\textbf{c}4} \textit{\textbf{x}c4} 14.\textit{\textbf{x}c4} \textit{\textbf{x}e3} 15.\textit{\textbf{w}xe3}, Black has at his disposal the energetic resource 15...b5 16.\textit{\textbf{w}xb5} \textit{\textbf{b}8} 17.a4 a6 18.\textit{\textbf{c}4} \textit{\textbf{x}b2} – The exchange of the pawns on the b-file has turned out to be in favour of Black, because White’s c3-pawn has become weak, Jacquin – Gerhardt, ICCF 2009.

Following 12.\textit{\textbf{x}f6}, Black’s simplest reaction would be 12... \textit{\textbf{x}f6}?, preventing e4-e5. 13.\textit{\textbf{c}4} \textit{\textbf{x}c4} 14.\textit{\textbf{x}c4} \textit{\textbf{e}8} 15.\textit{\textbf{f}e1} f5 16.e5 \textit{\textbf{e}6} 17.\textit{\textbf{e}6} \textit{\textbf{e}6} 18.\textit{\textbf{d}d1} \textit{\textbf{e}e8} – The pressure against the e4-pawn compensates fully Black’s slightly weakened pawn-structure, Bellegotti – Cutillas Ripoll, ICCF 2007.

12...\textit{\textbf{h}5} 13.\textit{\textbf{w}e3} \textit{\textbf{d}8}?

Black begins a fight for the d-file.

14.\textit{\textbf{c}2} \textit{\textbf{g}5} 15.\textit{\textbf{g}3}

The piece-sacrifice 15.\textit{\textbf{x}g5}?! does not look well prepared by White at the moment. 15...\textit{\textbf{h}xg5} 16.\textit{\textbf{w}xg5}, Anagelidyev – Gurcan, Elista 1998, 16...\textit{\textbf{f}4} 17.e5 \textit{\textbf{d}d3} – Black covers the diagonal of the enemy bishop and obtains an advantage.

15...\textit{\textbf{x}g3} 16.\textit{\textbf{f}xg3}

White thus opens the f-file, but now his e-pawn will be isolated and weak.

It is better for White to play here simply 16.\textit{\textbf{h}xg3} \textit{\textbf{b}8}, although even then Black’s prospects are not worse at all.

This position was reached in the game Zilberman – Yurtayev, Frunze 1989. Here, Black could have obtained an advantage with the move 16...\textit{\textbf{e}5}?!?, preventing reliably the pawn-advance e4-e5. He should not be afraid of the weakening of the f5-square, because White’s knight cannot come to this square in the nearest future.
Chapter 9

1.d4 ćf6 2.ćf3 g6 3.g3
Fianchetto without c2-c4

5.c4 d6 – see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation B.

Following 5.b3, Black must react energetically 5...c5!, inflicting an immediate strike against White’s centre. 6.0–0 (6.ćb2 cxd4 7.ćxd4 e5 8.ćf3 e4 9.ćd4 d5 10.0–0 e3 – see 6.0–0) 6...cxd4 7.ćxd4 d5 8.ćb2

In this chapter we will analyse variations in which White develops his bishop on g2, but does not push c2-c4 later (If he does that, there arise positions from the King’s Indian Defence and we analyse them in details in Chapters 10-13.). White cannot obtain an advantage in the opening if he plays like this, but Black must play accurately.

3...ćg7 4.ćg2

4.c4 0–0 – see volume 2, Chapter 1.
4.b3 0–0 5.ćb2 (5.ćg2 c5 – see 4.ćg2) 5...c5 – see Chapter 7, 3.b3.

4...0–0 5.0–0

There has arisen a position like in the second chapter, but with an extra tempo for Black, because he has advanced d7-d5 at once. 8...e5. He acquires space with tempo and begins active actions on the kingside. 9.ćf3 e4 10.ćd4 e3 11.f3 h5!? 12.c4 h4→ – White will have great problems to parry his opponent’s attack, Madina Yadarola – L.Bronstein, Acasusso 1991.
5...d6
In this position, if White does not plan to transpose to the King’s Indian Defence, he has a great choice of possibilities.

9...xc6 bxc6= – Now, the unfortunate placement of White’s pawn on h3 precludes him from playing 10...xc6?!, because of 10...xh3† and Black regains his pawn ending up in a better position, Hoeffer – Gutman, Bad Zwischenahn 2006.

The move 7.c3 has the defect that White’s knight has no access to the c3-square any more. 7...b6 8...bd2 cxd4 9...xd4 c6= Kunte – Hebden, Torquay 2002.

7.dxc5 dxc5 8...xd8 xd8 9.c3, Badea – Grigore, Iasi 1999, 9...e6!?= with an equal endgame.

6.a4
He occupies space on the queenside.

About 6.c4 c6 – see volume 2, Chapter 1, variation B.

After 6.h3, Black must react very accurately. 6...c5 (Following 6...bd7 7.c4 e5 8.c3 c6 9.e4, there arises a variation from the King’s Indian Defence, which is not analysed in this book.)

6.c3. This move seems too passive. 6...c6. Black is preparing e7–e5 and is not worse at all. 7. bd2 e5

White should better not be so ambitious, because after 8.e4, Black can organise powerful pressure against the enemy centre. 8...exd4 9.cxd4 e5 10.e1 g4 11. b3 d7† Kotpec Umiastowska – Cipolli, ICCF 2002.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10. c4 e7 11.b3 d8 12.a3 e8 13.c2 e4= – Black restricts the bishop on g2 and obtains at least

6.\(\text{c}d2\). As a rule, in the opening White’s knight on d2 is not so well placed as on c3. This position is no exception. 6...\(\text{c}c6\)

\begin{center}
\begin{game}
6.\(\text{c}d2\)
7.c3 e5 – see 6.c3.

It seems too artificial for White to choose 7.\(\text{c}c4\), preventing the move e7-e5. 7...\(\text{c}e6!\). Black ousts the enemy knight. 8.\(\text{c}e3\) \(\text{d}d7\) 9.c4 e5 10.d5 \(\text{c}e7\) 11.c5 \(\text{e}e8\) 12.\(\text{c}c4\) f5\(\Rightarrow\) and in the arising complicated position, Black has good prospects for active actions in the centre and on the kingside, Shabalov – Watson, Belgrade 1988.

7.e4 e5 8.dxe5 (8.c3 exd4 – see 6.c3) 8...\(\text{c}xe5\). Exchanging a couple of minor pieces is Black’s simplest road to equality. 9.\(\text{c}xe5\) dxe5

\begin{center}
\begin{game}
6.\(\text{b}3\) c5

Following 10.b3, Polugaevsky – Romero Holmes, Oviedo 1992, Black could have tried to exploit the vulnerability of the c3-square with the line: 10...\(\text{e}e4!\) 11.\(\text{c}e3\) \(\text{e}e8\) 12.\(\text{c}e1\) \(\text{f}e6\) 13.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{c}c3\) 14.\(\text{e}e3\) \(\text{a}a5\)

White has no chances of obtaining an advantage after 10.\(\text{f}e2\) \(\text{e}e7\) 11.b3 \(\text{g}g4\) 12.\(\text{e}e3\) \(\text{f}d8\) 13.\(\text{b}b2\) \(\text{d}d7\) 14.a4, Sturua – Lanka, Moscow 1994, 14...\(\text{b}b8!\)?\(\Rightarrow\) – The transfer of the knight to c6, followed by \(\text{d}d4\), is Black’s simplest way of organising counterplay sufficient to maintain the equality.

10.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{e}e7\) 11.b3. White plans to develop his bishop on a3. (It is possible for him to try 11.\(\text{e}e2\) b6 12.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{d}d7\) 13.f3, Karpov – Kotronias, Athens 1997. White has succeeded in restricting the enemy bishop on b7, but has weakened his castling position. 13...h5!?\(\Rightarrow\) 11...\(\text{d}d8\) 12.\(\text{e}e2\) b6 13.\(\text{a}a3\) \(\text{e}e6\) 14.\(\text{b}b2\) \(\text{f}f8\). The exchange of the dark-squared bishops is in favour of Black, since his bishop on g7 was horribly restricted by his own pawn on e5. 15.\(\text{x}f8\) \(\text{x}f8\) 16.\(\text{f}d1\) \(\text{b}b7\) 17.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{e}e7\) 18.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{ad8}\) – After the exchange of the major pieces on the d-file, it is only White who may have problems, because his bishop is not so mobile as its black counterpart, Huebner – Kotronias, Penne 2004.

6.\(\text{b}3\) c5
About 7.\(B_b2\) cxd4 8.\(\Box d4\) d5 – see Chapter 2, variation A.

7.c4. Now, Black can inflict an energetic strike against the enemy centre. 7...e5!? 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\(B_b2\) (Naturally, it would be too risky for White to capture on e5, because his pieces are not well prepared for the opening of the long diagonal. 9.\(\Box x e5?!\) \(\Box x d1\) 10.\(\Box x d1\) \(\Box f d 7 + )\) 9...e4 10.\(\Box x d 8\) (10.\(\Box g 5\) \(\Box e 7\) 11.\(\Box c 3\), Donchenko – De Rooij, Germany 2016, 11...\(\Box f 5! ? =\) ) \(\Box x d 8\) 11.\(\Box g 5\). Black is not worse in the arising complicated endgame, Romanishin – Viterbo Ferreira, Figueira da Foz 2014. 11...\(\Box e 8! ?\) 12.\(\Box a 3\) a6. Black restricts the enemy knight and prepares to advance b7-b5 at an opportune moment. 13.\(\Box a d 1\) \(\Box b d 7\) 14.\(\Box c 2\) b5 15.\(\Box c 3\) h6 16.\(\Box h 3\) \(\Box g 4! ?\) This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice. 17. \(\Box x g 4\) \(\Box x b 2\) 18.\(\Box x h 6 +\) \(\Box g 7 =\) – White has failed to hold on to his centre, Galkin – N.Mamedov, Konya 2011.

As a rule, the move 6.\(\Box d 3\) transposes to the Pirc Defence. 6...\(\Box d 7\)

7.\(\Box b d 2\) \(\Box x d 2\) 8.\(\Box x d 2\) c5 9.c3 – see 7.c3.

Black obtains a good position after 7.c4 \(\Box d 7\) 8.\(\Box b d 2\) \(\Box x d 2\) 9. \(\Box x d 2\) e5∞ Kochetkov – Kovalev, Alushta 2007.

7.c3. White protects reliably his d4-pawn. 7...c5 (Black increases the pressure against the enemy centre.) 8.\(\Box b d 2\) (8.\(\Box c 2\) d5=, followed by \(\Box c 6, \Box f 5\), Kurajica – Gohil, Germany 2005) 8...\(\Box x d 2\) 9. \(\Box x d 2\) \(\Box b 6\) 10.\(\Box x c 5\) dxc5 11.\(\Box a 4\) \(\Box c 6\) 12.b3 \(\Box d 8 =\) – White has failed to hold on to his centre, Galkin – N.Mamedov, Konya 2011.
7.e4 e5, or 7...e1 e5 8.e4 c6, or
7.h3 e5 8.e4 c6 – see Chapter 17,
variation A.

7.d5 a5 8.d4 c5 9.a4 d7
10.h3 c8 11.h2 e5 12.dxe6
fxe6 – After the exchange of the
f-pawn for the d-pawn, Black’s su-
periority in the centre may tell in
the future, Brynell – Hillarp Pers-
son, Gothenburg 2005.

7.a4 e5 8.dxe5. White refrains
from the logical occupation of the
centre and this cannot lead to an
advantage for him. (8.e4 c6 – see
Chapter 17, variation A) 8...dxe5
9.a5 c7 10.b3 e4 11.a3, Ovetch-
kin – Khanin, Samara 2012. Here,
Black could have obtained a very
good position with the line: 11...

7.d5 a5 8.d4 c5 9.a3, Ovetch-
kin – Khanin, Samara 2012. Here,
Black could have obtained a very
good position with the line: 11...

7.c4. This move weakens the
b4-square. 7...c5 8.c3 b4 9.d5
e5 10.dxe6 bxe6 Bellon Lopez –
Strikovic, La Roda 2004.

7.b3. This move does not pre-
vent Black’s plans. 7...c5 8.b2
d7 9.d5 (9.c4 c8 10.e1 h3
11.d5, Epishin – Zelbel, Werther
2011, 11...b4!?) 9...c8 10.d2
h3. Black’s position is a bit
 cramped, so it would be useful for
him to trade a couple of minor
pieces. 11.e4 xg2 12.xg2 e6 13.
c3 exd5 14.cxd5 xd5 15.xg7
f4+. With this intermediate
check, Black weakens the position of
the enemy king. 16.gxf4 xg7
17.c4, Stefanova – Harika, Dili-
jan 2013, 17...c6!? 18.f3 c7
19.ad1 ad8= – White cannot
exploit the weakness on d6, be-
cause of his vulnerable king.

6...a6

This is a multi-purpose move.
Black not only prepares c7-c5, but
prevents also b2-b4.

7.d3

7.c3. White fortifies his d4-
pawn, but deprives his knight of the
c3-square. 7...c5 8.e1 f5.
Black prevents e2-e4. 9.dbd2 d5

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10.\(\text{d}f1\) (10.e3 \(\text{c}8=\) Mishuchkov – Kulaots, Jyväskylä 2013) 10... \(\text{c}8\) 11.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{cxd}4\) 12.\(\text{cxd}4\) \(\text{w}d6\) 13. \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{b}4=\) Slipak – Pichot, Buenos Aires 2015. The domination over the c-file and the important b4-square provides Black with a very good position.

7.\(\text{e}1\). White is preparing e2-e4. 7...c5 8.d5 (8.c3 \(\text{f}5\) – see 7.c3; 8.e4 \(\text{cxd}4\) 9.\(\text{d}x\)d4 \(\text{g}4=\)) 8...e6 9. dxe6 \(\text{xe}6\) 10.e4, Mishuchkov – Mochalov, Dresden 2013, 10... \(\text{b}4=\) – White lags slightly in development and will have problems preventing d6-d5.

7.a5. This move looks to be too straightforward. 7...c5 8.\(\text{c}3\). White prepares the occupation of the centre with e2-e4. (8.c3 \(\text{d}7\) 9.\(\text{d}xc5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 10.\(\text{d}d4\) \(\text{c}7=\) Gutman – Fleuren, Goch 2009. Now, just like on the previous move, the b4-square would be weakened after 8.c4 \(\text{f}5\) 9.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}7\) 10.d5 \(\text{e}4\) 11.\(\text{b}3\), Romanishin – Gasanov, Alushta 2002. Here, Black had to compromise his opponent’s pawn-structure with 11...\(\text{xc}3=?\) 12.\(\text{bxc}3\) \(\text{fb}8=\))

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

9.\(\text{dxc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 10.\(\text{d}d4\) \(\text{c}8\) 11.e4 \(\text{h}3\) 12.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{gx}2\) 13.\(\text{f}xg2\), Panjwani – Krnan, Guelph 2015, 13... \(\text{e}6!=?\)

Following 9.h3 \(\text{c}8\) 10.\(\text{h}2\), Gutman – Schwarze, Bad Zwischenahn 2002, Black could have tried to fight for the centre with 10... \(\text{cxd}4!?\) 11.\(\text{xd}4\) d5 12.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{b}4=\).

9.e4 \(\text{cxd}4\) 10.\(\text{d}x\)d4. There has arisen a pawn-structure typical for the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence. In the next few moves Black would like to transfer his knight to the c6-square, which is more typical for it in similar positions. 10...\(\text{b}4\) 11.\(\text{d}e2\) (11.h3, Romanishin – Strikovic, Elgoibar 2013, 11...\(\text{c}8=\) 12.\(\text{h}2\) \(\text{c}6=\)) 11...\(\text{c}8\) 12.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 13.a6. This is a double-edged move. White wishes to exploit the vulnerability of the a7-pawn, but his own pawn on a6 may become a target for Black in the future. 13... b6 14.h3 \(\text{c}7\) 15.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{b}8\) 16. \(\text{d}e4\) \(\text{xd}4\) 17.\(\text{xd}4\), Alvarado Diaz – Ibarra Jerez, Linares 2015, 17...\(\text{e}4=!\)

7...\(\text{d}5\)
This move prevents radically White’s pawn-advance e2-e4. The fact that Black loses a tempo is not so important, because the position is closed. After this move White’s knight on c3 will be misplaced, since it impedes the possible pawn-advance c2-c4.

8.\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}4}}}

The alternatives for White would not provide him with an advantage either.

8.a5 c6 9.\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}5}}, Bellon Lopez – Vassallos Barrocoh, Albacete 2004, 9...\textit{\textbf{\textit{g}4}}!–=}

8.\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}5}} c6 9.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}2}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{f}5}} 10.b3 \textit{\textbf{\textit{d}7}}

11.\textit{\textbf{\textit{x}d}7} \textit{\textbf{\textit{x}d}7} 12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{a}3}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{f}d}8} – White has no active prospects, while Black is perfectly prepared to advance e7-e5, Zaichenko – Loskutov, Tomsk 2009.

8...\textit{\textbf{\textit{f}5}}

\textbf{9.\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}4}}}

White ousts the enemy bishop from its active position, but the edge of the board is not the best place for his knight.

After 9.\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}5}}, Panno – Van Wely, Buenos Aires 1995, the simplest move for Black would be 9...c6!–=, protecting reliably his d5-pawn.

\textbf{9...\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}6}} 10.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}2}} c5=}

Black has equalised. White’s attempt to create pressure against the enemy pawn on d5 after 11.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}xc}5}?! \textit{\textbf{\textit{xc}5}} 12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{fd}1}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{fe}4}}

13.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xe}4}}, could have led to an inferior position for him in the game Rashkovsky – Loskutov, St Petersburg 1999: 13...\textit{\textbf{\textit{dxe}4}}!? – Black’s fianchettoed bishop exerts powerful pressure against White’s queenside, moreover that the knight on h4 is misplaced.
The Pirc Defence has been named after the Yugoslavian grandmaster Vasja Pirc, but the Soviet master Anatoly Ufimtsev has also contributed greatly to the development of its theory, so you can see it named The Pirc-Ufimtsev Defence in some sources. Black does not mind that his opponent will occupy the centre with his pawns and tries at first to develop his kingside pieces and to castle there. With this approach it resembles the King's Indian Defence and we will devote our second volume to it.

The Pirc Defence has some advantages in comparison to the other openings.

At first, you do not need to study so much theory, while mastering it and the strategical ideas are often repeated. So, you would not need to spend so much time on it, as for example in the Sicilian Defence, or in the Ruy Lopez.

Secondly, White will have a hard time to reduce the tension in the fight and the positions are usually complicated, so it is irreplaceable in tournaments played in the Swiss system, in which you need to play for a win, irrelevant of the colour of your pieces, particularly if your opponent is weaker than you.

The third point is that the players who like to choose 1.e4, spend most of their time, while studying opening, on the first moves 1...c5 and 1...e5. Therefore 1...d6 may turn out to be a surprise for them. This would be particularly true in games with a shorter time-control.

We will devote to the Pirc Defence 17 chapters (10–26).

In Chapters 10 and 11 we will analyse the variations in which White refrains from 2.d4. These lines are almost ignored in many books, concerning the Pirc De-
fence, and I believe that is not correct. There may arise by transposition different lines from the Sicilian Defence and also from the Alekhine Defence and that may be a nasty surprise for the Black players.

In Chapters 12-14 we will deal with variations in which White plays 2.d4, but after 2...\(\mathcal{D}\)f6 refrains from the most popular move 3.\(\mathcal{D}\)c3 and chooses instead 3.\(\mathcal{D}\)d2 (Chapter 12), 3.\(\mathcal{D}\)d3 (Chapter 13), or 3.f3 (Chapter 14).

In Chapters 15-17, we will analyse White's not so popular moves after 3.\(\mathcal{D}\)c3 g6:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Figure 1}
\end{array}
\]

4.\(\mathcal{A}\)c4 (Chapter 15), 4.\(\mathcal{A}\)e2 (Chapter 16) and 4.g3 (Chapter 17).

In Chapters 18-20, we will deal with White's aggressive plans, connected with the development of his dark-squared bishop to e3 (g5): 4.\(\mathcal{A}\)g5 (Chapter 18), 4.\(\mathcal{A}\)e3 (Chapter 19), 4.f3, followed by \(\mathcal{A}\)g5, or \(\mathcal{A}\)e3 (Chapter 20).

The other 6 chapters of the book will be devoted to White's most popular fourth moves – 4.\(\mathcal{A}\)f3 (Chapters 21-23) and 4.f4 (Chapters 24-26).
In this chapter, we will have a look at some other moves for White besides 2.d4 and 2...c3: A) 2.g3, B) 2...c4, C) 2.f4.

About 2.c4 2.f6 3...c3 g6 – see Chapter 3.

White should better avoid 2.b3 2.f6 3...e2e e5 4.b2 c5 5.h3 c6 6.f3 g6 7.g3 g7 8.g2 0–0 9.c4, Rolle – Van Voorthuijsen, Baden-Baden 2001. Here, Black could have even obtained a better position with the line: 9...d4!? 10.xd4 cxd4 11.d3 d7?, followed by c5.

Following 2.d3, there arise as a rule positions from other variations, or chapters. 2...f6 3.g3 (3.f4 g6 – see variation C2; 3.f3 g6 – see 2.f3) 3...g6 4.g2 (4. f3 g7 5.g2 0–0 6.0–0 e5 – see Chapter 2, variation B) 4...g7 5.c3 0–0 – see Chapter 11, variation B.

5.f3 0–0 6.0–0 e5 – see Chapter 2, variation B.

5.f4 0–0 6.f3 (6.c3 c4 – see Chapter 11, variation B) 6...c5 – variation C2.

5.e2 0–0 6.0–0 (6.bc3 e5 7.0–0 c6 – see Chapter 11, 5.ge2) 6...e5 7.f4 (7.bc3 c6 – see Chapter 11) 7...c6 8.h3 exf4 9.xf4 d5 10.e5. White’s pieces are not well developed and it seems premature for him to occupy space. 10... e8 11.d4, Jakubec – Ftacnik, Czech Republic 1999, 11...f6!?
Chapter 10

2.\( \text{g}f3 \) \( \text{g}f6\) 3.\( \text{c}c3 \) (3.\( \text{d}3 \) g6 4.\( \text{g}3 \text{g}7\) 5.\( \text{g}g2\) 0–0 6.0–0 \( \text{e}5\) – see Chapter 2, variation B) 3...\( \text{e}5\) (3...
\( \text{d}xe4? 4.\( \text{g}a4+-\))

\( \text{d}3 \) g6 – see 2.\( \text{d}3\).

3...\( \text{g}6\)

4.\( \text{b}3\)
White prepares the fianchetto of his second bishop.

All other moves lead practically to transpositions:

4.\( \text{d}3 \text{g}7\) – see 2.\( \text{d}3\).

4.\( \text{d}4 \text{g}7\) – see Chapter 5.

4.\( \text{c}3 \text{g}7\) – see Chapter 11, variation B.

4.\( \text{f}4 \text{g}7\) 5.\( \text{d}4\) (5.\( \text{c}3\) – see Chapter 11; 5.\( \text{d}3 \) 0–0 – see 2.\( \text{f}4\))
5...0–0 6.\( \text{c}c3\) – see Chapter 16.

4.\( \text{e}2 \text{g}7\)

A) 2.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{f}6\) 3.\( \text{g}2\)

3.\( \text{c}c3 \) g6 – see Chapter 11, variation B.

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5.d3 0–0 – see 2.d3.
5...bc3 0–0 – see Chapter 11, variation B.
5.d4 0–0 – see Chapter 5.
5.c4 c5 – see Chapter 3.
5.0–0 0–0 6.h3 (6.c4 c5 7.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3 \text{\textcopyright}c6 – see Chapter 3, variation B; 6.d4 e5 – see Chapter 5; 6.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3 e5 – see Chapter 11, variation B; 6.d3 e5 – see 2.d3) 6...e5 7.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3 (7.d4 \text{\textcopyright}c6 – see Chapter 5) 7...c6 8.d4 b5 – see Chapter 17, variation B1.

4...e5
Black makes use of his opponent’s reluctance to occupy the centre with the move d2-d4 and does that himself.

5.\(\text{\textcopyright}b2 \text{\textcopyright}g7

6.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2

Following 6.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3, Black can also play 6...c5, without being afraid of the weakening of the d5-square. 7.d3 \text{\textcopyright}c6 8.\(\text{\textcopyright}f3 0–0 9.0–0 \text{\textcopyright}d4 10.\text{\textcopyright}xd4 cxd4 11.\(\text{\textcopyright}e2, Lentrodt – Wirthensohn, Lindau 2012, 11...d5!!\(\text{\textcopyright}† – After this move, he may think not only about equality, but also about seizing the initiative.

6...c5
Black increases his control over the d4-square.
7.0–0 0–0

8.\(\text{\textcopyright}bc3

8.a4. This move looks too slow. 8...\text{\textcopyright}c6 9.d3 (9.\(\text{\textcopyright}a3 d5 10.exd5 \text{\textcopyright}xd5 11.\(\text{\textcopyright}c3 \text{\textcopyright}e6 12.\(\text{\textcopyright}e1, Bellon Lopez – Pomar Salamanca, Las Palmas 1974, 12...\text{\textcopyright}f5!?\(\text{\textcopyright}† – Black has acquired more space, while White’s pieces are not harmoniously deployed.) 9...d5 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}d2, Bellon Lopez – Tarjan, Orense 1975, 10...\(\text{\textcopyright}e6!?\(\text{\textcopyright}∞

After 8.\(\text{\textcopyright}a3 \text{\textcopyright}c6, White should better prevent the pawn-advance d6-d5 with the move 9.c4 (Following the careless move 9.\(\text{\textcopyright}c4, Black may even obtain a better position after a temporary piece-sacrifice: 9...\text{\textcopyright}xe4! 10.\(\text{\textcopyright}xex4 d5 11.\text{\textcopyright}g2 dxc4 12.bxc4 \text{\textcopyright}g4\(\text{\textcopyright}† – His game is freer, Dunn – Pulkkinen, IECC 2004.) 9...a6. Black is pre-
paring b7-b5. 10...c2, Kr. Georgiev – Bjaoui, Saint Affrique 2006, 10...b5!∞

8.c3. White plans d2-d4, but this would restrict the mobility of his bishop on b2. 8...d5 9.exd5 cxd5 10.d4 exd4 11.cxd4 c6 12. d2, Nedela – Dvorak, Czech Republic 2003, 12...cxd4!? 13.cxd4 f6†, with a very unpleasant pin of the enemy knight.

8...c6 9.h3

9.h1, Kr.Georgiev – Goechev, Chalkidiki 2007, 9...d4!∞

9.f4 d4 10.cxd4 (10.h3, De Firmian – Ciocaltea, Smederevska Palanka 1981, 10...h5!? 11.f5 g5 12.g4 f4† – The dark squares in White’s camp have been weakened.) 10...cxd4 11.d5 cxd5 12.exd5 f5† – His bishop on b2 is misplaced, since it is severely restricted by the pawn on d4, Shytaj – Ricci, Bratto 2005.

9...b8

Black is preparing b7-b5.

10.f4 b5 11.d3 b4. He ousts the enemy knight to the edge of the board. 12.a4 h5∞ Black’s prospects are not worse and following 13.h2?! Bagirov – Kapengut, Baku 1972, he could have seized the initiative with the line: 13...exf4!? 14.xf4 xf4 15.gxf4 d4 16.c3 bxc3 17. xc3 a5 18.d2 b7† – Black maintains a stable advantage thanks to his powerful centralised knight.

B) 2.c4 f6

3.d3

3.c3 g6 – see Chapter 11.

3.d4 xe4 4.xf7+ xf7 5. h5+ g8 6.d5+ e6 7.xe4 d5 8.d3 c5 9.f3, Hemmann – Auer, Germany 2006, 9...cxd4!? 10.0–0 c6 11.xd4 e5 12.xc6 bxc6∞ – Black’s two powerful bishops and his mighty pawn-centre compensate the misplacement of his king.
3.\textit{\v{c}}e2. This move leads to the weakening of the control over the d4-square and Black can exploit this immediately. 3...\textit{\v{c}}c6!? 4.c3 (The move 4.\textit{\v{c}}f3 allows the unpleasant pin of the knight. 4...\textit{\v{c}}g4 5.c3, Brestak – Mojzis, Slovakia 1997, 5...d5!? This move is energetic and strong. Black is better prepared for the opening of the game in the centre. 6.exd5 \textit{\v{c}}xf3 7.gxf3 \textit{\v{c}}xd5 8.d4 e6\text{"}, followed by \textit{\v{c}}d7, 0–0–0. Black’s superior pawn-structure compensates with an interest White’s two-bishop advantage.) 4...e5. Black prevents the pawn-advance d2–d4.

5.h3. White wishes to continue with \textit{\v{c}}f3, but prevents the pin of his knight. Still, his last move seems too slow. 5...g6 6.d3 \textit{\v{c}}g7 7.\textit{\v{c}}f3 0–0 8.\textit{\v{c}}g5 h6 9.\textit{\v{c}}e3 d5\text{"} – Black already has a lead in development, Blum – Jansa, Wuerzburg 1989.

5.\textit{\v{c}}f3 \textit{\v{c}}e7 6.h3 0–0 7.0–0 d5!? This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice, which White should better refrain from accepting. 8.exd5 \textit{\v{c}}xd5 9.d3 (9.\textit{\v{c}}xe5!? \textit{\v{c}}f4 10.\textit{\v{c}}e3 \textit{\v{c}}xe5 11.\textit{\v{c}}xf4 \textit{\v{c}}d6\text{"}) 9...\textit{\v{c}}f6= Mayer – Kulcsar, Hungary 2009.

3...g6

4.\textit{\v{c}}f3

4.\textit{\v{c}}c3 \textit{\v{c}}g7 – see Chapter 11.

It seems premature for White to play here 4.f4, because Black can counter that with 4...d5\text{"}, exchanging his opponent’s powerful central pawn. 5.exd5 \textit{\v{c}}xd5 6.\textit{\v{c}}f3 \textit{\v{c}}g7 7.0–0 0–0 8.c3 c5 9.\textit{\v{c}}e5, Guillemot – Dussol, France 1989, 9...e6\text{"}, protecting the knight and preparing \textit{\v{c}}c7.

4.\textit{\v{c}}b3. White removes his bishop from the possible threat d6–d5 and prepares f2–f4. 4...\textit{\v{c}}g7 5.f4 0–0 6.\textit{\v{c}}f3 \textit{\v{c}}c6 7.c3, Enevoldsen – Quist, Denmark 1976, 7...\textit{\v{c}}a5!? This is an interesting idea. Black’s knight goes to the edge of the board indeed, but he ousts the enemy bishop from the excellent a2–g8 diagonal. 8.\textit{\v{c}}c2 c5 9.0–0 b5\text{"} Black’s queenside counterplay should provide him with at least equality.

4...\textit{\v{c}}g7 5.0–0
5.\text{c3} 0-0 6.0-0 c6 – see 5.0-0.

5...0-0 6.\text{c3}

6.\text{\textit{c3}} c6 – see Chapter 11, variation A.

6.\text{\textit{b3}} c6 7.\text{c3} \text{\textit{bd7}} – see 6.\text{c3}.

6.\text{\textit{e1}} c6 7.e5, Engelbrecht – Dobos, Budapest 2005, 7...\text{dxe5}!? 8.\text{\textit{xe5}} \text{\textit{bd7}} 9.\text{\textit{xd7}} \text{\textit{xd7}}. This move seems more precise than the capturing with the bishop, because Black’s bishop will be better placed on b7 (after the preliminary move b7-b5). 10.\text{\textit{d2}} b5 11.\text{\textit{b3}} e6 12.\text{\textit{f3}} \text{\textit{b7=}} – with a very good game for Black.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess-board.png}
\end{center}

6...\text{c6}. It seems less practical for Black to choose here 6...\text{c5}, because after 7.\text{\textit{b3}} \text{\textit{c6}}, there arise by transposition lines from the Sicilian Defence in which plenty of theory has been amassed. 7.\text{\textit{b3}} \text{\textit{bd7}} 8.\text{\textit{e1}} \text{\textit{e5}} 9.\text{\textit{bd2}} \text{\textit{wc7}} 10.\text{\textit{d4}}, Degraeve – Picard, Haguenau 2013. Here, Black could have begun active actions on the queenside. 10...\text{a5}!? 11.a4 b5 12.\text{\textit{f1}}

\textbf{\texttt{\textbf{C6}} 13.\text{\textit{axb5}} \text{\textit{xb5}}}. White is incapable of exploiting the weakening of the d5-square, since it is protected by both Black’s knights. 14.\text{\textit{c2}} \text{\textit{d7}} 15.\text{\textit{d3}} \text{\textit{fe8}} 16.\text{\textit{g5}} a4 17.\text{\textit{dxe5}} \text{\textit{dxe5}} 18.\text{\textit{e2}} \text{\textit{c6+}}, followed by \text{\textit{c4}}, or a4-a3. Black can be quite optimistic about the future.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess-board.png}
\end{center}

C) 2.\text{\textit{f4}} \text{\textit{f6}}

We will analyse now C1) 3.\text{e5} and C2) 3.\text{d3}.

About 3.\text{\textit{c3}} g6 – see Chapter 11, variation A.

\textbf{\texttt{\textbf{C1}} 3.\text{e5}}

This pawn-advance in the centre seems premature, because Black is better prepared for the opening of the game in the centre.

3...\text{\textit{d5}} 4.\text{d4}

There has arisen by transposition a line from the Alekhine Defence (1.e4 \textit{f6} 2.e5 \textit{d5} 3.d4 d6 4.f4). This variation is not among the best for White.
4...dxe5 5.fxe5

5.c4? ��b4.
Capturing with the other pawn leads to an inferior position for White. 5.dxe5 ��f5. Black develops his bishop to an active position. 6.��c4 e6 7.c3 ��c5. The other black bishop is also developed actively. 8.��f3 0–0 9.��xd5 exd5 ��f5 T Kотовskyy – M.Bortnyk, Lutsk 2016. Black leads in development. Both his bishops are very powerful, while White’s king is stranded in the centre.

5...c5
Black inflicts an immediate strike against the enemy centre. White must already think about equalising.

6.��f3
He cannot obtain a good position by reducing the number of pieces. 6.��b5+ ��d7 7.��xd7+ ��xd7 8.��f3 cxd4 9.��xd4 e6 10.0–0, Vitolinsh – Bagirov, Frunze 1979 (After 10.��g4, Mellado Trivino – Morovic Fernandez, Terrassa 1992, Black has the powerful resource 10...��c6!? 11.c3 ��b6 ��f5 and White will have problems to castle kingside.) 10...��c6!? This is Black’s most precise move. He is threatening ��c5 and ��c2 and ousts the enemy queen from its active position. 11.��d2 ��d7 12.b3 ��c5+ 13.��h1 ��e3. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to the f5-square, because White can always oust it from d5 with the move c2-c4. 14.��e1 ��f5 ��f5, followed by 0–0, ��fd8, ��ac8. Black’s pieces are very harmoniously deployed and he has a superior pawn-structure.

White cannot be successful if he tries to hold on to the d4-square. 6.c3 ��c6 7.��f3 ��g4. White’s centre is an excellent target for Black’s pieces. 8.��b5 e6! He should not be afraid of White’s counterplay on the a4-e8 diagonal. 9.0–0 ��e7 10.��xc6+ bxc6 11.��e1 (White might be in trouble if he tries to win material. 11.��a4 0–0 12.��xc6 ��c8 13.��b5 ��xf3 14.��xf3 cxd4 ��f5 – Black exploits the defencelessness of the bishop on c1 and restores the material balance, preserving all the advantages of his position.) 11...0–0 12.
bd2 \text{ \&} h5 13. \text{\&} e4 cxd4 14. \text{\&} xd4 \text{\&} b6. Black’s bishops are very powerful. 15. \text{\&} f2 c5 16. \text{\&} f3 c4 17. \text{\&} d4 h6 18. \text{\&} e3 \text{\&} fd8 19.b3 \text{\&} xe3 20. \text{\&} xe3 \text{\&} ac8\texttt{\&} Frijling – Legemaat, ICCF 2009.

6.c4 \text{\&} b4. The threat \text{\&} f5, \text{\&} c2 is very unpleasant for White. 7.d5 (It is possible, he had to opt for 7.a3 \text{\&} a4c6 8.e6, Afek – Dunworth, Oakham 1993, 8...fxe6!? 9.dxc5 \text{\&} xd1+ 10. \text{\&} xd1 \text{\&} g6\texttt{\&} – Black is better in this endgame indeed, but White still maintains the material balance.) 7...\text{\&} f5 8.\text{\&} a3. He defends against \text{\&} c2. But now White cannot out the enemy knight with the help of the move a2-a3. (8. \text{\&} f2, Kr.Georgiev – Solozhenkin, France 1996, 8...\text{\&} c2?\texttt{\&}) 8...e6 9. \text{\&} a4+ (9. \text{\&} f3 exd5 10.cxd5 \text{\&} xd5 11. \text{\&} b5+ \text{\&} d8 12. \text{\&} xd5 \text{\&} xd5+ Flazinski – Kuchnio, Kowalewo Pomorskie 2009) 9...\text{\&} d7 10. \text{\&} xd7+ \text{\&} xd7 11. \text{\&} f3 exd5 12.cxd5 \text{\&} xd5\texttt{\&} – White has no compensation for the pawn, Zapata – Tal, Subotica 1987.

6...cxd4 7. \text{\&} xd4

7.\text{\&} b5+ \text{\&} d7 8. \text{\&} xd7+ \text{\&} xd7 – see 6.\text{\&} b5.

7...\text{\&} c6

(diagram)

8. \text{\&} b5

8. \text{\&} e4 g6 9. \text{\&} c4 \text{\&} b6 10. \text{\&} b3 \text{\&} f5 11. \text{\&} e2 (11. \text{\&} h4 e6 12. \text{\&} g5 \text{\&} e7 13. \text{\&} xe7 \text{\&} xe7\texttt{\&} – The vulnerabili-
ty of the e5-pawn makes us evaluate this position in favour of Black, Kr.Georgiev – Zmijanac, Sunny Beach 2011.) 11...\text{\&} g7!?\texttt{\&}, Black is eying the weak enemy pawn on e5. (White has not played \text{\&} c3 yet, so Black should better refrain from 11...\text{\&} d4 12. \text{\&} xd4 \text{\&} xd4, because then, White will obtain a good position by preparing the transfer of his knight to f3. 13. \text{\&} d2= Nun – Manic, Trnava 1983.)

8...\text{\&} f5 9. \text{\&} c3 e6 10. \text{\&} g5, Ankerst – Horvath, Budapest 1992 (After 10. \text{\&} a4 \text{\&} db4\texttt{\&}, Black protects his knight on c6 and simultaneously attacks the enemy c2-pawn, Pelikan – Milos, Sao Paulo 2004.) 10...\text{\&} a5?! This is an active move. Black wishes to play \text{\&} b4, exploiting the pin of the enemy knight. 11. \text{\&} c4 \text{\&} c8 12. \text{\&} d4. White is incapable of exploiting the pin of the knight on c6. 12...\text{\&} b4 13. \text{\&} xc6+ bxc6 14. \text{\&} xf5. White is trying to exchange pieces and to save the draw. 14...exf5 15.0–0 \text{\&} c5+ 16. \text{\&} xc5 \text{\&} xc5+ 17. \text{\&} h1 \text{\&} xc3
18.bxc3. There has arisen a transfer to an endgame in which Black has better prospects thanks to his superior pawn-structure. 18...h6 19.\&h4 g5 20.\&f2 \&xf2 21.\&xf2 f4\+ – In this ending with four rooks on the board, White must play very precisely; otherwise, after Black’s king comes to e6, White will have problems with the protection of his pawn on e5.

C2) 3.d3 g6

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

4.\&f3

This is White’s most logical and strongest move. The f3-square is the best place for his knight.

4.g3 \&g7 5.\&g2 (5.\&f3 0–0 – see 4.\&f3) 5...0–0 6.\&e2. The knight is not so well deployed here as on f3. (6.\&c3 – see Chapter 11, variation B; 6.\&f3 c5 – see 4.\&f3) 6...c5 7.0–0 \&c6

(diagram)

About 8.\&bc3 \&b8 – see Chapter 11, variation B1.

8.c3 \&b8 9.h3, Pirisi – Madl, Hungary 1993, 9...b5!?∞

White’s straightforward pawn-offensive on the kingside – 8.h3 \&b8 9.\&d2 (9.g4 \&e8 10.\&bc3 b5 11.\&g3 b4 12.\&ce2 \&d7 – see Chapter 11, variation B1) 9...\&d7 10.g4 b5 11.f5, Butunoi – Flumberg, Austria 2009, would present to Black’s pieces the e5-square. 11...\&de5∞

8.\&d2 \&c7. He protects his knight on c6. Now, he will be able to play b7-b5, without being afraid of e4-e5. 9.h3 b5. Black begins active actions on the queenside. 10.g4 e6 11.\&g3 \&b7 12.\&f3 \&d7∞ – White will have to advance f4–f5 at some moment if he wishes to organise an attack on the kingside and this would lead to the loss of his control over the e5-square, Gadia – Mecking, Rio de Janeiro 1965.

4...\&g7 5.g3

He prepares the development of his bishop on g2.

About 5.\&c3 0–0 – see Chapter 11, variation A.

The g3-square is weakened after 5.h3?! \&h5 6.\&f2 e5\+ – The board is full of pieces and White’s
king on f2 does not beautify his position, Rodriguez Vila – Meza, Mar del Plata 2007.

5.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}}\text{e}2\). This is a clever move. 5...0-0 6.0-0 (6.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}}\text{3} \text{c}5 \) – see Chapter 11, variation A) 6...c5

7.\(\text{\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}}\text{3} \text{\texttt{c}}6 \) – see Chapter 11, variation A.

White cannot achieve much with the prophylactic move 7.a4 \(\text{\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}}\text{6} \) 8.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{a}3 \text{a}6\). Black exploits the defencelessness of the enemy rook on a1 and wishes to advance b7-b5. 9.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}2\). White parries his opponent’s threat. 9...\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{7} \) 10.c3 \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}7 \) 11.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\text{1} \text{\texttt{e}}\text{ab}8 \) 12.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{c}2 \text{b}5 \) 13. axb5 axb5= – Black has a quite acceptable position, Blittkowsky – Pereira, ICCF 2013.

7.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{1}\). White prepares the transfer of his queen to h4 in order to enhance his attack. 7...\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{6}

About 8.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{3}, \) or 8.\(\text{\texttt{h}}\text{1} \text{e}6 \) 9. \(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{3} \) – see Chapter 11, variation A. 8.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}2 \text{b}5 \) 9.a4 b4 10.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{4} \). White has the c4-square, but this does not promise him much. 10...\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{6} \) 11.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{3, Pakosta – Marhold, Klatovy 1995, 11...e6!?} \)

White weakens the d3-square with 8.c3 c4. This is Black’s simplest road to equality. The exchange of the c and d-pawns is in favour of Black. 9.\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{3} \text{cxd}3 \) 10. \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{xd}3 \text{e}5 \) 11.fxe5 \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{xe5} \)!, Poloch – Gazik, Hradec Kralove 1983, 12. \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{xe5} \text{dxe5} \) = – His superior pawn-structure promises him at least equal prospects.

8.\(\text{\texttt{h}}\text{4} \text{b}5\). Black starts active actions on the queenside. (It would be less precise for him to opt here for 8...c4 9.\(\text{\texttt{h}}\text{1} \text{cxd}3 \) 10.cxd3 \(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{4} \) 11.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{3} \text{\texttt{xf}}\text{3} \) 12.\(\text{\texttt{xf}}\text{3} \text{\texttt{b}}\text{6} \) 13.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}1\). White has a clear-cut attacking plan: \(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{3-h3} \). Later, in the game McShane – Cheparinov, Novi Sad 2009, Black failed to cope with the difficulties of the defence and lost quickly. 13...\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{6} \) 14.\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{3} \text{\texttt{f}}\text{c}8 \)?! 15.\(\text{\texttt{h}}\text{3=} \text{h}5 \) 16. \(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{5} \text{\texttt{e}}\text{5} \) 17.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{5} \text{\texttt{f}}\text{8} \) 18.\(\text{\texttt{fxg}}\text{6} \text{\texttt{fxg}}\text{6} \) 19.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\text{3} \text{\texttt{xd}}\text{3} \) 20.\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{3} \text{1-0} \) 9.a3. White impedes the pawn-advance b5-b4, but Black can change his plan a bit. (9.c3 b4∞ Babionyshev – Matjushin, Kiev 2002) 9...a6 10.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{3} \text{e}6\). He wishes to follow with \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{7}, \) with the idea either to trade White’s queen, or to oust it from its active position. 11.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{1} \text{\texttt{d}}\text{7} \) 12.\(\text{\texttt{xd}}\text{8} \text{\texttt{xd}}\text{8} \) 13.\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{2} \text{\texttt{b}}\text{7} \) 14.c3 \(\text{\texttt{ac}}\text{8} \)∞ Norman – Campbell, ICCF 2016.

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5...0-0 6.\( \text{Ng2} \) c5 7.0-0

7.\( \text{Qc3} \) \( \text{Qc6} \) – see Chapter 11, variation B2.

7.h3 \( \text{Qc6} \) 8.g4 b5 9.0-0 a5 – see 7.0-0.

7.c3 \( \text{Qc6} \) 8.\( \text{Qe2} \), Kharlov – Hulak, Budapest 1996 (8.0-0 \( \text{Qb8} \), or 8.\( \text{Qe2} \) b5 9.0-0 \( \text{Qb8} \) – see 7.0-0) 8...b5!??

7...\( \text{Qc6} \)

\( \text{8.c3} \)

White’s pawn joins in the fight for the central d4-square, but this creates a target for Black’s queenside counterplay (after b7-b5-b4).

\( \text{8.Qc3 b5} \) – see Chapter 11, variation B2.

\( \text{8.Qe1} \), Svidler – Vitiugov, Dubai 2014, 8...b5!??

After 8.\( \text{Qe2} \), Antipov – Yaniovyan, Moscow 2015, Black has the resource 8...b5!?, without being afraid of 9.e5 \( \text{Qd5} \)

\( \text{8.Qa3} \). The transfer of the knight to e3 seems rather artificial and takes too much time. 8...\( \text{Qb8} \) 9.\( \text{Qc4} \) (9.c3 b5 – see 8.c3) 9...b5 10.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qg4} \)= Zvjaginsev – Kovalia, Novokuznetsk 2008.

Following 8.\( \text{Qh4} \), Black can exploit in a tactical way the vulnerability of the g1-a7 diagonal

10.\( \text{Qb1} \) b5 11.b3, Bronstein – Najdorf, Moscow 1967, 11...e6!??

After 10.h3 b5 11.\( \text{Qf2} \), Lein – Van der Wiel, Lone Pine 1979, 11...\( \text{Qd7} \)!??, White has no compensation for the vulnerability of the d4-square.

10.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{Qg4} \). Black’s prepares the exchange of the important enemy defender of the central squares. 11.h3 \( \text{Qxf3} \) 12.\( \text{Qxf3} \), Campora – Illescas Cordoba, Dos Hermanas 2002, 12...\( \text{Qd7} \) 13.h4 \( \text{Qd4} \)

– Black’s powerful centralised knight is a more essential factor for the evaluation of this position than White’s bishop-pair, Savin – Myakutin, ICCF 2010.
and the insufficient protection of the b2-pawn: 8...\texttt{b6}!? 9.\texttt{\textint{h1} c4=} Tobiska – Taoubi, Germany 1994.

The move 8.\texttt{\textint{bd2} weakens the e3-square. 8...\texttt{g4}!? 9.\texttt{c4} (9.\texttt{e1} e5?!\texttt{\textint{infinity}}) 9...b5 10.\texttt{\textint{a3}, Nita – Davidevscu, Bucharest 2004, 10...\texttt{\textint{b8}!}?) 11.h3 \texttt{\textint{f6} – White’s knight on a3, at the edge of the board, does not beautify his position.}

After 8.a4, Black’s simplest way of equalising would be 8...c4!? 9.\texttt{\textint{c3} cxd3 10.cxd3 \texttt{\textint{b6}+ 11.\texttt{\textint{h1} g4= His pieces are very active and White’s attempt to seize the initiative by sacrificing a pawn would only lead to difficulties for him. 12.a5 \texttt{\textint{xax5 13.e5}} dxe5 14.fxe5 \texttt{\textint{d7 15.\texttt{\textint{a4} \textint{xf3 16.\textint{xf3 \texttt{\textint{c6 17.d4 \texttt{e6 18.\texttt{\textint{d1 h6 19.\texttt{\textint{a3 \texttt{\textint{f6, followed by \texttt{\textint{f8. White must fight for equality here, Savin – Morozov, ICCF 2010. 9.g4 a5

8.h3. This move is too straightforward. 8...b5

9.c3 \texttt{\textint{b8 – see 8.c3. 9.a4. White begins the fight for the c4-square. 9...b4 10.\texttt{\textint{bd2 \texttt{\textint{b8 11.\texttt{\textint{c4 \texttt{a6 12.\texttt{\textint{e1 \texttt{\textint{d7 13.\texttt{\textint{b1 (13.\texttt{\textint{h2 \texttt{\textint{c7}?!\texttt{\textint{infinity Movsesian – Baklan, Plovdiv 2008) 13...\texttt{\textint{d4 14.\texttt{\textint{xd4 \texttt{cxd4 15.b3 \texttt{\textint{c7. Black prepares the deployment of his queen to c5. 16.\texttt{\textint{b2 \texttt{c5}?! Spasov – Guartambel, ICCF 2006.

It would be a slight positional concession for White to choose here 9.\texttt{\textint{c3 b4 10.\texttt{\textint{e2. There has arisen a position from Chapter 11 (variation \texttt{B2b), but in a very good version for Black, since he has managed to advance b7-b5-b4, saving a tempo for the move \texttt{\textint{b8. 10...a5 11.g4 (11.\texttt{\textint{e3 \texttt{d7 12.\texttt{\textint{b1 a4∞ Klenburg – Sandipan, Pardubice 2005; 11.a3, Tu – Zagreb, Bled 2002, 11...\texttt{\textint{a6}?!\texttt{\textint{infinity) 11...\texttt{\textint{a6 12.\texttt{\textint{e3 \texttt{\textint{d7 13.\texttt{\textint{b1 a4 14.\texttt{b3 axb3 15.axb3 \texttt{\textint{b5. White defends his knight on c6 and prepares \texttt{\textint{a2. 16.\texttt{\textint{d2 \texttt{\textint{a2}∞ O.Hansen – P.Nielsen, Denmark 2006. 9.g4 a5

10.\texttt{\textint{c3 b4 11.\texttt{\textint{e2 \texttt{a6 – see 9.\texttt{\textint{c3.}

10.a4 b4 11.\texttt{\textint{bd2 \texttt{a6 12.\texttt{\textint{e1 \texttt{\textint{c8} Visser – De Vreugt, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

10.\texttt{\textint{e1 \texttt{a6 11.e5 dxe5 12.\texttt{\textint{xe5 \texttt{\textint{xe5 13.\texttt{\textint{e5 (White should not
accept the exchange-sacrifice, since following 13.\texttt{\textbackslash ha8}?! Rodríguez Vila – Bittencourt, Guarapari 2006, 13...\texttt{\textbackslash xd3}?! 14.cxd3 \texttt{\textbackslash xa8}–+, Black will have only a pawn for the exchange, but his bishops will be very powerful, while White’s king will be hopelessly vulnerable.) 13...\texttt{\textbackslash d5}∞

10.f5. This move seems to be too aggressive. 10...\texttt{\textbackslash b4} 11.\texttt{\textbackslash fe1 \textbackslash a6}. Black prepares c5-c4. 12.\texttt{\textbackslash h4} c4?! His prospects are already preferable. After White’s too optimistic move 13.\texttt{\textbackslash h6}?! cxd3 14.cxd3 \texttt{\textbackslash xd3}+, he would have no compensation for the pawn. 15.\texttt{\textbackslash e1 \textbackslash xh6} 16.\texttt{\textbackslash xh6} \texttt{\textbackslash b6}+ 17.\texttt{\textbackslash h1} \texttt{\textbackslash e5} 18.\texttt{\textbackslash bd2} \texttt{\textbackslash ac8} 19.\texttt{\textbackslash g5}?! This is another imprecise move by White after which his position becomes completely hopeless. 19...\texttt{\textbackslash ec2}–+ This penetration of Black’s rook to the penultimate rank is absolutely decisive. 20.\texttt{\textbackslash f1 \textbackslash xf1} 21. \texttt{\textbackslash xf1} \texttt{\textbackslash fc8} 22.\texttt{\textbackslash xg6} \texttt{\textbackslash hg6} 23.\texttt{\textbackslash b3 \textbackslash xg2} 24.\texttt{\textbackslash xg2} \texttt{\textbackslash ec2}+ 25.\texttt{\textbackslash g3 \textbackslash e3}+ 0–1 Fedorov – Kasparov, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

8...\texttt{\textbackslash eb8} 9.a4 White impedes the enemy pawn-advance b7-b5.

9.\texttt{\textbackslash bd2} b5 10.h3 b4 – see 9.h3.

9.\texttt{\textbackslash h4} \texttt{\textbackslash d7} 10.\texttt{\textbackslash e3} b5 11.a3 \texttt{\textbackslash b7}?! 12.\texttt{\textbackslash d2} a5=

9.\texttt{\textbackslash a3} b5 10.\texttt{\textbackslash c2} b4 11.c4 \texttt{\textbackslash g4} 12.\texttt{\textbackslash ce1} \texttt{\textbackslash d7} 13.h3 \texttt{\textbackslash xf3} 14.\texttt{\textbackslash xf3} e6 15.\texttt{\textbackslash h1}∞ – White has the two-bishop advantage, but his d4-square is too weak and precludes him from maintaining an edge, Petronic – Strikovic, Vrnjacka Banja 1998.

9.\texttt{\textbackslash e2} b5

10.h3 b4 – see 9.h3.
White would only weaken his king with 10.h4 b4+ Obukhov – Geller, Alushta 2004.

10.a3 a5 11.\texttt{\textbackslash h1} b4 12.axb4 axb4∞ Kharlov – Alterman, New York 1997.

White’s attempt to advance d3-d4 obviously backfires. 10.\texttt{\textbackslash d1} b4 11.d4, Van Dooren – Ivanov, Teplice 2007, 11...\texttt{\textbackslash xd4} 12.\texttt{\textbackslash xd4 \textbackslash b6}+ – His pawn-centre is a very good target for Black’s pieces.
10.e5 dxe5 11.fxe5 d5 12.f2 (12.bd2, Nadanian – Wang, Linares 1998, 12...g4!?) 12...b6 13.a4 b4 14.c4 c7 15.e3 e6. Black’s knight has succeeded just in time to protect reliably his c5-pawn. 16.bd2 d8 17.b3 xd3 18.xc5 xc5 19.xc5 xc4 White – Packroff, ICCF 2013.

9.h3 b5

10.a3, Strikovic – Izoria, Dos Hermanas 2003, 10...c4!?

10.g4 b4 11.c4 e6 12.bd2 d7! – White has no compensation for the weakness of the d4-square, Podinic – Delchev, Bijelo Polje 2005.

10.bd2 b4 11.c4, Todorcevic – Miton, El Sauzal 2006, 11...h5!? 12.h2 a5! – Black is better due to the vulnerability of the d4-square.

10.e3 b4 11.bd2 d7 12. c2, Fier – Iturrizaga Bonelli, ICC 2008, 12...a6!? – His bishop on a6 exerts powerful pressure against White’s d3-pawn.

His position looks rather precarious after 10.e2 b4 11.c4, Schaaf – Al Saleh, Germany 2005, 11...e5!? After Black has played b5-b4, White’s knight cannot go to c3, so Black does not need to worry about the weakening of the d5-square 12.e2 exf4 13.xf4 e6 14.bd2 d7 15.g4 h5 16.g5 e8 – White cannot protect simultaneously his pawns on b2 and h3.

9...a6

10.e2

After 10.bd2 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.h3 b4 13.c4, the d4-square becomes very weak in White’s camp. 13...b7 14.b3 a8 – Strikovic – Garcia Ilundain, Ponferrada 1992.

10.h1 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.e3 b4∞ Podinic – Vedmediuc, Bucharest 2012.

10.c2 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.h1 (12.h3, Kharlov – Hulak, Budapest 1996, 12...c4!? 13.d4 a5 14. bd2 d5 15.e5 f5 16.d1 e4 – White has more space, but Black’s pieces are very active.) 12...b4 13.e3 b6 14.bd2 bxc3 15.bxc3 b2. After the exchange
of the queens, there arises an approximately equal endgame on the board. 16.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xb2 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xb2 17.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}g1 (17.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}fc1, Podinic – Radovanovic, Banja Vručica 2012, 17...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e6!?) 17...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}c2 18.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}fc1 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xc1= Podinic – Jianu, Obrenovac 2010.

10.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e1 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.h3 b4 13.g4, Rodríguez Vila – Torres, Cali 2010, 13...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}b6!?∞, Black prepares the transfer of his bishop to an active position (\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}a6), followed by the doubling of his major pieces on the b-file (\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}b8).

White would not achieve much with 10.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e1 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.h3 b4 13.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}h2 e5 14.fxe5 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xe5 15. \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xe5 dxe5= – The vulnerability of his d3-pawn deprives him of chances of obtaining an advantage in the opening, Amin – Al Sayed, Abu Dhabi 2013.

There arises a complicated double-edged position after 10.h3 b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e3 (12.g4 b4 13.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e3 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}d7 14.d4 bxc3 15.bxc3 cxd4 16.cxd4 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}b4 17.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}a4 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}f6= – White’s centre needs additional protection, Bocharov – Yakunin, Novosibirsk 2007.) 12...c4. This is Black’s simplest road to equality 13.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}d4 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xd4 14.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xd4, Moussard – Villalba, Porto Carras 2010 (14. cxd4 e6=) 14...cxd3?=

10...b5 11.axb5 axb5 12.e5 dxe5

13.fxe5

After 13...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xe5, White even fails to equalise. 13...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xe5 14.fxe5, Dolezel – Ricardi, Buenos Aires 1998, 14...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}g4!? With this intermediate move Black develops his bishop to an active position and obtains an edge.

13...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}d5 14.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}bd2

After 14.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}f2 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}b6 15.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}bd2 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}f5∞, Black eyes the weak enemy pawn on d3, Nadanian – Izoria, Moscow 2002.

14...\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}f5 15.\texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}e4 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}b6 16. \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}f2, Yemelin – Swiercz, Czech Republic 2011, 16...b4!? 17. \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xc5 bxc3 18.bxc3 \texttt{\textsf{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}xc3∞ – Black’s pawn-structure is better and he is not worse at all.
Now, White has a choice. He can either fianchetto his lightsquared bishop: B) 3.g3, or can play A) 3.f4.

His alternatives, as a rule, do not lead to original positions.

3.d4 g6 – see Chapters 15-26.

3.♗g2 g6 4.d4 – see Chapter 15.

3.♗c4 g6 4.d3 (4.♗f3 ♗g7 – see Chapter 15; 4.f4 ♗g7 – see Chapter 15; 4.f4 g6 – see Chapter 21-23) 4...♗g7

5.d4 0-0 – see Chapter 22.
5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 ♗c6 7.a3 ♗g4 8.h3 ♗xf3 9.♗xf3 ♗e5 10.♖e2 ♗xc4 11.dxc4 ♗d7 12.♗d2, Siskov – Berta, Hungary 2002, 12...e6!? 13.♗ad1 ♗e7=

5.0-0 0-0 6.♗e1 (6.d4 ♗xe4 – see Chapter 22) 6...♗c6!? (6...c6?! 7.d4±) 7.d4 ♗g4 8.♗e3 ♗xe4 9.♗xe4 d5 10.♗d3 dxe4 11.♗xe4, Guerra Tulcan – Shoker, Tromso 2014, 11...♗xf3!? 12.♖xf3 ♗xd4 13.♗h3 ♗c8 14.♗xc8 ♗xc8 15.c3 ♗e6 16.a4 b6∞ – White must still prove that the power of his bishops compensates fully his sacrificed pawn.

5.h3 0-0 6.0-0 (6.d4 ♗xe4 – see Chapter 22) 6...♗xe4!? This is the simplest move for Black. 7. ♗xe4 ♗d5 8.♗d3 dxe4 9.♗xe4, Chmelik – Drabek, Czech Repub-
lic 1995, 9...f5!? The weakening of the a2-g8 diagonal is not so dangerous for Black, since he can counter 10...d3 with the move 10...e6 11.e1 d5 12.c3 c5\#, followed by c6, e7-e5.

A) 3.f4 g6

White’s pieces compensates his sacrificed pawn, but not more than that, Motzan – Jouanny, Email 2003.

White cannot obtain anything if he postpones the development of his knight. 4.c4 g7 5.e5 (5.f3 0–0 – see 4.f3; 5.d4 – see Chapter 24; 5.d3 0–0 6.f3 c6 – see 4.f3) 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 d7 7.e6 fxe6 8.xe6, Prorok – Gyori, Hungary 2013, 8...f8!??, Black impedes his opponent’s castling kingside. It will not work for White to play here 9.f3?! due to 9...e5! 10.d5 bc6 11.0–0 g4\# and Black’s pieces are obviously more active, while he can evacuate his king to the queenside following d6 and 0–0–0.

4.f3

4.d4 g7 – see Chapters 24-26.

White would not achieve much with 4.e5, because after 4...dxe5 5.fxe5 d7 6.d4 c5, Black would begin active actions against his opponent’s pawn-centre. 7.f3 g7 8.dxe5 0–0 9.e6. This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice with the idea to compromise the shelter of Black’s king, 9...xe6 10.c4 xc5 11.e2 b6 12.0–0 c6 13.e3 xb2. This is Black’s simplest solution. It might seem risky, but White is incapable of refuting Black’s brave queen-sortie. 14.b5 e4 15.c7 b8 16.xe6+ h8\# – The activity of

4...g7

5.c4

5.d4 0–0 – see Chapters 24-26.

5.e5 dxe5 6.fxe5 d7 7.d4 c5 – see 4.e5.
5...c5 6.d3 (6.g2 0–0 – see variation B) 6...0–0 7.g2 c6 – see variation B2.

5.d3 0–0 6.e3. The development of White's queenside pieces seems a bit premature. (It would be more reliable for him to opt for 6.g3 c5 7.g2 c6 – see variation B2 or 6.e2 c5 – see 5.e2). 6...e5 7.fxe5 dxe5 8.e2 c6 9.0–0, Rodriguez Vila – Mamedov, Sabadell 2008, 9...d4!? Black should not be afraid of 10.xe5, since he can counter that with the line: 10...xe4 11.xe4 xe5 12.c3 xe2+ 13.xe2 f5=. The material balance has been restored and Black's prospects are not worse in the forthcoming battle thanks to the power of his bishop-pair in this open position.

5.e2. White's bishop would not be so active here than on the c4-square. 5...0–0 6.0–0 (6.d4 – see Chapter 25; 6.d3 c5 7.0–0 c6 – see 6.0–0) 6...c5 7.d3 c6

8...e1. He is preparing the transfer of his queen to the h4-square. 8...e6!? This is a reliable move. Black is planning to counter the appearance of the enemy queen on h4 with the move d7, so that after the trade of the queens to deprive his opponent of his attacking chances. 9.h1 (White should not be happy with the position arising after 9.h4 d4 10.d1 d7 11.xd8 xd8= Hebblinghaus – Socko, Germany 2015.) Black can seize the initiative even in the middle game. 9...b6. Black plans to fianchetto his second bishop as well. 10.d2 b7 11.xe4 e8 12.h3 d4 13.xd4 cxd4. Now, his rooks will exert pressure against the enemy c2-pawn on the semi-open file. 14.d1 f5+ Short – Anand, London 2010.

5...0–0

6.d3

It would not be so useful for White to play here 8.h3 h5 9.e1 f5 10.exf5 gxf5= Enescu – Matei, ICCF 2005.

6.d4 xe4 – see Chapter 24.

6.0–0. This move seems premature, because Black can sacri-
fice temporarily a piece and simplify the position obtaining at least equality. 6...\textit{\textit{Q}}xe4!? 7.\textit{\textit{Q}}xe4 d5 8.\textit{\textit{Q}}d3 dxe4 9.\textit{\textit{Q}}xe4 \textit{\textit{Q}}d7 10.c3. It is possible White had to be reluctant to weaken the d3-square, because now Black’s knight will be headed there. 10...\textit{\textit{Q}}c5 11.\textit{\textit{Q}}c2 \textit{\textit{Q}}d3 12.\textit{\textit{Q}}e1 \textit{\textit{Q}}xc1 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}xc1, Abraham – Torre, Skopje 1972, 13...\textit{\textit{Q}}d6?!\textit{\textit{Q}} – His prospects seem preferable thanks to his two-bishop advantage.

After the prophylactic move 6.\textit{\textit{Q}}b3 (White defends against \textit{\textit{Q}}xe4.), Black’s simplest solution would be 6...\textit{\textit{Q}}c6!? – his knight will control important central squares from here (e5 and d4), and also might be exchanged for the powerful enemy bishop (\textit{\textit{Q}}a5).

7.d3 (7.d4 \textit{\textit{Q}}a5 8.0–0 c6 9.e5, Ristic – Koukoufiki, Athens 1999, 9...\textit{\textit{Q}}e8!?\textit{\textit{Q}}∞) 7...\textit{\textit{Q}}g4 8.\textit{\textit{Q}}e3 e5= Black has no problems whatsoever. In addition, White should be very careful. For example: 9.\textit{\textit{W}}d2 \textit{\textit{W}}xf3 10.gxf3 \textit{\textit{Q}}d4 11.0–0 \textit{\textit{Q}}h5\textit{\textit{Q}} – Degenhardt – Krojanski, Dortmund 1992.

6...\textit{\textit{Q}}c6!?

This is the most practical solution for Black.

He should better refrain from 6...c5, since following 7.0–0 \textit{\textit{Q}}c6, there arises a transfer to one of the variations of the Sicilian Defence, in a version which is not good for Black at all.

7.0–0

7.\textit{\textit{Q}}b3 b5 8.0–0 a5 – see 7.0–0.

7...\textit{\textit{Q}}b5

Black begins a chase after the enemy bishop.

8.\textit{\textit{Q}}b3 a5

9.a4

9.a3 \textit{\textit{Q}}bd7 10.\textit{\textit{Q}}e1 e6!? (It would not be good for Black to play immediately 10...\textit{\textit{Q}}c5 11.\textit{\textit{Q}}a2 b4, in view of 12.axb4 axb4 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}xf7+ \textit{\textit{Q}}xf7 14.\textit{\textit{Q}}xa8\textit{\textit{Q}} – White’s rook and two pawns seem to be more powerful than Black’s two minor pieces, Maltez – Barata, Vila Real 2005) 11.d4 \textit{\textit{Q}}b6 12.h3 a4 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}a2 \textit{\textit{Q}}b7 14.\textit{\textit{Q}}e3 c5∞ – There has arisen a very complicated position on the board. Black’s pressure against the enemy centre provides him with counterplay which would be sufficient to maintain the balance.

9...b4 10.\textit{\textit{Q}}e2 \textit{\textit{Q}}bd7 11.c3

(The transfer of White’s queen to the h4-square would lead to diffi-
culties for him. 11.\textit{We}1 \textit{Aa}6 12. \textit{Wh}4?! \textit{Cc}5\textsuperscript{+} threatening \textit{Cxb}3 and \textit{Axd}3, as well as \textit{Cxe}4; 12.e5 \textit{Cd}5\textsuperscript{?}) 11...\textit{Wb}6+ 12.\textit{Wh}1 \textit{Aa}6\textsuperscript{+} Velker – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009. Black’s bishop will be very strong on this diagonal, exerting pressure against the weak enemy d3-pawn. If we have in mind that his second bishop exerts powerful pressure on the a1-h8 diagonal, then it would become obvious that White must worry about equalising.

B) 3.\textit{g}3
White develops his pieces in the spirit of Closed variation of the Sicilian Defence.

3...\textit{g}6 4.\textit{Ag}2

4.d\textit{d} 4 \textit{Ag}7 – see Chapter 17.

4...\textit{Ag}7

5.\textit{d}3

5.d\textit{d} 0–0 – see Chapter 17.

5.f\textit{f} 0–0 6.\textit{Af}3 (6.d\textit{d} e5 – see Chapter 17; 6.d\textit{d} c5 – see 5.d\textit{d}) 6...c5 7.0–0 (7.d\textit{d} \textit{Cc}6 – see 5.d\textit{d}) 7...\textit{Cc}6 8.d\textit{d} \textit{Ab}8 – see 5.d\textit{d}.

The move 5.\textit{Ag}e2 has some venom too. White delays his decision about the future placement of his d2-pawn and can continue with either d2-d3, or d2-d4. 5...0–0 6.0–0 (6.d\textit{d} e5 – see Chapter 17, variation B) 6...e5. This is Black’s most precise solution. (Following 6...c5 7.d\textit{d} cxd\textit{d} 8.\textit{Ax}d\textit{d}, there arises on the board one of the lines of the Dragon variation. It is easy to understand that Black should be reluctant to comply with this.)

About 7.d\textit{d} c6, or 7.h\textit{h} c6 8.d\textit{d} b5 – see Chapter 17, variation B.

7.d\textit{d} c6 8.h\textit{h} (8.f\textit{f} \textit{Cd}7 9.h\textit{h} b5 – see 7.f\textit{f}) 8...d5!? This is the simplest. This timely strike against the enemy centre leads to complete equality for Black. 9. exd\textit{d} \textit{Cd}5 10.\textit{Ax}d\textit{d} cxd\textit{d} 11.d\textit{d}, Strijbos – Smit, Netherlands 1994, 11...e\textit{e}4 12.f\textit{f}3 f5∞

7.f\textit{f} c6 8.h\textit{h} b5. Black occupies space on the queenside. 9.d\textit{d} \textit{Cd}7 10.a\textit{a}3. White defends against the possible enemy pawn-advance b5-

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b4. 10...£b7 11.f5 £b6+ 12.£h2 d5 13.g4 h6 14.£g3∞ Helin – Hickman, Gibraltar 2007. There has arisen a complicated position with mutual chances. Black follows the classical principles and counters his enemy flank attack with a counter-strike in the centre (12...d5). White would hardly manage to develop a kingside attack, since Black could block the game there with the move g6-g5, so that White would have to spend numerous tempi in order to prepare the pawn-break h3-h4.

5...0–0 6.f4

6.£f3 e5 7.0–0 £c6 – see Chapter 2, variation B.

6...c5

There has arisen by transposition one of the lines of the Closed variation of the Sicilian Defence. Now, White must make up his mind where to develop his knight on g1 B1) 7.£ge2, or B2) 7.£f3.

7.h3. The delay of the development of White’s knight on g1 would not promise him anything positive. 7...£c6 8.£e3 (He should better choose here 8.£f3 £b8 – see 7.£f3, or 8.£ge2 £e8 – see 7.£ge2.) 8...£e6!?

Black shows a very concrete approach to the problems of this position. He plans to prepare and advance d6-d5-d4.

Following 9.£f3, Black at first defends his pawn 9...£b6 and only after 10.£b1 advances 10...d5, obtaining an excellent position, Vivas Font – Cardona Costa, ICCF 2012.

After 9.£d2, Black has a promising pawn-sacrifice. 9...d5! 10.£xc5 dxe4 11.£xe4 £xe4 12.£xe4 £xb2. The position has been opened and White’s lag in the development of his kingside pieces becomes a telling factor. 13.£b1 £g7 14.£xb7 £c8 15.£b1 £d8 + Van Wieringen – Saxena, ICCF 2010.

9.£f2. White removes in advance his bishop from the eventual pawn-fork. 9...d5 10.e5. He lags in development and should better avoid the opening of the position. 10...£d7 11.£f3 d4 12.
\( \text{B1) 7. } \text{Qge2} \)

The knight is not so active here than on the f3-square. White plans later to bring his knight into the attack after h2-h3, g3-g4, Qg3.

\( \text{7...Qc6 8.0-0} \)

8.h3 Qb8 9.g4 (9.0-0 Qd7, or 9.Qe3 Qd7 10.0-0 b5, or 10.Wd2 b5 11.0-0 b4 – see 8.0-0). Before advancing b7-b5, Black must play 9...h3d7, in order to defend against e4-e5. This circumstance however, would not prevent him from obtaining an acceptable position. 10.Qg3 b5 11.g5 Qe8\( ^{\circ} \) Mortensen – Sigurjonsson, Randers 1982.

\( \text{8...Qb8} \)

Black is preparing b7-b5-b4.

\( \text{9.h3} \)

This is a multi-purpose move. White not only prepares g3-g4, but also intends to occupy the e3-square with his bishop without being afraid of the enemy knight-sortie Qg4.

9.a4 a6 10.h3 Qd7 – see 9.h3.

9.Qh1. This is an interesting move, but still insufficient to provide White with an edge. He is reluctant to lose time for the move h2-h3, so he frees the g1-square for the retreat of his bishop. 9...Qd7 10.Qe3 b5 (10...Qg4 11.Qg1) 11.Qd2 a5 12.Qg1. White evacuates in advance his bishop against the possible attack of the enemy knight (Qg4). 12...a4!? Black is not in a hurry to advance b5-b4. 13.a3. Now, White should not be afraid of the pawn-advance a4-a3, but still, Black’s pawn on a3 might facilitate the development of his queenside initiative. 13...Qe8. He prepares the transfer of his knight to the c7-square. 14.Qd1 Qc7\( ^{\circ} \) Hernandez Carmenates – Quesada Perez, Yucatan 2004.
9...\textit{\textbf{d7}}

This prophylactic against e4-e5 is necessary.

![Diagram]

10.\textit{\textbf{e3}}

10.a3 \textit{\textbf{d}4 11.\textit{\textbf{x}d}4 \textit{\textbf{cxd}4 12.\textit{\textbf{e}e2 b6}} – The pressure against the c2-pawn provides Black with a good position, Shamkovich – Browne, Mentor 1977.}

10.a4 a6 11.\textit{\textbf{e}e3 (11.g4 b5 12.axb5 axb5 13.dg3 b4 14.\textit{\textbf{ce2 b6 15.g5 e8 16.\textit{\textbf{h}1 c7∞ Nikula – Held, Frankfurt 2013}) 11...b5 12.axb5 axb5. The opening of the a-file is much rather in favour of Black. Naturally, White will manage to get rid of the potentially weak a-pawn, but later Black’s major pieces are very likely to occupy the a-file. 13.d2 b4 14.d1 b6 15.g4 d4 16.g3 c6 17.f5. White can hardly continue his attack without this move, but now, Black’s knight gains access to the wonderful e5-outpost. 17...d7 Bartsch – Sosonko, Germany 1981.)}}}

10.g4 b5 11.dg3 (It would be premature for White to opt here for 11.g5?! \textit{\textbf{h}5+ Mamedov – Oparin, St Petersburg 2012.) 11...b4 12.\textit{\textbf{ce2 e8!? Black prepares the transfer of his knight to c7 and eventually to b5 from where it can even go to d4. 13.f5 (White would only create a weakness on c3 in his own position in the line: 13.c4 bxc3 14.bxc3 \textit{\textbf{a}5+ Kotsur – Wang, Kolkata 2001.) 13...c7 14.g5, Rublevsky – Kurnosov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013 (14.d4, Rogulj – Horvath, Austria 2007, 14...a5+) 14...b5!?∞ – The chances are mutual in this complicated position. Later, Black will organise active actions on the queenside, while White would seek his chances on the opposite side of the board.)}}}

10...\textit{\textbf{b5}}

Black is threatening to oust the enemy knight to the edge of the board after b5-b4.

![Diagram]

11.\textit{\textbf{a}3}

11.d2. White frees the d1-square for his knight. 11...b4 12.d1 a5
13.\texttt{xc1} a4∞ Bitoon – Li, Subic Bay 2009.

Black obtains a very good position following 13.f5 e6 14.g4, Gulati – Jiang, Edmonton 2005, 14...exf5. This is Black's simplest road to equality. 15.exf5 gxf5 16.\texttt{e6}. White trades an important defender of the enemy king. Still, some other of Black's pieces come to assist in the protection of his king. 16...\texttt{e8}. He is preparing \texttt{xf6}. 17.gxf5 \texttt{xf6} 18.\texttt{h6} \texttt{xf6} 19.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6}∞ – Black's prospects are not worse in this endgame, because the majority of White's pawns are placed against the rules – that is on squares with the same color as his bishop.

13.g4 a4 14.a3 \texttt{a5} 15.axb4, Ghaem Maghami – Gao, Vietnam 2012, 15...cxb4!?∞ – In this complicated position, Black's queenside counterplay should be sufficient to maintain the equality.

11...a5 12.a4 (diagram)

12...bxa4!? This is Black's simplest solution.

Following 12...b4 13.\texttt{b5}∞, White would obtain an excellent square for his knight, Short – McShane, Reykjavik 2000.

13.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{c8} 14.\texttt{h2} \texttt{e8} 15.c3 (15.\texttt{c1} \texttt{c7} 16.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xb2}. Black is not afraid of ghosts. 17.\texttt{xb2} \texttt{xb2} 18.f5 f6∞ – White has obtained the two-bishop advantage and the shelter of Black's king has been compromised, but he still has an extra pawn, moreover that it is a passed pawn, Ohtake – Haugen, ICCF 2013.) 15...\texttt{c7} 16.\texttt{d2} \texttt{a6} 17.d4 \texttt{cxd4} 18.cxd4 e6 19.\texttt{f1} \texttt{f8} 20.\texttt{d3} \texttt{e7} – White has extra space indeed, but Black's pieces are more harmoniously deployed, Chaika – Susedenko, ICCF 2015.

\textbf{B2) 7.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c6}}
8.0–0

White can hardly continue the game without this move.

8...\e3. Without h2-h3, this move seems premature. 8...\g4 9.\d2?! (9.\g1 f5∞ – Black does not have a single problem to worry about, Kovacik – Mrvova, Slovakia 1996.) 9...\b6 10.h3 (10.\b1 c4\textsuperscript{+}) 10...\e3! He wins a pawn with a simple, but effective tactical strike. 11.\xe3 \xb2\textsuperscript{+}

8.h3 \b8 9.\e3 (9.0–0 b5 or 9.a4 a6 10.0–0 b5 – see 8.0–0) 9...b5 10.\d2 (10.0–0 b4, or 10.\a3 a5 11.0–0 b4 – see 8.0–0) 10...b4 11.\d1 (11.\e2, Rodriguez Vila – Tsuboi, Sao Paulo 2004, 11...\d7!? 12.\b1 \a5\textsuperscript{+} – White has some problems with the defence of his a2-pawn.) 11.a5 12.g4, Makropoulos – Kourkounakis, Athens 2000, 12...\d5?! Black exploits the insufficient protection of the e4-square. 13.e5 d4 14.\f2 \d5 15.0–0 f6\textsuperscript{+} – Black’s prospects are obviously preferable, because White’s premature activity has only led to the weakening of the e3-square and the misplacement of his knight at the edge of the board.

8...\b8

(diagram)

We will analyse now: B2a) 9.a4 and B2b) 9.h3.

There arises a complicated double-edged position after 9.\b1 b5 10.a3 \d7 11.h3 (11.\d2 a5 12.\e2 b4 13.axb4 axb4 14.b3 \c8 15.\h1 \g4\textsuperscript{+} – White can hardly advance h2-h3 and g3-g4 after this move, Rubinetti – Ricardi, Buenos Aires 1986.) 11...a5 12.\e2 \c8 13.\h2 b4 14.a4 \c7 15.b3 e5∞ – White would be incapable of exploiting the weakening of the d5-square, because Black’s pawn on b4 controls the c3-square, while the transfer of the knight to e3 would consume too many tempi, Martin Molinero – Graham, ICCF 2011.

9.\h4 \g4. Before advancing \d7, Black would like to displace the enemy queen. 10.\d2. The queen will impede the development of White’s bishop on c1 from this square. (It is possible he could retreat his queen to another square – 10.\e1, although even then after 10...\d4 11.\f2 b5 12.\f3, Bohak – Dragu, ICCF 2010, 12...\xf3+ 13.\xf3 \xf3 14.\xf3 e6=, he would not have a single chance of obtaining an opening edge.) 10...\d7 11.h3 e6 12.\f3 \e8 13.\f2, Kallio – Leskiewicz, Jyvaskyla 1999, 13...f5?! – Black prevents the enemy pawn-advance f4-f5 and obtains a good position.
B2a) 9.a4 a6 10.h3

10.\(\mathcal{D}h4\) \(\mathcal{G}g4!\). We are already familiar with this manoeuvre of the bishop after our previous notes. 11.\(\mathcal{W}d2\) \(\mathcal{D}d7\) 12.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) (12.f5 b5 13.axb5 axb5 14.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) b4 15.h3 e6† Antoshin – Budnikov, Voronezh 1988) 12...b5 13.axb5 axb5 14.h3 \(\mathcal{W}b6\) 15.f5 b4† – Black’s dominance over the e5-square provides him with a slight edge, while following \(\mathcal{G}a8\), he will still have the a-file as well, Blatny – Taimanov, Decin 1975.

10...b5 11.axb5

White cannot obtain much if he refrains from this exchange: 11.\(\mathcal{D}e3\), Gelman – Stambulian, Krasnodar 1998, 11...b4!? 12.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) e6∞ or 11.g4 b4 12.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) \(\mathcal{D}d7\) 13. \(\mathcal{G}b1\), Peng – Yu, Shenyang 1999, 13...e6!? – and in both variations, there would arise a complicated fight with mutual chances.

11...axb5

12.\(\mathcal{D}e3\)

12.\(\mathcal{D}e2\). This deliberate retreat of the knight seems a bit passive. 12...\(\mathcal{B}b7\). Black is preparing \(\mathcal{G}a8\). 13.g4 (13.\(\mathcal{B}b1\) b4 14.\(\mathcal{D}e3\), M movsziszian – Sveshnikov, Bratto 2015, 14...e6!?∞) 13...\(\mathcal{G}a8\) 14.\(\mathcal{D}xa8\) \(\mathcal{W}xa8\) = Pineda – Revita, Manila 2016.

It is also possible for White to play here immediately 12.g4 b4 13.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) (13.\(\mathcal{D}a4?!\) T.L.Petrosian – Mahjoob, Esfahan 2004, 13... \(\mathcal{W}c7!?\)†) 13...\(\mathcal{B}b6\). Black is threatening to play c5-c4 at an opportune moment. 14.\(\mathcal{D}e3\) (Following 14.\(\mathcal{D}h1\), Black would begin a fight for the a-file: 14...\(\mathcal{B}b7\) 15.\(\mathcal{D}e3\) \(\mathcal{G}a8\) 16.\(\mathcal{B}b1\) \(\mathcal{G}a2\) Bulanov – Belous, Moscow 2007.) 14...\(\mathcal{B}b7\) 15.\(\mathcal{D}d2\) (15.\(\mathcal{W}e1\) \(\mathcal{G}a8\) 16.\(\mathcal{B}b1\) \(\mathcal{D}d7\)∞) 15... \(\mathcal{D}d7\) 16.\(\mathcal{B}b1\) \(\mathcal{G}a8\) 17.g5 \(\mathcal{W}c7\) 18.f5 \(\mathcal{G}a2\) 19.\(\mathcal{G}c1\) \(\mathcal{G}a7\) (19...\(\mathcal{X}xb2?!\) 20. \(\mathcal{F}f6\)?) 20.\(\mathcal{D}e2\) \(\mathcal{G}a2\)= – Black’s counterplay on the queenside is sufficient to maintain the equality, Grebenschikov – Shapiro, ICCF 2014.

12...b4 13.\(\mathcal{D}e2\)

13.\(\mathcal{D}a4\). From this square, White’s knight will impede the enemy major pieces to occupy the a-file, but its position there would be a bit passive. 13...\(\mathcal{B}b7\) 14.\(\mathcal{W}d2\) \(\mathcal{G}a8\)=. Black has a good position and White’s attempt to begin active actions in the centre would lead only to difficulties for him: 15.e5 \(\mathcal{D}d5\) 16.\(\mathcal{F}f2\) \(\mathcal{B}d6\) 17.\(\mathcal{X}xb6\) \(\mathcal{W}xb6\) 18.\(\mathcal{X}xa8\) \(\mathcal{X}xa8\) 19.exd6 exd6† Rodríguez Vila – Larrea, Porto San Giorgio 2016.
13...\textbf{b}7

14.\textbf{d}2

14.f5 \textbf{d}7 15.\textbf{c}1, Todorcevic – Sosonko, Strasbourg 1975, 15...\textbf{a}8!?=

14.c3. This move only creates a target for Black to attack on the queenside. 14...\textbf{a}8 15.\textbf{c}2 \textbf{c}7 16.\textbf{f}b1 \textbf{f}c8 17.\textbf{h}2 \textbf{d}7 18.\textbf{g}1 e6 19.\textbf{x}a8 \textbf{x}a8\infty Hansen – Evtushenko, ICCF 2012.

Following 14.b3, It seems very good for Black to transfer his knight to b5: 14...\textbf{e}8!? 15.\textbf{c}1 \textbf{c}7 16.g4 \textbf{d}5 17.\textbf{c}e1 \textbf{a}8 18.f5 e6= Kokolias – Rychagov, Aghios Kirykos 2009.

There arises a complicated double-edged position after 14.g4 \textbf{d}d7 (14...\textbf{b}6 – see 12.g4) 15.\textbf{b}1 e6 16.\textbf{d}2 \textbf{e}7 17.\textbf{g}3 \textbf{d}4= Ibragimov – Kuporosov, Berlin 1995.

14...\textbf{a}8 15.\textbf{a}b1

15.\textbf{x}a8 \textbf{x}a8 16.g4, Bonatti – Copie, IECG 2001, 16...\textbf{a}2!?\textbf{?}

15.g4 \textbf{b}6 16.c3 \textbf{d}7 17.f5. Here, the simplest for Black would be to trade the rooks in order to parry his opponent’s eventual attack. 17...\textbf{x}a1!? 18.\textbf{x}a1 \textbf{a}8 19.\textbf{x}a8+ \textbf{x}a8 20.d4 \textbf{b}7\infty Detela – Walter, ICCF 2011.

15...\textbf{e}6!? This is a reliable move.

Black should better avoid the double-edged complications arising after 15...\textbf{a}5 16.b3 \textbf{f}c8 17.f5 \textbf{b}6 18.g4 \textbf{a}2 19.\textbf{c}c1 \textbf{a}5 20.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{c}7 21.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{e}2 22.\textbf{b}c1= Spassky – Geller, Sukhumi 1968.

16.\textbf{e}5 \textbf{d}5 17.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{a}5 18.\textbf{f}d1 \textbf{c}7 19.\textbf{x}d6 \textbf{x}d6 20.\textbf{c}4 \textbf{e}7\infty – The vulnerability of the d3-pawn provides Black with at least equal chances, Usbeck – Karpenko, ICCF 2013.

\textbf{B2b) 9.h3 b5}

(diagram)

10.\textbf{g}4

White ignores his opponent’s queenside counterplay and begins
the preparation of an attack on the kingside.

His alternatives seem to be less energetic.

10.\(\text{f}2\) b4 11.\(\text{e}3\) (11.g4 \(\text{d}7\) – see 10.g4) 11...\(\text{d}7\) – see 10.\(\text{e}3\).

10.\(\text{h}2\) b4 11.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{x}d5\) 12.\(\text{exd}5\) \(\text{d}4\) 13.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{xd}4\) – Black has a superior pawn-structure, Karlsson – Shulman, Stockholm 1992.

It would not be so good for White to play here 10.\(\text{h}4\), because the edge of the board is hardly the best place for a knight. 10...b4 11.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}7\) 12.\(\text{h}1\) a5∞ Radulski – Colovic, Stara Pazova 2001.

10.\(\text{e}1\). White frees a square for his knight. He plans the manoeuvre \(\text{d}1\)-e3, but all this takes too much time. 10...b4 11.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{d}4\) 12.\(\text{e}3\), Hort – Branford, London 1982, 12...\(\text{xf}3\)+!? 13.\(\text{xf}3\) e6=

Following 10.\(\text{e}3\) b4 11.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}7\), White would have problems with the protection of his pawns on b2 and a2.

It would be too optimistic for White to opt here for 12.d4, because following 12...\(\text{a}6\), Black’s presently idle bishop on c8 enters the actions with a striking effect. 13.g2, Nikitinlykh – Antonov, corr. 2002, 13...\(\text{f}6\)?? – White’s seemingly beautiful centre is likely to crumble like a tower of cards.

White can only create additional weaknesses in his position with the line: 12.c3 \(\text{a}6\) 13.\(\text{f}2\) bxc3 14.bxc3 \(\text{a}5\) 15.d4 \(\text{b}6\) Satici – Jedrzejowski, ICCF 2002.

12.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{a}5\) 13.\(\text{c}1\). Now, in order to protect his pawn on a2, White must place his knight on an unfavourable position. (After 13.\(\text{d}2\), Black should not be in a hurry to capture on a2 and should better improve at first the placement of his bishop. 13...\(\text{a}6\) 14.f5 \(\text{b}5\) Destrues Moreno – Goebert, ICCF 2008) 13...\(\text{a}6\) 14.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{c}7\) 15.h4?! Visser – Nijboer, Netherlands 2001. White only weakens his kingside with this move. 15...\(\text{f}6\)?? 16.\(\text{h}2\) \(\text{c}8\) 17.g4 h5 18.g5 \(\text{g}4\)??, Black has established a firm control over the g4-square.
Prophylactic action on the queenside would not be effective for White here. 10.a3 a5

11.\(\mathcal{D}\)e2 b4 12.a4. He can try to prevent the opening of the a-file on the queenside, but this would not be good for him either. (White should better choose here 12.axb4 axb4 13.\(\mathcal{D}\)xe3 \(\mathcal{D}\)b7 – see 9.a4.) 12...c4! This is the point. Black exploits the insufficient protection of the enemy e4-pawn and accomplishes an important pawn-break. 13.\(\mathcal{D}\)d2 cxd3 14.cxd3 \(\mathcal{D}\)a6\(\mathcal{+}\) – The weak pawn on d3 would be a cause of permanent worries for White, Svetushkin – Shetty, Dubai 2005.

11.\(\mathcal{W}\)e1. He is preparing the manoeuvre \(\mathcal{D}\)c3-d1-e3. 11...b4 12.axb4 axb4 13.\(\mathcal{D}\)d1 \(\mathcal{D}\)b7. Black begins a fight for the open a-file. 14.\(\mathcal{D}\)e3 \(\mathcal{W}\)a8 15.\(\mathcal{W}\)xa8 \(\mathcal{W}\)xa8 16.\(\mathcal{D}\)d2 \(\mathcal{D}\)d7 17.\(\mathcal{D}\)dc4 \(\mathcal{W}\)a2\(\mathcal{+}\) – His queen is very actively deployed and will deflect White’s forces from the attack on the queenside, Bohak – Homske, ICCF 2011.

Following 11.g4 b4 12.\(\mathcal{D}\)e2, Black begins immediate active actions. (White should better play here 12.axb4 axb4 – see 9.a4.) 12...c4!? 13.\(\mathcal{D}\)g3 (His position would remain difficult too after 13.f5 \(\mathcal{D}\)a6 14.fxg6 hxg6 15.\(\mathcal{D}\)g5 cxd3 16.cxd3, Apaydin – R.Mamedov, Urgup 2004, 16...\(\mathcal{W}\)b6+! 17.\(\mathcal{D}\)h1 \(\mathcal{D}\)e5 18.d4 \(\mathcal{D}\)xe2 19.\(\mathcal{W}\)xe2 \(\mathcal{W}\)xd4\(\mathcal{+}\) and Black remains with a solid extra pawn). 13...cxd3 14.cxd3 \(\mathcal{W}\)b6+ 15.\(\mathcal{D}\)h1 \(\mathcal{D}\)a6\(\mathcal{+}\) with powerful pressure on the f1-a6 diagonal. N.Sammalvuo – T.Sammalvuo, Salo 2003.

There arises a complicated double-edged fight after 11.\(\mathcal{D}\)e3 b4 12.\(\mathcal{D}\)e2 (12.axb4 axb4 – see 9.a4) 12...\(\mathcal{W}\)c7 13.\(\mathcal{D}\)d2. White prepares the transfer of his knight to c4. 13...\(\mathcal{D}\)d7 14.axb4 axb4 15.c3 \(\mathcal{D}\)b6 16.\(\mathcal{D}\)c4 \(\mathcal{D}\)a6 17.\(\mathcal{D}\)d2 \(\mathcal{W}\)a7 18.\(\mathcal{W}\)xa6 \(\mathcal{W}\)xa6 19.f5 \(\mathcal{D}\)de5\(\mathcal{∞}\) – Black has a very good position thanks to his powerful centralised knight, Leupold – Kasyan, ICCF 2013.

10...b4 11.\(\mathcal{D}\)e2 \(\mathcal{D}\)d7

Now, in order to organise an attack on the kingside, White will have to advance sooner or later f4-f5, but then Black’s knight will occupy the wonderful central e5-outpost.
12.\textit{\textit{Q}}g3
White concentrates pieces on the kingside.

He may even fail to equalise after his alternatives.
12.g5 \textit{\textit{Q}}b6 13.a3 (13.\textit{\textit{Q}}h2, Benko – Aaron, Stockholm 1962, 13...\textit{\textit{d}}5!??) 13...\textit{\textit{Q}}a4. White will have problems now to protect his b2-pawn. 14.\textit{\textit{Q}}d2 \textit{\textit{Q}}xb2 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}a2 bxa3 16.\textit{\textit{Q}}xa3 a5\textit{∞} – In this complicated position Black has an extra passed a-pawn and this is a remedy against all possible problems, Savin – Hernaez Fernandez, ICCF 2015.

12.\textit{\textit{Q}}h1. This is hardly White’s most energetic move. 12...a5 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}e1 (13.\textit{\textit{Q}}b1, Himanshu – Ramnathan, Aurangabad 2011, 13...\textit{\textit{Q}}b7?\textit{∞}) 13...\textit{\textit{Q}}a6 14.f5, Lima – Tsuibo, Brasilia 1999. Here, Black can accomplish the thematic pawn-break on the queenside: 14...c4!\textit{∞}

12.\textit{\textit{Q}}e1. White is preparing the transfer of his queen to the kingside, but weakens his control over the d3-square. Black can exploit this circumstance with the moves \textit{\textit{Q}}a6, c5-c4. 12...\textit{\textit{Q}}a6 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}b1 (13.f5 c4 – see 12.f5; 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}f2 \textit{\textit{Q}}b6\textit{∞}) 13...c4 14.d4 c3\textit{!} – His powerful bishop on a6 will create numerous problems for White in the forthcoming fight, Rodriguez Vila – Milos, Santos 2007.

12.f5 \textit{\textit{Q}}a6 13.\textit{\textit{Q}}e1?! (13.\textit{\textit{Q}}f4 \textit{\textit{Q}}de5 14.\textit{\textit{Q}}xe5, Azaladze – Shana, Izmir 2011, 14...\textit{\textit{d}}xe5!? 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}d5 e6 16.\textit{\textit{Q}}e3 \textit{\textit{h}}h6\textit{∞} – After the removal of the knight from the e3-square, there would arise a trade of the dark-squared bishops and White’s bishop on g2 would be “bad”, because all his pawns are placed on squares with the same colour as his bishop.) 13...c4. Black seizes firmly the initiative. 14.fxg6?! fxg6 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}f4 \textit{\textit{Q}}c5 16.\textit{\textit{Q}}g5 \textit{\textit{Q}}d4++ Ambirk – Ramos Verdu, ICCF 2013.

12...\textit{\textit{Q}}c7 13.f5

White begins active actions on the kingside, but weakens the e5-square.
13...\textit{\textit{Q}}de5 14.\textit{\textit{Q}}h4 \textit{\textit{Q}}d4 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}d7 16.\textit{\textit{Q}}f3 \textit{\textit{Q}}xf3+ 17.\textit{\textit{Q}}xf3 \textit{\textit{Q}}e5\textit{∞} Rybak – Hauenstein, ICCF 2015. There has arisen a very complicated position. Black’s knight is very powerful at the centre of the board, but White has also his counter chances, connected with the pawn-advance h3-h4-h5.
4. d3 g7 5. e2 (5. c3 0–0 – see 4. c3; 5. g3 0–0 – see 4. g3). After this move, there arise original positions, but with knights on d2 and e2 White can even end up in an inferior position. 5...0–0 6.0–0 (6. f3 g4 7. g3, Hatle – Prouza, Most 1999, 7...c5!? 6...e5 7. c3 e8!? 8. c2 bd7=. Black has a very good position and after White’s careless move 9.b4?! d5!, Black turns up to be better prepared for the opening of the game in the centre, Vandevenne – Huebben, Bruges 2012.

4.f4. This active move would be much more effective with a white knight on c3 (Chapters 24-26). 4...e5!? This is an energetic response. Black inflicts an immediate strike against the enemy centre. 5.fxe5 (Following 5. gf3, Bierenbroodspot – Nijboer, Eindhoven 1984, 5...exf4!, White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient. 6. c4 h6=. This is a multi-purpose move. Black not only protects his f4-pawn and prepares his castling, but also covers the g5-square against the
penetration of the enemy knight.) 5...dxe5 6.d5, Balinas – Lim, Kuala Lumpur 1990, 6...c6!? – White's centre needs additional protection. Later, Black can develop his bishop not only to the g7-square, but also more actively to c5, impeding his opponent's castling.

4...\( \text{g7} \)

Now, White must choose a square for his bishop on f1: A) 5.e2, B) 5.e4, or C) 5.d3.

About 5.h3 0–0 6.d3 (6.e4 \( \text{xe4} \) – see 5.e4; 6.c3 \( \text{c6} \) – see 5.c3) 6...c6 – see 5.d3.

It is not good for White to play 5.g3. We will analyse similar positions, but with a white knight on c3, in Chapter 17. 5...0–0 6.g2 c5 7.c3 cxd4 8.xd4 (Following 8...cxd4, White will have difficulties with the protection of his pawn-centre. For example, after 9.e2?! \( \text{g4} \), Black seizes completely the initiative, Tsang – Iordachescu, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010.) 8...e5!? Black ousts immediately his opponent's knight away from the centre. (This move seems stronger than 8...c6 9.0–0 h4, although even then Black would have nothing to complain about, Polugayevsky – Ju.Polgar, Roquebrune 1992). 9.e2 g4. It would be useful for him to provoke the move f2–f3, after which White's bishop would be incapable of fighting for the d5-square. 10.f3 \( \text{e6} \) 11.0–0 d5 – Kovacic – Kodric, Bled 2001.

5.c3 0–0

6.e4 c6 – see 5.e4.
6.d3 c6 – see 5.d3.
6.e2 c6 – 5.e2.
6.g3 c5 7.g2 cxd4 – see 5.g3.
6.h3 c6 7.b5 (7.d3 e5 – see 5.d3) 7...a6 8.a4, Wagener – Fort Hooker, Germany 2007, 8...b5!? 9.e2 e5=

6.e2. White postpones the development of his bishop on f1, so that after 6...c6, he would have the possibility to play 7.b5 (7.e2 e5 – see 5.e2). This is not sufficient to provide him with an advantage though. 7...d7 8.xc6. Black was threatening \( \text{b4} \). 8...xc6 – His two-bishop advantage might become a telling
factor in the middle game, Backwinkel – Hickl, Germany 1994.

6.a4 \(\text{c6}!\) This is the simplest for Black. He wishes to inflict a strike against White’s centre with the move \(e7\text{-}e5\), as quickly as possible, without being afraid of the bishop-sortie to the b5-square.

7.\(\text{b5}\), Backwinkel – Lobron, Netetal 1994 (7.\(\text{xc2}\) e5 8.dxe5 \(\text{xe5}\) 9.\(\text{xe5}\) dxe5 10.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{h5}\) 11.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{f4}\) – Black’s knight on f4 is very powerful and after its exchange he will obtain the two-bishop advantage, Bistric – Arapovic, Sarajevo 1982) 7...e5!?= This is the best move. Black should not be afraid of the loss of a pawn 8.\(\text{xc6}\) bxc6 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\(\text{xe5}\)!, because after 10...\(\text{e}8\) 11.f4 \(\text{a6}\), White’s king will remain stranded in the centre for a long time.

\[\text{A) 5.}\(\text{xe2}\)

This is the least pretentious move for White. From this square his bishop does not protect the e4-pawn like in variation \(\text{C}\) and does not exert pressure against the f7-square, like in variation \(\text{B}\).

\[5...0-0\]

\[6.0-0\]

6.c3. White cannot create any problems for his opponent if he postpones his castling. 6...\(\text{c6}\)

About 7.0–0 e5, or 7.\(\text{xc2}\) e5 8.dxe5 \(\text{xe5}\) 9.\(\text{xe5}\) dxe5 10.0–0 \(\text{h6}\) – see 6.0–0.

7.d5 \(\text{b8}\) 8.0–0 c6 9.dxc6 \(\text{xc6}\). Black has no problems at all. 10.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{c7}\) 11.\(\text{f1}\), Janashia – Mindorashvili, Poti 2013, 11...\(\text{e}8\)!? – If he succeeds in advancing d6-d5, Black will maintain an edge.

7.b4. White wishes to counter e7-e5 with the move b4-b5. 7...e5.

Black accepts the challenge! 8.b5, Kavalek – Ardiyansyah, Bauang 1973 (8.dxe5, Langeweg – Hartoch, Wijk aan Zee 1973, 8...\(\text{g4}\)?) 9.0–0 \(\text{xc5}\) 10.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{e}8\)?) 8...\(\text{a5}!\)?= White lags in development and it would be too risky for him to capture the pawn, since following 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\(\text{xe5}\)!

\(\text{xe4}\) 11.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{xd1}\) 12.\(\text{xd1}\) \(\text{xe5}\), Black would restore the material balance and might obtain an edge in the endgame, because White’s queenside pawn-structure would be weakened by the pawn-advance b2-b4-b5.
6...\( \text{b8} \)
Black plans to advance e7-e5.

7.c3
White fortifies the d4-square.

7.\( \text{e1} \) e5 8.c3 – see 7.c3.

White would not obtain much with 7.b3 e5 8.dxe5 \( \text{xe5} \) 9.\( \text{xe5} \) dxe5 10.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{e7} \) 11.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 12.\( \text{e2} \) b6= Gaprindashvili – Chiburdanidze, Tbilisi 1973.

After 7.a4 e5 8.d5 (8.dxe5, Mammadov – Idrisov, Nakhchivan 2016, 8...\( \text{xe5}!\)?) 8...\( \text{e7} \), Black’s further plan will be connected with the pawn-advance f7-f5. 9.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{d7} \) 10.\( \text{c4} \) f5 11.f3 \( \text{f6} \) 12.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{d7} \) – White’s pieces are not harmoniously deployed, Stol- yar – Wang, ICCF 1997.

7.d5. Now, Black must lose some time to retreat his knight, but later his counterplay against the enemy d5-pawn (depending on the circumstances either c7–c6, or e7–e6) will provide him with an excellent position. 7...

8.dxe5
After this move the position is simplified.

There arises a much more complicated game after the line: 8.\( \text{b5} \) exd4 9.cxd4, Christiansen – Goldin, Qingdao 2002. White’s pawn-centre is seemingly beautiful, but Black’s pieces exert powerful pressure against it, 9...\( \text{g4} !? \) 10.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d7} \)! Black is not afraid of the pin of his knight. 11.\( \text{e1} \) (11. d5? \( \text{b4} \) 12.\( \text{a4} \) c6 13.\( \text{e2} \) a5 14. a3 \( \text{a6} \)) 11...a6. He outstirs the enemy bishop from its active position. 12.\( \text{f1} \) d5. Black begins a
fight for the light squares. 13.e5
\(\mathcal{A}f5\) 14.\(\mathcal{B}b3\) \(\mathcal{E}e4\)∞

8.\(\mathcal{F}e1\) \(\mathcal{F}e8\)

9.d5 \(\mathcal{F}b8\) 10.\(\mathcal{F}f1\) c6 11.dxc6
\(\mathcal{D}x\). There has arisen a weakness in Black’s position on d6, but
White is incapable of exploiting this. 12.\(\mathcal{S}c4\) h6. Black defends
against \(\mathcal{D}g5\). 13.h3 \(\mathcal{F}e7\) 14.\(\mathcal{F}f1\)
\(\mathcal{S}e6\) 15.\(\mathcal{D}x\)e6, Geller – Parma, Sie-
gen 1970, 15...\(\mathcal{D}x\)e6!?=, followed by d6-d5 with complete equality.

9.\(\mathcal{B}b5\) \(\mathcal{D}d7\) 10.d5 \(\mathcal{F}b8\) 11.\(\mathcal{X}x\)d7
\(\mathcal{D}x\)xd7 12.\(\mathcal{C}c4\), Dizdar – Lukin,
Groningen 1991, 12...a5!? 13.\(\mathcal{S}g5\)
a4 14.\(\mathcal{B}c2\) \(\mathcal{F}b8\)∞ – Black removes
his queen from the pin and obtains a good position.

9.dxe5 \(\mathcal{D}x\)e5 10.\(\mathcal{X}x\)e5 \(\mathcal{X}x\)e5.
The pressure of Black’s pieces against the e4-pawn may become
very dangerous. 11.\(\mathcal{F}f3\) (11.f3 This
radical solution of the problem
with the protection of the e4-
pawn seems more reliable 11...
\(\mathcal{F}f8\) Benko – Ljubojevic, Saraje-
vo 1970.) 11...\(\mathcal{F}e8\) 12.c4 \(\mathcal{E}e6\) 13.
\(\mathcal{B}c2\) \(\mathcal{D}d7\). Black prepares the
transfer of his bishop to the c6-
square in order to increase the
pressure against the e4-pawn.

14.\(\mathcal{F}f1\) \(\mathcal{A}a4\) 15.\(\mathcal{D}d3\) \(\mathcal{A}c6\) 16.\(\mathcal{G}g3,\)
Gipslis – Hort, Havana 1971, 16...
h5?!\(\mathcal{T}\), preparing h5-h4.

8...\(\mathcal{D}x\)e5 9.\(\mathcal{D}x\)e5
The situation in the centre is
stabilised after this move. Later,
both sides will have difficulties to
obtain any edge.

9.\(\mathcal{C}c2\) \(\mathcal{D}x\)f3+ 10.\(\mathcal{X}x\)f3 \(\mathcal{F}e7=\)

9...dxe5

10.\(\mathcal{F}c2\)
Besides this move, White has
numerous alternatives, but the
evaluation of the position as
approximately equal would not be
changed anyway.

10.\(\mathcal{E}e1\), Gipslis – Tseitlin, Riga
1970, 10...\(\mathcal{F}e7=\)
10.b3, Adorjan – Shamkovich,
Polanica Zdroj 1970, 10...
\(\mathcal{A}h6=\)
10.a4, Mammadov – Bajarani,
Al Ain 2015, 10...\(\mathcal{A}h6=\)
10.\(\mathcal{B}b3\) b6 11.\(\mathcal{E}e1\) \(\mathcal{B}b7\) 12.f3,
Zapata – Arencibia Rodriguez,
San Salvador 1998, 12...
\(\mathcal{C}h5=\)!∞
10.\texttt{c4} \texttt{e7} 11.\texttt{b3} b6 12.\texttt{e1} \texttt{b7-} – Now, in order to develop his bishop on c1, White must move his knight from the d2-square and protect his pawn on e4 with the move f2-f3, which would lead to some weakening of his kingside, Dauphin – Deiller, Cap d’Agde 2006.

10...\texttt{h6}!?

This is by the way Black’s simplest road to equality. Now, after the removal of the knight from d2, the dark-squared bishops will be exchanged and Black will get rid of his potentially bad piece (his bishop on g7 was restricted by his own e5-pawn).

11.\texttt{d1}

11.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e7} 12.\texttt{f1} b6 13.\texttt{f3} \texttt{xc1} 14.\texttt{xc1} \texttt{g4} 15.\texttt{e3} \texttt{xf3} 16.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{ad8=} Lundin – Hantak, Marianske Lazne 2010.

Following 11.\texttt{c4} \texttt{xc1} 12.\texttt{xc1}, it would be only White who might have problems, because his bishop on e2 might become “bad” in the future. 12...\texttt{e7} 13.b4 b6 14.a4 \texttt{b7} 15.f3 a5 16.\texttt{b3} \texttt{c6}

17.\texttt{b2} \texttt{h5=} Minic – Parma, Umag 1972.

11...\texttt{e7} 12.\texttt{c4}

12.a4, Taimanov – Savchenko, Gausdal 1992, 12...\texttt{d8=}

12...\texttt{xc1} 13.\texttt{axc1} b6

Black deploys his pawns “according to the rules” on squares with an opposite colour as his bishop. 14.\texttt{d2} \texttt{b7} 15.\texttt{f3} \texttt{fd8} 16.\texttt{cd1} \texttt{xd2} 17.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{h5} 18.\texttt{a3} \texttt{g7=} – Black’s bishop is much more active than its counterpart, which is severely restricted by the pawn on e4, Fuchs – Matulovic, Kapfenberg 1970.

B) 5.\texttt{c4} 0–0
6.0–0

6.h3 ∆xe4 7.∆xe4 d5 – see Chapter 22.

6...e2 ∆c6 7.c3 (7.0–0 e5 – see 6.0–0) 7.e5 8.dxe5 ∆xe5 9.∆xe5 dx e5 10.∆f3 (10.0–0 ∆e7 – see 6.0–0) 10...∆e7 11.0–0 ∆e6 – see 6.0–0.

6.e5. This pawn-advance is not well prepared. 6...dxe5 7.dxe5 ∆d5 8.0–0 ∆c6. White is beginning to have problems with the protection of his pawn on e5. 9.∆e2 (9.∆e1 ∆f5 10.∆b3, Vaganian – Van Wely, Ter Apel 1993, 10...∆f4?!?) 9...∆f5. Black develops his bishop to an active position with tempo. 10.∆b3 a5 11.a4, Astasio Lopez – Paunovic, Elgoibar 2010, 11...∆f4!? 12.∆c4 ∆d4! This is Black’s simplest road to equality. 13.∆xd4 ∆xd4= He has nothing to worry about. White cannot play 14.∆xd4?!, because after 14...∆e2+ 15.∆h1 ∆xd4??, two of his pawns would be hanging simultaneously: c2 and e5.

6.c3 ∆c6 7.h3 (7.0–0 e5 – see 6.0–0; 7.∆e2 e5 – see 6.∆e2; 7.∆b3 e5 – see 6.∆b3) 7...∆d7. This is an interesting idea. 8.0–0 e5 9.dxe5 ∆dxe5 10.∆xe5 ∆xe5. This is the point. Now, White will have to lose a tempo for the retreat of his bishop. 11.∆b3 ∆d3. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to the c5-square in order to exert pressure against the enemy pawn on e4. 12.∆c4 ∆c5 13.∆e2 ∆e8 14.∆e1 b6 15.∆d2 ∆b7 – With his attack against the e4-pawn, Black wishes to provoke f2–f3, which would lead to an irrevocable weakening of the light squares in the vicinity of White’s king, Goutioudi – Avrukh, Kavala 2003.

6.∆b3. This is a prophylactic move. White defends against ∆xe4, followed by d6-d5. 6...∆c6 7.c3 e5 8.dxe5 ∆xe5 9.∆xe5 dx e5 10.∆e2. White continues to delay his castling kingside. (10.0–0 b6 – see 6.0–0) 10...b6 11.f3 ∆h5 12.g3 ∆e7 13.∆d5 ∆b8∞ Vorotnikov – Krasnov, Moscow 1996.

6...∆c6

Black plays analogously to variation A.

7.c3

There arises a very complicated position with a non-standard material ratio after 7.e5 dxe5 8. dxe5 ∆g4 9.e6 ∆xe6 10.∆xe6 fx e6 11.∆g5 ∆xf2 12.∆xf2 ∆d4 13.∆gf3,
Burmakin – Grabics, Ljubljana 1994, 13...\texttt{xf2}+? 14.\texttt{xf2} \texttt{d6}∞ – Black has a rook and two pawns for White’s two minor pieces. The pawns are doubled indeed, but White’s position has some defects as well. His queenside pieces are not developed and his king is rather unsafe.

Following 7.e1, Black can sacrifice temporarily a piece and equalise completely with the line: 7...\texttt{xe4}! 8.\texttt{xe4} d5 9.\texttt{b5} dxe4 10.\texttt{xe4}, Kim – Lee, Seoul 2008, 10...\texttt{d5}?! 11.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 12.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{e6}∞ – White has an extra pawn, but his rook has obviously lost its way out of the enemy camp.

7.\texttt{e2} e5. Naturally, Black should better not allow e4-e5. 8. dxe5 dxe5!? After this move, there arises a much more complicated position, than after capturing with the knight. Black is not just after obtaining equality, he is striving for an advantage.

White’s queen is a bit misplaced on the e2-square, since it can come under attack after \texttt{d4}, as well as following \texttt{h5-f4}.

9.\texttt{b3} \texttt{e7} 10.c3 a5 11.a4 h6 12.\texttt{d1}, Thormann – Vogt, Stralsund 1975, 12...\texttt{d8}?!=

9.c3. White covers reliably the d4-square against the penetration of the enemy knight, but weakens the d3-square in the process. 9...\texttt{h5} 10.\texttt{b3} (Now, after 10.\texttt{e1} \texttt{a5} 11.\texttt{b5} a6 12.\texttt{a4} \texttt{f4} 13.\texttt{f1}, Pogats – Adorjan, Hungary 1972, 13...\texttt{e6}?!?, as well as following 10.\texttt{d1} \texttt{f4} 11.\texttt{f1} \texttt{f6}?, Black’s pieces are much more actively deployed, Tringov – Sigurjonsson, Reykjavik 1974.) 10...\texttt{f4} 11.\texttt{xf4}. White gets rid of the annoying enemy knight, but presents Black with the two-bishop advantage. 11...\texttt{xf4} 12.\texttt{ad1} \texttt{e7} Later, in the game Minic – Petrosian, Zagreb 1965 White failed to follow the right path and ended up quickly in a very bad position: 13.\texttt{e1}?! \texttt{g4} 14.\texttt{h3} \texttt{xf3} 15.gxf3 (15.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{e5} 16.\texttt{e2} f3→) 15...\texttt{e5}?

7...e5 8.dxe5

8.\texttt{b5} exd4 – see 5.e2.

8...\texttt{xe5} 9.\texttt{xe5} dxe5

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There has arisen a position like in variation A, but with the slight difference that White's bishop is not on e2, but on c4. This circumstance does not change the evaluation of the position as equal.

10.a4

After White's alternatives, the position looks like a dead draw anyway.

10...e7 11.e1 (11.a4 – see 10.a4) 11...d8= Bisguier – Reshevsky, New York 1962.

10.b3 e7 11.a4 d8 12.e2 h5 13.g3 h6= Kalinitschew – Thiede, Santanyi 2004.

10.f3 e7 11.b3, Sandipan – Tkachiev, Dubai 2014, 11...e8!?

After the move 10.b4, Black has the powerful argument 10...h6, preparing the trade of the dark-squared bishops. 11.e2 e7 12.b3 xc1 13.e1 xc1 e6 14. xe6 xe6 15.f3 d8= Minic – Matulovic, Umag 1972.

10.b3 b6 11.e2, Broberg – Hoffmann, Gruenheide 1996, 11...a5!?=, followed by a6, emphasising the premature removal of White's bishop away from the f1-a6 diagonal.

10.e1 e7 11.a4 a5 12.b3 d8 13.c2 h5 14.g3 f6. Having provoked a weakening of White's kingside, Black's knight goes back. 15.e3 e8= Sergeev – Nevednichy, Warsaw 2005.

10.e2 e7

After 11.b3 a5 12.a4 b6 13.f3, Black obtains an acceptable position, preparing the transfer of his knight to the d6-square. 13...e8!?= Popovic – Schussler, Groningen 1976.


11.f3 e6 12.e5. After this move the position is simplified even more. 12...xc4 13.xc4 xe4 14.xe4 xe4= Vrden akova – Dunnington, Amsterdam 1994.

10...e7 11.c2 e6 (diagram)

Black trades the active enemy bishop. 12.b3 f8 13.a3 e8 14.d1 a6 15.xe6 xe6 16. c4 d7 17.f3, Savic – Savicevic, Vrnenjka Banja 2006, 17...d8!?=


C) 5.\(\text{d}3\)
White fortifies his important central e4-pawn.

5...0–0

6.0–0

6.h3 \(\text{c}6\) 7.0–0 – see 6.0–0.

6.c3 \(\text{c}6\) 7.h3 (7.0–0 e5 – see 6.0–0) 7...e5 8.dxe5 (8.0–0 d5 – see 6.0–0) 8...\(\text{x}e5\) 9.\(\text{x}e5\) dxe5 10.\(\text{f}e2\) \(\text{f}e7\) 11.\(\text{c}4\) b6= Troeger – Tal, Porz 1982.

6...\(\text{c}6\)
Now, just like in the previous variations, we will analyse a plan for Black, connected with the development of his knight to the c6-square, followed by a pawn-strike against the enemy centre with e7-e5.

7.c3

7.h3 e5 8.c3 d5 – see 7.c3.

Black is not afraid of 7.d5, because after that he would transfer his knight with tempo to the c5-square obtaining a very good position. 7...\(\text{b}4\) 8.\(\text{a}2\) a5 9.c3 (9.\(\text{e}1\), Deepan Chakkravarthy – Rahul, New Delhi 2015, 9...\(\text{a}6\)?) 9...\(\text{a}6\) 10.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{c}5\). The pressure against the e4-pawn is rather unpleasant for White. 11.\(\text{c}2\) (11.\(\text{f}3\) e5 12.dxe6 \(\text{x}e6\) = Foisor – Calota, Sovata 1998) 11...a4! Black occupies space on the queenside. 12.\(\text{e}1\) e5 13.\(\text{a}4\) f3 c6 14.dxc6 bxc6. He has managed to trade his flank b-pawn for the enemy d-pawn and this is obviously in Black’s favour. If he manages later to advance d6-d5, White’s situation would become worrisome. 15.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{e}8\) 16.h3 d5 17.exd5 e4 18.\(\text{d}4\) cxd5 19.b3 \(\text{a}6\) – After the exchange of the light-squared bishops, Black will occupy the d3-outpost with his knight and will have an overwhelming advantage, Magnolache – Fedorov, Mamaia 2015.

7.\(\text{e}1\) e5 (diagram)

8.c3 \(\text{h}5\) – see 7.c3.

Following 8.d5, the centre will be blocked and the focus of the
fight would be transferred to the flanks. 8...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e7 9.c4 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)h5 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)f1, Velimirovic – Parma, Vrbas 1982, 10...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)f4!?\(\text{\&}\)∞, followed by f7-f5. Black has good counterplay.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)c4 \(\text{\textit{\&}}\)h5. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to f4. 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e3, Borngaesser – Ribli, Athens 1971, 10...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)f4!? 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)f1 \(\text{\&}\)f6\(\text{\&}\)∞ – His queen and knight exert powerful pressure against White’s kingside.

7...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e5

Here, White can choose between C1) 8.dxe5 and the more ambitious move C2) 8.\(\text{\textit{\&}}\)e1.

8.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)b5 exd4 – see 5.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)e2.

8.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)c4. This move seems inappropriate without the preliminary exchange on e5. 8...exd4 9.cxd4 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)g4 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)e3 d5 11.exd5, Marshall – Yates, New York 1924. Now, Black could have obtained a stable advantage with the simple move 11...\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xd5!? – White’s isolated pawn will be the cause of great worries for him in the future.

8.b4, Zherebukh – Kovalev, Moscow 2009, 8...exd4!? This is Black’s most precise move. He makes use of the insufficient protection of the enemy pawn on b4 and forces White to recapture with his knight. 9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xd4 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)e5?! – The premature pawn-advance b2-b4 has only led to the compromising of White’s queenside pawn-structure.

After 8.h3, Black can equalise immediately with the move 8...d5!?, after which numerous exchanges would become inevitable. 9.dxe5 (9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5 10.dxe5 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 dxe4 12.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 \(\text{\&}}\)xd1 13.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xd1 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5=) 9...\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 (10.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)e1 \(\text{\&}}\)e8 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 dxe4 12.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)f5 13.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)g5 \(\text{\&}}\)d7 14.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5=) 10...dxe4 11.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe4, Vesin – Garbarino, France 2006, 11...\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5!?=

C1) 8.dxe5

After this move, White obtains a solid position, but he cannot even dream about having an edge.

8...\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5 9.\(\text{\textit{\&}}}\)xe5

Black should better trade his knight immediately, since follow-
ing 9.\texttt{\textbf{c2}} \texttt{\textbf{g4}}, the pin would be rather unpleasant for White. 10. \texttt{h3}, Mishuchkov – Rodriguez Vargas, Dresden 2010. This move cannot help White to get rid of the pin, because after that Black can simply retreat with his bishop. 10...\texttt{h5\textasciitilde}, and it would be very bad for White to play 11.g4? \texttt{fxg4} 12.hxg4 \texttt{xg4\textasciitilde}.

9...\texttt{dxe5}

Now, for the third time in this chapter, there arises an almost symmetrical pawn-structure. The difference is that White’s bishop is on d3 and not on e2, or c4. In fact, this placement of the bishop is the worst possible for White, because his bishop needs protection.

10.\texttt{c4}

When White plays 10.\texttt{e2}, Black may threaten to penetrate with his knight to the f4-square and thus provoke a weakening of White’s king shelter. 10...\texttt{h5} 11. \texttt{g3} \texttt{e7} 12.\texttt{c4} \texttt{d8} 13.\texttt{c2} \texttt{h3\textasciitilde} Van Gool – Llaneza Vega, Vlissingen 2012.

10.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e7} 11.\texttt{a4} (11.\texttt{h3} \texttt{d8} 12.\texttt{c2}, Tologontegin – Sattarov, Moscow 2015, 12...\texttt{h6\textasciitilde} =) 11...\texttt{d8} 12.\texttt{e2} a5. Black prevents the further advance of the enemy a-pawn. 13.\texttt{c4} \texttt{h6} 14.\texttt{e1} b6 15.\texttt{e3} \texttt{g4}\textasciitilde Black ousts the enemy bishop from its active position. 16.\texttt{c1} \texttt{f6} 17.\texttt{e3} \texttt{g4} 18.\texttt{c1}, Draw, Karjakin – Nepomniachtchi, Loo 2014.

10...\texttt{h5}

Black wishes to either provoke g2-g3, or after \texttt{f4}, to manage to exchange his knight for the enemy bishop on c1, which would provide him with the two-bishop advantage.

11.\texttt{e2}

11.\texttt{a4} \texttt{f4} 12.\texttt{xf4} exf4 13.\texttt{h3}, Nanu – Kurnosov, Budva 2009, 13...\texttt{g5\textasciitilde} – Black has two powerful bishops and good attacking prospects on the kingside.

11.g3. White solves radically the problem with the penetration of the enemy-knight to the f4-
square. 11...\texttt{\textbackslash e}h3 12.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e1 \texttt{\textbackslash w}e7 13.b3 (13.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f1 \texttt{\textbackslash e}6 14.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e3 \texttt{\textbackslash f}d8 15.\texttt{\textbackslash w}e2 b6 16.a4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}d7 17.\texttt{\textbackslash e}d1 \texttt{\textbackslash e}ad8= Perelshteyn – Christiansen, New York 2003) 13...\texttt{\textbackslash f}d8 14.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c2 \texttt{\textbackslash e}d7= Black wishes to double his rooks on the d-file, Meduna – Vokac, Prague 1992.

11.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e1 \texttt{\textbackslash f}f4 12.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f1 \texttt{\textbackslash f}f6 13.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e3 (White can try to complicate the fight with the move 13.\texttt{\textbackslash x}f4, but after 13...\texttt{\textbackslash x}f4 14.e5, Gunina – Lagno, Olginka 2011, 14...\texttt{\textbackslash w}f5!?∞, there would arise a position in which Black’s prospects would not be worse thanks to his two powerful bishops.) 13...\texttt{\textbackslash d}d8 14.\texttt{\textbackslash w}c2 h5 15.\texttt{\textbackslash e}ad1 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d1 16.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d1 \texttt{\textbackslash g}4 17.f3 \texttt{\textbackslash e}6= Kafechin – Zubov, Voronezh 2012.

11...\texttt{\textbackslash f}f4 12.\texttt{\textbackslash f}xf4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}xf4 13.\texttt{\textbackslash w}xd8 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d8

In this endgame Black can even fight for a win thanks to his bishop-pair. 14.\texttt{\textbackslash f}fd1 \texttt{\textbackslash d}d7 15.\texttt{\textbackslash a}a5. This unjustified activity would not provide White with anything much. Black will gradually consolidate his position, centralise his king and maintain an edge. 15...\texttt{\textbackslash a}ab8 16.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f1 b6 17.\texttt{\textbackslash b}b3 \texttt{\textbackslash c}c6 18.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d8+ \texttt{\textbackslash x}d8 19.f3 \texttt{\textbackslash f}f8 20.\texttt{\textbackslash d}d1 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d1+ 21.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d1 \texttt{\textbackslash c}c7≠ – Here, Black can play without any risk for a win in a long and tough battle, Klarić – Velimirović, Banja Luka 1985.

\textbf{C2)} 8.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e1 \texttt{\textbackslash h}5

\textbf{9.\texttt{\textbackslash b}b3}

White maintains the pawn-tension in the centre.

After 9.d5, Black’s hands will be free for active actions on the kingside. 9...\texttt{\textbackslash e}7 10.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f1 h6 11.\texttt{\textbackslash g}3 \texttt{\textbackslash f}4 12.\texttt{\textbackslash x}f4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}xf4 13.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e2 g5∞ Cereda – Mazzariol, Bratto 2008.

White would not obtain much with 9.dxe5 \texttt{\textbackslash f}4 10.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f1 dxe5 11.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c4 (11.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c2 \texttt{\textbackslash f}6 12.\texttt{\textbackslash h}1 h5= A.Alexeev – Ajrapetjan, Simferopol 2013) 11...\texttt{\textbackslash g}4!? This is the simplest for Black. 12.\texttt{\textbackslash w}xd8 \texttt{\textbackslash e}xd8 13.\texttt{\textbackslash f}xe5. This is not a win of a pawn, because Black has the powerful resource 13...\texttt{\textbackslash a}xg2! 14.
\( \text{\textcopyright xc6 } \text{\textcopyright xe1 } 15.\text{\textcopyright xd8 } \text{\textcopyright xd8 } 16.\text{\textcopyright f4} \text{\textcopyright f3}+17.\text{\textcopyright g2 } \text{\textcopyright e8 } 18.\text{\textcopyright g3 } \text{\textcopyright xe4 } 19.\text{\textcopyright d3 } \text{\textcopyright e1 } 20.\text{\textcopyright b1 } \text{\textcopyright xb1 } 21.\text{\textcopyright xb1 } \text{\textcopyright e6} \text{\textcopyright xf3 } \text{\textcopyright xc4 } 23.\text{\textcopyright xc7 } f5= \) – The tactical complications are over and it is only Black who can fight for a win, because his pawn-structure is much better, Shumkov – Chernyshev, Cheliabinsk 2011.

9...\( \text{\textcopyright g4} \)
Black continues to exert pressure against the enemy centre.

10.\( \text{\textcopyright e2} \)

There arise simplifications following 10.dxe5 \( \text{\textcopyright xf3} \) 11.\( \text{\textcopyright xf3} \) \( \text{\textcopyright xe5} \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright h3} \) \( \text{\textcopyright xd3} \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright xd3 } \text{\textcopyright e8}= \) Bakre – Neverov, Paleochora 2009.

After 10.\( \text{\textcopyright e3} \) a5 11.a4 \( \text{\textcopyright f6} \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright h3} \) \( \text{\textcopyright xf3} \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright xf3} \) \( \text{\textcopyright xf3} \) 14.gxf3, it would be a complicated endgame on the board, in which Black’s prospects would not be worse thanks to his superior pawn-structure. 14...\( \text{\textcopyright exd4} \) 15.cxd4 \( \text{\textcopyright b4} \) 16.\( \text{\textcopyright ad1} \) \( \text{\textcopyright xd3} \) 17.\( \text{\textcopyright xd3 } f5\uparrow \) Shumilov – Pavlov, Kiev 2008.

10...\( \text{\textcopyright f6}! ? \)

Black’s knight retreats in order to increase the pressure against the enemy e4-pawn.

11.\( \text{\textcopyright h3 } \text{\textcopyright d7} \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright dx e5} \)

12.\( \text{\textcopyright d3 } \text{\textcopyright e8} \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright d2 } \text{\textcopyright a5} \) 14.a4, Godena – Hamdouchi, Cannes 1998. White prevents a5-a4, but weakens the b4-square. 14...\( \text{\textcopyright exd4}! \) 15.\( \text{\textcopyright bxd4} \). Now, he is forced to capture with his knight (otherwise, after 15.cxd4, Black’s knight will gain access to the magnificent b4-square. 15...\( \text{\textcopyright b4} \uparrow \) ). 15...\( \text{\textcopyright e5=} \)

12...\( \text{\textcopyright xe5} \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright xe5 } \text{\textcopyright dx e5} = \)

This position looks approximately equal. Later, in the game Lintchevski – Khishmatullin, Taganrog 2011, White played too straightforwardly and ended up in an inferior position: 14.\( \text{\textcopyright g5 } \text{\textcopyright h6} \) 15.\( \text{\textcopyright xf6} \) (White did not need to present his opponent with the two-bishop advantage.) 15...\( \text{\textcopyright xf6} \) 16.\( \text{\textcopyright g4 } \text{\textcopyright e8} \) 17.\( \text{\textcopyright c5} \) \( \text{\textcopyright e7} \) 18.\( \text{\textcopyright xd8 } \text{\textcopyright xd8} \) 19.\( \text{\textcopyright xb7} \) \( \text{\textcopyright b8} \) 20.\( \text{\textcopyright a5 } \text{\textcopyright xb2} \) 21.\( \text{\textcopyright eb1 } \text{\textcopyright c2} \)
Chapter 13  
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ²f6 3.²d3

The ideas behind this move are similar to what we have analysed in the previous chapter – 3. ²d2. White protects his pawn with a piece, so that later he can fortify his centre with the move c2-c3.

3...e5

Black wishes to clarify immediately his opponent’s intentions.

We will analyse now A) 4.²f3 and B) 4.c3.

His alternatives seem weaker.

About 4.²e2 exd4 5.²xd4 g6 – see 4.²f3.

White would not achieve much with 4.dxe5, because after 4... dxе5, the bishop on f8 would not be restricted by the pawn on d6 any more and could be developed to an active position (c5). 5.²f3 ²c5

Black has solved all his opening problems. Now, White must play very carefully.

6.²g5 ²e7 7.0-0 h6 – see 6.0-0.

Following 6.²xе5?! Black would follow with 6...²xf2+ 7.²xf2 ²d4+ 8.²f1 ²xe5=

6.0-0 ²e7 7.²g5. This activity is premature. (It seems more reliable for White to play here 7.h3 0-0 8.²bd2 ²c6= Mammadov – Rukhaia, Rustavi 2014, or 7.²bd2 0-0 8.c3 Mammadov – Mohammed, Al Ain 2014, 8...a5!? 9.²c4

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\( \text{c6=} \) 7...h6 8.h4 \( \text{bd7} \). Black is not in a hurry to castle, in order to complete the manoeuvre \( \text{f8-g6} \) as quickly as possible, ousting the enemy bishop to a passive position. 9.\( \text{c3} \) c6 10.\( \text{d2} \) f8 11.\( \text{a4} \) d6 12.\( \text{c4} \) g6 13.\( \text{xf6} \). White wishes to maintain the balance by exchanging pieces. 13...\( \text{xf6} \) 14.\( \text{xd6+} \) \( \text{xd6=} \) – Black’s position is already more pleasant, since his bishop is noticeably more active than its counterpart, which is restricted by his own pawn on e4, Krajnc – Parma, Maribor 1977.

After 4.d5, Black’s knight gains access to the wonderful c5-square. 4...\( \text{bd7} \) 5.e4 (5.\( \text{e2} \) c6 6.c4 \( \text{c5} \). White cannot protect his e4-pawn and retreat his bishop at the same time, so he has to present his opponent with the two-bishop advantage. 7.\( \text{bc3} \) \( \text{xd3+} \) 8.\( \text{xd3} \) e7 9.b1 0–0 10.b4 cxd5 11.cxd5 \( \text{h5} \) 12.0–0 f5\( ^{+} \) Hertneck – Adams, Munich 1993.) 5...\( \text{c5} \) 6.\( \text{c3} \) because later Black can get rid of his “bad” bishop with \( \text{h5} \) \( \text{d7} \) and \( \text{g5} \). 8.\( \text{ge2} \) 0–0 9.0–0 (9.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 10.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{c5} \) 11.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 12.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{h4=} \) Black has a good game. After White’s careless move 13.\( \text{xf3}! \), Black can seize the initiative with 13...\( \text{e4=} \) Degremont – Aubry, Maisons Alfort 2001.) 9...\( \text{h5} \) 10.\( \text{e3} \) (10.f4 \( \text{xf4} \) 11.\( \text{xf4} \) exf4 12.\( \text{xf4} \), Petrenko – Ionescu Brandis, Eforie Nord 2000, 12...\( \text{f6}! \) 13.\( \text{ae1} \) \( \text{e8=} \) – White has more space, but Black has a bishop-pair.) 10...\( \text{f5} \) 11.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 12.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{g5=} \) 13.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{g3} \) 14.\( \text{hxg3} \) \( \text{xe3=} \) Bellini – Ruck, Budapest 1999.

A) 4.\( \text{g3} \)

After this move, contrary to 4.c3, White strives for a more dynamic piece-play.

4...\( \text{exd4} \) 5.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{g6} \)

6.0–0

About 6.c3 \( \text{g7} \) 7.0–0 0–0, or 6.c4 \( \text{g7} \) 7.0–0 0–0, or 7.\( \text{c3} \) 0–0 8.0–0 \( \text{c6} \) – see 6.0–0.
6.f3. This move is too slow. Black succeeds in advancing d6-d5, equalising completely. 6...\$g7 7.0-0 c6 8.\$e3 0-0 9.c4 d5 10.\text{cxd}5 \text{cxd}5= Lorentzen – Lovholt, ICCF 2002.

6.\$g5 \$g7 7.\$d2?! (White should better play here 7.0-0 h6 – see 6.0-0, or 7.\$c3 h6 – see 6.\$c3.) 7...h6. Black clarifies immediately his opponent’s intentions. 8.\$e3 (Unfortunately for White, he cannot play 8.\$h4, because of the tactical strike 8...\$xe4†?) 8...\$g4†, followed by \$xe3, Szabo – Khismatullin, Rijeka 2010.

6.\$c3. White continues with his piece-development. 6...\$g7 7.\$g5 (7.0-0 0-0 – see 6.0-0) 7...h6

8.\$f4, Bilokha – Bjornstoft, Kiev 1999, 8...\$c6?! 9.\$xc6 bxc6=
8.\$h4 \$c6 9.\$xc6 bxc6 10.0-0. After the opening of the b-file, White will have to castle kingside, since castling on the other side would be too dangerous. 10...g5 11.\$g3 \$g4. Black is perfectly prepared to deploy his knight at the centre of the board. 12.h3 (12.\$e2 \$e5 13.\$d2 \$e6 14.\$ad1 0-0 15.b3 a5 16.a4 g4!? He prepares the transfer of his queen to the g5-square. 17.\$a2 \$g5∞ – Black’s prospects would be worse neither in the endgame, nor in the middle game, Borisenkov – Covo-lo, ICCF 2001.) 12...\$e5 13.\$e2. White sacrifices a pawn and begins to fight for the initiative. 13...\$xd3 14.\$xd3 \$xb2 15.\$ad1 \$g7 16.e5 0-0. This is Black’s most reasonable move. He does not hold on to his extra material, but wishes at first to develop his pieces and to evacuate his king away from the centre. 17.\text{exd}6 \text{cxd}6 18.\$xd6 \$e8 19.c4 \$f6 20.\$g3 \$g6 21.\$b3 \$e6∞ – Black is not worse thanks to his two powerful bishops, Lautier – Kramnik, Biel 1993.

6...\$g7

7.\$c3

About 7.\$e1 0-0 8.\$c3 \$c6, or 7.h3 0-0 8.\$c3 c6 – see 7.\$c3.

7.\$g5. This pin of the knight
seems premature. 7...h6 8.g4 dxc6 9.exd6 bxc6 10.f4 (10.c3 g5 – see 6.c3) 10...g5! Black gets rid of the pin and begins the fight for the key e5-square. 11.g3 g4 12.c1, Ibragimov – Mikae, Bled 1995 and here, Black’s simplest move is 12...gxf4?!?, obtaining an advantage, since later, White would be incapable of ousting the enemy pieces away from the e5-outpost.

7.c3. White plans the following set-up: g5, d2 and f2-f4. 7...0-0 8.g5 bd7. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to c5, in order to exert pressure against the e4-square. 9.d2 c5 10.c2, Beaulieu – Harkins, ICCF 1996 10...a5!?

7.c4. Before playing c3, White advances his pawn. This cannot provide him with an advantage however, because the pawn-advance c2-c4 would lead to the weakening of the dark squares. 7...0-0 8.c3 c6 9. xc6 (After 9.c2, Black can obtain a very good game by transferring his knight from f6 to c5. 9...d7 10.e1 c5 11.f1 e8+ Tishin – Dumansky, Alushta 2007.) 9...xc6 10.g5 (Following 10. c2 g4 11.e2, Black obtains the two-bishop advantage after 11.h4 12.xg4 xg4+ Banas – Jansa, Austria 2002.) 10...e8 11.bd2 h6. Black gets rid of the pin. 12.xh6 xh6 13.xh6 xb2= – It would not be easy for White to organise an attack against the enemy king. The position is approximately equal, Damjanovic – Sedlak, Petrovac 2004.

7...0-0

8.g5

8.e1 c6 9.f1, Aronian – Svidler, Moscow 2009, 9...xd4 10.xd4 e6=

After the prudent move 8.h3, there arises a complicated double-edged position. 8...c6 9.e3 e8 10.a4 bd7 11.d2 c5∞ Patil – Narciso Dublan, Barbera del Valles 2015.

It would be more or less the same after the line: 8.f4 bd7 9. f3 c6 10.h1 c5∞ and in both cases Black’s knight is very powerful on c5, exerting pressure against the enemy e4-pawn, and also may be exchanged in some lines on d3, providing him with the two-bishop advantage, Isik – Landeiro Ribeiro, Aviles 2000.

8...h6 9.h4, Zierk – Akobian, Las Vegas 2008, 9...e8?! 10.f4 bd7 11.f3 c6 12.h1 a5 13.a4 c5∞
B) 4.c3

We will deal now with B1) 6.\( \text{dxe4} \) and B2) 6.\( \text{f3} \).

6.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{c6!?} \) 7.\( \text{dxe4} \) (It would be better for White to choose here 7.\( \text{gf3} \) \( \text{c5} \) – see 6.\( \text{f3} \)). 7...\( \text{dxe4} \) 8.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xd1} + \) 9.\( \text{xd1} \) \( \text{xe5=} \) A. Ivanov – Karjakin, Kharkov 2001.

B1) 6.\( \text{dxe4} \)

This move cannot be recommended, because the trade of the light-squared bishops, in combination with the move c2-c3, weakens horribly the d3-square.

6...\( \text{dxe4} \)

7.\( \text{xd8+} \)

7.\( \text{a4+!?} \) White goes after winning material, but this would not end well for him. 7...\( \text{d7} \) 8.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{c6} \). The bishop will exert powerful pressure against the g2-pawn from this square. 9.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{d7!?} \).

(diagram)

10.\( \text{xd7+} \) \( \text{xd7} \). White cannot protect simultaneously his pawns on g2 and e5. 11.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 12.\( \text{xf3} \)
\( \Box x e 5 \uparrow \) - Black has a superior pawn-structure and a lead in development.

White cannot solve his defensive problems with the line: 10.e6 \( \Box x e 6 + 11.\Box x e 6 + f x e 6 12.\Diamond f 3 \Diamond x f 3 \) 13.gxf3 \( \Box c 6 \uparrow \) - Black has an only weakness, while White's entire kingside is vulnerable.

10.\( \Box g 3 \), Green - Berg, IECC 2003, 10...\( \Box a 6 \) 11.\( \Diamond f 3 \Box d 3 \). Black prevents his opponent's castling. 12.\( \Box e 3 \Box c 5 \) 13.\( \Box d 4 \) 0–0–0 14.\( \Box g 4 + \Box d 7 \) 15.\( \Box e 2 \Box x e 2 + 16.\Box x e 2 \Box h e 8 \uparrow \). Black regains his pawn and maintains an advantage thanks to his superior development and the bishop-pair. White's attempt to hold on to his extra pawn only worsens his position. 17.f4?! f6\( \uparrow \) - The position is opened and White's king is obviously misplaced at the centre of the board, despite the fact that it is an endgame.

7...\( \Box x d 8 \)

(diagram)

8.\( \Box e 2 \)

White should already think about equalising. 8.\( \Box d 2 \Box c 6 \) 9.\( \Box x e 4 \Box x e 5 \) 10.\( \Box g 5 + \Box e 8 \) 11.0–0–0 12.\( \Box f 5 \) - Black has the two-bishop advantage, but lags in development. White should not weaken his kingside pawn-structure. 12.\( \Box f 3 ?! \Box x f 3 \) 13.gxf3 f6 14.\( \Box f 4 \Box c 8 \uparrow \) - His initiative has reached its dead end, while Black has preserved his positional plusses, Nijboer - Cifuentes Parada, Wijk aan Zee 1995.

8.\( \Box f 4 \Box d 7 \). Black's knight is headed for the d3-square. 9.\( \Box d 2 \) (9.\( \Box e 2 \Box c 5 \) - see 8.\( \Box e 2 \) 9...\( \Box c 5 \) 10.\( \Box e 2 \Box f 5 \) 11.\( \Box e 3 \Box d 3 \) 12.\( \Box e 2 \Box c 5 + 13.\Box d 4 \Box e 8 \uparrow \) - He has two powerful bishops, Dimovska - Ionescu Brandis, Belgrade 2001.

8.\( \Box g 5 + \). White deprives his opponent of his two-bishop advantage. Still, this is insufficient for equality. 8...\( \Box e 7 \) 9.\( \Box x e 7 + \) (It is not good for him to opt for 9.\( \Box f 4 \). After this, there arise positions like in the variation with 8.\( \Box f 4 \), but with an extra tempo for Black. 9...\( \Box d 7 \) 10.\( \Box e 2 \), Mirzoev - Hamdouchi, Salou 2006, 10...g5? 11.\( \Box g 3 \) h5 12.h3 h4 13.\( \Box h 2 \Box c 5 \uparrow \) 9...\( \Box x e 7 \) 10.\( \Box d 2 \Box c 6 \) 11.\( \Box x e 4 \)
\( \text{\#xe5} 12.0-0-0 \) (12.\text{\#d1} \text{\#e6}+ Rabiaga – Bacrot, Germany 2010) 12...\text{\#f5}. Now, after the retreat of White's knight, Black has rather an unpleasant check \text{\#d3}+, so White is forced to compromise his pawn-structure. 13.\text{\#f3} \text{\#xf3} 14.gxf3 \text{\#hd8} 15.b3 \text{\#xd1}+ 16.\text{\#xd1} b6= – White's kingside has been considerably weakened and Black's bishop may turn out to be much more powerful than White's knight in actions on both sides of the board, Ruiz Marana – Guerra Bastida, Don Benito 2012.

10...\text{\#d3} 11.\text{\#d2} \text{\#g4} 12.\text{\#g5}+ \text{\#e7} 13.\text{\#xe7}+ \text{\#xe7} 14.\text{\#g3} e3. Black will lose his e4-pawn anyway, but it succeeds in compromising his opponent's pawn-structure before its inevitable demise. 15.\text{\#xe3} \text{\#xe5}+= Reilein – Lang, Germany 1997.

B2) 6.\text{\#f3} \text{\#c6}

The arising position resembles the Open variation of the Ruy Lopez, but with the favourable difference for Black that he has not played a7-a6 and b7-b5. Therefore, his queenside is less vulnerable.

7.\text{\#bd2}

White attacks immediately his opponent’s powerful knight.

7.h3, Blomstrom – Marin, Lund 2016. He defends against \text{\#g4}, but the move h2-h3 does not contribute to the development of White's pieces. 7...f6!? 8.exf6 \text{\#xf6} 9.\text{\#bd2} \text{\#c5} 10.\text{\#e2} \text{\#e6} 11. 0-0 h6 12.\text{\#b3} \text{\#d6} 13. \text{\#xc5} \text{\#xc5}= – Black's pieces are
very harmoniously deployed. He only needs to evacuate his king away from the centre.

7.0–0 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{g4}} 8.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}bd2 (8.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e7}} – see 7.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f4}}) 8...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c5}} 9.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}} (9.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b1}} d4 – see 7.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd2}}; 9.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e7}} – see 7.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd2}}) 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e7}} 10.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b3}} 0–0 11.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e6}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{d7}}\infty – Black’s position is very solid, Kodinets – Fridman, chessassistantclub.com 2004.

7.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{g4}} 8.0–0 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e7}} 9.h3 (9.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{c5}}?! = Tuominen – Miron, Tallinn 1997) 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h5}} 10.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}}. White must lose time for the retreat of his bishop, because the pin of the knight is very unpleasant for him. 10...0–0 11.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e8}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b3}} a5 13.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd4}} 14.cxd4 c5 15.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b5}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{f8}}\infty Fabrizio – Weir, corr. 1993. Black’s counterplay against the d4-pawn is sufficient to maintain the equality. After the removal of the bishop from b5, Black can begin a pawn-offensive on the queenside with c5-c4, b7-b5 etc.

7.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{c5}} 8.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{g4}} 9.0–0 (If White postpones his castling, he may have difficulties: 9.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f4}}?! d4 10.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{d7}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xc6}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xc6}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{cxd4}}. He has won a pawn, but will fail to hold on to it, due to the defencelessness of the cl-square. 12...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf3}} 13.gxf3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e6}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e3}}, Di-ana – Sarno, Turin 2000, 14...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd4}}?!\infty 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d7}}. Black prepares castling queenside. It is essential for him to advance d5-d4 as quickly as possible, creating the threat d4-d3. 10.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d1}} 0–0 0 11.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b4}}. White ousts the enemy knight from its active position and prepares the transfer of his bishop to b3 from where it will exert pressure against the enemy d5-pawn. 11...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e6}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf3}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe5}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{d6}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xa7}} c6 16.f3, Psakhis – Chernin, Ir- kutsk 1983, 16...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b8}}?! 17.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{c7}}\infty – Black has built a powerful battery on the h2-b8 diagonal. His central d-pawn is obviously stronger than the enemy a-pawn in this middle game.

7...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c5}}

8.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b1}}?!

This retreat of the bishop seems better than \textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}, because the bishop will not impede its queen to go to c2, or to the a4-square (after the preliminary move b2-b4).

White’s alternatives cannot create problems for Black. For example: 8.\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}}. This move is too
passive. 8...d4 9.cxd4 \(\&\)xd4 10. \(\&\)xd4 \(\&\)xd4 11.0-0 \(\&\)f5 12.\(\&\)f3 \(\&\)xd1 13.\(\&\)xd1. The arising endgame seems approximately equal. 13...\(\&\)e6 14.\(\&\)e3 \(\&\)e7 15.\(\&\)e1 h5!? Black should not allow the advance of White’s pawns on the kingside – g2-g4, followed by f2-f4-f5. 16.\(\&\)ac1 c6= Popovic – Chermin, Moscow 1994.

8.\(\&\)b3. This move presents Black with the two-bishop advantage. 8...\(\&\)xd3+ 9.\(\&\)xd3 \(\&\)e7 10.0-0 (10.\(\&\)bd4 0-0 11.0-0 \(\&\)xd4 – see 10.0-0) 10...0-0 11. \(\&\)bd4 \(\&\)xd4 12.\(\&\)xd4 (12.cxd4?!) b6 13.\(\&\)d1 \(\&\)e6 14.b3 c5 15.\(\&\)a3 \(\&\)d7= – Black has two powerful bishops and excellent prospects for active actions on the light squares, Landa – Onoprienko, Mlada Boleslav 1994.) 12...c5 13. \(\&\)f5 \(\&\)xf5 14.\(\&\)xf5 \(\&\)b6 15.\(\&\)e1 \(\&\)ad8= Antipov – Libiszewski, Linares 2013.

White would not achieve much with 8.\(\&\)b5 \(\&\)e7 9.\(\&\)b3 0-0 10.\(\&\)e3 \(\&\)xb3 11.axb3 \(\&\)g4 12.\(\&\)xc6 bxc6 13.b4 f6!= – Black’s two-bishop advantage compensates fully the defects of his pawn-structure, Godena – Halkias, Plovdiv 2012.

8.\(\&\)c2 \(\&\)g4 9.0-0 (9.h3 \(\&\)h5 10.b4. This move is too active. It only weakens White’s queenside pawn-structure. 10...\(\&\)e6 11.\(\&\)a4, Zhu – Grischuk, Tromso 2014, 11...a5?!; it is better for White to play here 10.0-0 \(\&\)e7 – see 9.

0-0) 9...\(\&\)e7.

10.h3 \(\&\)h5 11.b4 \(\&\)e6 12.g4 \(\&\)g6 13.\(\&\)b3, Managadze – Kotrotsos, Heraklio 2005, 13...\(\&\)xc2! 14. \(\&\)xc2 a6= – White does not have sufficient compensation for the weakness of his pawn-structure.

After 10.\(\&\)e1, Black’s simplest reaction would be 10...a5!?, preventing b2-b4. 11.h3 \(\&\)h5 12.\(\&\)e3 \(\&\)e6 – His knight will be very powerful on this blocking position, supporting also the pawn-break d5-d4, Montella – Lee-mans, ICCF 2007.

10.\(\&\)e1 d4 11.h3 (11.\(\&\)e4, Cori Sanchez – Valdes, Barcelona 2013, 11...dxc3!? 12.\(\&\)xc3 \(\&\)b4 13. \(\&\)b1 \(\&\)bd3 14.\(\&\)xd3 \(\&\)xd3 15.\(\&\)d5 \(\&\)xf3 16.\(\&\)xf3 \(\&\)xf3 17.gxf3 \(\&\)e6 18.\(\&\)e3 c6= – Black has a superior pawn-structure and his prospects are not worse.) 11...\(\&\)h5 12.\(\&\)e4 (12.g4 \(\&\)g6 13.cxd4 \(\&\)xd4 14.\(\&\)xg6 hxg6 15.\(\&\)e4 \(\&\)xe4 16.\(\&\)xe4 \(\&\)e6 17.\(\&\)xd8+ \(\&\)xd8 18.\(\&\)g2 \(\&\)d5 19. \(\&\)e3 c5= – Black’s chances are even preferable thanks to his better pawn-structure and the possibility to create a passed pawn on the queenside, Mrdja – Mitkov, Nice 2003.)
12...d3!? This is a very energetic move. Black is trying to seize the initiative without being afraid that his pawn on d3, which is isolated from the rest of his forces, may be lost later. 13...b1 (But not 13...xc5?!, because after 13...dxc2 14...xd8+ ...xd8+, it would not work for White to play 15...xb7?! ...d1 16...e3 ...xf3 17.gxf3 ...xe1+ 18...xe1, Rausis – Khalifman, Eupen 1994, 18...0–0!? 19. ...b8–+, Black’s rook succeeds timely in coming to assist his passed c2-pawn.) 13...xe4 14...xe4 ...d5 15...e3 ...xf3 16.gxf3 0–0–0 17...xd3 ...xe5∞ – White has the two-bishop advantage indeed, but the shelter of his king has been considerably weakened.

8...g4

9.b4
White ousts the enemy knight from the c5-square and prepares the transfer of his queen to a4. After his alternatives, there arise calmer positions.

9.h3 ...h5 10.0–0 ...e7 11...e1 d4 12...e2 ...d5+ – Black’s pieces are more actively deployed, Smagin – Azmaiparashvili, Cap d’Agde 1996.

Following 9.0–0, the simplest reaction for Black would be 9...d4!? (It would not be so precise for him to opt for 9...e7, because after 10.b4 ...e6 11...a4 ...h5, there arises a position like in the main line, except that White has avoided the move 11...a6.) 10.h3 (10...e2, Handke – Lorscheid, Germany 2004, 10...d5!? =) 10...h5 11...e4 (White would not obtain much with 11.cxd4 ...xd4 12.g4 ...g6= Kuporosov – Roemer, Seefeld 1999.) 11...dxc3 12...xc3 ...xd1 13...xd1 ...d8. Trading pieces is the simplest road to equality for Black. 14...xd8+ ...xd8 15...e1 ...g6 16.f4 ...xb1 17...xb1 ...e6 18...e4 g6. This move impedes White’s pawn-advance f4–f5. 19...f3 h5 20...f2 ...h6 21.g3 ...e8 22...e3 ...b4 23...d2 ...d5= – White can hardly manage to push g3–g4 and f4–f5, since Black’s pieces exert powerful pressure against the f4-pawn. He has no other active plan in sight anyway.

9...e6 10...a4
10...\textit{h5}
Black should better retreat immediately his bishop, because White has the permanent threat b4-b5 hanging in the air.

11.0-0
11.b5. White ousts the enemy knight to the edge of the board, but weakens his queenside pawn-structure. 11...\textit{b8} 12.\textit{f5} (12.0-0 \textit{d7} 13.\textit{d4} \textit{h4} 14.\textit{c2} \textit{xd4} 15.cxd4 \textit{xd4} 16.\textit{b2} \textit{b4} 17.\textit{b3} \textit{c5=} – White has some compensation for the pawn, but not more than that, Pap – Delchev, Bosnjači 2003.) 12...\textit{d7} 13.0-0, Rogic – Kunin, Germany 2015, 13...\textit{dc5}!? 14.\textit{c2} a6. Black exploits the too exposed position of the enemy pawn on b5 and obtains sufficient counterplay to equalise. 15.bxa6 \textit{xa6}+

11...\textit{a6}!!
Black prevents b4-b5.

(diagram)

12.\textit{e1}
White’s alternatives lead to a complicated positional battle: 12.\textit{b3}, Feuerstack – Light, Bargteheide 2015, 12...\textit{d7}?!∞, or 12.\textit{f5} \textit{d7} 13.\textit{e1} \textit{e7}∞ Herrera – Musi-
tani, ICCF 2008. Black obtains a very good position in both lines.

12...\textit{e7} 13.a3 0-0 14.\textit{f5} \textit{g6}
The trade of the light-squared bishops is in favour of Black. He plans to leave his opponent with a “bad” bishop on c1.

15.\textit{c2}

15...\textit{d4}. This is Black’s simplest road to equality. 16.\textit{xg6} \textit{hxg6} 17.cxd4 \textit{xcxd4} 18.\textit{xd4} \textit{xd4} 19.\textit{b2} \textit{d5}=. Stopa – Markowski, Warsaw 2010. Black’s knight on c6 has occupied a powerful blocking position. Later, if he manages to create a passed pawn on the queenside, he might even fight for the advantage.
5.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d}d2}}! This is a precise move after which Black is faced with a rather unpleasant choice. He must either play 5...\textit{\textbf{c}6} 6.\textit{\textbf{c}4}!\textit{\textbf{\pm}}, ending up in the Saemisch system in a version which is not so good for him, or choose 5...0–0 6.\textit{\textbf{c}c3}!\textit{\textbf{\pm}}, entering a position from Chapter 12, in which he has castled prematurely, which provides White with better attacking chances.

This move does not seem ambitious, but is not bad at all. About the power of 3.\textit{\textbf{f}3}, it would be enough to say that Garry Kasparov used to play it very often. White plans to follow with c2-c4, \textit{\textbf{c}c3} and transpose to the Saemisch system of the King’s Indian Defence.

\textbf{3...\textit{\textbf{c}5}!?}

This is not Black’s most popular move, but is interesting and is often played by Vladimir Kramnik. Black strives for a complicated and double-edged battle.

Black’s attempt to transpose to the King’s Indian Defence may lead to some difficulties for him in the opening. 3...\textit{\textbf{g}6} 4.\textit{\textbf{a}e3}!? \textit{\textbf{g}7

After 3...\textit{\textbf{e}5} 4.\textit{\textbf{dxe5}} dxe5 5.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{w}xd8+ \textbf{c}xd8}} 6.\textit{\textbf{c}c4}!\textit{\textbf{\pm}}, despite the early trade of the queens, Black will have serious problems to neutralise White’s slight advantage.

We will deal now with: \textbf{A) 4.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{d}e2}}, B) 4.\textbf{dxc5}, C) 4.\textbf{c3} and D) 4.\textbf{\textbf{d}d5}}.

4.\textit{\textbf{b}b5+ \textbf{d}d7 5.\textbf{xd7+ \textbf{b}xd7}} 6.\textit{\textbf{e}2} (Following 6.d5, Black can occupy immediately additional space on the queenside. 6...\textit{\textbf{b}5}!? 7.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{d}e2}} \textit{\textbf{g}6} 8.0–0 \textit{\textbf{g}7} 9.\textit{\textbf{a}4} \textit{\textbf{a}6}. He should better refrain from b5-b4, because this would weaken the c4-square, which would be occu-
pied later by White’s knight. 10. axb5 axb5 11.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{x}xa8 \texttt{\texttt{w}xa8=}}}} Jensen – Rasmussen, Aarhus 1991.) 6... cxd4 7.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}xd4 e6 8.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b}c3 a6. There}}}} has arisen a position from the Sicilian Defence, but not in a good version for White. 9.b3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}c8 10. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b}b2 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e7 11.g4, Zaja – Dizdarevic, Pula 2000. Here, Black could deploy at first his knight at the middle of the board 11...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e5!}, and after 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}f1, prevent the move f3-f4 with the line: 12...g5! 13.h4 h6\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{w}6}}}}}} with a complicated position with mutual chances.

A) 4.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}e2 e6!?}}}

This is a very practical decision. Black is reluctant to enter the Sicilian Defence (4...cxd4 5. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}xd4}) and tries to advance d6-d5, opening the position as quickly as possible in order to emphasise the defects of the move f2-f3.

5.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e3}}}

5.dxc5 d5!? 6.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b}d7 – see 5.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e3}}}}}}}

5.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bc3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b}d7 6.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}7 7.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d2 a6 8.g4 h6 9.dxc5, Mirzoev – Gar-}}}}}}}}}}

8...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}f3}}}}?

This is the simplest for Black. It would be senseless for him to sacrifice a piece.

8...b6 9.c6 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xb4 10.cxd7+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}xd7, Galkin – Kramnik, Moscow 2011, 11.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d4!}}}}}} – Black must still prove here that his compensation is sufficient.

9.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{rf3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e7 10.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}g2 a5 11.a3}}}}}}}}
0–0 12.0–0 \( \texttt{\&e5} \infty \) – Black's superior pawn-structure provides him with at least equal prospects.

B) 4.dxc5 \( \texttt{\&a5} \+)

Black regains his pawn, but his queen enters the actions a bit too early. Meanwhile, White can hardly exploit effectively this circumstance.

5.\( \texttt{\&c3} \)

This is his most natural move. White develops his queenside pieces and intends to castle there.

It would be interesting for him to try, but still insufficient for him to edge, the line: 5.\( \texttt{\&d2} \texttt{\&xc5} \) 6.c4 e6 (Black would obtain a good game if he follows a plan, connected with a fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop: 6...g6!\( \infty \)) 7.\( \texttt{\&c3} \texttt{\&e7} \) 8.b3 0–0 9.\( \texttt{\&b2} \) a6 10.\( \texttt{\&ge2} \texttt{\&c6} \) 11.\( \texttt{\&f4} \texttt{\&d7} \infty \) Spassky – Tse-shkovsky, Moscow 1999. Black has a clear-cut plan for actions, connected with the preparation of b7-b5, moreover that White will have problems to evacuate his king away from the centre, because it would be impossible for him to castle kingside at the moment. After \( \texttt{\&a4} \), Black will simply retreat his queen to a7, maintaining his control over the g1-a7 diagonal.

5...\( \texttt{\&xc5} \)

6.\( \texttt{\&d3} \)

White is preparing \( \texttt{\&e3} \).

6.g4 h6 7.h4, Shirazi – Strikovic, Marrakesh 2010, 7...\( \texttt{\&c6} \infty \)

6.\( \texttt{\&f4} \)? e5. Black weakens his control over the d5-square, but wins a tempo for the development of his bishop on f8. 7.\( \texttt{\&g5} \texttt{\&e6} \) 8.\( \texttt{\&b5} + \texttt{\&bd7} \) 9.\( \texttt{\&d2} \) a6 10.\( \texttt{\&a4} \), Rusev – Paunovic, Ourense 2006, 10...b5!? 11.\( \texttt{\&b3} \texttt{\&e7} \infty \)

6.\( \texttt{\&ge2} \). The transfer of White’s knight to f4 seems rather slow. 6...c6 7.\( \texttt{\&f4} \) e6 8.\( \texttt{\&b5} \texttt{\&e5} = \) 9.\( \texttt{\&b4} \)? This is a attempt by White to exploit the exposed position of Black’s queen. Still, it only leads to the weakening of White’s
queenside pawn-structure. 9... \(\text{b}\,b6\) 10.a4 \(a6\) Toledano Llinares – Marin, Cullera 2003.

6.\(\text{b}\,b5\) + \(\text{bd}7\)? (The move 6... \(\text{d}\,d7\) leads to simpler positions.) Black develops his pieces in the spirit of the Sozin attack in the Sicilian Defence. 8.\(\text{e}\,e3\) \(\text{c}\,c7\) 9.a4 \(a6\) 10.\(\text{c}\,c4\) \(b6\) 11.\(\text{h}\,h3\) \(\text{e}\,e7\) 12.0–0 0–0 13.\(\text{f}\,f4\) \(\text{e}\,e8\)! This is an important fine point after which Black is not afraid of the possible sacrifices on the e6-square. 14.\(\text{a}\,a2\) \(\text{b7}\)∞ – Klausner – Gavrikov, Arosa 1996.

6...\(\text{a}\,a6\)

It is essential for Black to control the b5-square.

7.\(\text{e}\,e3\) \(\text{a}\,a5\)

8.\(\text{g}\,g2\)

There arises an interesting position, which would be approximately balanced after 8.g4 \(\text{c}\,c6\) 9.\(\text{g}\,g5\) \(\text{d}\,d7\) 10.f4, Kierzek – Balashov, Acqui Terme 2015, 10...g6!∞

8.0–0–0 \(\text{c}\,c6\) (8...\(\text{e}\,e6\)? Fe-

dorov – Ardeleanu, Mamaia 2012, 9.a3!\(\text{a}\,a6\), followed by \(\text{e}\,e2\)-d4(f4), emphasizing the misplacement of the enemy bishop on e6) 9.a3, Petrisor – Luca, Baile Felix 2012, 9...e6!? 10.\(\text{b}\,b1\) b5∞ – White must be constantly on the alert about the possible pawn-advance b5-b4.

8.\(\text{d}\,d2\) e6 9.0–0–0 b5. Black begins immediate active actions without losing time for the development of his kingside pieces. 10.\(\text{b}\,b1\) \(\text{c}\,c6\) 11.g4, Vera – Galvan, Lima 1997, 11...\(\text{d}\,d7\)? 12.g5 \(\text{c}\,c5\) 13.a3 \(\text{b}\,b8\)∞ – Now, he must watch permanently about the possibility b5-b4.

8...\(\text{b}\,b7\) 9.\(\text{d}\,d2\) e6 10.\(\text{d}\,d4\) b5 11.g4 h6

Black impedes g4-g5.

12.h4 \(\text{b}\,b7\) 13.\(\text{g}\,g1\) b4 14.\(\text{c}\,c2\) \(\text{e}\,5\) 15.\(\text{c}\,c1\) \(\text{c}\,c7\)?

This is the most precise move.

The routine counter-strike in the centre 15...d5?! is obviously not the right decision at the moment, since White is better pre-
pared for the opening of the game. 16.g5 hxg5 17.hxg5 ²fd7 18.g6 ²f6 19.gxf7+ ²xf7, Khenkin – Strikovic, Andorra 2007, 20. ²g5!?+-

16.²xb4 d5 17.²a4+ ²fd7= – Black has very good compensation for the sacrificed pawn and if White continues a bit too optimistically 18.exd5?! ²e7!±, he will have great problem, having failed to evacuate his king away from the centre. Black only needs a single move to castle.

C) 4.c3

This position arises much more often in the Alapin system in the Sicilian Defence, after the move order 1.e4 c5 2.c3 d6 3.d4 ²f6 4.f3. White’s centre, supported by his pawns on c3 and f3, looks beautiful, but these pawns deprive his knights of the best squares for their development.

4...²e6!?

This is the simplest for Black. Now, just like in variation A, he is striving to advance d6-d5.

It seems less reliable for Black to follow a plan with the fianchetto of his dark-squared bishop. 4... ²bd7 5.²e3 g6 6.a4 ²g7 7.²d3 0-0 8.²e2± – White’s powerful pawn-centre provides him with a stable advantage, Velimirovic – Adorjan, Arandjelovac 1976.

5.²e3

This is the best square for White’s bishop.

5.²d3 ²c6. Black increases his pressure against White’s centre. 6.²e2 ²e7 7.0-0 (7.²e3, Kova-
lenko – Kanter, Dombai 2013, 7...²b6!?≈) 7...²b6 8.²a3. Black prevents the enemy knight from occupying the c4-square. 8...d5 9. exd5 ²xd5 10.²c4. Now, Black is not afraid of this move anymore. 10...²c7 11.²e3 cxd4 12.²xd5. White simplifies the position with this move, but has no advantage anyway. 12...exd5 13.²xd4 ²xd4 14.cxd4 0-0=

Following 5.dxc5, Black has an interesting pawn-sacrifice. 5...d5 6.exd5 (6.e5. After this, there arises a pawn-structure, which is typical for the French Defence, but White has no good prospects in it. 6...²fd7 7.f4 ²xc5 8.²f3 f6!± Shibut – Khachiyan, Minneapolis 2005) 6...²xc5 ²Merwin – Kha-
chiyan, Reno 2006.

5...²c6
Now, White’s pieces are squeezed with the protection of his pawn on b2.

7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d2}} d5!?  

This is an energetic and powerful move. Black inflicts pawn-strikes against the enemy centre and seizes the initiative. In this way he might not only equalise, but even fight for an advantage in the opening.

In order to equalise, it would be sufficient for him to continue with: 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 8.dxc5 dxc5 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}∞} Moiseenko – Jobava, Dubai 2014.

8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2}} e5!?  

Following 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d2}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d3}}, Black should better refrain from advancing his queenside pawns, since this would only create additional weaknesses in his position: 7...a6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2}} b5 9.0–0 0–0 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b8}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d2}}, followed by a2–a4, Lupulescu – Badea, Bucharest 2006. It would be correct for Black to opt here for 7...0–0!∞ with a complicated double-edged game.

6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{b6}}  

9.exd5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd5}} 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f2}} cxd4  
Here, the position is simplified considerably and there arises an endgame almost by force.

11.cxd4 exd4 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d4}}  
13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c5}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xc5}} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xc3}} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xc3}+} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{bxc3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e6}}  -- Black’s superior pawn-structure enables him to play for a win in this endgame without any risk.
D) 4.d5

This is White’s most principled move. He occupies space.

4...e6

It seems also very good for Black to follow here with 4...g6, but in this line after 5.c4 \g7 6. \d3 0–0 7.\g5, there arises a variation of the Saemisch system, which we do not plan to analyse in our volume 2. We think that it would be rather impractical to study this variation for Black, just to have it as a weapon against the move 3.f3.

![Diagram: Position after 4.d5 e6 5.c4]

5.c4

Now, before playing \d3, White advances his c-pawn.

5.\d3 exd5 6.exd5 \e7 7.\ge2 \a6. Black is preparing the transfer of his knight to c7, from where it would exert pressure against the enemy pawn on d5 and support the pawn-advance b7–b5. 8.g4 \c7 9.\g3 0–0 10.a4, Soffer – Gavrikov, Berlin 1990, 10...\e8!?∞

White will not achieve much with 5.\b5+, since Black can simply interpose with his knight. 5...\bd7!? 6.a4 (6.dxe6?! fxe6 7.\c3 a6 8.\xd7+ \xd7 9.\f4 \d6 – and Black preserves the two-bishop advantage, De Dovitiis – Perlman, Buenos Aires 2015) 6...a6 7.\e2 exd5 8.exd5 g6 9.c4 \g7 10.\h3 0–0 11.0–0 \e8= – White has much more space, but his pieces are not harmoniously deployed, Murali Krishnan – Gagnashvili, Mumbai 2008.

5...exd5 6.cxd5

6.exd5 \e7 7.\c3 0–0 8.\d3 \a6 9.\ge2, Lanzani – Cardon, Sas van Gent 1982, 9...\d7!??

6...\e7

Black is trying to castle as quickly as possibly.

![Diagram: Position after 5.c4 exd5 6.cxd5 \e7 7.\c3]

7.\c3

There arises a very complicated position after 7.\d3 0–0 8.\e2 (8.\c3 a6 – see 7.\c3) 8...
\[ \text{\textit{bd7 9.0-0 \textit{b8 10.a4 a6 11.\textit{ec3 \textit{e5 12.\textit{e2 \textit{e8?}}} Black prepares f7-f5. 13.f4 \textit{g6 14.\textit{a3 f5 15.exf5 \textit{xf5 16.\textit{c4 \textit{f6= Giri – Caruana, Elancourt 2013. His only weakness – the pawn on d6, is reliably protected by his knight on e8.}}}}}}}} \]

7.\textit{e2 0-0 8.\textit{ec3 \textit{e8 (8... \textit{h5?! Rustemov – Kramnik, ICC 1999, 9.f4?!± – Now, Black’s knight is rather unstable at the edge of the board.) 9.\textit{e2 f5 (9...\textit{h4+? 10.g3 \textit{f6∞) 10.exf5 \textit{xf5∞ Omar – Solak, Baku 2013.}}}}}}}}

7...0-0

8.\textit{ge2}

It is also possible for White to opt here for 8.\textit{d3 a6 9.a4 \textit{bd7 10.\textit{ge2 b8 11.0-0 (11. \textit{g3 \textit{e8 12.0-0 \textit{f6 13.f4 \textit{d4+ 14.\textit{h1 f6∞} 11...\textit{e5 12.\textit{c2. White should refrain from trading pieces, because he has much more space. 12...b5 13.axb5 axb5 14.f4, Moiseenko – Kayumov, Dubai 2014, 14...\textit{g6!∞ The arising}}}}}}}}}

This position was reached in the blitz-game Gelfand – Kramnik, Sochi 2014. White has more space, but Black’s pieces are better developed. White must still lose numerous tempi in order to consolidate the placement of his pieces and to evacuate his king to a save haven. 12...\textit{b8!∞}
Beginning with this chapter, we will analyse this most natural move for White. He not only protects his e4-pawn, but also develops his knight to an active position.

3...g6

Now, he has a great choice of moves. In this chapter we will deal with his not so popular alternatives: A) 4.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)4 and B) 4.\(\text{\textit{c}}\)4.

About 4.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)ge2 \(\text{\textit{g}}\)7 5.h3 (5.g3 0–0 – see Chapter 17; 5.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)3 c6 – see Chapter 19; 5.f3 c6 – see Chapter 20) 5...0–0 – see 4.h3.

4.h4 \(\text{\textit{g}}\)7 5.h5. This pawn-sacrifice seems too risky. (It is preferable for White to opt here for 5.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)2 c5 – see Chapter 16, or 5.f3 c6 – see Chapter 20.) 5...\(\text{\textit{x}}\)h5

6.g4 (6.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)h5?! gxh5 7.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)xh5 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)xd4 8.\(\text{\textit{c}}\)4 e6\(\pm\) – White does not have sufficient compensation for the exchange, Maga – Villamayor, Manila 2008.) 6.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)6 7.g5 \(\text{\textit{f}}\)7 8.f4 (It is possible White had to prefer here the more solid move 8.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)3, Smerdon – Ghasi, Davenport 2014, but even then after 8...c5!?\(\infty\), Black would have no problems at all.) 8...\(\text{\textit{b}}\)6 9.a4 a5. He should not allow a4-a5. 10.d5 e5 11.dxe6 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)xe6 12.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)3, Vlassov – Saveljev, Tomsk 2001, 12...\(\text{\textit{c}}\)6!\(\mp\) – Black has managed to neutralise his lag in development and White has no compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

It is not good for White to opt here for 4.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)3, because he weakens his control over the strategically important d4-square. 4...\(\text{\textit{g}}\)7
5...\textit{f3} 0–0 – see Chapter 21.
5.f4 0–0 – see Chapter 24.
5.\textit{ge}2. Here, contrary to the move 5.\textit{f3}, White's knight cannot be pinned by the enemy bishop (\textit{g4}). On the other hand, it will not impede the important thematic pawn-advance for Black e7-e5. This enables him to equalise easily. 5...0-0 6.0-0 e5 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.\textit{g5} c6 9.\textit{c1} \textit{e6} 10.\textit{b3} \textit{bd7} – Ruiz Diez – Leskovar, Buenos Aires 1994.

4.h3. This move, as a rule, transposes to other variations 4...\textit{g7}.

5.g3 0–0 – see Chapter 17.
5.\textit{g5} 0–0 – see Chapter 18.
5.\textit{e3} 0–0 – see Chapter 19.
5.\textit{f3} 0–0 – see Chapter 21.
5.\textit{ge}2 0–0 6.g4 (6.\textit{e3} \textit{bd7} – see Chapter 19; 6.g3 e5 7.\textit{g2} c6 – see Chapter 17, variation B) 6...e5 7.\textit{g2} c6.

(diagram)
8.\textit{e3} b5 9.dxe5 (9.a3, Vitolinsh – Hoerstmann, Porz 1991, 9...a5!?\textsuperscript{8001}) 9...dxe5 10.\textit{c5} \textit{wx}d1+ 11.\textit{ex}d1 \textit{e}8 12.\textit{c}1, Delgado Ramirez – Morovic Fernandez, Asuncion 2010, 12...\textit{fd}7!? 13.\textit{xe3} a5=

8.a4 exd4 9.\textit{xd}4 d5. This is the point. Now, Black has no problems at all. 10.exd5 (10.e5?! \textit{xf4} – The weaknesses on White’s kingside may become a telling factor in the future.) 10...

A) 4.\textit{f4}!?

(diagram)
This is an interesting idea, which is becoming popular lately. Now, just like after 4.\textit{e3}+5.\textit{xd}2 (see Chapter 19), White will prepare the exchange of the enemy

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dark-squared bishop, preserving the possibility to castle on either side of the board. Therefore, Black must play very accurately.

4...g7 5.d2

5.f3 0–0 – see Chapter 21.

5.e2 0–0 6.d2 (6.f3 bd7 see Chapter 23) 6...c5 7.d5 a6 8.a4, Gruentaler – Kiener, Bayern 2005, 8...a5!?=

5...c6!?
This is Black’s most precise move.

He does not need to be in a hurry to castle kingside, because after 5...0–0 6.h6 his king may come under a dangerous attack.

6.f3
White delays his plan with castling queenside and tries to develop his kingside pieces as quickly as possible.

About 6.h6 hxh6 7.xh6 a5 – see Chapter 19, variation A.

6.a4 0–0 7.f3 d5, or 6.h3 0–0 7.f3 b5 – see 6.f3.

If 6.d3, then Black can already play 6...0–0!? Now, he should not be afraid of 7.h6 xh6 8.xh6, since he can counter this with 8...b6= and both white pawns on d4 and b2 would be hanging. Janik – Dodu, Balatonbereny 1994, 9.Nge2 (9.0–0–0?! g4 10.h4 xd4=) 9...e5= – Black refrains from capturing on b2 and fortifies his position in the centre.

Following 6.0–0–0, the game transposes as a rule to Chapter 20. 6...b5 7.f3 (White would not achieve much with 7.d3 a5 8.b1 b4. Black ousts the enemy knight to a passive position. 9.e2 e6 10.c1, Rogovski – Bretschnieder, Pardubice 1996, 10...b6!? Black’s queen frees the way forward of his a-pawn. 11.f3 a5 12.e2 a4=) 7...bd7 8.h6 xh6 9.xh6 a5 10.b1 b6 – see Chapter 20.

6...0–0

After White has played f3, his plan, including attacking on the kingside, will hardly be so effective. So, it is possible for him to castle here kingside.

(diagram)

7.e2
White wishes to find a safe haven for his king.

7.h6 b5 – see Chapter 19, variation B1.
7...c4. This move enables Black to advance 7...b5 with tempo, for example: 8.d3 g4 9.h6 xf3 10.gxf3 bd7 11.xg7 xg7= – White has no compensation for the weakened pawn-structure on his kingside, Aarstad – Bue, Bronnoysund 2010.

After the prophylactic move 7.a4, Black can inflict a pawn-strike against the enemy centre – 7...d5!?

White would not obtain anything with 8.exd5 cxd5=, followed by c6, f5, e4.

8.e5 e4 9.xe4 dxe4 10.g5 f5. Black parries the threat against his e4-pawn. 11.f3 xf3 12.xf3 c5 13.d5 d7= – White’s pawn-centre might look very strong, but it needs permanent protection.

7.d3. This is a flexible move. White develops his bishop to an active position and defends his e4-pawn, preserving the possibility to castle on either side of the board. 7...bd7. Black’s further plan is connected with the pawn-advance e7-e5.

About 8.h6 e5 – see Chapter 19, variation B.

8.h4. This move is too active. 8...e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.g5, Shimanov – Zherebukh, Philadelphia 2016, 10...c7!?=

Following 8.0–0, Black can advance immediately 8...e5!, for example: 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.h6 (If White accepts the pawn-sacrifice 10.xe5 xe5 11.xe5, then after 11...xe4 12.xe4 xe5 13.xe5 e8 14.f4 xc3 15.bxc3 a5=, Black not only restores the material balance, but also obtains better prospects due to the pawn-weaknesses in the enemy camp.) 10...e7 11.xg7 xg7= – Black’s chances are not worse, because later, the superiority of his bishop over the enemy “bad” bishop...
might become a telling factor, Shevchenko – Botvinkov, Novosibirsk 2003.
8.0–0–0. This move seems too precarious, since Black can begin easily an attack on the queenside with the move b7-b5. White will have difficulties to organise anything real on the opposite side of the board, because the placement of his knight on f3 deprives him of the possibility to realise the standard plan of the attack, connected with f3, g4, h4-h5. 8...e5. Before beginning active actions on the queenside, Black stabilises his position in the centre. 9.\textit{h}6 (9.dxe5 dxe5 10.\textit{h}6 b5 11.\textit{x}g7 \textit{x}g7 12.\textit{b}1 \textit{e}7 13.h3 \textit{c}5 14.\textit{e}3 a5\textdagger Rodriguez Cespedes – IrzhanoV, Luzern 1997) 9...\textit{x}h6 10.\textit{w}xh6 \textit{g}4 11.\textit{w}d2, Zhao – BourmistroV, Churchill 2000, 11...b5!? 12.h3 \textit{g}f6= 7.h3. White prevents \textit{g}4. 7... \textit{bd}7 8.e5, Stanec – Kakagel’dyeV, Yerevan 1996 (8.\textit{h}6 e5 – see Chapter 19, variation \textbf{B2}; 8.\textit{e}2 e5!=) 8...\textit{d}5!? Black complies with the doubling of his pawns on the d-file, but obtains an excellent development and a powerful centralised knight. 9.\textit{x}d5 cxd5 10. exd6 exd6 11.\textit{e}2 (11.\textit{x}d6 \textit{e}8+ 12.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}6 13.\textit{e}5 f6 14.\textit{g}3 \textit{c}4 15.\textit{w}c1 \textit{f}5\textdagger) 11...\textit{f}6 12.0–0 \textit{e}4 13.\textit{w}c1 \textit{d}7 14.c3 \textit{e}8= 7.0–0–0. This move leads to a more complicated position than 7.0–0, but White must play very precisely. 7...b5 8.\textit{d}3 (8.e5 b4 9.\textit{x}f6 bxc3 10.\textit{w}x3 \textit{xf}6 11.h4 h5\textdagger Licina – Klinova, Pula 1997) 8...\textit{g}4. Black develops his bishop to an active position. Now, after the removal of White’s bishop from the f4-square, Black will advance e7-e5 and White will be incapable of winning a pawn, because his knight will be pinned. 9.\textit{h}6 e5

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10.\textit{x}g7 \textit{x}g7 11.\textit{e}2 \textit{bd}7 12.dxe5 (12.h3 \textit{xf}3 13.gxf3 \textit{w}b6\textdagger Dzagnidze – Severiukhina, St Petersburg 2009) 12...dxe5 13.h4 (13.h3, Gallagher – Tkachiev, Hastings 1994, 13...\textit{xf}3!? 14.gxf3 \textit{c}5\textdagger – Black’s pieces are actively placed, while White’s bishop is severely restricted by his own pawn on e4. In addition, his kingside pawn-structure has been compromised.) 13.h5. Black prevents h4-h5. 14.\textit{g}5 \textit{xe}2. This move is forced, but is not bad at all, because White we threatening f2-f3. 15.\textit{w}xe2 \textit{w}a5 16.\textit{b}1 \textit{c}5= Aitbayev – V.Onischuk, St Petersburg 2011.

10.\textit{e}2 \textit{bd}7 11.h3 (11.dxe5 dxe5 12.\textit{g}3, Stangl – Buchal, Germany 1995, 12...\textit{h}6!? 13.
\( \text{w}xh6 \text{wa5 14.} \text{b1} \text{e6} \text{\n}, \text{with good attacking prospects for Black.) 11...xf3 12.gxf3 wb6 13.e3, Smolka – Luetke, Oberhausen 2008, 13...c5? 14.dxc5 dxc5\text{\n} – He has a superior pawn-structure and good attacking prospects against the enemy king.}

7...\text{bd7 8.0-0 wc7}

9.e5

If Black succeeds in advancing e7-e5, he will equalise completely. For example: 9.a4 e5 10.h6 exd4 11.xd4, Netolitzky – Kuporosov, Wattens 1996, 11...c5?!\text{\n} with good counterplay against the enemy e4-pawn.

9.h5

Black removes his knight from the attack with tempo.

10.exd6

There arises a more complicated position following 10.g5, but even then after 10...dxe5 11.\text{x}xe7 \text{e}8 12.d5, Malakhov – Badea, Porto San Giorgio 1997, Black can obtain a good position with 12...b6?! 13.d6 \text{d}7\text{\n} – His counterplay on the kingside, connected with f4, f6, wg4, should compensate the power of White’s passed pawn.

10...exd6 11.e4

After 11.h6 d5, there arises on the board the pawn-structure of the exchange variation in the French Defence which is typical with its drawish tendencies. 12.xg7, Alekseev – Svidler, Sochi 2015, 12.xg7=

11.df6! This is Black’s most precise move. Now, the tactical complications should lead to an approximately equal endgame. 12.xd6 xxe4 13.xc7 xd2 14.xd2 xdxd4 15.c3 xxb6 16.xb6 axb6 17.xh5 gxh5. White has managed to weaken his opponent’s kingside pawn-structure, but this is not much, because Black’s bishop will be more powerful than White’s knight in a fight on both sides of the board. 18.a3 ed8 19.ed1 ef5= Solak
B) 4.\(\textit{\&}c4\)
White develops his bishop to an active position.
4...\(\textit{\&}g7\)

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5.\(\textit{\&}e2\)
He creates the threat e4-e5.

5.\(\textit{\&}g5\) – see Chapter 18.

5.\(\textit{\&}f3\) 0–0 – see Chapter 22.

5.f4 \(\textit{\&}xe4\) – see Chapter 24.

Following 5.\(\textit{\&}f3\), the too exposed position of White’s queen might hurt him in the future. 5...0–0 6.\(\textit{\&}ge2\) \(\textit{\&}c6\) 7.\(\textit{\&}g5\) h6 8.\(\textit{\&}h4\) e5\(\&\) – Black’s prospects are not worse, Tsiganova – Fridman, Tallinn 1998.

5.\(\textit{\&}b3\). This is a prophylactic move against \(\textit{\&}xe4\), followed by d6-d5. 5...0–0 6.\(\textit{\&}ge2\) (6.\(\textit{\&}f3\) \(\textit{\&}g4\) – see Chapter 22) 6...\(\textit{\&}bd7\) 7.0–0 c5 8.\(\textit{\&}e1\) cxd4 9.\(\textit{\&}xd4\). The position is beginning to resemble the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence. 9...\(\textit{\&}c5\) Black prepares an eventual exchange of the powerful enemy bishop. 10.\(\textit{\&}g5\) h6 11.\(\textit{\&}h4\) a6 12.\(\textit{\&}d5\) e6 13.\(\textit{\&}xf6\) + \(\textit{\&}xf6\) 14.\(\textit{\&}xf6\) \(\textit{\&}xf6\) – The position has been simplified and White can hardly exploit the slight vulnerability of the enemy d6-pawn, Gulsksten – Djurhuus, Oslo 2010.

5...\(\textit{\&}c6\)!
This is Black’s most accurate move. He must counter attack the d4-square as quickly as possible; otherwise, he might end up in an inferior position. For example, after the routine line: 5...0–0 6.e5\(\uparrow\), White will seize the initiative.

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6.e5
This is the logical continuation of his plan in the opening. After his alternatives, White may even fail to equalise.

6.d5 \(\textit{\&}d4\) 7.\(\textit{\&}d3\) c5\(\&\) The powerful placement of Black’s knight at the middle of the board provides him with at least equal
chances. White cannot play 8. 
\textit{\textbf{\&e}} 3 ?!, because of 8...\textit{\textbf{\&g}} 4+ Skok – Malnar, Ljubljana 2008.

After 6.\textit{\textbf{\&e}} 3, the simplest way for Black to equalise would be 6...
\textit{\textbf{\&g}} 4 7.\textit{\textbf{\&f}} 3 0–0 8.0–0 \textit{\textbf{\&e}} 5 9.dxe5, Vukovic – Matulovic, Bela Crkva 1986, 9...
\textit{\textbf{\&c}} xe5!??

The move 6.\textit{\textbf{\&f}} 3 allows the rather unpleasant pin of the knight – 6...
\textit{\textbf{\&g}} 4.

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7.e5 \textit{\textbf{\&xf}} 3 8.gxf3 \textit{\textbf{\&xd}} 4 9.exf6
\textit{\textbf{\&xe}} 2 10.fgx7 \textit{\textbf{\&g}} 8 11.\textit{\textbf{\&xe}} 2 \textit{\textbf{\&xg}} 7+ – Black’s queen and two pawns will be stronger than White’s three minor pieces, Zelcic – Djurkovic, Pula 2001.

7.\textit{\textbf{\&b}} 5 \textit{\textbf{\&d}} 7 8.\textit{\textbf{\&xc}} 6 bxc6 9.\textit{\textbf{\&e}} 3
\textit{\textbf{\&b}} 8+ – Black has the two-bishop advantage and well developed pieces Salom – Scharrer, Calvia 2011.

7.\textit{\textbf{\&e}} 3 e5 8.dxe5 \textit{\textbf{\&xe}} 5 9.\textit{\textbf{\&b}} 3
0–0 10.0–0–0 \textit{\textbf{\&h}} 5?! Before exchanging on f3, Black retreats prudently his bishop. 11.h3. White can hardly find a useful move here. (11.\textit{\textbf{\&h}} 1 \textit{\textbf{\&fd}} 7+) 11...
\textit{\textbf{\&xf}} 3 12.
gxf3 \textit{\textbf{\&d}} 7. Black prepares \textit{\textbf{\&e}} 5, increasing the pressure against the f3-pawn. 13.\textit{\textbf{\&h}} 1 \textit{\textbf{\&e}} 5 14.\textit{\textbf{\&g}} 3 c6+

– White has managed to protect his f3-pawn, but his rook on g3 is misplaced and his kingside pawn-structure has been compromised, Kuehn – Reich, Austria 2000.

\textbf{6...\textit{\textbf{\&g}} 4?!}

Black should better not accept the queen-sacrifice, since following 6...
\textit{\textbf{\&xd}} 4 7.exf6 \textit{\textbf{\&xe}} 2 8.fgx7 \textit{\textbf{\&g}} 8 9.gxe2 \textit{\textbf{\&xg}} 7 10.h6 \textit{\textbf{\&g}} 8 11.
0–0–0?, White’s pieces will be very active, while Black will hardly manage to activate his rooks, because there are no open files on the board.

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7.\textit{\textbf{\&b}} 5
This is the only way for White to hold on to the e5-square.

The move 7.e6?! leads to complications, which are favourable for Black. 7...
\textit{\textbf{\&xd}} 4.

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8.exf7+ \textit{\textbf{\&f}} 8 9.\textit{\textbf{\&d}} 1 \textit{\textbf{\&f}} 5. He exerts pressure against the c2-pawn and forces White to remove his bishop from the a2-g8 diagonal, so the pawn on f7 remains de-
fenceless. 10.\textbf{d}d3 \textbf{d}d7 11.\textbf{g}e2 (11.\textbf{e}e3 \textbf{e}e6 12.\textbf{g}e2 \textbf{x}e3 13.\textbf{x}e3 \textbf{x}e3\textbf{=-}+ Lejarre – Le Roux, Sautron 2015) 11...\textbf{x}d3 12.cxd3 \textbf{g}xe2 13.\textbf{x}xe2 \textbf{x}f7 14.0-0, Horak – Pick, Czech Republic 2005, 14...\textbf{h}h8!? 15.h3 \textbf{f}f6\textbf{=}, followed by \textbf{g}g8. White’s compensation is insufficient.

8.\textbf{x}xg4. This is a very brave decision. White sacrifices the exchange and hopes to organise a successful attack against the enemy king. Still, Black has sufficient defensive resources. 8...
\textbf{xc}2+

After 9.\textbf{e}e2, Bezemee – Van Ryn, Netherlands 1993, Black can refrain from capturing the enemy rook in favour of the line: 9...fxe6!? 10.\textbf{b}b1 d5 11.\textbf{d}d3 \textbf{d}d4+ 12.\textbf{f}f1 e5 13.\textbf{d}d1 0-0 14.\textbf{g}e2 c5\textbf{=}. He has three pawns for the piece, a powerful pawn-centre, while White will have difficulties to coordinate his pieces, because his king has been deprived of its castling rights.

Following 9.\textbf{d}d1, it seems very good for Black to play 9...f5!, removing his pawn from the attack with tempo. 10.\textbf{b}b5+, Kotz – Kilians, Austria 2014, 10...\textbf{f}f8!? 11.\textbf{h}h4 \textbf{x}xa1 12.\textbf{h}h6 \textbf{x}xe6 13.\textbf{f}f3 c6 14.\textbf{x}g7+ \textbf{x}g7 15.\textbf{d}d4+ \textbf{g}g8. Naturally, White will regain the knight on a1, but Black will remain with a rook and three pawns for two minor pieces. The only thing he must still do is to exchange the queens, so that he would not come under attack in the forthcoming middle game. 16.\textbf{c}c4 d5 17.\textbf{d}d3 \textbf{g}g6! 18.\textbf{x}xb6 axb6 19.\textbf{d}d2 \textbf{g}g7 20.\textbf{x}xa1 \textbf{h}d8 21.\textbf{e}e1 \textbf{f}f6\textbf{=} – White will have to fight long and hard for a draw in this endgame.

9.\textbf{f}f1 \textbf{x}xa1 10.\textbf{xf}7+ \textbf{f}f8 11.\textbf{h}h4 d5! Black sacrifices a pawn in an attempt to seize the initiative. 12.\textbf{d}d5 (12.\textbf{d}d5 c6 13.\textbf{h}h6, Fontana – Fischer, Frankfurt 2002, 13...\textbf{c}c2\textbf{=}) 12...c6 13.\textbf{h}h6 \textbf{c}c2. Black succeeds in evacuating his knight away from the danger zone. 14.\textbf{e}e4 \textbf{d}d4 15.g4, Isonzo – Belotti, Mantova 1996, 15...\textbf{x}f7!?\textbf{=}

7...0-0 8.\textbf{xc}6

White weakens his opponent’s queenside pawn-structure, but presents him with the two-bishop advantage.
8...bxc6 9.h3

White must oust immediately his opponent’s knight to a passive position, because after the careless move 9...f3, Black has the resource 9...c5! Following 10.dxc5 exd5 12.e3, Oral – Delemarre, Szeged 1994, 12...b8!?

9...h6 10.f3

10...f5!?

This is Black’s most precise move. He wishes to centralise his knight as quickly as possible.

He has a good alternative though: 10...b8 11.0-0 f5∞ Braga – McNab, Graz 1981.

If Black tries to solve immediately his problems in the opening with the help of a pawn-sacrifice – 10...c5, he cannot equalise completely, because White manages to hold on to the e5-square after 11.dxc5 b7 12.f4!

11.f4

After 11.g4?!, Black can try an interesting sacrifice of the knight for three pawns: 11...dxe5! 12.gxf5 exd4 13.e4 xf5 14.g3 e6?

11...c5

The leads to a further weakening of Black’s queenside; otherwise, he cannot create counterplay.

12.dxc5 dxc5 13.d1 e8 14.0-0 b7

15.e4

15.d5 d8 16.c4 d4 17. xd4 cxd4 18.xc7 d7 19.e6 d3! This is the most precise move. Now, there arises on the board, almost by force, an approximately equal endgame. 20.g4 c6 21. d5 xe6 22.xd3 x5 23.f1 x4 24.h4 x2 25.cxd5 d7=

15...c6

This move emphasizes the vulnerability of the light squares in White’s camp.
16.\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{fe}}}}1 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{ad}}}}} 8 17.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{c}}}}3
White prevents $\textit{\textbf{\textbf{d}}}$4.
17...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{h}}}}6 18.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{fd}}}} 2 g5 19.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{h}}}}2

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22.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{f}}}}1 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{a}}}}5 23.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{f}}}}4 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{b}}}}6
Black’s king is not so well protected, so the exchange of the queens will be in his favour.
24.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{fxg}}}} 5 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{xf}}}}2+ 25.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{x}}f} 2
\textit{\textbf{hxg}} 5 26.\textit{\textbf{e}}6 \textit{\textbf{ixa}} 2 27.\textit{\textbf{a}}1

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19...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{c}}} 4 20.\textit{\textbf{f}}3
He neutralises the pressure of Black’s pieces on the h1-a8 diagonal.
20...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{a}}}6} 21.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{f}}}2}

Or 21.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{d}}}f} 1 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{c}}}} 8! $\infty$, followed by \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{e}}}6}, Black’s two-bishop advantage compensates the vulnerability of his pawn-structure.

21...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{d}}5}!
He attacks the enemy weakness on e5 and covers the c5-square against the penetration of the enemy pieces.

27...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{xb}}} 2! This piece-sacrifice is Black’s simplest way of equalising. 28.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{xa}}} 6 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{xc}}} 3 29.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{e}}} 5 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}} 1 30.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{xb}}} 2 \textit{\textbf{c}} 3 31.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{a}}} 3
\textit{\textbf{fxe}} 6 32.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{d}}} 3 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{h}}4} 33.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}} 6 \textit{\textbf{Ed}} 8 34.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{c}}} 1 \textit{\textbf{Ed}} 1 35.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{e}}} 2 \textit{\textbf{Ee}} 1 36.\textit{\textbf{Ee}} 4
\textit{\textbf{c}} 2 37.\textit{\textbf{g}} 3 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}} 3} 38.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{e}}}x}} 3 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}}g}} 3 39.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}}e}} 1 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{\textbf{xe}}}e} 1= – All Black’s pawns have been weakened, but in order to make a draw, it would be sufficient for him to trade his 5(!) pawns for the single enemy pawn.
Chapter 16  1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♕f6 3.♕c3 g6 4.♕e2

This move most often leads to positions from Chapter 23, because later, White usually plays ♕f3. Here however, we will focus on plans connected with an immediate attack on the kingside with g2-g4, or h2-h4.

4...♕g7 5.♖h4

This move is played with the idea to follow with h4-h5. Still, by playing like this, White infringes a famous rule – flanks attacks are likely to be successful only in positions with a stable centre.

About 5.♗g5 – see Chapter 18; 5.♕e3 – see Chapter 19; 5.f4 – see Chapter 24; 5.♕f3 or 5.♕f4 0-0 6.♕f3 – see Chapter 23.

The position is simplified quickly and there arises a rapid transfer to an endgame after 5.e5 dxe5 6.dxe5 ♞xd1+ 7.♕xd1 ♕g4 8.♖f4 ♖d7 9.h3 ♖h6 10.♕f3, Vrban – Medic, Sisak 2013, 10...♕c6!? Black is threatening to play ♕b4(d4) and to prepare castling queenside. 11.♗d2 0-0-0 12.0-0-0 ♖d4 13.♕e4 f6. The pawn on e5 cramped Black's position and his desire to get rid of it was easily understandable. 14.♖xf6 exf6=

After 5.g4, Black's simplest reaction would be 5...d5!?, creating immediate counterplay. 6.e5 ♕e4

7.♕b1. White’s attempt to trap the annoying enemy knight fails, since Black has a simple response 7...e6, preparing ♖h4. 8.h4. White
Chapter 16

defends against the enemy queen-sortie. Here however, the move f2-f3 would be senseless, since Black’s knight has gained access to the g3-square. 8...c5 9.c3, Lenart – Berta, Pecs 1997, 9...f6!?!?

7...xe4. This move leads to the opening of the d-file. This would enable Black to organise immediate pressure against the enemy d4-pawn. In addition, his pawn on e4, having come from the d5-square, will impede the habitual development of White’s knight on g1. 7...dxe4 8...e3 c5 9.c3...c6?!? (9...cx4?! 10.xd4= Paiachadze – Zarkua, Tbilisi 2012).

7.f4. This is White’s best move. He fortifies in advance his pawn on e5 and following 7...c5, he can occupy even more space in the centre in the line: 8.dxe4 dxe4 9.d5. Well, he has no chances of obtaining an edge in view of his lag in development. 9...e6 10.c4 (White defends against...h4 10...e3, Ziatdinov – S.Chekhov, Voronezh 2009, but this leads to an unfavourable exchange of his d-pawn for the enemy c-pawn: 10...exd5!? 11.xc5...c6??) 10...h4+. Black deprives his opponent of his castling rights. 11.f1, Smeets – Mamedyarov, ICC 2007, 11...f6!?∞ (diagram)

5...c5

He follows the classical principles to counter the flank attack with the counter-strike in the centre. Now, White must choose the kind of pawn-structure on the board. He may preserve the tension in the centre A) 6...f3, or enter a position similar to the Benoni Defence B) 6.d5, or just exchange pawns C) 6.dxc5.

6...e3?!...a5!?

There arises a complicated endgame following 6.e5 dxe5 7.dxe5...x1+ 8...x1...g4 9.f4 h5∞ – Black has the attractive g4 and f5-squares for his pieces, Mestrovic – Gorsek, Slovenia 2011.

A) 6...f3 cxd4 7...xd4

White has entered a bad version for him of the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence.

7...c6

(diagram)

8...e3

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White plans to castle queenside.

After 8.h5 gxh5 9.Qxh5 bxc6 10.Qxh5 11.Qxh5 Bb8+ – Black has two powerful bishops, Minasian – Wan, Moscow 2012.

8.Qb3. White defends against the threat Qxe4, but this somewhat slow retreat of his knight away from the centre combines rather poorly with the active move h2-h4. 8...e6 9.h5 Qxh5 10.Qxh5 (After 10.g4, Nezhmetdinov – Lisitsin, Kislovodsk 1956, Black has the intermediate exchange 10...Qxc3+! 11.bxc3 and only then plays 11...Qf6+ and White’s pawn on e4 is hanging, so he fails to oust the enemy knight with the move g5.) 10...Qxc3+! Black compromises his opponent’s queenside pawn-structures. 11.bxc3 gxh5 12.Qxh5 Qd7 13.Qe3 0–0–0 14.Qe2 Qb8+ Van der Wiel – Larsen, Reykjavik 1985.

8...h5
This is Black’s simplest reaction. Before castling kingside he defends against h4-h5.

9.f3

White would not achieve much with 9.Qd2 Qg4 10.Qxg4 Qxg4 11.f3 Qd7 12.0–0–0 Qe5 13.b3 a5= – Black has the two-bishop advantage and a solid position, Baron Rodriguez – Vila Dupla, Zaragoza 1996.

9...0–0 10.Qd2

13.f4

White should better not give up his central e5-pawn. For example: 13.g4 Qxe5 14.gxh5, Ermenkov – Kir.Georgiev, Sofia 1991, 14...Qg3+!? 15.Qf2 Qd6++; or 13.Qh6 Qxe5! Black sacrifices the ex-
change and seizes the initiative. 14.\texttt{xf8 \texttt{g3+} Black deprives his opponent from castling with this intermediate check. 15.\texttt{f1}, Deville – Remus, ICCF 1994, 15...\texttt{b6}! 16.\texttt{d1 \texttt{x8+} – He has more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

\textbf{13...f6}

Black must not delay this important move and undermines immediately his opponents powerful central pawn.

\textbf{14.0–0–0}

14.g4. White will only have problems after this dubious pawn-sacrifice. 14...\texttt{xg4} 15.\texttt{xg4 hgx4} 16.0–0–0 (16.h5 fxe5 17.fxe5 \texttt{x5e5} 18.hxg6 \texttt{d6} 19.0–0–0 – see 14.0–0–0) 16...f5 17.h5, Trana – Frydendal, ICCF 2005, 17...\texttt{d6}!?\texttt{+} – Black has two extra pawns, while White has not achieved anything meaningful on the kingside.

\textbf{14...f5e5} 15.fxe5 \texttt{x5e5} 16.g4

After the loss of his central pawn, White’s only chance is to organise an attack against the enemy king. Accordingly, he is trying to open the g and h-files, ignoring the risk of any material sacrifices.

\textbf{16...x5g4} 17.x5g4 hx5g 18.h5

\textbf{18...d6}

It also seems practical for Black to opt here for 18...g5. He sacrifices a pawn, but prevents the opening of the h-file. 19.x5g5 \texttt{d6} 20.h4, Smyslov – Botvinnik, Moscow 1958, 20...g3!?\texttt{+}

19.hx5g6 \texttt{xb8} 20.d4 \texttt{x5d4} 21.x5d4 \texttt{f4+}

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Black exploits the possibility to make an immediate transfer to an endgame. There would be no checkmating attacks for him to worry about anymore.

22.\text{\textit{xf4}} \text{\textit{xf4}} 23.\text{\textit{e2}} \text{\textit{f6}} – White will be faced with a long and laborious fight for a draw in this endgame, Pedersen – Boye, Denmark 1984.

\textbf{B) 6.d5}

\textbf{7...a6}

He should better avoid here the move 7...\textit{bd7}, because White can simply counter it with 8.\textit{f4} (Black's idea would be justified after 8.\textit{f4} \textit{g4}! 9.\textit{d3} \textit{df6} Spassky – Yukhtman, Tbilisi 1959.) 8...\textit{e5} 9.\textit{f3}+, White has protected reliably the g4-square against the penetration of the enemy pieces and maintains a stable advantage, Malaniuk – Gubanov, St Petersburg 1996.

\textbf{8.\textit{g5} \textit{c7}}

\textbf{9.0–0}
Chapter 16

After 9.\textit{\text{e}3}, Black has the powerful resource 9...\textit{\text{g}4} and White cannot play 10.\textit{\text{x}g}4?!, Muller – Niehaus, Germany 2000, due to the intermediate line: 10...\textit{\text{x}c}3+!? 11.bxc3 h\textit{\text{x}}g4+ and suddenly it becomes obvious that White’s knight on g5 is misplaced, because Black is threatening f7-f6.

Still, it would be quite possible for White to play here 9.a4, preventing immediately Black’s queenside counterplay. 9...0–0 10.\textit{\text{f}4} b6 11.\textit{\text{f}3} g4 12.\textit{\text{d}2} xf3 13.\textit{\text{x}f}3 a6. Black is perfectly prepared for the pawn-advance b6–b5. 14.\textit{\text{h}6} b5 15.\textit{\text{x}g}7 \textit{\text{x}g}7=. Karagiannis – Kotsrotsos, Salonica 2006. After he has pushed b6–b5, he can be quite optimistic about the future, because White can hardly manage to organise an effective attack on the kingside.

9...0–0 10.a4

We will deal now with C1)7.\textit{\text{d}3} and C2) 7.\textit{\text{f}1}.

Winning a pawn with the move 7.cxd6 would not promise anything good to White. 7...\textit{\text{x}e}4 8. dxe7 \textit{\text{c}6}! Black should better worry predominantly about the development of his pieces. (8...\textit{\text{x}c}3?! 9.bxc3 \textit{\text{x}c}3+ 10.\textit{\text{f}1} \textit{\text{x}a}1 11.\textit{\text{g}5}! This is the point! White is threatening a checkmate on d8 and thus succeeds in regaining the bishop on a1. 11...\textit{\text{c}6} 12. \textit{\text{x}a}1=. – White has more than sufficient compensation for the exchange.) 9.\textit{\text{f}1} \textit{\text{x}c}3 10.bxc3

10...\textit{\text{b}8}

It would be premature for Black to choose here 10...e6, because after 11.dxe6 \textit{\text{xe}6}, he would have a hurting weakness on d6 in his camp. 12.\textit{\text{c}4}+. Kapengut – Tukmakov, Leningrad 1962.

11.\textit{\text{f}4}, Das – Asadli, Al Ain 2015. Here, Black should combine the pressure of his bishop against White’s queenside on the a1-h8 diagonal with the opening of the b-file. 11...\textit{\text{g}4}? 12.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{d}7} 13.\textit{\text{f}e}1 a6 14.a5 b5 15.axb6 \textit{\text{x}b}6 16.\textit{\text{a}2} \textit{\text{b}4} 17.\textit{\text{g}3} \textit{\text{b}8}+
\( \Box e7 \Box e7 \) – White’s queenside pawn-structure has been compromised and his king has been deprived of its castling rights, Burgos Figuerroa – Peralta, Montcada 2008.

7.\( \Box d2 \). White gets rid of the pin, but weakens his control over the d5-square. 7...\( \Box x c5 \) 8.h5 g6 9.\( \Box e2 \) (Following 9.\( \Box x h5 \) \( \Box c6 \) 10.\( \Box e2 \), Black can accomplish a freeing pawn-break in the centre 10...d5, equalising completely. 11.exd5 \( \Box x d5 \) 12.\( \Box x d5 \) \( \Box x d5 \) = Shirazi – Korsunsky, New York 1993) 9...\( \Box c6 \) 10.\( \Box f4 \) \( g5 \) 11.f3 (There arise simplifications in the line: 11.\( \Box x h5 \) \( \Box x h5 \) 12.\( \Box x h5 \) \( \Box c8 \) 13.\( \Box x f1 \) \( \Box e5 \) 14.\( \Box e2 \) \( \Box c4 \) 15.\( \Box x c4 \) \( \Box x c4 \) = Morgan – Vlasov, ICCF 2010.) 11...\( \Box e6 \) 12.\( \Box c1 \) (12.\( \Box x e6 \) \( f x e6 \) 13.\( \Box d3 \) \( \Box d7 \) 14.f4 \( \Box f 6 \alpha \) ) 12...\( \Box d4 \) 13.\( \Box d3 \) \( \Box c4 \). Black removes his bishop from the attack of the enemy knight. 14.\( \Box x c4 \) \( \Box x c4 \) 15.\( \Box e3 \) \( \Box c8 \) 16.\( \Box d2 \) \( \Box e6 \) 17.\( \Box x e 6 f x e 6 \) = – Black’s pawn structure has been weakened indeed, but he has an extra pawn after all..., Rodriguez Vila – Tkachiev, Villa Martelli 1997.

8.\( \Box e3 \)
White attacks the enemy queen, winning a tempo for the development of his bishop.

8.h5 \( \Box x h 5 \) 9.\( \Box x h 5 \) \( \Box x c 3 + ! \) 10.\( b x c 3 \) \( g x h 5 \alpha \) Hodgson – Belotti, Forlì 1992

8...\( \Box a 5 \) 9.h5

White has also tried in practice the move 9.\( \Box b 5 + \), transposing to an approximately equal endgame. 9...\( \Box x b 5 \) 10.\( \Box x b 5 \) \( \Box a 6 \) 11.\( \Box d 4 \) (It would be too precarious for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice 11.\( \Box x a 7 \), Rigo – Berg, Dortmund 1988, because after 11...\( \Box d 7 ? ? \), he would be incapable of protecting his e4-pawn with the move 12.f3, in view of 12...\( \Box h 5 ? ? \) 11...0–0 12.\( \Box c 3 \) \( \Box b 4 \). The edge of the board is hardly the best place for a knight, so Black transfers it to a more active position. 13.0–0 \( \Box e 6 \) 14.a3 \( \Box c 6 \) = Jansen – Nyvlt, ICCF 2005.

9...\( \Box x h 5 \)

C1) 7.\( \Box d 3 \) \( \Box x c 5 \)

10.\( \Box b 5 + \)
Chapter 16

It is already high time White thought about equalising, so he entered an endgame.

Following 10.\textit{\v{c}}xh5 \textit{\v{c}}xc3+!, Black compromises his opponent’s pawn-structure and ends up in a superior position. 11.bxc3 (11.\textit{\v{c}}xc3 \textit{\v{c}}xc3+ 12.bxc3 \textit{\v{g}}xh5 13.\textit{\v{c}}xh5 \textit{\v{c}}c6 14.f4, Reprintsev – V.Onischuk, Lutsk 2016, 14...\textit{\v{g}}g4?! 15.\textit{\v{h}}h6 f5† – Black’s better pawn-structure enables him to play for a win without any risk.) 11...\textit{\v{g}}xh5 12.\textit{\v{e}}e2 \textit{\v{g}}g8!? Black develops his rook to an active position. 13.\textit{\v{f}}f4 \textit{\v{c}}c6† It would not work for White to play here 14.\textit{\v{c}}xh5?, due to 14...\textit{\v{e}}e5 15.\textit{\v{d}}d4 \textit{\v{g}}xg2!++ Vujic – Pantovic, Obrenovac 2004.

10...\textit{\v{a}}xb5 11.\textit{\v{a}}xb5 \textit{\v{a}}a6 12.\textit{\v{g}}xh5 \textit{\v{g}}xh5 13.c3 (13.0–0–0 f5?!∞ Benjamin – Chernin, Buenos Aires 1992) 13...\textit{\v{d}}d7 14.\textit{\v{c}}xh5 0–0 15.\textit{\v{e}}e2 f5∞ – Black maintains the two-bishop advantage, so he should strive for opening of the position, Vetter – Neuschmied, ICCF 1996.

C2) 7.\textit{\v{f}}f1 \textit{\v{c}}xc5

![Diagram]

12.\textit{\v{c}}xh5

After his alternatives White will even fail to equalise.

12.\textit{\v{d}}d4 \textit{\v{g}}g8 13.\textit{\v{c}}xh5 e5† Toirkens – Stam, Hengelo 1994.
12.\texttt{d4} 13.\texttt{b4} 14.\texttt{d5} (Or 13.f3 \texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{f2}, Kasparavicius – Kribben, ICCF 2002, 14...
\texttt{g8!?\#}, followed by 0–0–0 and Black’s king seems to be much safer than its counterpart.) 13...
\texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{xa5} 15.\texttt{xh5} \texttt{c4} 16.\texttt{d4} f6\# – There is only a single
weak pawn in Black’s position on h7, while White must worry about three – a2, c2, c3, Feelders –
Muhren, Netherlands 2005.

12...\texttt{xc3}

13.\texttt{e2}

It is bad for White to choose here 13.\texttt{d4} \texttt{xd4} 14.\texttt{xd4}, Marrero Lopez – Linares Napoles,
\texttt{Cali 2009, 14...f6!?\#}, as well as 13.\texttt{d4} 14.\texttt{d3} \texttt{xd3+} 15.\texttt{cxd3}, Schwertel – Mrkvíck
Serve 1990, 15...f6!?\# and in both variations White does not have full compensation for the
corrupted pawn.

13...\texttt{c4} 14.f3

It is possible that White should better forget about any ambitious plans and seek equality in the
endgame after 14.\texttt{d4} \texttt{xd4} 15.\texttt{d4}, Hvattum – Sandum, Molde 2000, 15...\texttt{g4!?} 16.\texttt{h6} \texttt{d7}
17.f3 f6 18.\texttt{f2}. He prepares the doubling of his rooks on the h-file after which White will regain
the pawn on h7. 18...\texttt{c6} 19.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 20.\texttt{ah1} \texttt{ec8} 21.\texttt{xh7} \texttt{xh7} 22.\texttt{xh7} \texttt{c7} 23.c3 \texttt{b5} 24.\texttt{e5}
a6= – His pawns on a2 and c3 are weak, but Black’s edge is just symbolic, because there is just a
few material left on the board. In addition, the drawish tendencies in positions with bishops of oppo-
site colours are quite well fam-
iar.

14...\texttt{c6} 15.\texttt{f2} (15.\texttt{b1}, Lopez – Bonneville, Geneva 2007, 15...b6!?\#) 15...\texttt{e6} 16.\texttt{b1} b6
17.\texttt{b3} \texttt{e8\#} – Black’s superior pawn-structure provides him with a stable advantage, Lhavasuren
– Azmaiparashvili, Moscow 1986.
Chapter 17  1.e4 d6 2.d4 ʁf6 3.ʁc3 g6 4.g3

With this move White prepares the fianchetto of his lightsquared bishop. From the g2-square it will protect reliably the pawn on e4. In this scheme the focus of the fight is on the middle game. This circumstance may be in favour of Black, since White's knight is already on c3, in front of the pawn on c2, and he may miss badly his pawn on c4 in the forthcoming middle game.

4...ʁg7 5.ʁg2

About 5.ʁf3 0–0 6.ʁg2 ʁbd7 – see variation A.

5.ʁge2 0–0 6.ʁg2 e5 – see variation B.

5.h3 0–0 6.ʁg2 (6.ʁe3 – see Chapter 19) 6...e5 – see 5.ʁg2.

5...0–0

We will analyse now A) 6.ʁf3 and B) 6.ʁge2.

It is not good for White to play here 6.f4, because Black may exploit his opponent's insufficient control over the e5-square with the line: 6...e5 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.ʁxd8 ʁxd8 9.fxe5 ʁg4. He regains easily his pawn and obtains a very good position in this endgame. 10.ʁd5 ʁa6 11.ʁg5 ʁe8 12.h3 ʁxe5=. Now, White must comply with the fact that he has no advantage and should try to complete his development. The seemingly strong move 13.ʁf6+?! ʁxf6 14.ʁxf6, leads to an inferior
position for him following 14... \( \text{\textipa{c}c}4 \) 15.\( \text{\textipa{f}}f2 \), Nakamura – Mamedov, Moscow 2010, 15...\( \text{\textipa{c}c}5^+ \)

After 6.h3 e5, White should better not ignore the development of his knight on g1 (7.\( \text{\textipa{g}}ge2 \) c6 – see variation B), because the move 7.\( \text{\textipa{e}}e3 \) may lead to difficulties for him: 7...exd4 8.\( \text{\textipa{x}}xd4 \) \( \text{\textipa{c}c}6 \). Now, White must lose a tempo for the retreat of his bishop. 9.\( \text{\textipa{e}}e3 \) \( \text{\textipa{e}}e8 \) 10.\( \text{\textipa{g}}ge2 \) \( \text{\textipa{b}}b8!? \) Black is preparing b7-b5-b4. 11.g4 b5↑ Stupak – T.Hansen, Krakow 2012.

A) 6.\( \text{\textipa{d}f}3 \)
White’s knight is more active here, than on the e2-square, but he will be incapable of advancing f2-f4.

6...\( \text{\textipa{b}d}7 \) 7.0–0

7.h3 e5 8.0–0 c6 – see 7.0–0.

7...\( \text{\textipa{e}}5 \)

8.h3
This is a useful move. Here, White can already develop his bishop on e3 without being afraid of the enemy knight-sortie \( \text{\textipa{g}}4 \).

8...\( \text{\textipa{e}}e3 \) c6 9.h3 \( \text{\textipa{c}}c7 \) – see 8.h3.

8.dxe5. This reduction of the tension in the centre seems harmless for Black. 8...dxe5

9.h3 c6 – see 8.h3.
9.a4 c6 10.b3 \( \text{\textipa{e}}e8 \) – see 9.b3.
9.\( \text{\textipa{w}}e2 \) c6 10.\( \text{\textipa{d}}d1 \) \( \text{\textipa{w}}e7 \) 11.a4 a5 12.b3 \( \text{\textipa{c}}c5 \) 13.\( \text{\textipa{a}}a3 \) b6 14.h3 \( \text{\textipa{e}}e8 \) 15.\( \text{\textipa{w}}e3 \) \( \text{\textipa{f}}f8 \); Ryska – Ilyasov, ICCF 2010.

9.b3 c6. Black should not be afraid of the weakening of his d6-square, since White will be incapable of exploiting this. 10.a4 \( \text{\textipa{e}}e8 \) 11.\( \text{\textipa{a}}a3 \) (11.\( \text{\textipa{d}}d2 \) \( \text{\textipa{c}}c5 \) 12.\( \text{\textipa{c}}c4 \) \( \text{\textipa{e}}e6 \) 13.\( \text{\textipa{w}}xd8 \) \( \text{\textipa{a}}xd8 \)= and there has arisen an approximately equal endgame, Karayannis – Kosmas Lekkas, Katakolo 2009) 11...\( \text{\textipa{w}}a5 \) 12.\( \text{\textipa{w}}d2 \) \( \text{\textipa{f}}f8 \). Black trades the active enemy bishop. 13.\( \text{\textipa{x}}xf8 \) \( \text{\textipa{x}}xf8 \) 14.\( \text{\textipa{d}}d5 \) \( \text{\textipa{w}}d8 \) 15.\( \text{\textipa{x}}xf6+ \) \( \text{\textipa{x}}xf6 \)= – Here, White should play very carefully, since his "bad" bishop might become a cause of worries for him later, Averbakh – Rosenberg, New York 1992.
8.\(\text{e1 c6}\) 9.a4. White prevents b7-b5. (9.b3 \(\text{wc7}\) 10.a4 \(\text{ee8}\) – see 9.a4; 9.h3 \(\text{wc7}\) – see 8.h3) 9...\(\text{wc7}\) 10.b3 (10.h3 b6 – see 8.h3) 10...\(\text{ee8}\) 11.\(\text{a3 exd4}\). After the exchange on d4, Black’s knight may go to c5 and from there it would exert pressure against the pawn on e4. 12.\(\text{xd4 c5}\) 13.\(\text{d2 d7}\) Black connects his rooks. 14.\(\text{ad1 ad8}\). His rook will be very useful on this square for the sake of the protection of the pawn on d6. 15.h3 \(\text{c8}\) 16.g4. White occupies space on the kingside. Still, it is well known that pawns do not come back, so the weakening of his king may hurt him in the future. 16...h5 17.f3 hxg4 18.hxg4 \(\text{wc7}\) 19.\(\text{de2 c8}\) – White has plenty of space, but Black’s position is tremendously solid, while White’s king is rather unsafe, Sosonko – Van Wely, Rotterdam 1998.

8.a4 c6

9.h3 \(\text{wc7}\) – see 8.h3.
9.\(\text{e1 wc7}\) – see 8.\(\text{e1}\).
9.dxe5 dxe5 – see 8.dxe5

It seems a bit slow for White to opt here for 9.b3 \(\text{exd4}\) 10.\(\text{xd4 ee8}\) 11.\(\text{a3 c5}\). Black’s pieces have occupied active positions, while White will be incapable of exploiting the slight weakening of his opponent’s d6-pawn. 12.\(\text{e1, Spassky – Gligoric, Montilla 1978, 12...d6!}\) This is Black’s simplest road to equality. He makes use of the vulnerability of the a1-h8 diagonal and manages to advance d6-d5. After this the exchanges would be unavoidable and there would arise quickly a transfer to an equal endgame. 13.\(\text{exe6 exe6}\) 14.\(\text{d2 d5}\) 15.exd5 \(\text{xd5}\) 16.\(\text{d6 xal}\) 17.\(\text{e7+ exe7}\) 18.\(\text{xd8+ exd8}\) 19.\(\text{exe7 ee8}\) 20.\(\text{c5}\). It may look like White’s strategy has succeeded, because Black’s bishop and pawn are hanging, but the forced variation has not ended yet. 20...\(\text{c3}\) 21.\(\text{e3 ed8}\)! He is threatening \(\text{d1}\) and \(\text{h3}\). 22.\(\text{xc6 ec8}\) 23.\(\text{xc3 xc6}\) 24.\(\text{d4 xc3}\). After the trade of the rooks, there arises a dead drawish endgame on the board with bishops of opposite colours. 25.\(\text{xc3 f5}\) 26.\(\text{d4 xc2}\) 27.\(\text{xa7 xb3}\)=

9.a5 \(\text{wc7}\) 10.dxe5. White cannot obtain much in this endgame. Black gets rid of his only weakness. He only needs to complete the development of his queenside pieces in order to equalise completely. (10.h3 \(\text{b8}\) – see 8.h3) 10...dxe5 11.\(\text{e2}\). White is preparing \(\text{d1}\). (11.\(\text{e3 ee8}\) 12.h3 \(\text{f8}\) 13.\(\text{d2}\), Skalkotas – Kozlovskaya, Halkidiki 2016, 13...\(\text{c5!?}\)) 11...\(\text{ee8}\) 12.\(\text{d1 f8}\) 13.h3 \(\text{ee6}\). Black’s knight will be very powerful on this square. White must be per-
manently on the alert about its possible penetration to the d4-outpost. 14.\textit{xe}3 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{b}4 \textit{b}5 16.\textit{axb}6 \textit{axb}6= Stefanova – Arakhamia Grant, Batumi 2012.

8...\textit{c}6 9.a4

About 9.\textit{xe}1 \textit{c}7 10.a4 \textit{b}6, or 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.a4 \textit{w}c7, or 10.\textit{xe}3 \textit{w}c7 11.a4 \textit{d}8 – see 9.a4.

9.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}8!? 10.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}5\infty, with good counterplay for Black on the queenside.

9.\textit{e}3 \textit{w}c7 10.\textit{d}2. White delays the prophylactic move a2-a4, but this would not end up well for him (10.a4 \textit{b}6 – see 9.a4). 10...\textit{b}5 11.a3 \textit{b}7 12.\textit{h}6, Bouwmeester – Robatsch, Luzern 1963, 12...\textit{a}5?!\infty – Black has managed to occupy space on the queenside.

9...\textit{w}c7

10.\textit{xe}3

10.dxe5. White reduces the tension in the centre, but without any positive result. 10...dxe5 11.\textit{xe}3 \textit{d}8 12.\textit{we}2 a5 13.\textit{fd}1 \textit{b}6 14.\textit{f}1 \textit{a}6 15.\textit{we}1 \textit{x}f1 16.\textit{x}f1 \textit{f}8= Iwinski – Kazmierczak, Zakopane 2001.

10.\textit{xe}1 \textit{b}6 11.\textit{b}3 (11.\textit{xe}3 \textit{b}7 – see 10.\textit{xe}3) 11...\textit{b}7 12.\textit{a}3 exd4 13.\textit{xd}4 \textit{a}6. Before advancing c6-c5, Black must cover the b5-square against the possible penetration of the enemy knights. 14. \textit{e}5. White wins the exchange for a pawn. Still, this is insufficient for him to maintain an edge. 14...dxe5 15.\textit{xf}8 \textit{xf}8 16.\textit{de}2 \textit{b}4\infty – Black has a pawn for the exchange and two powerful bishops, while the dark squares are vulnerable in White’s camp and his knights have no good squares, Kunte – Gallagher, Torquay 2002.

10.a5. White prevents \textit{b}7-b6. 10...\textit{b}8. Black plans to advance his b-pawn anyway.

11.d5 \textit{b}5 12.\textit{axb}6 \textit{axb}6 13.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 14.\textit{e}1 \textit{c}5\infty – Black prevents \textit{e}1-d3-b4-d5, Fedoseev – Ziska, Abu Dhabi 2016. The activity of his pieces compensates the slight weakness of the d5-square.
11.dxe5 dxe5 12.\text{\textae}e3 b5 13.\text{\textabla}xb6 axb6 14.\text{\textabar}d2 \text{\textbar}d8= Landa - Fedorov, Samara 1998.

11.\text{\textae}e3 b5 12.axb6 axb6 13.d5 (13.dxe5 dxe5 - see 11.dxe5) 13...b5 14.dxc6 (14.\text{\textaa}7 \text{\textbb}=) 14...\text{\textbar}xc6 15.\text{\textbar}d2, Swinkels - Vocaturo, Wijk aan Zee 2010. Here, Black could have obtained good counterplay with the line: 15...b4!? 16.\text{\textbar}d5 \text{\textbar}xd5 17.exd5 \text{\textbar}c7\infty, followed by f7-f5, with the idea to advance his pawns in the centre and on the kingside.

10...b6

Black's knight on d7 stands in the way of the development of his bishop on c8, so he plans to deploy it on b7.

11.\text{\textbar}d2

Following 11.\text{\textae}e1 \text{\textbb}7 12.dxe5 (12.\text{\textbar}d2 \text{\textae}e8 - see 11.\text{\textbar}d2) 12...dxe5, Black has no problems at all. 13.\text{\textbar}d2 \text{\textbar}fd8. He is preparing \text{\textbar}f8-e6, or \text{\textbar}f8-c5. 14.\text{\textbar}b1 \text{\textbar}f8\infty Averbakh - Vasiukov, Moscow 1962.

11...\text{\textbb}7

12.\text{\textbar}e1

12.\text{\textbar}ad1 \text{\textae}8 13.\text{\textae}1 a6 - see 12.\text{\textae}1.

12.\text{\textbb}h6. White would not achieve much if he trades the dark-squared bishops. Later, the superiority of Black's bishop on b7 over its counterpart may be rather unpleasant for White. 12...\text{\textae}8 13.\text{\textbb}xg7 \text{\textbar}xg7 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.\text{\textbb}d1 \text{\textbar}ad8 16.\text{\textae}3 \text{\textbar}c5 17.a5 \text{\textbb}e6 18.\text{\textbb}f1 c5 19.axb6 axb6\infty - Black is perfectly prepared to deploy his knight on the d4-outpost, Nogueiras Santiago - Shirov, Moscow 1994.

12...\text{\textae}8 13.\text{\textbb}h6

13.\text{\textbar}ad1 a6 14.\text{\textbb}h6 (14.g4 \text{\textbar}ad8 - see 13.g4) 14...b5 - see 13.\text{\textbb}h6.

13.\text{\textbb}h2 a6!? Black prepares b6-b5. 14.\text{\textbb}h6 b5 15.\text{\textbb}g7 \text{\textbar}xg7 16.axb5 axb5= Mecking - Martinovsky, Linares 1995.

13.g4. White begins active actions on the kingside. 13...a6 14.\text{\textbar}ad1 \text{\textbar}ad8 15.\text{\textbb}h6 (15.d5, Drazic - Menoni, Bratto 1998, 15...\text{\textbar}xd5?! 16.exd5 \text{\textbar}c8=) 15...b5 16.axb5 axb5 17.b4. He prevents b5-b4 with this move, but weakens the c4-square. 17...\text{\textbb}b6 18.\text{\textbar}g5 \text{\textbb}h6. This is the simplest for Black (He can also play here 18...\text{\textbb}h8?!? Schroeder - De Seroux, Barcelona 2014, after which there arises a much more compli-
cated position.). 19.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xh6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e7= – Black’s queen is in a hurry to come back and to assist in the defence of his king. Now, he will always have the defensive resource \texttt{\textasciitilde}f8-g7, Mamedyarov – Amonatov, Almaty 2016.

13...a6 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ad1

Or 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xg7 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xg7 15.dxe5 (15.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ad1 b5 – see 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ad1; 15.\texttt{\textasciitilde}h4, Kovalevskaya – Federovski, Bilbao 2014, 15...h6!? 15...dxe5= Bolbochan – Olafsson, Stockholm 1962.

14...b5 15.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xg7 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xg7

16.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3

Following 16.\texttt{\textasciitilde}h4 h6 17.f4, Black can exploit the vulnerability of the enemy centre with 17...b4 18.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2, Indjic – Arsovic, Belgrade 2014, 18...exf4!? 19.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xf4 c5\texttt{\textasciitilde} – his bishop on b7 enters the actions. White will hardly manage to hold on to his central pawns.

16...b4. Black ousts the enemy knight from its active position. 17.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2, U.Andersson – See- man, Estonia 1998, 17...\texttt{\textasciitilde}ad8?!\texttt{\textasciitilde} – He has a very good position. If White tries to win a pawn with 18.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xb4?!, then Black will seize the initiative. 18...c5! 19.dxc5 d5\texttt{\textasciitilde} – His pieces a obviously much better prepared for the opening of the game in the centre.

B) 6.\texttt{\textasciitilde}ge2

This is White’s most popular response. His knight will not stand in the way of the pawn-advance f2-f4 on this square, and will also fortify the e4-pawn at an opportune moment from the g3-square, after the preliminary moves h2-h3 and g3-g4.

6...e5

7.h3

White can hardly continue the game without this move. He needs it in order to develop his bishop to e3 without being afraid of \texttt{\textasciitilde}g4.

7.dxe5. White cannot achieve anything after a transfer into an
endgame. 7...dxe5 8.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd8 (8.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}g5 c6 9.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd8 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd8 – see 8.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd8; 8.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e3 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}bd7\textit{\textbullet}∞) 8...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd8

The move 9.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}d5 leads to further exchanges and simplification of the position. 9...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd5 10.exd5 c6 11.c4 (11.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}c3?! \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}f5\textit{\textbullet} – White has problems with the protection of his c2-pawn, Rajkovic – Pirc, Vrnjacka Banja 1962.) 11...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xd5 12.cx\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}d5 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6∞ – Black’s prospects are not worse at all. Later White played a bit too optimistically 13. \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}g5?! f6 14.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}d2, Moskalenko – Petran, Lubniewice 1994 and following 14...b6!? 15.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}c3 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}b4 16. 0–0 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}b7\textit{\textbullet}, he could have lost his d5-pawn.

The pin 9.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}g5 is not dangerous for Black, since he can counter it with 9...c6, covering the d5-square against the penetration of the enemy knight. 10.0–0 (10.h3 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6 11.0–0 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e8 12.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}fd1 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e6= – Black has completed the development of his queenside pieces and has equalised completely, Luksic – Djukanovic, Podgorica 2008.) 10...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6. Black prepares the transfer of his knight to c5. 11. \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}fd1 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e6 12.a3, Zurano Lopez – Peralta, Spain 2014, 12...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}c5!?∞

7.0–0 c6

8.h3 b5 – see 7.h3.

8.b3. White prepares a double fianchetto. 8...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e8 9.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}b2 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}bd7 10.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e1 (10.dxe5 dxe5 11.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}d2, Barcza – Ivkov, Belgrade 1954, 11...b5?!÷) 10...b5. Black occupies space and obtains a good position. 11. d5, Bisguier – Lombardy, Columbus 1977, 11...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}c7?! 12.dxc6 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}xc6= 8.a4 a5 9.b3 (9.h3 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6 – see variation B2) 9...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6 10.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a3 (10. h3 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}b4 – see variation B2) 10...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}b4 11.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}d2 \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e8 12.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}ae1, Timman – Donner, Amsterdam 1973, 12...\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e6!?∞, with a complicated double-edged position.

7...c6

This is an important moment – Black is not in a hurry to play \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}bd7. He wishes to provoke the move a2–a4, in order to deploy later his knight to a more active position: \textit{\textbf{\textsection}}a6–b4.

(diagram)

Now, White can either prevent Black’s pawn-advance b7–b5 with B2) 8.a4, or can ignore that threat after B1) 8.0–0.

About 8.\textit{\textbf{\textsection}}e3 b5 9.dxe5 (9.0–0
$\text{b7}$, or 9.a3 $\text{b7}$ 10.0–0 $\text{bd7}$ – see 8.0–0) 9...$\text{dx5}$

10.0–0 $\text{b7}$ – see 8.0–0.
10.$\text{c5}$$\text{xd1+}$$\text{d1}$$\text{e8}$$\text{cl}$. White prepares the transfer of his knight to d3, but he cannot dominate over the c5-square, because Black has the resource $\text{a6}$, after the preliminary move $\text{a7}$$\text{a5}$. 12...$\text{a5}$$\text{d3}$$\text{a6}$$\text{e3}$$\text{b4}$ Makarichev – Torre, Saint John 1988.

10.$\text{xd8}$$\text{xd8}$. There has arisen an approximately equal endgame on the board. 11.$\text{c1}$ (11. 0–0 – see 8.0–0) 11...$\text{a5}$$\text{a4}$$\text{b4}$$\text{b1}$$\text{e6}=$ Pavaovic – Berkes, Zalaegerszeg 2004.

**B1) 8.0–0 b5**

9.$\text{a3}$

White prevents the further advance of the enemy pawn.

9.$\text{b3}$$\text{c7}$$\text{g5}$$\text{e8}$$\text{d2}$ b4. Black ousts his opponent’s knight to the edge of the board and tries to seize the initiative. 12.$\text{a4}$$\text{exd4}$$\text{f5}$$\text{xf6}$$\text{xf6}$$\text{d4}$$\text{xb7}$$\text{c3}$$\text{bxc3}$$\text{xc3}$$\text{d7}=$ His two-bishop advantage compensates the vulnerability of his pawns on c6 and d6, but not more than that, Tal – Torre, Brussels 1987.

White’s plans, connected with the exchange on e5, do not promise him much. For example: 9.$\text{e1}$$\text{b7}$$\text{dxe5}$$\text{dx5}$$\text{dxd8}$$\text{xd8}$$\text{e3}$$\text{bd7}=$ Kauppala – Timmerman, Norway 1994.

9.$\text{dxe5}$$\text{dx5}$$\text{xd8}$$\text{e3}$$\text{e7}$$\text{cl}$$\text{bd7}$$\text{d3}$$\text{a5}$$\text{a3}$, Slipak – Flores, Villa Martelli 2004, 13...$\text{d8}?$ 14.$\text{d2}$$\text{b7}=$ 10...$\text{d8}$$\text{e3}$$\text{bd7}$$\text{cl}$$\text{a5}$$\text{d1}$$\text{f8}$$\text{d3}$$\text{a6}=$ Black has managed to cover reliably the c5-square against the possible
penetration of the enemy pieces. The prospects of both sides are approximately equal, Alekseev – Mamedyarov, Nalchik 2009.

9.\( \text{\textcopyright} e3 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} b7 \) 10.dxe5 (10.a3 \( \text{\textcopyright} bd7 \) – see 9.a3) 10...dxe5 11.\( \text{\textcopyright} c5 \) (11.a4 b4 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \)= Godena – Petursson, Debrecen 1992; 11.\( \text{\textcopyright} c1 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} bd7 \) 12.g4, Kosteniuk – Ushenina, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010, 12...\( \text{\textcopyright} e7 \)??) 11...\( \text{\textcopyright} e 8 \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \) 13.a4, Z.Horvath – Schlosser, Budapest 1991, 13...\( \text{\textcopyright} a 6 \)= – with complete equality.

9...\( \text{\textcopyright} b 7 \)

10.\( \text{\textcopyright} e 3 \)

10.f4 \( \text{\textcopyright} x d 4 \) 11.\( \text{\textcopyright} x d 4 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} e 8 \)?? 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} d e 2 \)=? a5 13.e5 \( \text{\textcopyright} b 6 + \) 14.\( \text{\textcopyright} d 4 \) c5?? 15.\( \text{\textcopyright} f 2 \)=? dxe5 16.fxe5 \( \text{\textcopyright} e 5 \)?? Vitiugov – Bologan, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013.

Here, once again, the exchange 10.dxe5 only leads to simplifications. 10...dxe5 11.\( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} x d 8 \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} x e 3 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} b d 7 \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright} c 1 \) (13.\( \text{\textcopyright} a d 1 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} f 8 \) 14.\( \text{\textcopyright} c 1 \) a5= Mieles Palau – M.Marin, Mallorca 2004) 13...\( \text{\textcopyright} f 8 \) 14.\( \text{\textcopyright} d 3 \) a6 15.f4. White’s pieces have no access to the c5-square, so he begins an offensive on the kingside. It is unlikely to be effective though. 15...\( \text{\textcopyright} x f 4 \) 16.\( \text{\textcopyright} x f 4 \) c5 17.e5 \( \text{\textcopyright} x g 2 \) 18.\( \text{\textcopyright} x g 2 \), Zavgorodniy – Itkis, Nikolaev 2001, 18...b4!! 19.\( \text{\textcopyright} x b 4 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} x b 4 \) 20.\( \text{\textcopyright} e 2 \). After the retreat of this knight, Black is dominant over the d5-square. 20...\( \text{\textcopyright} d 5 \) 21.\( \text{\textcopyright} g 1 \) a5= – He has no pawn-weaknesses in his position and there is just a few material left on the board. The most probable outcome of this game would be a draw.

10.\( \text{\textcopyright} g 5 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} b d 7 \) 11.d5 (11.\( \text{\textcopyright} d 2 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} e 8 \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} a d 1 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} c 7 \) 13.g4, Rodin – Zakharevich, Moscow 1991, 13...a5=??) 11...\( \text{\textcopyright} c x d 5 \) 12.\( \text{\textcopyright} c x d 5 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} x d 5 \) 13.\( \text{\textcopyright} x d 5 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} c 7 \). There has arisen a very complicated position. Both sides have their trumps. 14.\( \text{\textcopyright} c 3 \). The c3-square is not the best place for White’s knight, since it is in front of the pawn on c2. His threats against the b5-pawn can be easily parried by Black. (White could have tried here instead 14.a4 b4 15.c3 \( \text{\textcopyright} a b 8 \)?? Bjelajac – Nikolic, Vrsac 1983.) 14...a6 15.\( \text{\textcopyright} h 2 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} b 6 \) 16.\( \text{\textcopyright} e 2 \) \( \text{\textcopyright} f d 7 \)=, followed by \( \text{\textcopyright} c 4 \), f7-f5, e5-e4, Boguslavsky – Kasimdzhanov, Germany 2013.

10...\( \text{\textcopyright} b d 7 \) (diagram)

11.g4

White is preparing \( \text{\textcopyright} g 3 \). Still, this plan seems rather slow and
Black succeeds in seizing the initiative on the queenside.

White cannot solve his problems with the line: 11.f4 exd4 12. \(\text{\texttt{exd4}}\) (12.\(\text{\texttt{exd4 e8}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{e1 a5}}\) Gamback – Kochyev, Jyvaskyla 2001) 12...\(\text{\texttt{e8}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{f2 b6}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{g4 c5}}\). Black is threatening b5-b4, so White fails to defend his e4-pawn and is forced to play 15.e5. But here, after 15...\(\text{\texttt{xg2}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{xg2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 17.\(\text{\texttt{xd8 axd8}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{xc5 d2}}\), Black maintains powerful initiative, despite the exchange of queens and the transfer into an endgame, Nepomniachtchi – Wang, Chalkidiki 2003.

It is possible, White had better forget about his ambitious plans and exchange on e5 with the idea to prevent the possible difficulties: 11.\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 \(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5= or 11.\(\text{\texttt{xd2 a5}}\) 12.\(\text{\texttt{fd1 c7}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5, Paichadze – Gagunashvili, Tbilisi 2010, 13...\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5=

11...a5?! This is an energetic move. Black plans at first to oust the enemy knight from c3 with the move b5-b4, and then to inflict a strike against the centre with d6-d5. 12.\(\text{\texttt{g3 b4}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{ce2 d5}}\)! 14.\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 \(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 15.\(\text{\texttt{c5 e8}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{axb4 axb4}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{xa8 xa8}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{exd5 cxd5}}\) – Black’s pieces have been deployed more harmoniously. 19.\(\text{\texttt{g5?!}}\) (19.\(\text{\texttt{xb4? d4—}}\) 19...\(\text{\texttt{e4}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{d4 a6}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{e1 xg5}}\) – Black has ended up with an extra pawn, Hoelzl – Jansa, Austria 1994.

B2) 8.a4 a5

9.0–0

White can hardly continue the game without castling.

9.\(\text{\texttt{e3 a6}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 (10.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{b4}}\) – see 9.0–0) 10...\(\text{\texttt{dx}}\) ex5 11.\(\text{\texttt{xd8 xd8}}\) 12.\(\text{\texttt{b6}}\). If White goes after the pawn on a5, he will hardly obtain anything, but he has no chances of an advantage after his alternatives either. 12...\(\text{\texttt{e8}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{xa5 d7}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{d1}}\). The threat b7-b6 forces White to retreat his knight to the edge of the board. 14...\(\text{\texttt{ac5}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{b4 xa4}}\). Black regains his pawn and obtains a very
good position. 16.\( \text{bxa}4 \) \( \text{gxa}4= \)  

9...\( \text{\textg{a}6!} \)

Black’s knight is headed for the b4-square, where it would be much more active than on d7. In addition, it would have restricted the mobility of the bishop on c8, had it remained on d7.

10.\( \text{\texte{e}3} \)

White’s plan includes \( \text{\textw{d}2}, \text{\texta{d}1}, \text{\textfe{1}}, \text{\textf{2}-f4} \), followed by g3-g4.

It does not seem so active for White to try here 10.b3. After 10...\( \text{\textb{b}4} \) 11.\( \text{\textb{b}2} \), Kotronias – Popchev, Sochi 1989, Black could have obtained a very good position with the line: 11...\( \text{\texte{e}8!?} \) 12.\( \text{\textw{d}2} \) exd4 13.\( \text{\textx{d}4} \) \( \text{\textd{7}7!?}, \) followed by \( \text{\textc{c}5} \).

White cannot obtain an advantage with 10.\( \text{\textg{g}5} \), since following 10...exd4, he cannot recapture the pawn with his bishop. 11.\( \text{\textx{d}4} \) \( \text{\texte{8}} \) 12.\( \text{\texte{1}} \), Milu – M.Marin, Herculane 1996, 12...h6!? Black gets rid of the pin. 13.\( \text{\texte{3}} \) \( \text{\textc{5}} \) Black creates pressure against the enemy pawn on e4 and wishes to provoke a weakening of White’s kingside. 14.f3. Now, his bishop on g2 cannot take part in the fight for the d5-square and Black will manage to accomplish a pawn-break in the centre. 14...d5! This pawn-sacrifice is his simplest road to equality. 15.\( \text{\textx{c}6} \) bxc6 16.\( \text{\textx{c}5} \) \( \text{\textc{7}} \). Black eyes the weakness on g3. 17.exd5 \( \text{\textx{e}1}+\) 18.\( \text{\textw{f}2} \) \( \text{\textd{5}} \) 19.\( \text{\textf{2}} \) \( \text{\textb{8}} \) 20.\( \text{\textx{d}5} \) cxd5 21.c3 \( \text{\textxb{2}}! \) This is an excellent exchange-sacrifice. 22.\( \text{\textxb{2}} \) \( \text{\textxc{5}+} \) 23.\( \text{\texth{2}} \) (23.\( \text{\textf{2}?}! \) \( \text{\textxc{3}7} – \) Black’s passed d-pawn, supported by his two powerful bishops, will create great problems for White. In addition, his pawn on a4 is very weak and he is likely to lose it in the future.) 23...\( \text{\textxc{3}} \) 24.\( \text{\textxc{1}} \) d4 25.\( \text{\textb{5}} \) \( \text{\texte{7}} \) 26.\( \text{\textb{8}} \) \( \text{\texte{8}} \) 27.f4 \( \text{\textd{7}7} \) – White’s a4-pawn is weak and he will hardly manage to realise his minimal material advantage.

10...\( \text{\textb{4}} \)

It would be premature for Black to opt for 10...exd4, in view of 11.\( \text{\textx{d}4!} \)

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11. \( \text{Nxd2} \)

This is White’s most logical response. Before advancing his kingside pawns, he wishes to occupy the d and e-files with his rooks.

It seems premature for him to choose 11.g4?! , because Black can counter this with a very promising piece-sacrifice. 11...\( \text{Bxd4!} \) 12. \( \text{hxg4 Bxg4} \) 13. \( \text{Nf3? Exe3} \) 14. \( \text{fxe3 Bg5+} \) 15. \( \text{Kh2 Nh6} \) 16. \( \text{Qd2, Papp - Vicicko, Balatonelle 2009,} \) 16...f5?!++ – He has two pawns for the piece and very actively placed pieces. White will have a problem to find a safe haven for his king, since this would lead to the loss of his e3-pawn.) 13...\( \text{Bxe3} \) 14. \( \text{fxe3 Bg5+} \) 15. \( \text{Kh2 Bh3} \) ++ – White has problems to coordinate his pieces, while Black has already three pawns for the knight, Belfiore – Llanos, Acasusso 1991.

White cannot achieve anything with 11. \( \text{Bb1}, \) because of 11...d5, equalising immediately. Black exploits the retreat of White’s knight and inflicts a strike against the enemy centre. 12.c3 (12.dxe5 \( \text{Bxe4=} \) Simic – Damljanovic, Sibenik 1986) 12...\( \text{Nd6} \) 13.dxe5 \( \text{Bxe4} \) 14.f4. The pawn on e5 restricts the mobility of the bishop on g7, therefore, Black exchanges it immediately. 14...f6!? = Vogt – Prusikin, Germany 2004.

11. \( \text{Bxa2} \) \( \text{Bxa2} \). Black has slightly less space and the trade of the knights is in his favour. 12.\( \text{Bxa2} \) \( \text{Bxe8} \) 13. \( \text{Nc3} \), Gagunashvili – Demchenko, Quezon City 2014, 13...\( \text{exd4?} \) This is the simplest for Black. He relies on the pawn-advance d6-d5, forcing exchanges and transferring into an endgame. 14.\( \text{Bxd4 Bxe6} \) 15.\( \text{a1 d5} \) 16. \( \text{exd5 Bxd5} \) 17.\( \text{Bxg7 Bhxg7} \) 18.\( \text{Bxd5 Bxd5} \) 19.\( \text{Bd4+ Bf6} \) 20.\( \text{Bxf6+ Bxf6} \) 21.\( \text{Bxd5 cxd5=} \) – In this rook and pawn ending, Black will easily protect his only weak pawn on d5.

After 11.f4, Black can play 11... \( \text{Bh5} \), creating immediate counterplay against the enemy g3-pawn and preparing at the same time f7-f5. 12. \( \text{Bh2} \) (There arises a position with a non-standard material ratio after 12.g4 \( \text{Bxf4} \) 13. \( \text{Bxf4 exd4} \) 14. \( \text{Bxd4 Bxd4+} \) 15. \( \text{Bxd4 Bxc2} \) 16. \( \text{Bd2 Bxa1} \) 17. \( \text{Bxa1 Bxe6=} \) – Black has a rook and two pawns for two minor pieces, Danin – Efimenko, Moscow 2010.) 12...f5 13. \( \text{Bd2} \) (13.exf5?! \( \text{Bxf5=} \) – Suddenly, White has problems with the protection of his c2-pawn, Berkvens – Nijboer, Wijk aan Zee 2000.) 13...\( \text{Be7=} \) – with a complicated double-edged position, Alekseev – Motylev, Plovdiv 2010.

11... \( \text{Be6=} \)?

Black’s bishop has no good prospects on the h3-c8 diagonal, therefore, Black prepares its transfer to the c4-square, where it would be considerably more active.

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12.\textit{\texttt{Ead1}}

After 12.\textit{\texttt{Eac1}}, Boruchovsky – Vanegas, Barcelona 2015, 12...\textit{\texttt{Dd5}}!? = – Black has no problems whatsoever.


12.b3. White prevents \textit{\texttt{bc4}}, but then Black can inflict a strike against the centre, because he is at least as well prepared for the opening of the game as his opponent. 12...\textit{\texttt{Dd5}}! 13.\textit{\texttt{Exd5}} (13.\textit{\texttt{Exe5}} \textit{\texttt{cxex4}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Exe4}} \textit{\texttt{dxex4}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Dd4}}, Stupak – Gelashvili, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010, 15...\textit{\texttt{Dd7}}!? = – After the trade of the e4-pawn for the e5-pawn, the position becomes finally equal.) 13...\textit{\texttt{Dxd5}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Exd5}} \textit{\texttt{xd5}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Ead1}} (15.\textit{\texttt{Exd5}} \textit{\texttt{xd5}}) 15...\textit{\texttt{Exg2}} 16.\textit{\texttt{Exg2}} \textit{\texttt{Dd5+}} 17.\textit{\texttt{Exg1}} \textit{\texttt{exd4}} 18.\textit{\texttt{Exd4}} \textit{\texttt{xd4}} 19.\textit{\texttt{Dxd4}} \textit{\texttt{ead8}} = – The numerous exchanges have simplified completely the position, Vajda – Marin, Bucharest 1997.

Following 12.f4 \textit{\texttt{bc4}}, White should better refrain from 13.\textit{\texttt{Ef2}}, because he might encounter serious difficulties after it. (13.\textit{\texttt{Efe1}} \textit{\texttt{Wc7}} 14.b3 \textit{\texttt{Dsa6}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Ead1}} \textit{\texttt{Ead8}} – see 12.\textit{\texttt{Ead1}}) 13...\textit{\texttt{Ee8}} 14.\textit{\texttt{g4}} (14.b3?! \textit{\texttt{Exe2}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Exe2}}, Sanz Alonso – Iru- zubieta Villaluengua, Salamanca 1998, 15...\textit{\texttt{Dh5}}? Black opens with tempo the diagonal for his bishop on g7. 16.\textit{\texttt{h2}} \textit{\texttt{exd4}} 17.\textit{\texttt{Exd4}} \textit{\texttt{Dxc2+}} – White suffers material losses.) 14...\textit{\texttt{exd4}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Exd4}} \textit{\texttt{d5}}\textit{\texttt{+}} White’s pieces are not well prepared for the opening of the position. 16.\textit{\texttt{Exd5}} \textit{\texttt{exd5}} 17.\textit{\texttt{Ead1}} \textit{\texttt{Ee4}} 18.\textit{\texttt{Exe4}} \textit{\texttt{dxe4}}\textit{\texttt{+}} – Black has created a dangerous passed pawn, while White’s king has been weakened. 19.\textit{\texttt{Ee3}} \textit{\texttt{Wh4}} 20.\textit{\texttt{Exg2}} \textit{\texttt{Fed8}} 21.\textit{\texttt{Wc1}} \textit{\texttt{Exd1}} 22.\textit{\texttt{Wxd1}} \textit{\texttt{Dd3}}! This is a decisive tactical strike. 23.b3 \textit{\texttt{Exxf2}} 24.\textit{\texttt{Exxf2}} \textit{\texttt{Exe2}} 25.\textit{\texttt{Wxe2}} \textit{\texttt{Dd8++}} Seynaeve – Marin, Porto Mannu 2007.

12...\textit{\texttt{bc4}}

13.b3

White ousts immediately the enemy bishop to a6.

13.\textit{\texttt{Efe1}} \textit{\texttt{Wc7}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Dc1}} (It is preferable for him to opt here for 14.
b3 \(\text{a6}\), or 14.f4 \(\text{a6}\) 15.b3 \(\text{a6}\) – see 13.b3.) 14...\(\text{e}8\) 15.b3 \(\text{e}6!\)? Black’s bishop comes back, unexpectedly for White, and the pawn-break d6-d5 becomes unavoidable. 16.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{d}8\) 17.\(\text{w}2?\)! (17.d5 exd5 18.\(\text{x}4\) axb4 axb4 19.\(\text{x}d5\) \(\text{x}d5\) 20.exd5 \(\text{w}5\) 21.g4 \(\text{c}8=\) ) 17...exd4 18.\(\text{x}d4\) d5 – Black’s pieces have been more harmoniously deployed, Konstantinov – Korepanov, ICCF 2007.

13...\(\text{a}6\) 14.\(\text{e}1\)

14.f4 \(\text{c}7\) 15.\(\text{f}2\) (About 15.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{d}8\) – see 14.\(\text{e}1\). After 15.fxe5 \(\text{d}5\) 16.\(\text{d}5\), Chiburdanidze – Petrovic, Jajce 1986, Black’s simplest reaction would be 16...\(\text{d}6!?\)=, preventing the further advance of the enemy d-pawn.) 15...\(\text{d}8\) 16.\(\text{c}1\) exd4 17.\(\text{x}d4\), Drazic – Markus, Vrnjacka Banja 2010, 17...\(\text{e}8\)!\(\text{e}8\)! – The pressure of Black’s pieces against the pawn on e4 compensates completely the slight weakness of his d6-pawn.

14...\(\text{c}7\)

Black connects his rooks.

15.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{ad}8\) 16.\(\text{b}1\). The retreat of White’s knights to the edge of the board is not impressive at all. (The position is simplified after – 16.\(\text{a}3\)a2 \(\text{xa}2\) 17.\(\text{xa}2\) d5 18.exd5 \(\text{xd}5=\) Laketic – Moskalenko, Padova 2013.) 16...\(\text{d}5\). Black ignores the threat c2-c3 and inflicts an immediate strike against the enemy centre. 17.c3 exd4 18.\(\text{f}4\) dxc3! 19.\(\text{xc}7\) cxd2 20.\(\text{xd}2\) \(\text{h}6\) 21.f4 b6! This exchange-sacrifice provides Black with a very good position. 22.\(\text{x}d8\) (22.\(\text{x}b6\) \(\text{b}8\) 23.\(\text{xa}5\) \(\text{xe}4\) 24.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{f}8\) 22...\(\text{xd}8\) 23.exd5 cxd5 – He has a pawn, the two-bishop advantage and actively deployed minor pieces for the sacrificed exchange, Stupak – Valles, Beirut 2015.

15.g4 \(\text{ad}8\) 16.\(\text{g}3\) (Without the preliminary move \(\text{g}3\), it would not be good for White to play here 16.g5, Solak – Firman, Albena 2014, because Black can counter that with 16...\(\text{h}5!?\) 17.\(\text{f}3\) f6 18.\(\text{ex}h5\) gxh5 – after the removal of the bishop from the
g2-square, White’s king has been deprived of its basic defender.) 16...\(\text{\textit{\&}xg4?!}\) This combination is standard for this variation and it leads by force the the material ratio of a rook and two pawns for two minor pieces. 17. \(\text{h}x\text{g}4 \text{ex}d4 18.\text{\textit{\&}}\text{x}d4 \text{\textit{\&}}x\text{d}4 19.\text{\textit{\&}}\text{xd}4 \text{\textit{\&}}x\text{c}2 20.\text{\textit{\&}}f6 \text{\textit{\&}}xe1 21.\text{\textit{\&}}xe1 \text{\textit{\&}}fe8 22.\text{\textit{\&}}h5.\) This move leads by force to a draw by a perpetual check. 22...\(\text{g}x\text{h}5 23.\text{\textit{\&}}g5+ \text{\textit{\&}}f8 24. \text{\textit{\&}}h6+ \text{\textit{\&}}g8 25.\text{\textit{\&}}d5 \text{cxd}5 26.\text{\textit{\&}}g5+ \text{\textit{\&}}f8=\) Zambor – Molnar, Slovakia 2009.

15...\(\text{\textit{\&}}\text{ad}8\)

Black improves patiently the placement of his pieces.

16.\(g4\)

White begins active actions on the kingside.

16.\(\text{\textit{\&}}h2\). He removes immediately his king away from the dangerous diagonal. 16...\(\text{\textit{\&}}e8 17.\text{\textit{\&}}c1 \text{ex}d4 18.\text{\textit{\&}}x\text{d}4\), Oratovsky – Anagnostopoulos, Bad Wiessee 2002. Here, Black obtains a very good position by transferring his knight to the c5-square 18...\(\text{\textit{\&}}d7?!\)?
17...exf4

The players with Black, who might enjoy having a rook and two pawns for two minor pieces, might try here the line: 17...\(\Box xg4\)!!? 18.hxg4 exd4 19.\(\Box xd4\) \(\Box xd4+\) 20.\(\mathcal{W} xd4\) \(\Box xc2\) 21.\(\mathcal{W} f2\) \(\Box xe1\) 22.\(\mathcal{W} xe1\) \(\mathcal{W} e7\infty\) Trofimov – Serner, ICCF 2014.

18.\(\Box xf4\) c5

Black continues to undermine his opponent’s centre.

(diagram)

19.e5

19.dxc5?! \(\mathcal{W} xc5+\) 20.\(\Box e3\) \(\mathcal{W} c7\) 21.\(\Box d4\), Cuartas – Gagunashvili, Istanbul 2012, 21...\(\Box c8!\) – His pieces are very active, while White’s isolated e4-pawn is weak, so Black has the advantage.

19...dxe5 20.\(\Box xe5\) \(\Box xe5\)

21.\(\Box xe5\) \(\mathcal{W} b6=\) Vajda – M.Marin, Bucharest 1997. His pieces exert powerful pressure against White’s e4-pawn. In addition, Black’s king is safer in the middle game, because it is protected by three pawns, while White’s monarch is defended only by two.
Chapter 18  1.e4 d6 2.d4 2f6 3.2c3 g6 4.2g5

This is one of the most dangerous lines for Black in the Pirc Defence. White develops his bishop to an active position and later, he can continue with active operations in the centre with f2-f4, preparing e4-e5, or can castle queenside after 2d2, 0-0-0.

4...2g7

We will analyse now A) 5.e5, B) 5.f4 and C) 5.2d2.

5.f3 c6 – see Chapter 20.

5.2f3 0-0 – see Chapter 21.

5.h3 0-0 6.2d2 (6.2f3 d5 – see Chapter 21) 6...a6 7.2f3 b5 8.2d3 2b7 9.a3 2bd7 10.0-0 c5∞ Feoktistov – Podzielny, playchess.com 2007.

Following 5.2c4 0-0 6.2xf6 (6.2f3 2xe4 – see Chapter 22), Black should better capture with his pawn 6...exf6!, increasing his control over the e5-square. He can rely on having an edge in the middle game thanks to his bishop-pair.

5.2e2 0-0 6.2d2 (6.2f3 h6 – see Chapter 23) 6...c5 7.2f3, Bjerring – Rosell, Vejle 1974 (7.d5 a6 8.a4 2b6!?∞) 7...2b6!?∞ (It also seems good for Black to opt here for 7.cxd4 8.2xd4 2c6= and there has arisen a position from the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence in a good version for Black.).

5.2e2. White prepares 0-0-0 and e4-e5. Still, his queen, placed on e2, will impede the development of his kingside pieces. 5...0-0 6.0-0-0 c6. Black should try to play as quickly as possible b7-b5-b4, in order to create counterplay on the queenside. Meanwhile, with the pawn-advance c7-c6, if White plays e4-e5, Black can prepare a square for his knight at the centre of the board. 7.e5 (Af-
ter 7.\f3 b5 8.e5 b4 9.exf6 exf6 10.\xd2 bxc3 11.\xc3, Bagonyai – Videki, Zalakaros 2003, 11...\xe6?!, Black will have good attacking prospects against the enemy king.) 7...dxe5 8.dxe5 \xd5 9.\xd5 cxd5 10.f4. White fortifies his e5-pawn. (10.\xb5. He is trying to win material ignoring the problems with his development and this will not end well for White. 10...\xc7 11.\xb5 \xc6 12.\xf3 b6! – Black has more than sufficient compensation for his minimal material deficit, Varga – Hendriks, Budapest 2008.) 10...\xc6 11.\xd2, Tolnai – Zimmerman, Hungary 1997. White creates pressure against the d5-pawn in an attempt to deflect Black from the attack against his king. (11.g4?! \xe6!; 11.\xb1, Valles Moreno – A.Marin, Madrid 2016, 11...d4!??) 11...\xb6!∞

A) 5.e5

This move cannot create serious problems for Black, since there arises an immediate transfer into an endgame.

5...dxe5 6.dxe5 \g4!

Black cannot exchange the queens, because after 6...\xb1+ 7.\xd1 \g4? 8.h3! \xe5 9.\d5--; he would be incapable of protecting his c7-pawn.

7.\xd8+ \xd8

The loss of the castling rights, as a rule, is not so important in the endgame, because the king is usually better placed in the centre than on the flanks.

8.\xd1+

8.\xd5 \c6 9.\xd1 \d7 – see 8.\xd1+

8.0–0–0+ This move seems less precise, because after 8...\d7, White will have problems to protect not only his e5-pawn, but also his f2-pawn. 9.\h3 \xe5 10.\e2, Gallagher – Karim, Caleta 2011, 10...h6!? 11.\h4 \ec6 12.\c4 \xc3! Before playing f7-f6, Black exchanges his bishop, which would become passive after this move. In addition, he compromis-
es his opponent’s queenside pawn-structure. 13.bxc3 g5. Black restricts the enemy knight on h3. It will have problems later to abandon the edge of the board. 14.Qg3 f6=+, followed by Qc8, Qf5(g4), Qd7. White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient.

8.Qf3. This pawn-sacrifice leads to an approximately equal position. 8...Qxe5 9.Qxe5 Qxe5 10.Qc4 f6 11.0-0-0+ Qd7 12.Qh6 Qc8 13.Qhe1, Del Rio – Beck, Schoeneck 1991, 13...Qc6!=?∞ – The activity of White’s pieces compensates his minimal material loss, but not more than that.

8...Qd7

9.e6

The protection of the pawn on e5 reduces White’s attacking potential, so he decides to sacrifice it.

After 9.Qd5, the activity of White’s pieces seems threatening, but Black can gradually neutralise it. The point is that White will have problems to bring his rook on h1 into the actions, moreover that his e5-pawn needs permanent protection. 9...Qc6 10.f4 (After 10.Qe2, Schneider – Maiwald, Germany 2014, Black has the powerful resource 10...h6!?!∞ and White cannot play 11.Qxg4?!, because after 11...Qxg4, his rook will be hanging, so the discovered check will be harmless for Black. 12.f3 Qd7=+) 10...h6 11.Qh4 g5. Black wishes to undermine the base under the enemy e5-pawn. 12.h3 (12.fxg5?! hxg5 13.Qxg5 Qxh2 14.Qf4 Qxe5+ – White has no compensation for the pawn, Haubt – Hort, Germany 1981.) 12...Qgxe5 13.fxg5 hxg5 14.Qxg5, Bayer – Kieftabner, Badenweiler 1995, 14...Qg6!?∞ – Black has fortified reliably his e7-pawn and can be quite optimistic about the future.

The complications, arising after 9.f4?! turn out to be in favour of Black. 9...f6 10.e6 fxg5 11.exd7. White’s d7-pawn may seem very powerful, but his pieces fail to come to its support. 11...Qe3 12. Qd2, Kupper – Alexander, Amsterdam 1954, 12...gxf4?! 13.Qe4 Qxd7! This is a well calculated piece-sacrifice and with it Black increases his advantage. 14.Qc5 Qe8 15.Qxd7 b6. He regains his knight. 16.Qxc7 bxc5+ – The tactical storm is over and White’s kingside pieces have remained undeveloped.

9...fxe6
10.\(\text{xc}4\)

10.\(\text{xe}2\) \(\text{e}5\) 11.\(\text{f}3\) (The move 11.f4 only helps Black to transfer his knight to the d6-square, from where it neutralises the pressure of White’s rook on d1. 11...\(\text{f}7\) 12.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 13.0–0 \(\text{d}6\) Bronznik – Held, Wuerttemberg 1998.) 11...\(\text{f}7\) \(\infty\) Asensio Linan – Vidarte Morales, Barbera del Valles 1999.

10.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{e}5\) 11.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 12.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}8\) 13.0–0 \(\text{c}6\). Black wishes to follow with \(\text{d}8\), \(\text{c}8\), in order to manage to trade the idle rook on a8 for the active enemy rook. 14.\(\text{fe}1\) \(\text{d}8\) 15.\(\text{h}6\), Karpatchev – Berelovich, Smolensk 1992, 15...\(\text{c}8\)!? 16.\(\text{xd}8\)+ \(\text{xd}8=\)

10...\(\text{e}8\) 11.\(\text{f}3\)

11.\(\text{ge}2\). White’s knight will not be so active here as on f3. 11...\(\text{e}5\) 12.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{bc}6\) 13.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{f}7\). Black wishes to play \(\text{d}6\), \(\text{a}5\)-c4, after which the knight on c4 in combination with the bishop on g7 will exert powerful pressure against

White’s queenside. 14.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{a}5\) 15.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{d}6\) 16.0–0 \(\text{c}8\) 17.\(\text{fe}1\) \(\text{ac}4\) 18.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{f}8\) 19.\(\text{d}3\) c5\(\text{f}\) – Black’s pawn is doubled, but it is extra and his pieces are much more active than their counterparts, Bulgarnini Torres – Ohtake, ICCF 2010.

11...\(\text{c}6\)

12.0–0

12.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{c}8\) 13.\(\text{bd}4\) (13.0–0 \(\text{ge}5\) 14.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) – see 12.0–0) 13...\(\text{xd}4\) 14.\(\text{xd}4\), Schellhorn – Chandler, Hamburg 1980, 14...\(\text{c}5\)!? 15.\(\text{xe}6\) \(\text{xb}2+\)

12...\(\text{ge}5\)

Black wishes to parry his opponent’s activity by trading pieces.

13.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 14.\(\text{b}5\)

After 14.\(\text{b}3\), Black can advance his pawn to the c4-square and cover the diagonal of the enemy bishop on b3, reducing the pressure against his e6-pawn. 14...\(\text{c}5\) 15.\(\text{fe}1\) c4 16.\(\text{a}4\), Kadric – Kojic, Gorazde 2008, 16...\(\text{xa}4\)

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17.\texttt{\textendash}xa4 \texttt{\textendash}f7\texttt{\textendash} – White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient.

14...\texttt{\textendash}c8

15.\texttt{\textendash}xd7

This is an interesting exchange-sacrifice, but it is still insufficient for White to maintain an advantage.

15...\texttt{\textendash}xd7 16.\texttt{\textendash}xe6

16.\texttt{\textendash}xa7, Van Geet – Brugman, Netherlands 1982. The pawn on a7 is hardly worth the tempo to capture it. 16...\texttt{\textendash}a8! 17.\texttt{\textendash}b5 \texttt{\textendash}e5\texttt{\textendash}

16...\texttt{\textendash}e5 17.f4, Magem Badals – Chernin, New York 1998. Here, Black could have simply captured on b2. 17...\texttt{\textendash}xb2!? 18.\texttt{\textendash}d1 \texttt{\textendash}b6 19.\texttt{\textendash}xc8 \texttt{\textendash}xc8 20.\texttt{\textendash}xc7+ \texttt{\textendash}f7 21.\texttt{\textendash}d7 a6∞ – The knight on c8 protects reliably the pawn on e7, so White can hardly achieve anything real out of the activity of his pieces. Black will gradually maintain an edge, because he has only one weak pawn (e7), while White has two – a2 and c2.

B) 5.f4 0–0

6.\texttt{\textendash}d2

White prepares to castle queenside. Black needs to react precisely; otherwise, he may come under a positional bind.

It would be premature for White to choose here 6.e5?! \texttt{\textendash}g4 7.\texttt{\textendash}d2 dxe5 8.fxe5 c5\texttt{\textendash} Morgado – Vicondo, corr. 1965.

6.\texttt{\textendash}d3. This move has the drawback that White weakens his control over the important d4-square. Black can exploit this circumstance immediately. 6...\texttt{\textendash}c6 7.d5 (7.\texttt{\textendash}ge2 \texttt{\textendash}b4=) 7...\texttt{\textendash}b4 8.\texttt{\textendash}f3 c6\texttt{\textendash} Lanza Fernandez – Llera, Gijon 2003.

Black can counter 6.\texttt{\textendash}f3 with the move 6...d5!? This is not his most popular response, but is not bad at all.

(diagram)

Following 7.e5 \texttt{\textendash}e4, White must lose a tempo for the retreat of his bishop. 8.\texttt{\textendash}h4 \texttt{\textendash}xc3 9.bxc3. He has more space, but his queen-
side pawn-structure has been weakened. 9...h6. Black prepares counterplay on the kingside. 10. \texttt{\textbackslash{}xd2 f6 11.g3, Krzyzanowski – Pauli, ICCF 2012}, 11...\texttt{\textbackslash{}c6}!??

7.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xf6}. White accepts the pawn-sacrifice. 7...\texttt{\textbackslash{}xf6 8.exd5 (8.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xd5?! f5 9.\texttt{\textbackslash{}c3 fxe4 10.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xe4, Khalukov – Kravchenko, Dnipropetrovsk 2007}), 10...\texttt{\textbackslash{}d7} 9.\texttt{\textbackslash{}c4 \texttt{\textbackslash{}b6 10.\texttt{\textbackslash{}b3, Mednis – Mallof, Antwerp 1955}}, 10...\texttt{\textbackslash{}e8}+!?)

This check is very useful and it deprives White of his castling rights. 11.\texttt{\textbackslash{}f2. This is the only way for him to hold on to his d5-pawn. 11...\texttt{\textbackslash{}g4. Black plans to play f6-f5, in order to open the diagonal of his bishop on g7 and to emphasize the vulnerability of the c4-square. Therefore, it is useful for him to develop his light-squared bishop, so that later it would not be restricted by the pawn on f5. 12.\texttt{\textbackslash{}d2 \texttt{\textbackslash{}xf3 13.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xf3 f5 14.g3 c6. Before White has improved the placement of his king, Black wishes to open the game and to exert pressure against the enemy d4-pawn. 15.dxc6 bxc6 16. \texttt{\textbackslash{}ad1 a5 17.a4 \texttt{\textbackslash{}e7! 18.\texttt{\textbackslash{}he1 \texttt{\textbackslash{}d7 19.d5 cxd5 20. \texttt{\textbackslash{}xd5 \texttt{\textbackslash{}xb2 21.\texttt{\textbackslash{}e3 \texttt{\textbackslash{}xd5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xd5 \texttt{\textbackslash{}g7. White cannot exploit the extra pawn on the queenside, because there is just a few material left on the board. In addition, after Black transfers his bishop to the a3-f8 diagonal, he will prevent the advance of the pawn. 23.\texttt{\textbackslash{}d3 \texttt{\textbackslash{}c8 24.\texttt{\textbackslash{}c4 \texttt{\textbackslash{}f6 25.\texttt{\textbackslash{}b1 h5 26.h4 \texttt{\textbackslash{}e7 27.\texttt{\textbackslash{}b7 \texttt{\textbackslash{}b4 28.\texttt{\textbackslash{}e2 \texttt{\textbackslash{}e7=}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}

6...h6!? Black wishes to provoke the move \texttt{\textbackslash{}h4}, in order to advance e7-e5 exploiting the defencelessness of the bishop.

7.\texttt{\textbackslash{}h4}

After 7.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xf6 exf6!? 8.0–0–0 f5 9.e5 c6 10.\texttt{\textbackslash{}f3 b5, Black’s two-bishop advantage compensates the slight weakening of his pawn-structure, Pischurina – Efremov, Rybinsk 2010.}}

(diagram)

7...e5!

This is the point. Now, Black’s prospects are not worse, because the tactical threat \texttt{\textbackslash{}xe4 is very unpleasant for White.}

8.\texttt{\textbackslash{}xf6}

After this exchange, the dark squares in White’s camp become very weak.
8.\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}3 \) \( \text{exf}4 \infty \\

The move 8.fxe5 leads to simplifications. 8...\( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}4 \) 9.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}8 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}2 \) 10.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xc}7 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}1 \) 11.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}1 \) dxe5 12.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) 13.dxe5 \( \mathcal{D} \text{f}5 \) 14.\( \mathcal{E} \text{c}1 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{c}6 \) 15.\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{ae}8 \) 16.\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}2 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \). Black has restored the material balance. In this endgame, with actions on both sides of the board, Black’s bishop might prove to be stronger than White’s knight, Serner – Heimbrot, Germany 2009.

White would not obtain much if he captures the pawn in another way. 8.dxe5 \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}4 \)! 9.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}8 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}2 \) 10.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xc}7 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}1 \) 11.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}1 \) dxe5 12.fxe5?! Erdogdu – Kerigan, Kocaeli 2015 (White should better play here 12.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) 13.fxe5 \( \mathcal{D} \text{f}5 \) – see 8.fxe5.) 12...\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}6 !? \) 13.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 + \) 14.\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{c}6 \) 15.\( \mathcal{D} \text{d}1 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{g}4 \) – The activity of Black’s pieces compensates with an interest his minimal material deficit.

8...\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 \) (8...\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 !? \)\( ) \) 9.dxe5 \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) 10.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}8 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}8 \) 11.fxe5 \( \mathcal{D} \text{c}6 \) (11...\( \mathcal{D} \text{d}7 !? \)\( \infty \) 12.\( \mathcal{D} \text{f}3 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{g}4 \)

13.0-0-0 \( \mathcal{D} \text{g}5 + \) 14.\( \mathcal{D} \text{b}1 \), Dreev – Tkachiev, Neum 2000, 14...\( \mathcal{D} \text{ad}8 !? \) 15.\( \mathcal{D} \text{d}3 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}3 \) 16.\( \mathcal{G} \text{xf}3 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xe}5 \) 17.h4 \( \mathcal{D} \text{e}7 \) 18.\( \mathcal{D} \text{d}5 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{d}6 \)

19.f4. Without this move White’s bishop on d3 may turn out to be bad. Now however, his pawn on f4 may need additional protection. 19...\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}3 \) 20.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}3 \) \( \mathcal{F} \text{f}6 \) 21.\( \mathcal{G} \text{g}3 \) c6 22.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 + \). White transfers into a rook and pawn ending, but this is insufficient for complete equality. 22...\( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}6 \) 23.\( \mathcal{E} \text{e}5 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xf}4 \) 24.\( \mathcal{D} \text{g}6 + \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{f}7 \) 25.\( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}6 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{xd}6 \) 26.\( \mathcal{D} \text{exd}6 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{e}6 \) 27.\( \mathcal{H} \text{h}5 \) \( \mathcal{D} \text{d}6 + \) – Black’s king and rook are more active.
C) 5.\textit{\$d}2 h6
Black begins a chase after the enemy bishop.

9.0–0–0 \textit{\$bc}6 10.\textit{\$d}5 (10. \textit{\$e}2 \textit{\$e}6 11.\textit{\$d}5 \textit{\$e}7\textit{\$G}ulko – Vovsha, ICC 2008) 10...\textit{\$e}6 11.h3.
This move seems somewhat slow.
White wishes to retreat his bishop to \textit{c}3 and to follow this with \textit{f}2-\textit{f}4.
11...\textit{\$b}8!? Black does not lose time for castling and begins immediate active actions on the queenside. He wishes to advance \textit{b}7-\textit{b}5, so that after \textit{f}2-\textit{f}4, he would have the possibility \textit{\$c}4. 12.\textit{\$e}3 \textit{b}5 13.\textit{f}4 \textit{\$c}4 14.\textit{\$xc}4 \textit{bxc}4 15.\textit{c}3 0–0 16.\textit{\$f}3 \textit{f}5\textit{\$F} – The position is being opened and this is in favour of Black, because he has the two-bishop advantage, Lugovoi – Sakaev, St Petersburg 1995.

After 6.\textit{\$f}4, Black should better play 6...\textit{a}6, preparing \textit{b}7-\textit{b}5 (following 6...\textit{g}5 7.\textit{\$e}3 \textit{\$g}4, White has the powerful resource 8.\textit{\$h}4\textit{\$F}).

About 9.\textit{h}3 \textit{\$bc}6 10.\textit{\$e}3 \textit{\$e}6 – see 9.\textit{\$e}3.
9.\textit{\$e}3 \textit{\$bc}6 10.\textit{h}3 \textit{\$e}6 11.\textit{\$d}5 (11.0–0–0 \textit{\$c}4 12.\textit{\$xc}4 \textit{\$xc}4\textit{\$F I.Zaitsev – Savon, Yerevan 1962) 11...\textit{\$e}7\textit{\$G} Black prepares the trade of his opponent's centralised knight, Dekker – Pospelov, Zalakaros 1996.

After 7.\textit{\$f}3, Black can turn back to the plan with the chase after the enemy dark-squared bishop. 7...\textit{g}5 8.\textit{\$g}3 \textit{\$h}5 9.\textit{\$c}4, Vavra – Kulhanek, Prague 2015, 9...\textit{g}4?! 10.\textit{\$h}4 \textit{e}6\textit{\$F} 7.\textit{f}3 \textit{b}5 8.a4 \textit{b}4 9.\textit{\$d}1 \textit{\$fd}7\textit{\$F} Vella – Hernandez, France 2000. It would be bad for White to play
here 10.\textit{\$}xb4?!, because of 10...\textit{\$}c6 11.\textit{\$}d2 \textit{\$}xd4++. – The trade of the b-pawn for the d-pawn is evidently in favour of Black.

7.\textit{\$}e2 \textit{\$}c6. Black increases his pressure against the d4-pawn. 8.0–0–0 \textit{\$}g4. White’s pawns on d4 and f2 are hanging. This forces him to present his opponent with the two-bishop advantage. 9.\textit{\$}xg4 \textit{\$}xg4 10.f3 \textit{\$}d7 11.\textit{\$}ge2 b5 12.e5 b4 13.\textit{\$}e4 a5 14.\textit{\$}e3. White cannot castle kingside, because his h6-pawn will remain unprotected. Black can play 14...\textit{\$}f8\textit{\$}\infty, followed by \textit{\$}g8-h7, Mastronardi – Nichols, ICCF 2011.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{ch18diag.png}
\end{center}

8.0–0–0

This is White’s most popular move. He makes a useful move and conceals his further plans for the moment.

8.f3 \textit{\$}xg3 9.hxg3 \textit{\$}c6 10.\textit{\$}ge2 e6 11.g4. White fixes the enemy weakness on h6. This deprives Black of the possibility to play h6-h5 later. 11...\textit{\$}d7. His kingside has been weakened, so he prepares castling queenside. 12.0–0–0 (It does not seem so energetic for White to choose here 12.\textit{\$}d1, Fadyinov – Gulko, Wilmington 2003, 12...\textit{\$}e7?! 13.\textit{\$}e3 c5 14.0–0–0 \textit{\$}c7\textit{\$}\textit{\$}\textit{\$}, followed by 0–0–0.–) 12...a6 13.\textit{\$}e3, Amonatov – Mamedyarov, Almaty 2016. Here, Black could have accomplished a manoeuvre well known after the games of A.Rubinstein – 13...\textit{\$}b8\textit{\$}\textit{\$}\textit{\$}, followed by \textit{\$}a7, increasing the pressure against the d4-square.

We will deal now with C1) 6...g5 and C2) 6...0–0.

C1) 6...g5 7.\textit{\$}g3 \textit{\$}h5

There has arisen a position which is very important not only for this variation, but also for the evaluation of the entire Pirc Defence.

Black can obtain eventually the two-bishop advantage (\textit{\$}xg3) and can also exert pressure against the d4-square (\textit{\$}c6). Still, he lags in development and his kingside pawn-structure has been weakened.
White has lost two tempi, but his knight on b4 is hardly better placed there than on c3. 10...\textcircled{a}a5!?  

9.\textcircled{d}d1. White prepares the transfer of his knight to e3. This plan seems a bit too slow, though... 9...e6 10.f3 \textcircled{x}xg3 11.\textcircled{x}xg3 f5 12.\textcircled{e}e3, Turov – Nesci, Chania 2000, 12...\textcircled{f}f6!?=, followed by \textcircled{d}d7, 0–0–0.  

9.d5 \textcircled{e}e5 10.\textcircled{d}d4 c5. Black continues his fight for the dark squares. 11.dxc6 (After 11.\textcircled{b}b5+, Black should better retreat his king and not exchange his important light-squared bishop. 11...\textcircled{f}e8! 12.\textcircled{x}xg5 \textcircled{x}xg5 13.\textcircled{f}f3, Sanchez Bernandino – De la Rocha Prieto, Aragon 2003, 13...\textcircled{f}f6!?=, with a good game on the dark squares.) 11...\textcircled{x}xc6= Samraoui – Gomez, ICCF 2000.  

8...\textcircled{c}c6  

9.0–0–0 \textcircled{d}d7 – see 8.0–0–0.  

9.f3 \textcircled{x}xg3 10.hxg3 e6 – see 8. f3.  

The move 9.\textcircled{d}d5 is not so sensible here. 9...e6 10.\textcircled{b}b4, Filippowicz – Gufeld, Budapest 1970.  

White develops a piece and pins the enemy knight, which exerts unpleasant pressure against the d4-pawn.
White cannot achieve much with the straightforward line: 9. d5 \(\text{c}d4\) 10. \(\text{c}b1\). He wishes to trap the enemy knight with the move \(c2-c3\), but this proves to be a difficult task. (10. \(\text{c}ge2\) \(c5\) 11. \(\text{c}xd4\) \(\text{cxd4}\) 12. \(\text{c}b5+\) \(\text{f}8\)!∞) 10... \(c6\). Now, Black’s knight can always retreat back to its own camp (\(\text{d}b5-c7\)). 11. \(\text{c}a3\) \(\text{d}7\) 12. \(\text{c}e3\) \(\text{b}5\) 13. \(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{xg}3\) 14. \(\text{hxg}3\), Anand – Chernin, Paris 1995, 14... \(\text{cx}d5\)!? 15. \(\text{ex}d5\) 0–0∞ – Black’s two powerful bishops compensate the slight weakening of his kingside.

9. \(\text{c}ge2\) \(\text{d}7\). In this variation, Black as a rule, is not in a hurry to capture on \(g3\), since this would lead to the opening of the \(h\)-file.

About 10. \(\text{c}e3\) \(e6\) – see 9. \(\text{c}e3\).
10. \(\text{b}1\) \(e6\) 11. \(d5\) (11. \(\text{c}e3\) \(\text{e}7\) – see 9. \(\text{c}e3\)) 11... \(\text{c}7\)∞

10. \(f3\) \(\text{c}xg3\). This is the right time for the exchange; otherwise, the bishop will retreat to \(f2\) and will become inconceivable why Black has weakened his kingside and played moves with his knight to the edge of the board at the first place. 11. \(\text{hxg}3\) \(e6\).

Or 12. \(\text{c}e3\), Karpatchev – Reich, Stuttgart 2003, 12... \(\text{c}7\)!∞

12. \(g4\). White fixes the enemy weakness on \(h6\), but places another pawn on a same square as his bishop. 12... \(\text{c}7\) 13. \(\text{b}1\) 0–0 0–0 14. \(d5\), Ganbold – Perepelitsky, San Francisco 2005, 14... \(\text{c}5\)!∞

White would not achieve much with 12. \(d5\), because Black is well prepared for the opening of the game in the centre. 12... \(\text{c}7\) 13. \(d4\), L’Ami – Nyback, Hengelo 2002, 13... \(\text{ex}d5\) 14. \(\text{c}d5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 15. \(\text{ex}d5\) 0–0 0–0 16. \(\text{b}5\). White trades the important enemy lightsquared bishop. Still, this is insufficient for him to maintain an advantage, because Black organises quickly counterplay on the queenside. 16... \(\text{xb}5\) 17. \(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{c}8\) 18. \(\text{g}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 19. \(\text{c}3\) \(b5\)∞

12. \(f4\) \(\text{f}6\) 13. \(e5\) (Following 13. \(\text{c}e3\), Black evacuates his king away from the centre and obtains a good position. 13... \(\text{c}7\) 14. \(\text{b}1\) 0–0 0–0= Karpatchev – Reich, Stuttgart 2003.) 13... \(\text{d}xe5\) 14. \(\text{fxe}5\), Almasi – Marin, Reggio Emilia 2008 (14. \(\text{dxe}5\) \(\text{e}7\) 15. \(\text{c}4\) 0–0 0–0 16. \(\text{c}2\) \(\text{c}8\) 17. \(\text{a}3\) \(\text{c}8\) 18. \(\text{d}3\), Horvath – Leib, Saas Almagell 2005. Here, it seems very good
for Black to transfer his bishop to the b7-square. 18...b6!? 19.\(b1 \ b7=) 14...g6!? This retreat seems better than to the e7-square, because it impedes the move \(e4. 15.e3 b4 16.a2 0-0-0 17.a3 d5 18.xd5 exd5 19.c3 e6 20.f3. Black has the two-bishop advantage, so he should strive to open the position. 20...f6! =

9.e3 d7

10.ge2 e5 11.dxe5 dxe5=
10.b1 e6 11.d5 (11.ge2, Sanchez – Garcia, Manila 2011, 11...e7!?!?) 11...exd5 12.exd5+ e7 13.e1 b8=\( Bulgarini Torres – Hansen, ICCF 2012.


9...d7 10.ge2

Or 10.d5, Agopov – Virtanen, Finland 2012, 10...a5 11.xd7+ xd7 12.f3 c5=

10.e6

11.f3

11.b1 a6 12.xc6 xc6 13.h4. White begins active actions on the kingside. Black’s defensive resources are however quite sufficient to maintain the balance. 13...xg3 14.xg3 g8 15.d5 d7 16.h5 h8 17.xg5 xg5 18.f4 xg6 19.f2 e5 20.xe5 xe5= – His two powerful bishops compensate the vulnerability of the pawns on h6 and f7, Haller – Mislin, ICCF 2015.

11.e1 xg3. After the removal of White’s rook, Black does not need to fear the opening of the h-file. 12.hxg3 a6 13.a4 b5 14. b3 a5= Woller – Bartolomaeus, Mecklenburg 2005.

Or 11.e3 a6 12.xc6 xc6 13.h4, Balogh – Valdes, Budapest 2002, 13...e7!=

11.d5, Van der Wiel – Roobol, Amsterdam 2001, 11...e7!=

11...xg3 12.hxg3 e7 13.d5

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White cannot obtain much with 13.\textit{We}3, Netzer – Martinsen, Stockholm 2003, 13...0–0–0?! =, or 13.g4 0–0–0 14.\textit{We}3 (14.\textit{xf}c6 \textit{xf}c6 15.\textit{f}g3 \textit{He}6= Brizzi – Tristan, Neuquen 2015) 14...\textit{b}8 15.\textit{g}3, Emms – Hodgson, London 1990, 15...\textit{He}8?! = – Black’s position is solid, despite its being a bit cramped. We should also remember Z.Tarrasch’s statement that “Future belongs to the player with the bishops”.

13...\textit{He}5

14.\textit{xf}d7+

White trades the important enemy light-squared bishop, Pra- gua – Lorscheid, Germany 1993.

There arise simplifications after 14.f4 \textit{g}4 15.\textit{d}4, Da Costa – Werton, Brazil 1990, 15...\textit{x}b5?! 16.\textit{c}xb5 \textit{a}6 17.\textit{c}3 \textit{xd}4 18.\textit{xd}4 e5 19.\textit{a}4+ \textit{d}7 20.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 = – Black’s knight on g4 is well placed and protects reliably his weak h6-pawn.

14...\textit{xd}7?! 15.g4 (15.\textit{e}3 \textit{a}6

16.g4 \textit{b}6 17.\textit{d}4 0–0–0 =) 15...0–0–0 16.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}6= – Black has managed to solve his main problem – to remove his king from the centre to a safe place. His bishop on g7 exerts powerful pressure on the long diagonal and protects the pawn on h6.

C2) 6...0–0–0!

This move is not so popular as 6...g5, but is not bad at all. Black is reluctant to weaken his kingside pawns and thinks about the safety of his king, removing it immediately away from the centre. Later, he can undermine the enemy pawn-centre with e7-e5, or c7-c5, or eventually, if White castles queenside, to prepare a pawn-offensive there: c7-c6, b7-b5, a7-a5, b5-b4.

7.0–0–0

7.f4 e5 – see 5.f4.
7.h3 c5=
7.f3 c5=.
7.\textit{d3} \textit{bd7} 8.f4 c5. White has a beautiful pawn-centre, but lags in development, so he will hardly manage to hold it. 9.d5, Ignatowski – Jasik, Poland 2006 (9.\textit{f3} \textit{cxd4} 10.\textit{xd4} e5\textsuperscript{=} Kobak – Wesolowska, Wisla 1999) 9...b5?! Black sacrifices a pawn and seizes completely the initiative. 10.\textit{xb5} (10.\textit{xb5}?! c4! Black deflects the enemy bishop from the protection of the e4-pawn. 11.\textit{xf6} \textit{xf6} 12.\textit{xc4} \textit{xe4} 13.\textit{e3} \textit{xb2} 14.\textit{b1} \textit{a5+} 15.c3 \textit{xc3+} 16.\textit{xc3} \textit{xc3}+ 17.\textit{xc3} \textit{xc3} 18.\textit{c1} \textit{a4}\textsuperscript{=} – He has already an extra pawn.) 10...\textit{b8} 11.\textit{xd7} \textit{xd7} – Black has a bishop-pair and exerts powerful pressure against the pawn on b2. White lags in development and all this provides Black with more than sufficient compensation for his minimal material deficit.

7.\textit{f3} c6 8.0–0–0 (8.a4. White prevents b7-b5, but after this move his castling queenside will become very precarious. 8...\textit{bd7} 9.\textit{e2} e5 10.dxe5 \textit{dxe5} = Wiseman – D.Gurevich, Chicago 1989.) 8...b5 9.e5. This pawn-break in the centre may look threatening, but Black can gradually equalise with a precise play. 9...dxe5 10.dxe5 \textit{xd2+} 11.\textit{xd2} b4 12.\textit{b5} (12.\textit{a4} \textit{d5} 13.\textit{c4} e6=) 12...\textit{d5} 13.\textit{xd5} \textit{cx} 14.\textit{xe7} \textit{c6} 15.\textit{xf8} \textit{xf8} 16.\textit{c7} \textit{b8} 17.\textit{xd5} \textit{xe5} 18.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 19.\textit{c4} \textit{b7} – Black’s two powerful bishops compensate the sacrificed pawn in this endgame.

7...\textit{c6}

8.f4

8.\textit{b1} \textit{c7} 9.f3. The plan, connected with a pawn-offensive on the kingside, does not seem so promising for White. The point is that his bishop on h4 stands in the way of his h-pawn. 9...b5 10.\textit{d3} \textit{bd7} 11.g4?! b4 12.\textit{ce2} c5\textsuperscript{=} – It has become quite obvious that Black’s attack on the flank is much ahead of White’s attack, so the initiative is completely in Black’s hands, Talbot – Thomas, Swansea 2006.

8.a4

8.a4


8.f3 b5 9.\textit{b1}, Gasimov – Tagelsir, Al Ain 2014, 9...a5?∞

8.e5 \textit{d5} 9.f4, Panov – Simagin, Moscow 1946, 9...\textit{xc3}?! 10.\textit{xc3} a5 11.\textit{f3} b5∞

Following 8.\textit{xf6}, Black must capture 8...\textit{xf6}; otherwise, White will advance e4-e5 with tempo. 9.f4, De Groote – Van der Werf,
Netherlands 2015, 9...f5!? This is the simplest decision for Black. He gets rid immediately of his doubled pawn. 10.exf5 ∆xf5 11.∆d3
∆xd3 12.∆xd3 ∆d7 13.∆f3 3e8=

8...b5 9.∆d3

∆f3 f5= – Later, Black can prepare an attack against the enemy king on the semi-open b-file and can also plan a transfer of his knight to the weakened e4-square.) 10...∆d5 11.∆c4 3a5 12.
∆b3 3d7∞, followed by 3a6-b5, Kobalia – G.Kuzmin, Moscow 2002.

After 9...∆bd7?! 10.e5 b4 11.
∆e4 dxe5 12.fxe5 3d5 13.∆f3 3a5
14.∆b1 c5=, Black undermines the enemy centre and obtains a quite acceptable position.

10.∆ce2 3a5 11.∆b1
White protects his a2-pawn.

11.a3?! 3a6?

11...∆bd7 12.∆f3

![Diagram](image_url)

This position was reached in the game S.Zhigalko – Onischuk, Khanty-Mansiysk 2012. Here, Black could have undermined his opponent’s centre with 12...c5!? 13.c4 bxc3 14.∆xc3 exd4 15.
∆xd4 3b7 16.∆he1 3fc8∞, followed by 3ab8. White’s king is protected by only two pawns and that might prove insufficient in the forthcoming middle game.
Chapter 19  

1.e4 d6 2.d4 \( \varepsilon \)f6 3.\( \varepsilon \)c3 g6 4.\( \varepsilon \)e3

This is a flexible move. Now, contrary to the straightforward move 4.f3, which we will analyse in Chapter 20, after 4.\( \varepsilon \)e3, later White can not only play f2-f3, but can also develop his knight to the f3-square, depending on circumstances.

4...\( \varepsilon \)g7 5.\( \varepsilon \)d2

This is White’s most popular move.

He refrains sometimes from 5.\( \varepsilon \)d2 in favour of some other plans.

5.f3 c6 – see Chapter 20.

5.f4 0–0 – see Chapter 24.

5.\( \varepsilon \)gge2 c6 6.h3 (6.f3 b5 – see Chapter 20) 6...b5 7.e5. Black is well prepared to counter this enemy pawn-advance in the centre. 7...\( \varepsilon \)d5 8.\( \varepsilon \)xd5 cxd5 9.\( \varepsilon \)c3, Kruppa – Gipslis, Minsk 1993, 9... a6!? = – White is incapable of exploiting the defencelessness of the pawn on d5, because his own central e5-pawn needs protection.

About 5.\( \varepsilon \)f3 0–0 6.\( \varepsilon \)d2 (6.h3 a6 – see 5.h3; 6.\( \varepsilon \)d3 \( \varepsilon \)g4 – see Chapter 21, 5.\( \varepsilon \)d3; 6.\( \varepsilon \)c4 \( \varepsilon \)xe4 – see Chapter 22; 6.\( \varepsilon \)e2 e6 – see Chapter 23) 6...c6 – see variation B.

5.h3 0–0

6.\( \varepsilon \)d2 c6 – see 5.\( \varepsilon \)d2.

6.\( \varepsilon \)f3 a6 – see Chapter 21.

6.f4 c5 – see Chapter 24.

6.\( \varepsilon \)d3. One of the drawbacks
of this move is the fact that now Black can advance e7-e5 without the preparatory move ♞bd7. 6...e5 7.♘ge2 (Following 7.d5 c6 8.♗ge2 cxd5 9.exd5 ♞bd7, White will miss badly his pawn on e4 in this middle game, since without it the pawn on d5 will need protection. Without the pawn-advance c4-c5 his queenside initiative will be practically non-existent. 10.♗c4 a6 11.a4, Duda – Kuk, Warsaw 2012, 11...♗c7?! 12.♗a2 ♙h5!? 7...♗c6 8.0–0 d5= Lempert – Rakic, Vrnjacka Banja 1996.

6.g3. White wishes to develop his pieces in the spirit of the variation with 4.g3. 6...e5 7.♗g2 (The exchange on e5 would not bring anything real to White: 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.♗g2 ♗e7 9.♗ge2= Uribe – Peralta, Cali 2007, while after 7.♗ge2 exd4 8.♗xd4, Stoica – Chandler, Bucharest 1980, Black can exploit the insufficient protection of the e4-pawn with the line: 8...♗c6?! 9.♗e3 b5±) 7...exd4 8.♗xd4 ♙c6 9.♗e3 ♗e8 10.♗ge2 ♗b8= – Black is perfectly prepared for the pawn-advance b7-b5, followed by b5-b4, deflecting the enemy knight from the protection of the pawn on e4, Stupak – Hansen, Krakow 2012.

6.♗ge2. White does not clarify yet the placement of his g-pawn. 6...♗bd7 7.g4 (7.g3, Hamitevici – Fernandez, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010, 7...b5=) 7...b5!? 8.♗g2 c6 9.0–0 ♘b6 10.a3 ♘b7 11.b3 a5 12.♗d2 ♙fd7∞ – There has arisen a very complicated position. Twelve moves have been made and neither a pawn, nor a piece have been exchanged. Later, White will seek his chances in the centre and on the kingside (f2-f4, followed by f4-f5, or e4-e5), while Black will try to organise active counterplay on the queenside with b5-b4, c6-c5.

6.g4 d5!? He counters his opponent’s flank attack with a counterstrike in the centre according to the classical principles. 7.e5 ♙e4 8.♗xe4 dxe4 9.♗g2. Black’s e4-pawn is weak, but he manages to create pressure against the enemy d4 and e5-pawns. 9...c5 10.c3 cxd4 11.cxd4, Pancevski – Bae, Bad Homburg 2013, 11...♗a5+!? 12.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 13.♖xd2 ♙c6 14.♗e2 ♗d8 15.♗e1 ♘f5 16.exf6 ♗xf6 17.♗xe4 ♗e6 18.♖c6 (18.f3 ♗xd4 19.♖xd4 ♗xd4 20.♖xd4 ♗xd4= – Black’s more active pieces compensate the slight weakness of his e7-pawn.) 18...♗xc6= – His two powerful bishops are sufficient to compensate his minimal material deficit.

5.♗e2. This move has some venom. Now, Black must play very carefully, because White can transpose to some other variations of the Pirc Defence. 5...0–0. (diagram)

6.♗f3 e6 – see Chapter 23.
6.f4 ♘a6 – see Chapter 24.
6.g4. We have already analysed a similar position, but without the inclusion of the moves
equalises simply with 7...c5!? 8.
\text{dxc5 } \text{\underline{a}a5 } 9.\text{\underline{g}g5 } \text{\underline{d}xc5 } 10.0-0
\text{\underline{c}c6=, followed by \underline{d}d8, } \text{\underline{d}d4.)} 7...
\text{\underline{c}c6. He exploits the circumstance that White's bishop on e2 and
his pawn on f3 deprive his knight on g1 from these squares and it cannot
not take part in the protection of the d4-square.} 8.\text{\underline{d}d2} \text{ (After 8.
\text{\underline{h}h3, Black can simply exchange on h3, preventing the activation
of White's knight:} 8...\text{\underline{x}xh3} 9.\text{\underline{e}e3 } \text{e5 } 10.\text{\underline{d}d4=} \text{ Mauro
– Trevisani, Forli 1992.)} 8...\text{e5} 9.\text{\underline{d}d4=} \text{Black has a very good game
thanks to his strong centralised knight. If White tries to win a
pawn with 10.\text{\underline{x}xd4?! } \text{exd4} 11.\text{\underline{c}xd4, he will weaken catastrophically
the dark squares in his camp.} 11...\text{c6} 12.\text{\underline{d}xc6 } \text{bxc6 } 13.\text{\underline{d}d2, Sax
– Keene, Teesside 1972, 13...\text{\underline{h}h7=, Black is eyeing the weak g3-
square.}} 14.\text{\underline{d}d3 } \text{d5 } 15.\text{exd5 } \text{\underline{x}xd5 }
16.\text{\underline{c}xd5 } \text{cxd5 } 17.\text{\underline{e}e2 } \text{\underline{b}b6 } 18.\text{\underline{h}b1 }
\text{\underline{e}e8=} 

5...\text{c6}

Black should better not be in a hurry to play 5...0–0=!, because
White will obtain good attacking chances after 6.0–0–0. The players
who might be interested in similar positions in details, should
have a look at our volume two “A Practical White Repertoire with
1.d4 and 2.c4” (Chapter 15, variation D).

(digram)

We will analyse thoroughly now the moves: \textbf{A) } 6.\text{\underline{h}h6} and \textbf{B)}
6.\text{\underline{f}f3}.
6.f3 b5 – see Chapter 20.

6.0-0-0 b5 7.f3 ²a5 – see Chapter 20, variation E.

6.a4 0-0 7.²f3 ²bd7 – see variation B (7.f3 ²a5 – see Chapter 20).

6.²e2. This is not White’s most active move. 6...b5 7.a3 0-0 8.²h6 e5 9.²xg7 ²xg7 10.²d1 ²e7 11.²f3 a5= Slobodjan – Azmaiparashvili, Groningen 1997.

It is not good for him to choose here 6.²d3, because after 6...²g4, White’s pawn on d4 is not sufficiently protected, so he cannot avoid the exchange of his bishop on e3 and Black obtains the two-bishop advantage. 7.²f3 (7.0-0-0 ²xe3 8.fxe3 b5 9.²b1 0-0² Wolff – Nijboer, Groningen 1993) 7...²xe3 8.fxe3 0-0 9.0-0 ²d7 10.²f2 e5² Thorhallsson – Brown, Basingstoke 2012.

6.h3 0-0

(diagram)

7.²f3 ²bd7 – see variation B2.

7.²d3 ²bd7 8.²f3 e5 – see 6.²f3.

7.²h6 b5 8.²d3 e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.²f3, Mitkov – Tkachiev, Ponzaferrada 1997, 10...²e7!?=

7.0-0-0. White’s castling queenside seems a bit too optimistic. 7...b5 8.²d3 ²bd7 9.²h6 b4 10.²ce2 e5² and it has become quite obvious that Black’s queenside initiative develops faster than White’s attack on the opposite side of the board, Borisek – Anton Guijarro, Berlin 2015.

7.a4 ²bd7 8.a5, Ninov – Chatalbashchev, Pleven 2005, (8.²f3 e5 – see 6.²f3) 8...e5!?

7.g4 b5 8.²g2 ²bd7 9.f4, Van Oosterom – Dessing, Delft 2008. White’s pawn-chain seems threatening, but his pieces are not developed and his king is in the centre, so Black manages to organise excellent counterplay with the help of a positional pawn-sacrifice. 9...²b7 10.e5 b4 11.²ce2 ²d5 12.²xd5 cxd5 13.²xb4 ²b8²

A) 6.²h6 ²xh6 7.²xh6 ²a5

This is the best position of Black’s queen in this variation. It
pins the knight on c3 and controls the e5-square, impeding in the process the pawn-break e4-e5, and also, if White castles queenside, Black's queen will create threats against the a2-pawn (after b5-b4).

About 8.f3 b5 – see Chapter 20, 7...h6 hxh6 8...xh6 a5.

8.0-0-0. Castling queenside may lead to difficulties for White, because his king will not be safe there, contrary to its counterpart at the centre of the board 8...b5.

White would weaken his king's shelter with the move 9.a3, Grunfeld – Postny, Tel Aviv 2001, 9...a6!? This is Black's most precise reaction. He is preparing b5-b4. 10.f3 b4 11.axb4 xb4 12. c4 e6!? He should better exchange immediately the powerful enemy bishop. 13.xe6 fxe6 14. b1 8b8 15.d2 d3!? 16.b3 xb3 17.xd3 b6∞, followed by 7d7 and 7hb8, or 8a6. White will have problems to parry his opponent's threats on the a and b-files.

9.e5 dxe5 10.dxe5 g4 11.g7 8f8 12.e4 f5 13.h3 (Following 13.e2?! d7 14.b1!? Chiburdanidze – Piket, London 1985, Black has a simple tactical strike at his disposal – 14...xe4! 15.xg4 xc2+! 16.xc2 8a4+ 17.b1 xg4 18.f3 xg2+ and he ends up with two extra pawns.) 13... xe4 14.hxg4 d7 15.e6 fxe6
16.\( \text{h}d4 \) \( \text{d}d5 \) 17.\( \text{a}3 \) e5 18.\( \text{w}e3 \) b4 19.f3 bx\( a \) 3 20.\( \text{w}xa3 \) \( \text{w}xa3 \), J.Geller – Zakharevich, St Petersburg 2002, 21.bxa3 \( \text{g}8 \) – Black has an extra pawn in this endgame, despite its being doubled.

8...c5

He begins a fight for the dark squares at the centre of the board.

9.d5

White occupies space.

9.\( \text{f}3 \) cxd4 10.\( \text{xd}4 \) c6 – see 9.\( \text{d}ge2 \).

After 9.dxc5 \( \text{w}xc5 \), Black has the rather unpleasant threat to capture on f2.

10.\( \text{f}3 \)? \( \text{w}xf2 \)?! 11.\( \text{xf}2 \) \( \text{g}4 \)

12.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{xh}6 \) 13.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{d}8 \) Mol- dovano – Van Wely, Innsbruck 1987.

10.f3 \( \text{e}6 \) 11.\( \text{d}ge2 \) \( \text{bd}7 \) = Perez Mitjans – Del Rio de Angelis, Montcada 2012.

10.h3. White parries his opponent’s threat, but the move 10.h3 does not contribute to the development of his pieces and Black may already think about seizing the initiative. 10...c6 11.\( \text{d}ge2 \) g5!? He is threatening to trap White’s queen with \( \text{g}8 \)-g6 at an opportune moment. 12.0–0 \( \text{e}6 \) 13.\( \text{d}5 \), Van der Wiel – Van Wely, Netherlands 1992, 13...\( \text{xd}5 \)?! 14. \( \text{exd}5 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 15.\( \text{h}4 \) 0–0–0 16.\( \text{wx}g5 \) \( \text{wxg5} \) 17.\( \text{hxg}5 \) \( \text{Edg}8 \) 18.f4 \( \text{h}6 \) – Black has seized the initiative.

9.\( \text{d}ge2 \) cxd4 10.\( \text{xd}4 \) c6

11.\( \text{f}3 \), Dgebuadze – McNab, Liverpool 2008, 11...\( \text{e}6 \)?! 12.h3 0–0–0= 11.\( \text{b}5 \). This move looks very good, although it is not a frequent guest in the tournament practice. 11...\( \text{d}7 \) 12.0–0–0, Rendle – Zimmermann, Budapest 2002, 12...\( \text{xd}4 \)? Black should try to trade his opponent’s active pieces as quickly as possible. 13.\( \text{xd}7 \)
\( \text{xd7 14.} \text{x}d4 0-0-0 15.\text{b1} \text{b8 16.} \text{hd1} \text{c8 17.} \text{d5} \text{d8 18.} \text{e3} \text{b6=} \)

11.\text{b3} \text{b6}

After 12.0-0-0, Black should better refrain from capturing on f2: 12...\text{e6}!?∞ Kroeze – Beim, Leeuwarden 1994.

12.\text{d5}. There arise simplifications after this move. 12...\text{xd5} 13.\text{exd5} \text{b4} 14.0-0 \text{xd5} 15.\text{fe1} \text{e6} 16.\text{xg6}. White has succeeded in restoring the material balance, but Black’s king is evacuated to a safe haven to the queenside. 16...0-0-0 17.\text{d3} \text{b8} 18. \text{c3}, Povhancic – Corbat, ICCF 2008, 18...\text{Edg8}!? 19.\text{ad1} \text{f6} 20.\text{e3} \text{xe3} 21.\text{exe3} \text{g4} 22. \text{e1e5} 23.\text{d4} \text{d7=} – Black’s powerful centralised knight compensates the slight weakness of his h-pawn.

12.0-0 \text{e6} 13.a4 (13.\text{e2} \text{g4} 14.\text{d2}, Balogh – Peralta, Barbera del Valles 2009, 14...0-0!? =; 13.\text{h1} 0-0-0 14.\text{d2} \text{b8=} Bricard – Chabanon, Montauban 2000) 13...\text{xb3} 14.cxb3 \text{xb3} 15. \text{fc1} a6! = – White must still prove that the activity of his pieces compensates the sacrificed pawn, Kanovsky – Rasik, Czechi Republic 2011.

9...\text{bd7} 10.\text{f3}

After 10.\text{ge2}, A.Ivanov – De Guzman, Reno 2005, Black should continue analogously to the main line: 10...c4!? 11.\text{xc4} \text{c5} 12.\text{d3} \text{xf2}+! 13.\text{xf2} \text{g4}+ 14.\text{e1} \text{hxh6}=

10...c4!

This temporary pawn-sacrifice is Black’s simplest way of equalising.

11.\text{xc4} \text{c5}

White cannot defend against \text{xf2}, followed by \text{g4}, after which there arises a transfer into an endgame

12.\text{d3}

12.b3 \text{xf2}+ 13.\text{xf2} \text{g4}+ 14.\text{e2} \text{hxh6} 15.h3 0-0 16.\text{h1} f6 17.a4 a5= Biedermann – Tashkov, ICCF 2013.

12.\text{b5} \text{xf2}+ 13.\text{xf2} \text{g4}+ 14.\text{g3} (Following 14.\text{e2} \text{hxh6} 15.e5 dxe5 16.\text{xe5}, Sethuraman – Aguera Naredo, Stockholm
2016, Black gradually neutralises the activity of White's pieces. 16... f6!? Black prepares the transfer of his knight on h6 to the centre of the board. 17.\textsymbol{c}c4 \textsymbol{d}f7 18.\textsymbol{d}he1 \textsymbol{d}f8 19.\textsymbol{f}f2 \textsymbol{d}de5 20.\textsymbol{x}xe5 \textsymbol{d}xe5=) 14...\textsymbol{x}xh6 15.e5 0–0 16.\textsymbol{x}xd7 \textsymbol{d}xd7 17.\textsymbol{d}he1 dxe5 18.\textsymbol{x}xe5 \textsymbol{a}c8. Black only needs to get rid of his backward e-pawn in order to equalise. 19.h3 \textsymbol{f}f5+ 20.\textsymbol{f}f2 e6 21.\textsymbol{d}d1 h5 22.\textsymbol{d}d2 \textsymbol{g}7 23.dxe6 \textsymbol{d}xe6=

\begin{center}
12...\textsymbol{x}xf2+ 13.\textsymbol{x}xf2 \textsymbol{g}4+
\end{center}

14.\textsymbol{g}3
On this square White's king will not stand in the way of his active operations on the e-file. Still, this is insufficient to maintain an advantage anyway.

After 14.\textsymbol{e}e2 \textsymbol{x}xh6 15.h3 0–0 16.b4 (16.\textsymbol{d}d2 a6=), the simplest move for Black would be 16...\textsymbol{g}7, preparing the transfer of his knight to the f6-square. 17.\textsymbol{e}e3 \textsymbol{g}8 18.\textsymbol{b}5 \textsymbol{g}6 19.\textsymbol{c}7 \textsymbol{b}8 20.a4 \textsymbol{e}8 21.\textsymbol{x}xe8+ \textsymbol{x}xe8 22.\textsymbol{h}f1 e6 23.c4 exd5 24.cxd5 f5= Schuster – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014.

\begin{center}
14...\textsymbol{x}xh6 15.\textsymbol{d}he1 0–0 16.e5
\end{center}

After 16.h3, Buchicchio – McNab, England 2016, it seems very good for Black to play 16...f6?, preventing e4-e5. 17.\textsymbol{b}5 \textsymbol{f}7 18.a4 \textsymbol{d}e5=

\begin{center}
16...dxe5 17.\textsymbol{x}xe5, Vachier Lagrave – Peralta, Tromso 2014, 17...\textsymbol{x}xe5!? 18.\textsymbol{d}xe5 \textsymbol{f}5 19.\textsymbol{a}e1 (19.\textsymbol{x}xe7?? \textsymbol{x}xd3 20.cxd3 \textsymbol{f}5=+) 19...\textsymbol{x}xd3 20.cxd3 f6 21.\textsymbol{e}6 \textsymbol{f}5+ 22.\textsymbol{f}f4 h5=
\end{center}

B) 6.\textsymbol{f}3
This is a flexible move after which White is not in a hurry to trade the dark-squared bishops for the moment.

6...0–0
diagram

We will deal in details now with B1) 7.\textsymbol{h}h6 and B2) 7.h3.

7.\textsymbol{d}d1. White provides an additional defence to the strategically important d4-square, but after this he cannot castle queenside anymore. 7...b5 8.\textsymbol{d}d3 \textsymbol{g}4 9.\textsymbol{h}6
\(1.e4\ d6\ 2.d4\ \blacklozenge f6\ 3.\blacklozenge c3\ g6\ 4.\blacklozenge e3\ \blacklozenge g7\ 5.\blacklozenge d2\ c6\ 6.\blacklozenge f3\ 0-0\)

\(\blacklozenge x f3\ 10.g x f3\ e5\ 11.d x e5\ d x e5\ 12.\blacklozenge x g7\ \blacklozenge x g7\) – White has no compensation for his compromised kingside pawn-structure, Hebden – Hellers, Malmo 1987.

Following 7.h4 b5 8.a3, the simplest for Black would be to prevent the further advance of White’s pawn with the move 8...h5, for example: 9.\blacklozenge h6, Kulaots – Onischuk, Tallinn 2007, 9...\blacklozenge bd7!? 10.\blacklozenge e2 a5 11.\blacklozenge x g7\ \blacklozenge x g7\ 12.\blacklozenge g5\ \blacklozenge b6\ 13.0-0 e5=

7.\blacklozenge e2. White prepares to castle kingside, but enables his opponent to acquire additional space on the queenside. 7...b5 8.a3 a5 9.0-0 \blacklozenge bd7 10.\blacklozenge d3 (10.b4 \blacklozenge b7=) 10...\blacklozenge b7 11.\blacklozenge f1\ e5 12.d x e5\ d x e5= Geiser – Casas, ICCF 2015.

7.\blacklozenge d3\ \blacklozenge bd7

(diagram)

8.0-0-0\ b5 – see 7.0-0-0.
8.h3\ e5 – see 7.h3.
8.0-0\ e5 9.d x e5 (9.h3\ exd4 – see 7.h3) 9...\blacklozenge x e5 10.\blacklozenge x e5\ d x e5 11.\blacklozenge d1, Hakuc – Hanegby, IECC 1999, 11...\blacklozenge c7=

8.h6 e5 9.\blacklozenge x g7\ \blacklozenge x g7\ 10.\blacklozenge d3\ (There arise simplifications after 10.d x e5\ \blacklozenge x e5\ 11.\blacklozenge x e5\ d x e5 12.0-0-0, Paschmann – Schulte, Ditzingen 2014, 12...\blacklozenge c7!?∞) 10...exd4!? 11.\blacklozenge x d4\ \blacklozenge e8=, followed by \blacklozenge b6, \blacklozenge c5. The pressure against the e4-square compensates the slight weakness of Black’s d6-pawn, Wong – Simon, USA 2000.

7.a4\ \blacklozenge bd7

8.h3\ e5 – see 7.h3.
8.h6 e5 9.\blacklozenge x g7\ \blacklozenge x g7\ 10.\blacklozenge d3, Eljanov – Svidler, Moscow 2008, 10...\blacklozenge e8=.

After 8.\blacklozenge c4, Salvador – Castellanos, Lodi 2006, Black has a combination with which he can simplify the position: 8...\blacklozenge x e4!? 9.\blacklozenge x f7+\ \blacklozenge f7 10.\blacklozenge x e4\ \blacklozenge f6 11.\blacklozenge g3\ \blacklozenge d5=
8.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}2\) e5 9.dxe5 (Following 9.0–0, it seems very good for Black to opt for 9...exd4, followed by pressure against the e4-pawn. 10.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{x}d4\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}8\) 11.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{c}4\), Jerez Perez – Fernandez Hernandez, Barcelona 2000. White manages to hold the e4-pawn in a tactical way, but after 11...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{b}6\)!? 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{a}2\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}6=\), Black succeeds in trading the bishops and equalises completely.) 9...dxe5 10.h3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}7\) 11.0–0 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{c}5\). Black prepares the transfer of his knight to e6, from where it might go later to d4, after the preliminary move \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{d}8\). 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{g}5\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}6\) 13.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{c}4\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{d}8\) Cooper – Ruthen, ICCF 2013.

The move 7.0–0–0 leads to a complicated double-edged fight. 7...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{b}5\).

8.e5 dxe5 9.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{xe}5\), Hauenstein – Marquez Abreu, ICCF 2009, 9...b4!? It is important for Black to deflect his opponent from his offensive on the kingside even at the price of the weakening of the pawn-structure. If White manages to play h4–h5, he would obtain good attacking prospects. 10.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{a}4\)

Or 10.h4, Alekseenko – Basso, Al Ain 2013, 10...exd4!? 11.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{xd}4\) b4 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{a}4\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{h}6\) 13.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{h}6\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}5\) 10.h3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}8\) 11.g4, Kulaots – Nyback, Bled 2002, 11...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{b}6\)!? – Black's pieces are harmoniously deployed and well coordinated. 10.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{g}7\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{g}7\) 11.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}2\) (11.h3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}8\) 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{e}2\) \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\text{b}6\) 13.c3, Utemov – Donchenko, Moscow 1994, 13...
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ∆f6 3.∆c3 g6 4.∆e3 ∆g7 5.∆d2 c6 6.∆f3 0-0

d5!?++; 11.h4 h5 12.∆e2 ∆g4? Klugel – Copie, Poland 1999
11...∆b6 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.∆g3 c5=, followed by c5-c4, Straka – Bauer, Klatovy 2000.

B1) 7.∆h6 b5
Black creates the threat b5-b4.

8.∆d3
Or 8.∆xg7 ∆xg7 9.e5 (9.∆d3 ∆g4 – see 8.∆d3; 9.a3 a5 10.∆d3 ∆g4 – see 8.a3) 9...dxe5 10.∆xe5
∆c7 11.∆e2, Galdunts – Bewersdorff, Germany 2000, 11...∆bd7!? 12.f4 ∆d8=

After 8.a3 a5, White cannot castle queenside, because following b5-b4, Black will manage to open files quickly against the enemy king and will organise a dangerous attack. 9.∆d3 ∆g4 10.∆xg7 ∆xg7 11.e5 (He is well prepared for the opening of the game in the centre and following 11.∆f4, White’s situation would become even worse: 11...∆xf3 12.∆xf3 ∆bd7 13.∆e2 e5 14.0-0 ∆e8= Bar-va – Vajda, Eger 2004.) 11...dxe5 12.dxe5 ∆fd7 13.∆g5 ∆xf3 14.gxf3 f6. This is Black’s simplest road to equality. 15.exf6+ exf6 16.∆g3 ∆e7+ 17.∆f1 ∆c5= – The vulnerability of White’s kingside pawns may become a telling factor in the future, Stripunsky – Bologan, Azov 1996.

8...∆g4
Black plans to exchange on f3.

9.∆xg7
9.a4. White has not castled yet, so this queenside activity seems a bit premature. 9...b4 10.∆e2 ∆bd7!? This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice. 11.∆xg7 ∆xg7 12.∆xb4 c5 13.∆d2 (13.dxc5 ∆xc5 14.0-0 ∆b8 15.∆c3 ∆b6 16.∆fb1 ∆fc8= – The activity of Black’s pieces compensates with an interest his minimal material deficit, Bosch – Hergott, Hertogenbosch 1999.) 13...∆xf3 14.gxf3 cxd4 15.∆xd4 ∆b6 16.c3 ∆fd8 17.a5 ∆b7 18.∆e2 a6 19.∆g1 ∆h8 20.b4 d5† – White has an extra pawn indeed, but his defence would not
be easy at all, since his king has no safe haven, Iordanyan – Lesko, ICCF 2014.


9.0–0–0 e5

10.Qxg7 Qxg7 – see 9...Qxg7
10. Qe2 Qbd7 11.h3 (The transfer of White’s knight to the g3-square seems too clumsy. 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Qg3, Stangl – Buchal, Germany 1995, 12...Qxh6!? 13. Wxh6 Wa5. He has problems now with the protection of his a2-pawn. 14.Qb1 Qe6 15.b3 c5–) 11... Qxf3 12.gxf3 Wb6 13. Qe3, Smolka

9.h4. White wishes to advance h4-h5 and to begin an attack against the enemy king. Black’s defensive resources are quite sufficient, though... 9...Qxf3 10.gxf3 e5


11.Qe2 Qh5 12.Qg3, Sabaev – Burghoff, ICCF 2004. White wishes to trade the enemy knight, which stands in the way forward of the h-pawn (It would be less precise for White to opt here for 12.0–0–0, Mohr – Mueller, Lienz 1988, 12...Qxh6!? 13. Wxh6 Wf6=). 12...Qxh6!? 13. Wxh6 Qxg3 14.fxg3 exd4 15.a4

(diagram)

15...Qd7! Black should neither advance b5-b4, nor capture on a4, because White’s bishop will gain access to the c4-square. 16.axb5 cxb5 17.h5 We7 18.0–0–0 Qe5 19.hxg6 fxg6 20.f4 Qg4. Black’s threat to inflict a double attack
from the f2-square forces White to enter an endgame. 21.\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}h4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}xh4 22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}xh4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}f2 23.\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}d2 g5. Black gives back his extra pawn, activates his rook and compromises his opponent’s pawn-structure. 24.\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}xg5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}xd3+ 25.\textit{\textcolor{red}{R}}xd3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}f1+ 26.\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}d1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}xd1+ 27.\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}xd1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}e8= – White has so many pawn-weaknesses that he has no chances of fighting for a win in this endgame.

\textbf{9...\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}xg7}

\textbf{10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}g5}

He removes his knight from the possible exchange. Still, White will have to lose a tempo later to bring back the knight.

10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{R}}e3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}xf3 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}xf3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}bd7 – see 10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}f4.

\textbf{10.h3. White provokes his opponent to exchange on f3. 10...\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 e5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}bd7 – see 10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}g5.}

\textbf{10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}e2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}bd7 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}g3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}b6= Hebden – Schlosser, Cappelle la Grande 1993.}

\textbf{10.0–0–0 e5 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}e2 (11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{Q}}e2. White avoids the doubling of his pawns, but begins defending. 11...\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}e7 12.h3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}bd7= Kholmov – Shabanov, Tula 2003.) 11...\textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}bd7 12.dxe5 (12.h3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}b6 14.h4, Dzagnidze – Se- veriukhina, St Petersburg 2009, 14...\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}h5!∞) 12...dxe5 13.h3, Gal- lagher – Tkachiev, Hastings 1994, 13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3!? 14.gxf3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}e7?!∞ – White’s pawn-structure has been weakened and his prospects to attack on the kingside seem rather questionable.}

Following 10.e5 dxe5 11.dxe5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{B}}fd7, Black will gradually neutralise his opponent’s slight initiative. 12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}e3 (12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{G}}g5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 f6 14.exf6+ exf6= Stefanova – Monell Camarasa, Balaguer 1996) 12...\textit{\textcolor{red}{C}}c7 13.e6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xf3 (13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{A}}xe6?! Adams – Shirov, Dos Hermanas 1995, 14.h4!?∞) 14.gxf3 fxe6= Vegjeleki – Petukhov, ICCF 2011.

\textbf{10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{W}}f4. White avoids the dou-bling of his pawns, but loses too}
many tempi on moves with his queen. Black succeeds in completing his development and seizes the initiative. 10...\texttt{\textdual}xf3 11.\texttt{\textdual}xf3 \texttt{\textdual}bd7 12.0–0 e5 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.\texttt{\textdual}fd1 \texttt{\textdual}e7. Both Black’s knights are obviously more active than White’s “bad” bishop. 15.a4 (15.a3 \texttt{\textdual}c5\texttt{\textdual}) 15...a6 16.\texttt{\textdual}e2 (16.axb5 axb5 17.\texttt{\textdual}xa8 \texttt{\textdual}xa8\texttt{\textdual} Mischuk – Kuzubov, Lvov 2016) 16...\texttt{\textdual}c5\texttt{\textdual} Kosten – Laketic, Bozen 1992.

10...e5
Black exploits another drawback of the move 10.\texttt{\textdual}g5 and advances e7–e5 without the preparatory move \texttt{\textdual}bd7.

11.dxe5

About 11.h3 \texttt{\textdual}c8 12.dxe5 dxe5 – see 11.dxe5.

11...dxe5 12.h3

White only creates additional weaknesses in his position with the line: 12.f4 h6 13.fxe5 \texttt{\textdual}fd7 14.\texttt{\textdual}f3 \texttt{\textdual}xf3 15.gxf3 \texttt{\textdual}xe5 16.0–0 \texttt{\textdual}g5+ 17.\texttt{\textdual}g2 \texttt{\textdual}xg2+ 18.\texttt{\textdual}xg2.

12...\texttt{\textdual}e8

Here, in the game Teske – Gonzalez Perez, Pielagos 2011, the opponents agreed to a draw, which seemed to be a bit premature. Following 18...\texttt{\textdual}d8?! 19.\texttt{\textdual}e2 g5\texttt{\textdual}, and then \texttt{\textdual}g6–f4, \texttt{\textdual}d7–e5, Black could have continued to play for a win without any risk.

13.a4

After 13.\texttt{\textdual}e2, Reefat – Rahman, Dhaka 2004, the simplest response for Black would be 13...c5?! 14.\texttt{\textdual}xb5 \texttt{\textdual}xd2+ 15.\texttt{\textdual}xd2 h6 16.\texttt{\textdual}f3 \texttt{\textdual}xe4=

Or 13.0–0 h6 14.\texttt{\textdual}f3 \texttt{\textdual}e7 15.\texttt{\textdual}e2 \texttt{\textdual}bd7 16.\texttt{\textdual}g3 \texttt{\textdual}c5= Hame-link – Pruijssers, Hoogeveen 2004 (16...\texttt{\textdual}e8?! 17.a4 b4 18.\texttt{\textdual}h4 \texttt{\textdual}h7 19.f4\texttt{\textdual} Naiditsch – Van der Wiel, Essen 2001).

13.\texttt{\textdual}f3 \texttt{\textdual}bd7
(diagram)

14.a3 \texttt{\textdual}b7=

14.0–0 a5?!=

14.0–0–0, Rodriguez Ces-
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ☐f6 3.☐c3 g6 4.☐e3 ☐g7 5.☐d2 c6 6.☐f3 0-0

pedes – Irzhanov, Luzern 1997, 14...☐e8!?∞

14.a4 b4 15.☐e2 a5 16.0–0 (16.☐e3 ☐e7 17.☐g3 ☐e8 18.0–0, Kaimov – Sale, Abu Dhabi 2002, 18...☐c5!?) 16...☐e7 17.☐g3, Matjushin – Zubov, Kiev 2001, 17...☐c5!?=. White’s pawn on e4 restricts considerably the bishop on d3 and this may hurt him in the future.

13...b4 14.☐e2 c5
Black prepares the development of his knight to the c6-square.

15.f4

15.☐e3 ☐e7 16.0–0 ☐c6= Yagupov – Irzhanov, Nizhnij Novgorod 1998.

15...☐c6 16.0–0 0 0e7 17.☐b5 ☐d8 18.☐e3 ☐b7 19.☐c4.
Black is not afraid of his opponent’s pressure against the f7-square, since he can deploy his knight to the e5-outpost. 19...exf4 20.☐xf4 ☐e5 21.☐d5 h6 22.☐f3, Vescovi – Luz, Teresina 2012, 22...☐ab8!? 23.☐xb7 ☐xd1+ 24.☐xd1 ☐xb7= – Black dominates over the e5-square, while White’s isolated pawn on e4 may turn out to be weak later.

B2) 7.h3
After this move Black will not be able to attack the enemy bishop with the move ☐g4.

7...☐bd7

8.☐d3
White provides additional protection of his e4-pawn and prepares to castle kingside.

It is obviously bad for White to opt here for 8.0–0–0?!, because after 8...b5, Black’s queenside attack will develop much faster. 9.☐d3 (Following 9.e5, Black can
try an interesting pawn-sacrifice: 9...b4 10.exf6 bxc3 11.\(\text{B}x\text{c}3\) \(\text{B}x\text{f6}\) 12.\(\text{B}x\text{c}6\) \(\text{Kh}8\) 13.\(\text{We}a4\), Knaak – Kuemmel, Germany 1992, 13...
\(\text{Q}d5?!\#) 9...\(\text{B}c7\) 10.\(\text{Ah}6\) b4 11.\(\text{B}e2\), Kude – Mueller, Uckley 1999, 11...
\(\text{c5}?!\) 12.\(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 13.\(\text{dxc5}\) \(\text{B}x\text{c5}\#)

8.\(\text{B}d1\), Jovanovic – Schmidt, Austria 2013, 8...b5?!=

White would not obtain much with 8.e5, since following 8...dxe5 9.dxe5 \(\text{B}d5\), Black’s pieces would exert powerful pressure against the enemy e5-pawn. 10.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\) (There arise simplifications after 10.\(\text{Ah}6\) \(\text{B}a5\) 11.\(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 12.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\), Degraeve – Glinert, Guelph 2002, 12...
\(\text{B}x\text{d}2\)? 13.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}2\) \(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\)=) 10...
\(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\) 11.\(\text{Ah}6\) (11.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\)?! \(\text{Q}x\text{e}5\) 12.\(\text{B}x\text{d}8\) \(\text{Q}x\text{f}3\) 13.\(\text{gxf}3\) \(\text{B}x\text{d}8\), with a superior pawn-structure for
Black; 11.\(\text{Q}f4\) \(\text{B}c5\)=) 11...\(\text{B}c7\) 12.\(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 13.0–0–0 \(\text{Q}x\text{e}5\)=
Skytte – Hoi, Denmark 2011.

The move 8.\(\text{B}e2\) has the drawback, in comparison to 8.\(\text{B}d3\), that after 8...b5, White must consider the threat b5-b4, since his e4-pawn is not sufficiently pro-
tected. 9.a3 \(\text{B}c7\)

10.0–0 \(\text{B}b7\) 11.\(\text{B}f\text{d}1\) (11.\(\text{Ah}6\) e5 – see 10.\(\text{Ah}6\); 11.\(\text{Ah}2\) a5 12.b4
\(\text{B}b6\#) 11...a5. Black is threatening again b5-b4. 12.b4 \(\text{B}f\text{e}8\) 13.
\(\text{Ah}6\) e5= Hoehne – Ohlendorf, Email 2010.

10.\(\text{Ah}6\) e5 11.0–0 \(\text{B}b7\) 12.\(\text{B}f\text{d}1\) \(\text{B}f\text{e}8\) 13.\(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 14.d5. White wishes to exploit the slight vul-
erability of the pawn on d6, but Black does not need to protect it and can simply exchange it for the
enemy e4-pawn. 14...a6 15.\(\text{dxc6}\) \(\text{B}x\text{c6}\) 16.\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\). Now, there arises
a real storm on the board and almost all the pieces are annihilated. White did not have anything
better anyway. 16...\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\) 17.\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\) \(\text{B}c5\) 18.\(\text{B}d2\) \(\text{B}a8\) 19.\(\text{B}x\text{d}8\) \(\text{B}x\text{d}8\)
20.\(\text{B}d1\) \(\text{B}x\text{e}4\) 21.\(\text{B}x\text{e}4\) \(\text{B}x\text{d}1\)+ 22.\(\text{B}x\text{d}1\) \(\text{B}x\text{e}4\)= Sveshnikov –
Lerner, Moscow 1989.

8.a4. White prevents b7-b5. 8...e5 9.dxe5 (9.\(\text{B}d3\) \(\text{exd}4\) – see 8.\(\text{B}d3\)) 9...
\(\text{B}x\text{e}5\). The knight on d7 was impeding the development of
Black’s queenside pieces, so it was useful for him to exchange it.

After 10.\(\text{B}e2\) \(\text{B}a5\), White cannot achieve anything real out of the weakness of the enemy pawn
on d6. 11.0–0 ¹xf3+ 12.²xf3 ²d8 13.³f1 ³e6 14.⁴ab1 ⁴d7 15.b4 ²d8 16.³g5 ²f8 17.b5 h6 18.³f4 d5= – Finally, Black managed to advance d6-d5 and that meant that he equalised completely, Arbril – Krause, ICF 2014.

10.³xe5 dxe5 11.²xd8 ²xd8 12.³c4 ³h5 13.g3, G.Kuzmin – Adorjan, Sochi 1976, 13...³f8!?=. Black has prepared the exchange of the powerful enemy bishop with ³g7, ³e6.

8.³h6 e5 9.³xg7 (9.³d3 exd4 – see 8.³d3; 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.³xg7 ³xg7 – see 9.³xg7; 9.0–0–0 ³e8 10.³xg7 ³xg7 – see 9.³xg7) 9...³xg7 10.0–0–0 (White would not obtain much if he clarifies the pawn-structure in the centre. 10. dxe5 dxe5 11.³d3 ³e7 12.³e2 ³c5= Kleiman – Tseshkovsky, Odintsovo 2011.) 10...³e8 11.g4 b5 12.g5, Landa – Rudolf, Rethymno 2003, 12...b4!? This is Black’s most precise move. The point is that after 13.gxf6+ ²xf6, White cannot preserve his extra piece, because both his knights are hanging. 14.³g2 bxc3 15.³xc3 ³b8∞. Now, it is bad for White to choose 16.³xc6?! in view of 16... ²f4+ 17.³b1 ³b6 18.³c7 ³xe4 19.³e1 ³c6 20.³xe4 ³xc7 21.dxe5 dxe5= – Black has a superior pawn-structure in this endgame and this enables him to play for a win without any risk.

8...³e5

This is Black’s most reliable plan. He wishes to exchange on d4 and to exert pressure against the enemy e4-pawn with ³e8 and ³c5. He does not need to play b7-b5, because later, after a2-a4, White can begin active counter actions on the queenside.

9.0–0

It seems less precise for White to opt here for 9.a4. He defends against b7-b5, but Black did not intend to play like this anyway. 9...exd4 10.³xd4 ³c5 11.0–0 ³e8= Jordan Arenas – Del Rio de Angelis, Mislata 2009.

Following 9.³h6 exd4 10. ³xd4 ³xh6 11.³h6 ³b6, White’s knight and pawn are hanging and in order to avoid material losses, he would have to play 12.³b3 a5 13.a4 ³e5= Jimena Bonillo – Sesko, ICCF 2008.

9.dxe5. White reduces the tension in the centre and this leads to approximate equality. In addition, Black may even end up in a better position, because White’s
bishop on d3 is restricted considerably by his own pawn on e4 and may become very bad later. 9...\(\text{c}xe5\) 10.\(\text{d}xe5\) (10.0-0-0, Kislin-
sky – Chojnacki, Litomysl 2014, 10...b5!?=; 10.\(\text{d}xe2\) b5 11.a3 a5 12.\(\text{d}xe5\) dxe5 13.\(\text{d}xe8\) \(\text{d}xe8=\) Me-
khitarian – Shoker, Sao Paulo 2011) 10...\(\text{d}xe5\) 11.a4 (11.0-0 \(\text{d}xe6\) 12.\(\text{d}h6\) \(\text{w}c7\) 13.\(\text{d}xg7\) \(\text{d}xg7\) 14.\(\text{w}e3\), Palkova – Horejsi, Klatovy 2002,
14...\(\text{f}d8=\) – Black's bishop is evidently more active than its white counterpart.) 11...\(\text{d}xe6\) 12.a5, Ri-
zouk – Moskalenko, Catalunya 2013. White occupies space on the queenside, but Black can simply counter this with 12...b5!? and
White cannot win a pawn 13.axb6 axb6 14.\(\text{e}xa8\) \(\text{e}xa8\) 15.\(\text{d}xb6\), because after 15...\(\text{b}8\) 16.\(\text{d}e3\) \(\text{xb}2=\), Black regains it.

9...

\[\text{exd4}!\]

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image}
\caption{Diagram of the position after 9...
\text{exd4}!\}
\end{figure}

\[10.\text{exd4}\]

10.\(\text{exd4}\)

If White captures with his bishop, he may have problems later. 10.\(\text{exd4}\) b5. This move is not played with the idea b5-b4,
but with the intent to deploy the bishop on the b7-square and after a7-a6, c6-c5, to bring another piece into the attack against the
\(\text{e}4\)-square. 11.\(\text{f}e1\) (11.a3 a6 12.\(\text{f}e1\) \(\text{b}7\) – see 11.\(\text{f}e1\)) 11...\(\text{b}7\) 12.a3 a6 13.\(\text{d}e3\) \(\text{e}8\) 14.\(\text{d}ad1\) c5
15.\(\text{g}5\), Magem Badals – Bernard, France 1997 (15.\(\text{f}f1?!\) \(\text{d}e4\) 16.\(\text{d}g5\) \(\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{w}d6\) \(\text{b}6\) 18.\(\text{d}e2\)
\(\text{ac}8\) 19.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{d}d8\) – Black’s pieces are obviously more actively deployed, Ainudtinov – Krause,
ICCF 2012.) 15...c4!? Black forces the enemy bishop to abandon the
d3-square, from where it was protecting the \(\text{e}4\)-pawn. 16.\(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{c}5\) 17.\(\text{f}f4\) \(\text{e}6\). Black gets rid of the pin. 18.\(\text{w}d6\) \(\text{w}d6\) 19.\(\text{w}d6\) \(\text{x}g5\)
20.\(\text{x}g5\) \(\text{h}6\) 21.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{x}e4\) 22.\(\text{d}xe4\)
\(\text{x}e4\) – He has restored the material balance and has better pros-
spects in this endgame thanks to his two powerful bishops.

\[10.\text{exd4} 11.\text{f}e1\]

Following 11.\(\text{h}6\) \(\text{x}h6\) 12.\(\text{w}xh6\), Patil – Uribe Arteaga, Bar-
celona 2016, 12...\(\text{w}b6!\)? 13.\(\text{b}3\) a5\(\text{f}\), or 11.\(\text{a}e1\) \(\text{c}5\) 12.\(\text{h}6\), Eriet – Bacrot, Port Barcares 2005,
12...\(\text{x}h6!\)? 13.\(\text{x}h6\) \(\text{b}6=\), Black
develops his queen to an active position and obtains a very good
game. The vulnerability of his d6-
pawn is absolutely irrelevant, be-
cause White’s bishop on d3 and
his knight on d4 impede his rook’s
active operations on the d-file.

\[11.\text{c}5\]
1. e4 d6 2. d4 ∆f6 3. ∆c3 g6 4. ∆e3 ∆g7 5. ∆d2 c6 6. ∆f3 0-0

12. ∆h6

12. ∆f4 a5=; 12. ∆g5 ∆c7 13. ∆ad1, David – Drenchev, Loutraki 2015, 13...a5=

12...∆xh6 13. ∆xh6 ∆b6 14. ∆b3 ∆xd3 15. cxd3 ∆e6 (diagram)

16. ∆f4

16. ∆d2. White is trying to transfer his knight to the g5-square, but after 16...∆xb2 17. ∆ac1 d5=, his compensation for the pawn is insufficient, A. Vovk – Hendriks, Dieren 2011.

16...∆h5 17. ∆e3

White should better refrain from capturing on d6, since following 17. ∆xd6 ∆xb3 18. axb3 ∆d8, Black’s pieces would become tremendously active. 19. ∆a3 a6 20. ∆a4 ∆c7 21. ∆ad1 ∆d4 22. ∆c5 ∆ed8 23. ∆c3 ∆xd3 24. ∆xd3 ∆xd3= – He has restored the material balance and preserves better prospects.

17...∆xb3 18. ∆xb6 axb6 19. axb3 ∆f4 20. ∆ad1, Ruan – Tan, Shenzhen 2011, 20... d5!?=
White plans to develop his pieces in the spirit of the Zemisch system in the King’s Indian Defence – $e3$, $d2$ etc. (see volume 2). This plan has some merit, but some drawbacks as well. At first, in comparison to the King’s Indian Defence, White will have an extra tempo for the development of his pieces and it can be very useful in the organisation of his attack against the enemy king. On the other hand, if Black manages to cope with the first attacking wave of his opponent, then in the middle game White will miss badly his pawn on c4. With a knight on c3, he will hardly manage to advance c2–c4.

4...$g7 5.$e3

About 5.h4 $c6 6.e3 $b5, or 5.$ge2 $c6 6.e3 $b5, or 5.g4 $c6 6.e3 $b5 – see 5.e3.

5.$g5 $c6 6.$d2 $b5 7.0–0–0
(7.$h6 $xh6 – see 5.$e3; 7.a3 $bd7 8.$h3 0–0 9.$f2, Diez del Corral – Dzindzichashvili, Buenos Aires 1978, 9...$c7! =) 7...$bd7 8.e5. This pawn-break in the centre seems premature.

(White should prefer here 8.$h6 $xh6 9.$xh6 $a5 10.$b1 $b6 – see variation E.) 8...$b4 9.exf6 $xc3 10.$xc3 $xf6 11.$xc6+ $d7 12.$a6 $b8 – Black has good attacking prospects for the sacrificed pawn, Eriksson – Schmidt, Borup 2008.

5...$c6
Black should not be in a hurry to castle kingside, because his king may come under a dangerous attack there.

(diagram)

6.$d2
This is White’s strongest and most logical move.

It would be difficult for him to
continue the game without the move \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdaggerdbl}d2} \), but still White postpones it sometimes. For example: 6.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}} \)ge2 b5 7.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdaggerdbl}}}d2 \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}} \textsf{\textdaggerdbl}}d7 \) – see variation \textbf{B}, or 6.h4 b5 7.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdaggerdbl}}}d2 \) (7.g4 b4 \) – see 6.g4) 7...h5 – see variation \textbf{A}.

6.g4 b5 7.h4 (7.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdaggerdbl}}}d2 \) h5 – see variation \textbf{D}) 7...b4. Before advancing h7-h5, Black should better out his opponent’s knight from its active position (after the immediate move 7...h5, White has the powerful resource 8.e5?!\). 8.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}} \)ce2 h5. This is a standard reaction for Black against White’s pawn-offensive on the kingside. We will encounter it numerous more times. 9.g5 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)fd7. Now, it would not be easy for White to develop his initiative on the kingside. 10.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdaggerdbl}}}d2 \) a5 11.f4. Black has managed to prevent the opening of the g and h-files, so White uses his f-pawn in an attempt to break his opponent’s defensive fortress on the kingside. 11...\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)b6 12.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)g3, Vasile – Didiliuc, Sarata Montecu-ru 2012, 12...0–0 13.f5 c5. Black begins his counterplay against the d4-square. 14.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)f3 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)c6 15.c3 a4\textsuperscript{+} – His queenside pawn-offensive, with the support of his powerful bishop on g7, promises Black at least an equal position.

6.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)c4. This move does not seem so logical, because now, Black can win a tempo for his queenside offensive by attacking the enemy bishop with his pawns. 6...b5 7.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)b3 a5 8.a3 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)bd7 9.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)d2 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)a6 10.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)ge2 0–0 11.0–0 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)c7 12.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)f1, Hummer – Flores, Portsmouth 2000, 12...\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)fd8!? Black plans to advance e7-e5 and deploys in advance his rook on the d-file. 13.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)f4 e5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)d3 \( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)ac8\textsuperscript{∞} – His pieces have been deployed harmoniously. White is incapable of exploiting the slight weakness of the c5-square.

6.a4. This is a prophylactic move. White prevents the enemy pawn-advance b7-b5, but weakens his queenside and makes an eventual queenside castling very precarious. 6...0–0

7.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)ge2 e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\( \textsf{\texttt{\textdagger}}} \)c1, Petrushin – Tseshkovsky, Kras-
nodar 1980, 9...we7!? 10.ac4 xd8 11.wb2 b6=

Following 7.ac4, Black can inflict an immediate strike against the enemy centre. 7...d5 8.cb3 (8.exd5 cxd5. The exchange of the central e-pawn for the flank c-pawn is in favour of Black. 9.da2 dc6† Vetemaa – Ehlvest, Vlissingen 1996.) 8.dxe4 9.exe4 dxex 10.fxe4 e5 11.df3 exd4 12.axd4. There has appeared a weak isolated e-pawn in White's camp.

12...axd4 13.xd4 wxd4 14.xd4 d7 15.0–0 c5† Rabitte – Mitchell, Blackpool 2010.

7.wd2 wa5 8.hge2 e5

9.d5 a6!?? Black sacrifices a pawn, but White should better not accept it. Black wishes to reach a very complicated position in the middle game. (The transfer into an endgame 9...exd5 10.axd5 wxd2+ 11.axd5 axd5 12.exd5, does not promise complete equality for Black, Berczes – Takacs, Hungary 2004.) 10.dxc6?! bxc6 11.wx6d6? White wins material, but ignores his development and pays dearly for this. 11...xe8 12.xc6 d7 13.c4 db4 14.0–0–0 edc8 15.db3 df8–+

White is helpless against the threat he6.

9.g4 db7 10.g5 (10.0–0 0–0 b5∞) 10...exd4

11.xd4 h5 12.db3 wb4 13.a5 b5 14.axb6 db6 15.db1 wxd2+ 16.b1xd2 c5 17.c3 he6 18.a6 xe5†. White wishes to win the a-pawn, but this will lead to difficulties for him. 19.he7?! ab8 20. wxa7?! bxb3 21.xb3 dc8 22. xc8 xb3 23.xb7 xb7 24.xb7 db8 25.db5 db2†

11.xd4 h5 12.xg7 xg7 13.0–0–0 c5 14.d4 (14.b3 wb4 15.wxd6?! he6†; 15.db1 wxd2+ 16.wxd2 xd8= Black's only weakness – his pawn on d6 is easily defensible.) 14...xa4 15.dx4 wxa4 16.db1 he6 17.xe6 fxe6 18.wc3 (White creates the threat.) 18...c5 19.xd6 xd6 20.xd8 xd8 21. xd3 wc6 22.wf5 (There arises an approximately equal endgame after 22.wa5 b6 23.xa7 c4 24.wc2 a8 25.wc7 wa4 26.wa3 wxa3 27. bxa3 xa3 28.db2 eb3 29.wx4 xf3=) 22...a6 23.f4 c4 24.db2 e5 25.db4 wb6 26.h4 db7 27.f3 gxf5 28.exf5 exf5 29.db7 db6 30. wxd6 zd6 31.db4 h6= – The bishop is usually stronger than
the knight in a fight on both sides of the board, but now, there is just a few material left on the board, so the most likely outcome of the game would be a draw.

6...b5

We will analyse in details now A) 7.h4, B) 7.ge2, C) 7.d3, D) 7.g4 and E) 7.0–0–0.

7.d1. White wishes to fortify the d4-square with the move c2-c3, but the retreat of the knight to the edge of the board seems rather passive. 7...bd7 8.d3 (8.a4 bxa4 9.xa4, Hecht – Schnaebel, Germany 1989, 9...0–0!? - White lags in development and because of this is incapable of exploiting the slight weakness of the enemy a7-pawn.) 8...e5 9.c3 d5 10.f2 0–0 11.e2 e8= Ashley – Delemarre, Wijk aan Zee 2000.

7.a4. White begins immediate active actions on the queenside. But after 7...b4, he will have to lose a tempo for the retreat of his knight. 8.d1 a5

9.h4 h5 – see variation A. 9.d3 bd7 – see variation C. 9.e2 a6∞ 9.f2 bd7 10.d3 0–0 – see 9.d3 bd7 10.f2 0–0.

9.c3. White continues with his active actions on the queenside, but this is detrimental to the development of his pieces. 9.bxc3 10.bxc3 0–0 11.d3 bd7 12.e2 e5 13.0–0 (13.f2 d5 14.0–0 a6 – see 13.0–0) 13...d5 14.f2 a6. Black exchanges the powerful enemy bishop. 15.xa6 xa6 16.h6 (16.a2 c7 Van der Wiel – C.Hansen, Wijk aan Zee 1994) 16.xh6 17.xh6 dxe4 18.fxe4 c5 19.ad1 cxd4 20.cxd4, Vysochin – Poluljahov, Swidnica 1999, 20...c7!?? – White’s knights are rather passive and his pawn-centre needs permanent protection.

7.a3. White prevents b5-b4. Now however, if he castles queenside, Black will manage to develop quickly a dangerous attack there with a7-a5 and b5-b4. In addition, the move 7.a3 does not contribute to White’s development. 7...bd7.

(diagram)

8.d3 0–0 – see variation C. 8.h3 0–0 9.f2, Cardoso –
Pfleger, Manila 1974, 9...b7!? 10.e2 c7 11.0–0 a5∞

8.h6 hxh6 9.xh6 b6 10. g2 a5 11.h4 a6∞ White has weakened both his flanks, so he is forced to leave his king stranded in the centre. He may pay dearly for this in the middle game, Mrsic – Forster, Austria 1999.

8.g4 b6. Black plays this move so that after 9.h4 h5 10.g5, he will have the possibility to retreat his knight to the d7-square.

9.b3. White restricts the enemy knight on b6, but weakens his queenside. 9...a5. Black is preparing a5–a4. 10.a4 b4 11.e2 h5 12.g3 fd7 13.d1 a6 14.g2 d5. White lags in development, so Black is trying to open the position as quickly as possible. 15. h3, Gazik – Pribyl, Hradec Kralove 1982, 15...dxe4!? 16.fxe4 0–0 17.0–0 c7 18.hf4 e5∞ – White has completed his development and castled, but now, after the exchange of the e5-pawn for the d4-pawn, there will appear an isolated pawn in his camp. 9.h6 hxh6 10.xh6 a4!? Black weakens his pawn-structure, but wishes to open the b-file for his major pieces. 11.xa4 (After 11.d1, Podkrajsek – Copie, Argentina 1994, the simplest way for Black to equalise would be 11...e5!=) 11...bx a4 12.e2 b6 13.b1 e6∞

7.h6 hxh6 8.xh6 a5. There has arisen a position from Chapter 19, but with the inclusion of the not so useful move f2–f3, since it deprives his knight of the f3-square and also weakens the dark squares in White’s camp.

9.d3 bd7 – see variation C.

9.d2. White eliminates his opponent’s unpleasant pressure on the e1-a5 diagonal, but loses a tempo for the retreat of his queen to his own camp. 9...b4 10.d1 0–0 11.e3, Videki – Istvandi, Hungary 1995, 11...c5!? 12.d5 bd7∞
9.a4 \(\square bd7\) 10.\(\square ge2\) (10.\(\square d2\) b4 11.\(\square d1\), Miljanic – Terzic, Neum 2005, 11...0–0? =) 10...b4 11.\(\square d1\) \(\square a6\) 12.\(\square c1\) \(\square xf1\) 13.\(\square xf1\), Galkin – Berelowitsch, Azov 1995, 13...c5鹊 – Black begins an active fight for the dark squares.

9.\(\square ge2\) b4 10.\(\square d1\) \(\square a6\) 11.\(\square c1\) \(\square xf1\) 12.\(\square xf1\), Huebner – Pfleger, Germany 1989, 12...\(\square b6\)!? 13.e5. This is a pawn-break in the centre, but Black is well prepared for it, despite the lag of development of his pieces. 13...\(\square xe5\) 14.\(\square xe5\) \(\square d5\) 15.e6. White sacrifices a pawn for the initiative, but Black is not obliged to accept it. 15...c5!? 16.\(\square xf7+\) \(\square xf7\) 17.\(\square d3\) \(\square d7\) 18.e3 \(\square e6\) 19.\(\square d2\) \(\square xe3+\) 20.\(\square xe3\) \(\square xe3\) a5=

A) 7.h4

This move is not so dangerous for Black, because he can prevent the further advance of White’s pawn with the move

7...h5

White’s kingside attack has reached its dead end. The pawn-advance h4-h5 has become impossible and the pawn-sacrifice g2-g4 is not good for him, because he would not obtain sufficient compensation for it. Therefore, White should forget about the plans, connected with an immediate attack against the enemy monarch and start a positional battle.

8.\(\square h3\)

White prepares the transfer of his knight to the g5-square.

8.a3. This move does not look so active. 8...\(\square bd7\) 9.\(\square h3\) \(\square b6\) 10.b3 \(\square xh3\) 11.\(\square xh3\) a6 12.\(\square e2\) \(\square c7\) Varavin – Gylanets, Ekaterinburg 1997.

8.a4 b4 9.\(\square d1\) a5 10.\(\square f2\) (Following 10.\(\square h3\) 0–0 11.\(\square h6\), Gauthier – Rivest, Montreal 2003, the simplest for Black would be to trade the knight on h3, because later, it might join into the attack: 11...\(\square xh3\)!? 12.\(\square xg7\) \(\square xg7\) 13.\(\square xh3\) \(\square bd7\)=) 10...\(\square a6\) 11.\(\square xa6\) \(\square xa6\) 12.\(\square e2\) \(\square d7\). Black prepares the move c6-c5, in order to enlarge
the scope of action of his bishop on g7. 13.0–0 c5 14.\texttt{\textdollar}ad1 cxd4 15.\texttt{\textdollar}xd4. White wishes to weaken the position of the enemy king by exchanging the dark-squared bishops. Still, it would be rather difficult for him to organise an effective attack against the enemy king. 15...\texttt{\textdollar}xd4 16.\texttt{\textdollar}xd4 \texttt{\textdollar}b6 17. \\texttt{\textdollar}b3 \texttt{\textdollar}ac5 18.\texttt{\textdollar}h1 \texttt{\textdollar}f6 19.\texttt{\textdollar}h3 \texttt{\textdollar}c8=. Black’s pieces are very active and he only needs to castle in order to complete his development, Topalov – M.Gurevich, Elenite 1994.

8.0–0–0. It seems rather risky for White to castle queenside here, because his king may come under an attack there, while the development of his kingside offensive seems rather questionable. 8...\texttt{\textdollar}bd7 9.\texttt{\textdollar}h3 (9.\texttt{\textdollar}b1 \texttt{\textdollar}b6∞ I.Smirnov – Kaliuzhny, Alushta 2001; after 9.e5, Black has at his disposal the standard counter-strike for similar positions – 9...b4!∞) 9...\texttt{\textdollar}b6 10.\texttt{\textdollar}g5 0–0 11.\texttt{\textdollar}d3 \texttt{\textdollar}c7

12.\texttt{\textdollar}g1, Kr.Georgiev – Grigorov, Bulgaria 1984. Now, Black could have begun a decisive offensive with the line: 12...b4!? 13.\texttt{\textdollar}d1 c5 14.g4 c4 15.\texttt{\textdollar}f1 c3! He weakens the shelter of the enemy monarch with 16.bxc3 \texttt{\textdollar}c4 17. \texttt{\textdollar}xc4 \texttt{\textdollar}xc4→

8...\texttt{\textdollar}xh3

This is the simplest for Black. The transfer of White’s knight to g5 is not so dangerous for him, but still, trading the knight immediately is the best.

9.\texttt{\textdollar}xh3 \texttt{\textdollar}bd7

10.0–0–0

10.\texttt{\textdollar}d3 \texttt{\textdollar}b8 11.0–0–0 \texttt{\textdollar}c7 12.\texttt{\textdollar}b1 0–0 – see 10.0–0–0.

10.g3 \texttt{\textdollar}c7 11.\texttt{\textdollar}h1, Berg – HIlarp Persson, Gothenburg 2011, 11...0–0!?∞

10.\texttt{\textdollar}d1. The transfer of this knight to f2 seems rather slow. 10...a6 11.\texttt{\textdollar}f2, Langner – Sejkora, Tatranske Zruby 2000, 11...\texttt{\textdollar}c7∞, followed by c6–c5, \texttt{\textdollar}b6–c4.
10.a4. White is trying to create a target for an attack on the queenside. 10...a6 Black is however reluctant to weaken his position.

11.d5?! cxd5 12.exd5 a5+ A.Zapata – Almeida Quintana, Cali 2012.

11.h1, Agopov – Saric, Reykjavik 2015, 11...0–0?!∞

11.e2 0–0 12.d1, Ziegler – Hillarp Persson, Vaxjo 2015, 12...b8?!∞

11.b3 0–0 12.e2 c7∞ – White has the two-bishop advantage, but his king has remained stranded in the centre and later, this might become a cause of worries for him, Feygin – Malykin, Germany 2004.

10...c7

Black must watch carefully about his opponent’s possible pawn-break in the centre – e4-e5.

Black will end up in a difficult position after the straightforward line: 10...b6 11.d3 b8, Janev – Moskalenko, Barbera del Valles 2005, 12.e5!? d5 13.xd5 xd5 14.e6 fxe6 15.xg6+ d7 16.g5 b4 17.f4+ – His king is stranded in the centre and is an excellent target for White’s active pieces.

11.b1 b8?! 12.d3

12.f4 0–0 13.e5 b4 14.exd6 exd6∞

This position was reached in the game Koepke – Chernyshov, Pardubice 2010. 12...a5 13.f4. This is the only way for White to advance e4-e5, but now, Black’s knight gains access to the g4-square. 13...g4 14.e5 b6 15. exd6 (15.g1 e6 16.exd6 xd6 17.e4 xd5! 18.xa5 0–0∞) 15... xd6 16.f5 xe3. Black deprives his opponent of his two-bishop advantage. 17.xe3 xf5 18.xf5 c4 19.e4 b4. Black is creating threats against the enemy king and forces White’s queen to occupy a passive position. 20. c1 e6 21.c3 xb2+. After this simple simplifying combination, there arises an approximately equal endgame on the board. 22.xb2 xb2 23.xb2 exf5 24.d6+ d7 25.xf5 f6=
B) 7. \( \text{d} \text{ge2} \)

This is an elastic move. White develops his knight and does not clarify yet his further plans. The move 7. \( \text{d} \text{ge2} \) was played by Garry Kasparov and quite deservedly so.

7... \( \text{d} \text{bd7} \)

![Chess Diagram]

8. \( \text{d} \text{h6} \)

White exchanges the dark-squared bishops.

The move 8. \( \text{d} \text{c1} \) cannot create any serious problems for Black. White prepares the development of his bishop on f1, but weakens the control over the central d4-square. In addition, making two moves with the same piece, before the full completion of the development, cannot be good as a rule. 8...0–0 9. \( \text{d} \text{e2} \), Zhuravlov – Sarin, Debrecen 1992, 9...e5!±

8. \( \text{d} \text{f4} \). This move is often played by grandmaster Alexander Galkin. White wishes to develop rapidly his kingside pieces and to castle as quickly as possible. Still, the knight on f4 comes under attack after e7-e5. 8...0–0 9. \( \text{d} \text{e2} \) (9. \( \text{d} \text{d3} \), Galkin – Shchechakev, St Petersburg 1994, 9...a5!? =) 9... \( \text{d} \text{c7} \) 10.0–0 e5 11. \( \text{d} \text{xe5} \) \( \text{d} \text{xe5} \)?

Black is not afraid to have a backward pawn on the d-file and wishes to obtain an active piece-play. 12. \( \text{d} \text{b3} \) \( \text{d} \text{b7} \) (12...a5!? 13. \( \text{d} \text{fd1} \) \( \text{d} \text{d8} \) 14. \( \text{d} \text{a3} \) \( \text{d} \text{b7} \) = Jensen – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009) 13. \( \text{d} \text{a4} \) b4 14. \( \text{d} \text{a2} \) a5 15. \( \text{d} \text{c3} \) c5 16. \( \text{d} \text{ad1} \), Galkin – Kasimdzhanov, Yerevan 1999. Here, Black could have started favourable complications with the line: 16...g5!? 17. \( \text{d} \text{d3} \) \( \text{d} \text{xd3} \) 18. \( \text{d} \text{xd3} \) d5∞

8.g4. This seems to be much stronger on move seven (without the inclusion of the moves \( \text{d} \text{ge2} \) \( \text{d} \text{bd7} \)), because now, after 8... \( \text{d} \text{b6} \), Black is threatening to penetrate with his knight to the c4-square.

![Chess Diagram]

9. \( \text{d} \text{g3} \) h5 10.g5 (White only weakens unnecessarily his pawn-structure with 10. \( \text{d} \text{gxh5} \) \( \text{d} \text{xb5} \)). There has appeared a weakness for him on h2 and he can hardly obtain anything real in the nearest future. 11. \( \text{d} \text{g1} \), Zhang – Gagunashvili, Netherlands 2004, 11... \( \text{d} \text{c4} \) ? 12. \( \text{d} \text{xc4} \) bx\( \text{c4} \) 13.0–0–0 \( \text{d} \text{b8} \) =) 10... \( \text{d} \text{fd7} \) 11.h4 \( \text{d} \text{c7} \) 12.f4,
T.L. Petrosian – Anastasian, Yerevan 2005, 12...0–0?!?. Black is perfectly prepared to organise active actions on the queenside. Later, depending on circumstances, he can continue with b5-b4, c6-c5, or d6-d5, c4.

9.b3. White solves radically the problem with the penetration of the enemy knight on c4, but loses a tempo and weakens the a1-h8 diagonal. 9...h5 10.g5 (10.gxh5 c5 11.g2 a5 12.f4, Herguth – Brettschneider, Binz 1994, 12... a4?!?) 10...cfd7

11.f4 b4 12.d1 c5 13.g2 0–0 14.a3, Belotti – Nijboer, Groningen 1984, 14...bxa3!? 15.axa3 a5 16.0–0 a4= – Black gets rid of his only weakness – his a-pawn.

9...b6!?

It would not be so precise for Black to choose here 9...b7 10.a3 e5 11.0–0–0 We7 12.b1 a6 13. c1= – His king will be safe neither in the centre, nor on the queenside, contrary to its counterpart, Kasparov – Topalov, Wijk aan Zee 1999.

10.a3
White prevents b5-b4.

10.g4 b4 11.d4 a4 b5 12.b3 c5= Broniek – Degterev, LSS 2010.

10...b7 11.d1 c5 12.d5 e6 13.dxe6 fx e6= – If Black manages to advance d6-d5 in the middle game, he will succeed in fighting for the advantage, Kolar – Teeriahko, ICCF 2014.
C) 7.\text{\textipa{d}3}
White develops his bishop, but weakens his control over the strategically important d4-square.
7...\text{\textipa{b}d7}

8.\text{\textipa{g}e2}

8.a3 0–0 9.\text{\textipa{g}e2} e5 10.0–0, Kaminski – Balcerowski, Lodz 1998, 10...\text{\textipa{b}7} 11.\text{\textipa{d}1}. Here, Black can make use of his opponent’s somewhat slow play and inflict a counterstrike in the centre with 11...exd4!? 12.\text{\textipa{x}d4} d5\textup{↑}

8.g4. This move does not combine well with \text{\textipa{d}3}. 8...e5 9.\text{\textipa{g}e2}, Forlani – Buffe, France 1998, 9...b4!? Before playing d6–d5, Black outstages the enemy knight from its active position. 10.\text{\textipa{d}1} 0–0 11.\text{\textipa{f}2} d5\textup{↑}

About 8.\text{\textipa{d}1} 0–0 9.\text{\textipa{e}2} e5 – see 8.\text{\textipa{g}e2}.

8.\text{\textipa{h}6} \text{\textipa{x}h6} 9.\text{\textipa{x}h6} \text{\textipa{a}5}
(diagram)
10.\text{\textipa{h}3} b4 11.\text{\textipa{e}2} c5 12.dxc5?! (White should better play here

12.0–0 cxd4=) 12...\text{\textipa{x}c5} 13.0–0 \text{\textipa{x}h3} 14.\text{\textipa{x}h3} 0–0\textup{↑} – The dark squares in White’s camp have been weakened and his bishop is severely restricted by his own pawn on e4, Beliavsky – Hort, Moscow 1975.

10.\text{\textipa{d}2} 0–0 11.\text{\textipa{g}e2} e5 12.\text{\textipa{d}1}, Jurcik – Banoci, Slovakia 2001, 12...\text{\textipa{b}6}!?

10.\text{\textipa{g}e2} b4 11.\text{\textipa{d}1} c5 12.dxc5, Moiseenko – E. Andreev, Kharkov 2000, 12...\text{\textipa{x}c5}=

8.a4 b4

9.\text{\textipa{c}e2}, Nielsen – From, Denmark 1984. Here, Black can play 9...e5?!, without being afraid of the capturing on b4. 10.\text{\textipa{x}b4}?! (White’s situation would be even worse after the preliminary exchange on e5: 10.dxe5?! \text{\textipa{x}e5} 11.\text{\textipa{x}b4} 0–0 12.\text{\textipa{g}3} \text{\textipa{c}7} 13.\text{\textipa{d}2

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d5+) 10...exd4 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}xd4  e5 – The activity of Black’s pieces compensates with an interest his minimal material deficit.

9.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}d1 a5

10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}f2 0–0 11.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}e2 e5 12.c3 d5 13.0–0  e8 – see 10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}e2.

10.c3 0–0 11.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}e2 bxc3 12.bxc3 e5 – see 9.c3.

10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}h3. The transfer of the knight to f2 seems rather slow. In addition, after \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}hf2, this knight deprives the other white knight of its only good square. 10...e5 11.c3 0–0 12.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}h2  e8 13.0–0 d5\textsuperscript{†}


10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}h6 0–0 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}xg7  e8\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}xg7 12. c3, Ganguly – Koshy, Nagpur 2002, 12...e5?!\textsuperscript{∞}

10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}e2 0–0 11.0–0 e5 12.c3 (12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}f2  e8 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}ad1 d5\textsuperscript{∞} Yordanova – Delchev, Borovec 2002) 12...d5. After the removal of White’s knight from c3, this pawn-strike is often encountered in practice. White does not exert any pressure against the central e5 and d5-squares and this enables Black to occupy effortlessly the centre with his pawns.

9...e5 10.a4

10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}g3 exd4!? (10...\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Q}}g4= Tiviakov – Smirin, Formia 1995) 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{W}}xd4  e8?!\textsuperscript{∞}
10...b4 11.\( \textit{\underline{\text{d1}} \text{ exd4?!}} \)
Black begins active actions in the centre.

12.\( \textit{\underline{\text{xd4}}} \)

12.\( \textit{\underline{\text{xd4}}} \) c5 13.\( \textit{\underline{\text{e3}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{e5}} \uparrow} \) Silva Filho – Mary, LSS 2012.

12...\( \textit{\underline{\text{e5}}} \) 13.\( \textit{\underline{\text{e2}}} \) d5! 14.\( \textit{\underline{\text{f2}}} \)
\( \textit{\underline{\text{dxe4}}} \) 15.\( \textit{\underline{\text{fxe4}}} \)
There has appeared an isolated pawn in White’s camp.

15...a5 16.\( \textit{\underline{\text{ad1}}} \)

16...\( \textit{\underline{\text{eg4}}} \)!
Black sacrifices a pawn. Meanwhile, he regains it quickly and obtains the two-bishop advantage. 17.\( \textit{\underline{\text{xg4}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{xg4}}} \) 18.\( \textit{\underline{\text{xc6}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{e8}}} \) 19.\( \textit{\underline{\text{d4}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{xe3}}} \) 20.\( \textit{\underline{\text{xe3}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{xa4}}} \) 21.\( \textit{\underline{\text{b3}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{e8}}} \) 22.\( \textit{\underline{\text{fe1}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{e5}}} \) 23.\( \textit{\underline{\text{c4}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{c5}}} \) 24.\( \textit{\underline{\text{f5}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{xe3}}} + \)
25.\( \textit{\underline{\text{exe3}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{a7}}} \)\( \uparrow \) Varlamov – Schafer, ICCF 2015.

D) 7.\( \textit{\underline{\text{g4}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{h5}}} \)
This is Black’s standard reaction against the pawn-advance g2-g4 in this variation. It is essential for him not to allow h4-h5.

8.g5

After 8.\( \textit{\underline{\text{gxh5?!}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{xh5}}} \) 9.\( \textit{\underline{\text{ge2}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{d7}}} \) 10.\( \textit{\underline{\text{g1}}} \), Beliavsky – Chernin, Reggio Emilia 1996, 10...\( \textit{\underline{\text{b8}}} \)!\( \uparrow \) – White has no compensation for his weakness on h2.

8...\( \textit{\underline{\text{fd7}}} \)

9.f4
White prepares the development of his knight on the f3-square.

9.\( \textit{\underline{\text{d1}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{b7}}} \)

9.\( \textit{\underline{\text{ge2}}} \) \( \textit{\underline{\text{b6}}} \) 10.b3, Vogt – Tischbierek, Germany 1994, 10...0–0?!\( \uparrow \)}
After 9...d3, Black can begin immediate active actions on the queenside. 9...b4 10...ce2 c5 11.a3 bxa3 12...xa3, Tiviakov – Hagesæther Gausdal 1993, 12...0–0?! – The weakness of the pawn on a7 is completely irrelevant. White’s lag in development is much more important.

He cannot achieve much with active actions on the queenside, because White’s lag in development becomes even greater. 9.a4 b4 10...ce2 c5 11.dxc5 (11.f4, Perez Candelario – Granda Zuniga, Navalmoral 2012, 11...c6?!†, with powerful pressure against the d4-square) 11...dxc5† 12...d5?!...c7, Schmittdiel – Wolff, Gausdal 1988, 13...xa8?...b6++

9.0–0–0. It seems very risky for White to castle queenside here. 9...b6 10...d3 0–0 11.f4, Derakhshani – Stopa, Montcada 2015, 11...b4?! 12...ce2 c5 13.dxc5 dxc5†. The bishop on g7 exerts powerful pressure against the b2-square. White’s defence is very difficult. The move 14...xc5?! loses immediately. 14...a4 15...xb4...xb2 16...d2...c6 17...a3...b8++

9...b4?!

This move is not so popular as 9...b6∞, but still, it seems very energetic. Black ousts his opponent’s knight from the c3-square and inflicts an immediate strike against the centre with c6-c5.

10...d1

10...ce2 c5 11.a3 (11.dxc5...xc5 12...xc5 dxc5 13...xd8+...xd8 14.0–0–0+...c7 15...g2...b7† – Black has two very powerful bishops, Hudak – Dunlop, ICCF 2013.) 11...b7 12...g2 a5 13...h3 cxd4 14...xd4...c6 15.0–0 0–0† – His pieces have been much more harmoniously deployed, Fourie – Lloyd, ICCF 2015.

10...c5 11...f3

Or 11.c3 bxc3 12.bxc3, Perez – Santiago, Villa Martelli 2016, 12...0–0?!†

11...0–0?!

Black should not be in a hurry to play here 11...b7, because after 12.d5, White’s d5-pawn will restrict considerably the bishop. 12...0–0 13...h4 a5 14...e2± Nookala – Nichols, FICGS 2010.

12.d5

Following 12...d3?!., Black can open advantageously the game in the centre: 12...cxd4 13...xd4 e5
14.fxe5 dxe5 15.f2 bc6† – His knight is very powerful at the centre of the board, Kawulok – Rasik, Pardubice 2013.

12...a5 13.e2 a6. Black’s plan includes the move b6-c4. 14.0–0 b6 15.a3 d8d7 16.e1 c4 17.xc4 xc4∞ – His prospects are not worse thanks to his bishop-pair.

E) 7.0–0–0

White protects his a2-pawn against the possible threat b5–b4.

It would be too risky for him to play 8.a3 0–0 9.ge2, Rutschke – Richter, Germany 2003, 9...a6!?∞ and White must be constantly on the alert about the possibility b5–b4.

He cannot achieve anything much with an immediate pawn-break in the centre, because after 8.e5 dxe5!? 9.dxe5 b4 10.exf6 bxc3 11.xc3 xc3 12.bxc3 xf6=, there arises an endgame in which Black’s prospects are not worse thanks to his superior pawn-structure.

8...bd7

This is White’s most ambitious move. He castles immediately queenside. Later, he plans to attack on the kingside, but the point is that Black does not intend to evacuate his king there!

7...a5

He should better not be in a hurry to castle kingside in view of the danger of a pawn-offensive there. Presently, Black’s king is safer in the centre than on the kingside. In addition, he preserves the possibility to castle queenside.

7...b1

8.h6

9.\( \text{c} \)h3. White’s knight is removed too far away from the centre. 9...\( \text{d} \)b6 10.e5. This pawn-advance leads to exchanges, but White does not have anything better anyway. 10...\( \text{d} \)f5 11.\( \text{d} \)xd5 \( \text{wx} \)d2 12.\( \text{d} \)xd2 \( \text{d} \)xd5 13.\( \text{c} \)f4 \( \text{d} \)xf4 14.\( \text{d} \)xf4 dxe5 15.dxe5 \( \text{d} \)e6= – The position has been simplified considerably and neither side can rely on obtaining an advantage, Kr.Georgiev – Gazik, Cannes 1990.

There also arise simplifications and an approximately equal endgame after the line: 9.\( \text{d} \)d5 \( \text{wx} \)d2 10.\( \text{d} \)xf6+ \( \text{d} \)xf6 11.\( \text{wx} \)d2, Campos Lopez – Hort, San Antonio 1972, 11...h5?!=

Following 9.h4, naturally, Black should not allow h4-h5. 9...h5 10.\( \text{d} \)h3. White’s knight is headed for the g5-square. (10.\( \text{e} \)e1 b4 11.\( \text{c} \)ce2 c5 12.\( \text{d} \)h3 0–0 13.\( \text{g} \)g5, Kr.Georgiev – Lagno, Istanbul 2003, 13...\( \text{a} \)a6!?∞) 10...\( \text{d} \)b6.

11.b3, Izeta Txabarri – Franco Ocambos, Toledo 1991, 11...\( \text{d} \)fd7!?=

After 11.\( \text{d} \)g5 b4, White is forced to allow the enemy knight to occupy the c4-square and from there it will exert powerful pressure against the queenside and can also capture the bishop on e3. 12.\( \text{d} \)e2 \( \text{d} \)c4 13.\( \text{d} \)c1 \( \text{d} \)d7= Kr. Georgiev – Petrov, Loutrak 2015.

11.e5 \( \text{d} \)fd5 12.\( \text{d} \)xd5 \( \text{wx} \)d2 13.\( \text{d} \)xd2 (13.\( \text{c} \)c7+ \( \text{d} \)d7 14.\( \text{d} \)xe2 \( \text{d} \)xc7= Kr. Georgiev – Lalic, Yugoslavia 2000) 13...\( \text{wx} \)d5 14.exd6 \( \text{d} \)xh3 15.\( \text{d} \)xh3 exd6= Pridorozhni – Lagno, St Petersburg 2002.

9.g4 \( \text{d} \)b6

After 10.\( \text{d} \)d3, Short – Torre, Brussels 1987, Black obtains good counterplay following 10...b4!? 11.\( \text{d} \)ce2 c5∞

10.b3 White covers the c4 and a4-squares against the penetration of the enemy knight, but weakens the a1-h8 diagonal. 10...h5 11.g5 \( \text{d} \)fd7 12.f4 b4 13.\( \text{d} \)ce2 c5= Schmitzer – Held, Frankfurt 2013.

10.g5 \( \text{d} \)h5 11.\( \text{d} \)ce2 \( \text{wx} \)d2 12.\( \text{d} \)xd2 0–0= – The queens have been exchanged and there has arisen an approximately equal endgame on the board, Har Zvi – Smirin, Tel Aviv 1996.
9...\textit{\textsc{hx}}6 10.\textit{\textsc{xh}}6 \textit{\textsc{b}}6

\textbf{11.\textit{\textsc{dh}}3}

White prepares the transfer of his knight to the g5-square.

It is obviously bad for him to play 11.a3, Kveinys – Ben Artzi, Riga 2014, 11...\textit{\textsc{xe}}6!?→ followed by \textit{\textsc{eb}}8, \textit{\textsc{da}}4, or b4.

11.e5. This pawn-break in the centre seems premature. 11...b4 12.\textit{\textsc{de}}4 \textit{\textsc{xe}}4 13.\textit{\textsc{fxe}}4 \textit{\textsc{e}}6 14.b3 dxe5 15.\textit{\textsc{df}}3, Huang – Chen, Zhongshan 2015, 15...\textit{\textsc{cd}}7!?→ – White's compensation for the pawn is insufficient.

Following 11.\textit{\textsc{xd}}3 \textit{\textsc{e}}6 12.d5 b4 13.dxe6 bxc3 14.exf7+ \textit{\textsc{xf}}7 15.b3, Carnicelli – Kudelya, Herceg Novi 2008, 15...c5?! =, White cannot organise an attack against the enemy king, because he must be constantly on the alert about the threat \textit{\textsc{wa}}3-b2.

11.g4 \textit{\textsc{e}}6 12.d5, Tangatarov – Selegenenko, Ufa 2010, 12...b4 13.dxe6 bxc3 14.exf7+ \textit{\textsc{xf}}7 15.b3.

There has arisen a position like in the variation with 11.\textit{\textsc{d}}d3, but with the difference that White has already played g2-g4. This circumstance is in favour of Black, because after 15...g5?! he fixes the enemy pawn on a square with the same colour as his bishop. If Black succeeds in trading the queens, then he will have a clear advantage in the endgame, because White's bishop will be "bad".

The move 11.\textit{\textsc{ce}}2!? has some venom. In this variation White's knight is very well placed on the c1-square. There, just like on c3, it protects reliably the a2-pawn and Black cannot attack it. 11...\textit{\textsc{c}}4 12.\textit{\textsc{d}}c1 \textit{\textsc{wb}}6. Black's queen frees the way forward of his a-pawn. 13.h4 (13.g4 a5=; 13.\textit{\textsc{ge}}2 a5 14.g4 a4=) Vegjelek – Kreutz, ICCF 2008) 13...a5 14.\textit{\textsc{xc}}4 (The game ends in a draw by a perpetual check in the line: 14.g4 a4 15.\textit{\textsc{dh}}3 a3 16.b3 \textit{\textsc{db}}2 17.\textit{\textsc{dd}}2 \textit{\textsc{c}}4 18.bxc4 bxc4+ 19.\textit{\textsc{db}}3 cxb3 20.cxb3 \textit{\textsc{ea}}4 21.\textit{\textsc{ce}}2 \textit{\textsc{wd}}4 22.bxa4 \textit{\textsc{wb}}4+ 23.\textit{\textsc{da}}1 \textit{\textsc{wd}}4+ 24.\textit{\textsc{db}}1 \textit{\textsc{wb}}4=) 14...bxc4 15.c3 a4 16.a3 \textit{\textsc{ea}}5?!?

11...\textit{\textsc{xe}}h3!?

Black should better exchange immediately the enemy knight, since it might become very active.

\textbf{12.\textit{\textsc{wh}}3}

White must remove his queen from its active position in order to preserve the harmony in his pawn-structure.
After 12.gxh3, Sulypa – Gritsak, Lvov 1995, 12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b8!? 13.h4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c4 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e2 c5\textsubscript{∞}, Black’s pieces are actively placed, while the vulnerability of White’s pawn-structure may hurt him in the future.

![Diagram](image)

12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a4!?  
This is Black’s most precise move. He wishes to open the b-file and to exchange the important defender of the enemy king.

13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xa4  
13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e2? White has no time to retreat his knight. 13...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b4 14.b3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a3! Black sacrifices a piece and develops a crushing attack. 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}xa4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}xa4 16.c3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b8+ 17.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}c2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}xa2+ 18.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b3 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}c1 a3. This pawn should settle the issue. White succeeds in removing his king from the danger zone, but is incapable of coping with the powerful enemy passed pawn. 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b2 21.g3 a2 22.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g2 0–0 23.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a1 e5 24.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f2 exd4 25.cxd4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d5! This knight-sacrifice is decisive. Black opens the e-file and his rook on f8 joins into the attack. 26.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}xa2 (26.exd5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}fe8 27.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}he1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xe2+ 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}xe2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xd4+ 29.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b2+ 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xe3+ 31.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b1–+) 26...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xa2 27.exd5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}fe8 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xb2 29.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xd5++

There arises an approximately equal position after the line: 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d3 c5 14.dxc5 dxc5 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h6 c4 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e3 0–0–0=. Black’s pieces are actively deployed, but his king’s shelter is not so reliable.

13...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}xa4 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h6

14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a3  
It seems also good for Black to play here 14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b8!? 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b6 16.c3 0–0–∞, followed by \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b7, \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b8, with powerful pressure against the b2-square.

15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c4  
White is in a hurry to cover the b-file.

There arises an approximately equal endgame following 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xd2 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xd2 axb2 17.c3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b8 18.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xb2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xb2+ 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}xb2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d7= Garbarino – Schwanek, Chacabuco 1980.

15...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b4!? 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a5= Black’s king is still stranded in the centre, but his threats on the b-file are quite sufficient for at least equality for him.

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Chapter 21  1.e4 d6 2.d4 \textit{\&}f6 3.\textit{\&}c3 g6 4.\textit{\&}f3

His popular alternatives 5.\textit{\&}c4 and 5.\textit{\&}e2 will be analysed in the next chapters.

5.g3 0–0 – see Chapter 17.

5.\textit{\&}e3 0–0 – see Chapter 19.

5.e5 dxe5 6.\textit{\&}xe5 0–0 7.\textit{\&}c4 \textit{\&}fd7 – see Chapter 22.

White is not trying to refute his opponent’s set-up and plans to develop his pieces quickly, focusing on the forthcoming middle game. His last move may be rather unpleasant for the player with Black who would like to try to create counterplay rapidly, since he would hardly manage to organise active actions in the nearest future. On the other hand, White will also have problems to fight for the advantage, because his knight on c3 is a bit misplaced having been developed in front of the pawn on c2.

4...\textit{\&}g7 5.h3

White takes the g4-square under control and prepares the development of his bishop to e3.

It is not good for White to play here 5.\textit{\&}d3 – he has fortified his e4-pawn, but his other central pawn is not protected by his queen anymore. 5...0–0

6.h3 \textit{\&}c6 – see 5.h3.

6.\textit{\&}g5 h6 7.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}g4 8.\textit{\&}d2 e5=

6.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}g4 7.0–0 \textit{\&}c6 or 7.h3 \textit{\&}xf3 8.\textit{\&}xf3 \textit{\&}c6 9.0–0 \textit{\&}d7 – see 6.0–0.

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6.\text{\textgreek{f}2} c5 7.\text{\textgreek{c}3} cxd4 8.cxd4, Torres Ventosa – Jimenez Martinez, Badajoz 2013, 8...\text{\textgreek{g}4}!??

6.0–0 \text{\textgreek{g}4}. Black emphasizes another defect of his opponent’s move 5. The placement of the bishop on d3 and not on e2 allows this rather unpleasant pin. 7.\text{\textgreek{e}3} (7.h3 \text{\textgreek{xf}3} 8.\text{\textgreek{x}f}3 \text{\textgreek{c}6} 9.\text{\textgreek{e}3} – see 7.\text{\textgreek{e}3}) 7...\text{\textgreek{c}6}

8.\text{\textgreek{b}5}. This interesting move is often played by GM Eduardas Rozentalis. White wishes to trade his bishop for the enemy knight and to compromise his opponent’s queenside pawn-structure, reducing the pressure against his d4-pawn. Still, this takes too much time and White is incapable of obtaining an advantage in the opening. 8...\text{\textgreek{d}7} 9.\text{\textgreek{xc}6} bxc6 10. h3. He gets rid of the pin and deprives his opponent of his two-bishop advantage. 10...\text{\textgreek{xf}3} 11.\text{\textgreek{x}f}3 \text{\textgreek{b}8}. Black develops his queen to an active position with tempo. 12.\text{\textgreek{ab}1} (12.b3, Rozentalis – McNab, Koszalin 1997, 12...\text{\textgreek{b}4}!? 13.\text{\textgreek{e}2} e5=) 12...\text{\textgreek{b}7} 13.\text{\textgreek{e}2} \text{\textgreek{ab}8} 14.\text{\textgreek{f}4} c5\text{\textgreek{=}}. Black gets rid of his doubled pawn and obtains a good position, Andriasian – Tkachiev, Nancy 2015.

8.h3. White eliminates the pin, but loses another tempo. 8...\text{\textgreek{x}f}3 9.\text{\textgreek{x}f}3 \text{\textgreek{d}7}. He has problems with the protection of his d4-pawn. 10.d5. Now, after the retreat of his knight, Black will be able to attack the enemy d5-pawn with c7-c6. (After 10.\text{\textgreek{e}2}, Black’s simplest response would be 10...\text{\textgreek{b}4}, depriving White of his two-bishop advantage and simplifying the position. 11.\text{\textgreek{d}2} \text{\textgreek{xd}3} 12.\text{\textgreek{xd}3} c5 13.c3, Meins – Hovhannisyan, Bad Wiessee 2014, 13...\text{\textgreek{c}8}=) 10...\text{\textgreek{ce}5} 11.\text{\textgreek{e}2} c6 12.\text{\textgreek{f}4} \text{\textgreek{xd}3} 13.\text{\textgreek{xd}3}, Wang – Wang, Hefei 2011, 13...\text{\textgreek{c}8}!??, followed by the exchange on d5 after which Black will have at least equal prospects thanks to his counterplay on the semi-open c-file and his active bishop on g7.

White’s plan, connected with the move 5.\text{\textgreek{g}5}, has some venom. He preserves the option to castle on either side of the board. Accordingly, Black must play very precisely. 5...0–0

6.h3 d5 – see 5.h3.
6.\text{\textgreek{d}3} h6 – see 5.\text{\textgreek{d}3}.
6.\text{\textgreek{c}4} \text{\textgreek{xe}4} – see Chapter 22.
6.\_e2 h6 – see Chapter 23.

6.e5. This pawn-activity in the centre seems rather premature, because Black is perfectly prepared for the opening of the game in the centre. 6...\_fd7 7. exd6. The trade of the central e-pawn for the flank c-pawn is in favour of Black (7.\_e2 \_c6 – His piece-pressure against the enemy centre provides him with good counterplay, Voitsekhovsky – Irzhanov, Tomsk 1997.). 7... cxd6 8.\_d2 \_f6. This is the simplest for Black. After the removal of the e5-pawn from the board, his knight can go back to f6. Later, his plans include \_f5 and \_e4, either immediately, or after the preliminary move d6-d5. 9.\_e2, Campora – Madeira, Seville 2009. 9...\_f5=

6.\_d2. It may look like Black has castled prematurely, since now, he must worry about White’s threats \_h6, 0–0–0, followed by a pawn-offensive on the kingside. He has however, an energetic strike against the enemy centre – 6...d5?! This move is not encountered so often in the tournament practice, but it is Black’s fastest road to equality.

It is bad for White to play here 7.e5, because after 7...\_e4, his queen and bishop are hanging at the same time. The exchange of the annoying enemy knight 8.\_xe4 dxe4 would lead to the necessity for White’s knight to retreat to the edge of the board. 9.\_h4, Perry – Boyd, IECC 2008, 9...c5!?

There arises an approximately equal position after 7.exd5 \_xd5 8.\_e4, Watson – McNab, London 1982, 8...\_c6!=

7.\_xf6. White wins a pawn with this move, but this is insufficient to maintain an advantage. 7...exf6! Black opens the e-file for his rook. 8.exd5 (8.\_xd5? f5†) 8...\_d7 9.\_c4. This move is at least straightforward. White is reluctant to give back his extra pawn without a fight. (9.\_e2 \_b6=) 9...\_b6 10.\_b3 \_e8+. Black deprives his opponent of his castling rights. 11.\_f1 a5 12.a4 \_g4 13.\_f4 h5 14. h4 \_f8\_c3. Black’s bishop was very passive on g7, therefore, he transferred it to a more active diagonal. He has the two-bishop advantage as compensation for the sacrificed pawn, while White’s king is misplaced.

5.\_f4. With this move, just like after 5.\_g5, White plans to continue with \_d2 and \_h6. 5...0–0

(diagram)

6.h3 \_c6 – see 5.h3.

6.\_e2 \_bd7 – see Chapter 23.

It would be premature for
1.e4 d6 2.d4 .gf6 3.gc3 g6 4.gf3 g7 5.h3 0-0 6.ge3 a6

White to choose here 6.e5  gh5 7.ge5 gc6 — his centre has become a juicy target for Black's pieces, Moussard — Glek, Belgium 2014.

6.gd2 c5!? This energetic strike against the centre is Black's simplest way of equalising.

Now, White must choose the future pawn-structure.

7.d5. The transfer to the Benoni system is not his best decision. He has lost tempi for the moves  gf4 and gd2, so White fails to evacuate in time his king away from the centre and to connect his rooks. 7...a6 8.a4 (It would be too optimistic for White to play here 8.gh6. He cannot obtain anything meaningful on the kingside, while Black will at first out the enemy knight away from the c3-square and then will undermine the d5-pawn with the move e7-e6, seizing the initiative. 8...b5 9.gxg7 hxg7 10.gf4 b4 11.ge1 e6 12.dxe6 xex6† Ziadinov — Boros, Budapest 2004.) 8...gd4 10.ge1 b5. Black has seized completely the initiative. 11.f3 gc8 12.gc1 b4 13.ghb1 gc7 14.gc2, German — Trifunovic, Rio de Janeiro 1952, 14... gh5!? 15.ge3 e6†

7.dxc5. After this trade of pawns, there arises a rapid transfer into an endgame. 7...dxc5 8. 0–0 0  gxd2+ 9.gxd2 (9.xd2, Lalic — Horvath, Haarlem, 1998, 9...gd4!? 10.ge1 gc6 =) 9...gc6 10.h3, Vorotnikov — Skousen, Copenhagen 1990, 10...b6?? = — The endgame is approximately equal, because neither side has pawn-weakenesses.

7.gh6. This attempt to organise an attack is doomed to failure. After 7...gxh6 8.gxh6 cxd4 9. gxd4 gc6 10.0–0 0  gb6, White's knight cannot retreat, because of the loss of the pawn on f2. 11.gd2 gxd4 12.gxd4 gbxd4 13.xd4. There has arisen an approximately equal endgame, which is typical for the Dragon variation in the Sicilian Defence. 13.ge6 14.ge2 gc8 15.h3 fc5 16.f4 fxc8 = Gazic — Grafl, Moerlenbach 2004.
Chapter 21

5...0–0

6.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3

6.c4 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xe4 – see Chapter 22.

6.e2 c5 – see Chapter 23.

6.a4. This move does not contribute to the development of White’s pieces. Besides this, Black can continue now with 6...\text{\textit{\textbullet}} c6 7.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3 b6, preparing the development of his bishop on b7. He should not be afraid of 8.d5, because Black can counter it with 8...\text{\textit{\textbullet}} b4. This move has become possible after 6.a4, since White is incapable of playing a2-a3. 9.a5 bxa5 10.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xa5, Zhou – Bauer, England 2016, 10...\text{\textit{\textbullet}} d7?!∞ Black has better development and it would be very risky for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice: 11.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xa7?! \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xa7 12.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xa7 c5 13.dxc6 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xc6 14.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} d3 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} a8. Black restores the material balance with the help of this double attack. 15.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} d4 e5 16.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xe4+]

White’s attempt to maintain the pawn-tension in the centre with 8.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3 would enable Black to obtain good counter chances. 8...exd4 9.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xd4 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xd4 10.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xd4 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} e6 11.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} d2, Metz – Koeller, Germany 1993. Now, at first he ousts the enemy bishop from d3 – 11...c5!? 12.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3 c4 13.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e2 and then he exploits the insufficient protection of the e4-pawn and follows with 13...b5∞

The position is simplified after 8.dxe5 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} xe5 9.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} xe5 dxe5 10.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} g5 c6 11.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} f3. The pin of the enemy knight does not promise White much. 11.e6 12.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} ad1 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} e7 13.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} e3 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} b4++; Oleksak – Kolanowski, ICCF 2011.

8.d5. After this move, the position in the centre is stabilised. 8...\text{\textit{\textbullet}} c7. White will have problems later to organise active actions on the queenside, since he will have to lose time for the retreat of his knight if he wishes to advance c2-c4. 9.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} g5 (9.e3 \text{\textit{\textbullet}} e8 10.\text{\textit{\textbullet}} h2 c6=, followed by f7-

6.\textit{\&}f4. This placement of White's bishop is more vulnerable than on c3, because after 6...\textit{\&}c6, he must be constantly on the alert about the possibilities e7-e5 and \textit{\&}xd4+e7-e5.

7.d5 e5!?∞ Finnlaugsson – Balashov, Kaunas 2012.

7.e5 \textit{\&}d7 8.exd6 cxd6 9.d5 \textit{\&}ce5 10.\textit{\&}xe5, De Firmian – Kaiszauri, Reykjavik 1982, 10...\textit{\&}xe5!?∞

Following 7.\textit{\&}e2, Black has an interesting pawn-sacrifice: 7...e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\textit{\&}xd8 \textit{\&}xd8 10.\textit{\&}xe5, Schaper – Waltermann, Bad Driburg 1994, 10...\textit{\&}d4!? 11.\textit{\&}d1 \textit{\&}e8∞ – The activity of Black's pieces compensates fully his minimal material deficit.

7.\textit{\&}d2 e5! He exploits his lead in development and equalises with an energetic pawn-break in the centre. 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.\textit{\&}xd8 \textit{\&}xd8 10.\textit{\&}xe5?! This is not the best decision for White. (He had better think about equalising: 10.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}e6= G.Kuzmin – Popovic, Kladovo 1980.) 10...\textit{\&}b4. This is the point. Suddenly, White has problems with the protection of his c2-pawn. 11.\textit{\&}c1. This move does not solve his problems, because at first Black ousts his opponent’s bishop from the c1-h6 diagonal and then, removes his rook from the c1-square. 11...\textit{\&}h5 12.\textit{\&}h2 \textit{\&}h6∞ Acedo – Benz, Argentina 1999.

6.\textit{\&}g5. Now, just like after 5.\textit{\&}g5+6.\textit{\&}d2, Black equalises easily with 6...d5!?

7.exd5 \textit{\&}xd5 8.\textit{\&}e4 \textit{\&}c6= Rosell – Marin, Lund 2016.

Following 7.\textit{\&}xf6 exf6 8.exd5, Black will regain the d5-pawn after a while. 8...\textit{\&}e8+. This is an important check. 9.\textit{\&}e2. The bishop is pinned and White fails to protect his pawn with the move \textit{\&}c4. 9...\textit{\&}d7 10.0–0 \textit{\&}b6. Black plays this just in time. His knight has not only attacked the pawn, but has also deprived the enemy bishop of the c4-square. 11.\textit{\&}b5 \textit{\&}e7 12.\textit{\&}e1 \textit{\&}xe1+ 13.\textit{\&}xe1 \textit{\&}f5=, followed by \textit{\&}d5, Karl – Buglisi, Arco 2015.

6...a6!?
Black's plans include the pawn-advance b7-b5. With this idea, it is better for him to play a7-a6, and not c7-c6, because at first the pawn on c6 deprives his own knight of this square and secondly if the bishop goes to b7, it would be severely restricted by the pawn on c6.

We will analyse now A) 7.\textit{d}3 and B) 7.a4.

7.\textit{c}4. This is not White’s most logical move, because his bishop will come under attack with tempo on this square. 7...b5 8.\textit{b}3 e6 9.e5 dxe5 10.\textit{xe}5 \textit{b}7 11.0-0, Anwuli – Balogun, Accra 2016, 11...\textit{c}6!?∞ Black exchanges the powerful enemy knight and obtains a quite acceptable position.

7.e5. White ousts the enemy knight from f6 and begins active actions on the kingside. Still, Black can hold the defence with a precise play. 7...\textit{fd}7 8.e6. White sharpens the position with a positional pawn-sacrifice. (8.exd6 cxd6 9.\textit{c}4 \textit{c}6= Baldursson – Bjornsson, Reykjavik 1997) 8...fxe6 9.h4! White’s h-pawn joins into the attack. 9...\textit{f}6 10.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}6 11.h5. He sacrifices another pawn. 11...\textit{hx}5 12.\textit{g}5 \textit{f}6 13.\textit{hx}7 \textit{hx}7 14.\textit{hx}7 \textit{hx}7 15.\textit{h}5+ \textit{g}8 16.\textit{xg}6 \textit{f}6. Black’s rook frees a square for his king. White’s attack looks very powerful, but he is a rook down after all... 17.0-0-0 \textit{xg}6 18.\textit{xg}6 e5! Now, if Black manages to play \textit{f}5, after \textit{f}8, or \textit{d}4, he will manage to parry his opponent’s attack. 19.\textit{h}1 \textit{xd}4 20.\textit{h}7 \textit{f}8. It may look like White’s attack has reaches its dead end, but he can still give a perpetual check. 21.\textit{g}xg7+ \textit{xg}7 22.\textit{e}8+ \textit{h}7 23.\textit{h}5= Tesic – Wukits, ICCF 2014.

7.\textit{e}2 b5 8.e5 (8.a3 \textit{b}7) 8...\textit{fd}7 9.e6!? We are already familiar with this positional pawn-sacrifice. 9...fxe6

Following 10.h4 \textit{f}6 11.h5 \textit{hx}5 12.\textit{g}5, White obtains a powerful attack for the two sacrificed pawns, but Black’s defensive resources prove to be sufficient to maintain the balance. 12...\textit{f}6 13.
d3 (13.\textit{g}4 b4 14.\textit{c}ce4 \textit{xe}4 15.\textit{c}xe4 e5 16.dxe5 dxe5 17.\textit{e}e2 w\textit{xd}1+ 18.\textit{xd}1. The queens have been exchanged indeed, but Black will still have problems to neutralise his opponent’s initiative. 18...\textit{c}c6 19.\textit{g}5 \textit{d}d4 20.\textit{c}xh7 \textit{xd}8 21.\textit{c}c4+ e6 22.\textit{xd}d4 \textit{xd}4 23.\textit{xd}d4 exd4 24.\textit{g}5 f8 25.\textit{xd}e6 d3 26.\textit{c}d3 \textit{xb}2. Black has given back his extra material, but has managed to simplify considerably the position. 27.\textit{h}6 \textit{xe}6 28.\textit{c}xe6+ \textit{f}7 29.\textit{c}xc7 \textit{a}a7 30.\textit{d}d5 \textit{b}7 31.\textit{h}h7+ \textit{g}g7 32.\textit{h}h4 g5 33.\textit{e}g4 \textit{h}5 34.\textit{x}g5 \textit{a}a5 35.\textit{d}d1 \textit{xa}2 36.\textit{xb}4 \textit{xf}2 37.\textit{c}xa6 \textit{h}6 38.\textit{g}3 \textit{f}4 39.\textit{e}f3 \textit{xf}3 40.\textit{g}xf3 \textit{e}e6=) 13...\textit{w}e8 14.\textit{c}xh7 \textit{ch}7 15.\textit{c}xh7. White wishes to crush the enemy monarch with the help of sacrifices. 15...b4 16.\textit{g}g4 \textit{f}5 17.\textit{h}xg7+ \textit{hxg}7. Black has given back most of the extra material and has succeeded in parrying the first and most dangerous wave of the attack. 18.\textit{c}e2 \textit{d}d7 19.\textit{c}xf5 exf5 20.\textit{g}g5 \textit{f}7 21.0–0–0 \textit{c}f6 22.\textit{h}h1 \textit{xa}2 23.\textit{h}h6+ \textit{f}7 24.\textit{g}g5 \textit{d}7 25.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 26.\textit{h}h4+ \textit{f}7 27.\textit{h}h7+ \textit{f}6 28.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}8. Now, White has nothing better than to force a draw by a perpetual check: 29.\textit{g}h4+ \textit{f}7 30.\textit{d}5 g5 31.\textit{h}h7+ \textit{g}7 32.\textit{h}h5+ \textit{g}6 33.\textit{h}h7+ \textit{g}7.

10.\textit{c}g5 \textit{b}6

(diagram)

11.\textit{g}4 \textit{f}5! Black has sacrificed the exchange and covers reliably the e6-square. 12.0–0 h6 13.\textit{xf}5 exf5 14.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}8. Black has the two-bishop advantage and a pawn for the sacrificed exchange. What is very important is that there are no open files on the board and White’s rooks have no active prospects. 15.a4 b4 16.\textit{e}e2 a5 17.c3 \textit{a}a6 18.\textit{e}e1 \textit{f}7 19.\textit{c}c1 g5!– \textit{∞} – Black begins active actions on the kingside, A.Ivanov – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

11.h4 h6 12.\textit{d}3 \textit{e}8 13.h5. This piece-sacrifice is interesting, but still insufficient to maintain an edge. 13...\textit{x}g5 14.\textit{x}g6 \textit{d}8d7 15.\textit{h}h5 \textit{f}6 16.\textit{x}g5 \textit{d}bd5 17.\textit{c}xh5 exd5 18.\textit{h}h7 \textit{g}xh7 19.\textit{c}xd5+ e6 20.\textit{g}xh7+ \textit{h}8 21.\textit{c}xa8. White has regained his rook and even has two extra pawns, but Black seizes the initiative. 21...e5 22.\textit{d}xe5 \textit{xe}5 23.\textit{c}c6 \textit{xb}2 24.\textit{d}d1 \textit{g}4 25.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}3+. The exchange of queens is Black’s simplest road to equality. 26.\textit{c}xc3 \textit{xc}3+ 27.\textit{d}2 \textit{xd}2+ 28.\textit{c}xd2 \textit{f}5= There is just a few material left on the board, so the most likely result in this endgame is a draw.

Following 7.\textit{w}d2 b5 8.e5 (8.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}7 – see 7.\textit{d}3), Black can exploit the placement of the enemy queen on d2 with the move 8...b4.
9. \( \text{dxe2} \text{ dxe5} \) 10. \( \text{dxe5} \text{ wxd2}+ \) 11. \( \text{exd2} \text{ e4} \) 12. \( \text{xb4} \text{ c6} \). Black regains the pawn. 13. \( \text{a3} \text{ xe5} \) 14. \( \text{xe5} \text{ xe5} \) 15. \( \text{d1} \text{ b7} \) White’s kingside is not developed yet and this may become an important factor in this endgame, Prasca Sosa – Valdes, Havana 2008.

9. \( \text{exf6} \text{ bxc3} \) 10. \( \text{xc3} \text{ xf6} \) 11. \( \text{c4} \text{ c5} \) Hulse – Conterno, ICCF 2011.

A) 7. \( \text{d3} \)
The bishop protects the e4-pawn from this square.

7... \( \text{b5} \)

8.0–0

8. \( \text{e2} \text{ b7} \) 9. \( \text{e5} \text{ dxe5} \) 10. \( \text{dxe5} \text{ d}5= \) Willoughby – Lifshitz, IECG 2005.

White cannot obtain much with the move 8.e5, because Black is better prepared for the opening of the game in the centre. 8... \( \text{dxe5} \) 9. \( \text{dxe5} \text{ d}5= \)

10. \( \text{d2} \), Hebden – Ghasi, Torquay 2013, 10... \( \text{b7} \)!

After 10. \( \text{d2} \), Black can create good counterplay against the enemy e5-pawn with the line: 10... \( \text{xc3} \) 11. \( \text{xc3} \) \( \text{b7} \) 12.0–0–0, Gaehwiler – Karthikeyan, Doha 2014, 12... \( \text{d7} \)!

10. \( \text{d5} \text{ wxd5} \). His queen is very powerful at the centre of the board. 11. \( \text{e2} \text{ b7} \) 12. \( \text{c4} \), Kveinys – Ponomariov, Lubniewice 1998 (12.0–0, Korotylev – Balashov, Nizhnij Novgorod 1998, 12... \( \text{d7} \)!? 13. \( \text{f4} \) \( \text{c5} \) – with a two-bishop advantage for Black) 12... \( \text{e6} \)!

He sacrifices the pawn on b5, with the idea to exploit his lead in development and also relying on the vulnerability of White’s pawn on a2. 13. \( \text{xb5} \text{ axb5} \) 14.0–0 \( \text{xf3} \) 15. \( \text{xf3} \text{ xa2} \) 16. \( \text{xa2} \text{ xa2} \) 17. \( \text{e2} \text{ xe5} \) 18. \( \text{h6} \text{ g7} \) 19. \( \text{gxg7} \text{ xg7} \) 20. \( \text{e5} \) + \( \text{g8} \)
21.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}\texttt{x}e7} \textit{c6} – Black has not only restored the material balance, but has also won a pawn. White must still prove that the activity of his pieces is sufficient to maintain the balance.

8.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}\texttt{d}2 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}7}. White has problems with the protection of his e4-pawn.

Following 9.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\texttt{h}6 \textit{b}4 10.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}\texttt{x}g7 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}g7 11.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\texttt{e}2 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}e4}, Black manages to exchange his b-pawn for the enemy e-pawn and obtains a very good position. 12.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{e}4 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}e4 13.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}\texttt{x}b4 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}7 14.0-0 \textit{c5}= Toros Solis de Ovando – Blanco Gramajo, Argentina 2001.

After 9.e5 \textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\texttt{5} 10.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\texttt{h}6 \textit{d}xe5 11.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{x}g7 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}g7 12.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\texttt{e}4}, Black can get rid of the pin of his knight with 12...\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}\texttt{a}7 13.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{d}5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}d5 14. \textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{d}x5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}d5 15.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\texttt{e}5 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}d2+ 16. \textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{x}d2 \textit{c5}= – The position has been considerably simplified and there has arisen a transfer to an approximately equal endgame, Pott – Zaichuk, IECG 2005.

9.a3. White solves radically the problem with the enemy pawn-advance b5-b4. Still, his last move is not so helpful to his development. 9...\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}\texttt{d}7 10.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\texttt{h}6 (10. 0-0 \textit{c5} – see 8.0-0) 10...e5 11. \textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{g}7 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}g7. Black has no difficulties at all. In addition, White must play precisely in order not to end up in an inferior position, because his bishop is restricted by his own pawn on e4, while its black counterpart is considerably more active. 12.dxe5, El Taher – Hari-krishna, Sharjah 2003, 12...\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{e}5!? 13.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\texttt{e}5 dxe5 14.0-0-0 \textit{c5}=}

8.a4. White wishes to exploit the vulnerability of his opponent’s queenside pawns. Black must defend accurately. 8...\textbf{\textit{\texttt{b}}\texttt{4} 9.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\texttt{e}2 \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}7 10.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\texttt{3} \textit{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}\texttt{d}7

Following 11.c3 bxc3 12.bxc3, Jovanovic – Nestorovic, Sarajevo 2014, at first Black prevents the possibility d4-d5 and then advances c7-c5, obtaining a quite acceptable position. 12...\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\texttt{6} 13.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}\texttt{2} \textit{c5=}

After 11.\textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\texttt{2}, Black can inflict an energetic strike against his enemy centre: 11...\textit{c5} 12.c3, Bachmann – Peralta, Deizisau 2009, 12...\textit{d5!} \textit{∞}

11.0-0 \textbf{\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\texttt{8}!? This is his most precise move. (Black cannot
equalise with the straightforward approach 11...c5, since after 12. c3=, White can exploit the vulnerability of the enemy pawns on the queenside.) 12.c3 bxc3 13.bxc3 e5 14.d5 $\texttt{xd}5!$ Black sacrifices temporarily a piece and simplifies advantageously the position. 15. exd5 e4 16.$\texttt{dxe4 } \texttt{dxe4 } 17.$\texttt{xe4 } $\texttt{xe}4=$

8.$\texttt{e}2$. The transfer of White's knight to the g3-square takes too much time. 8...$\texttt{bd}7$

Following 9.0–0 c5 10.c3 e5 11.$\texttt{d}2$ $\texttt{b}7$ 12.$\texttt{g}3$, Reynolds – Mangione, Leicester 2010, Black can seize the initiative with the line: 12...exd4!? 13.cxd4 d5 14. exd5 c4 15.$\texttt{c}2$ $\texttt{e}8$ 16.$\texttt{g}5$ $\texttt{c}7=$ – He will regain easily the pawn on d5 and then White will have no compensation for his isolated pawn. In addition, Black will have a clear-cut plan for actions in the middle game, connected with the advance of his queenside pawns.

9.$\texttt{g}3$ c5 10.c3 e5 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.0–0 c4. He occupies space on the queenside. 13.$\texttt{c}2$ $\texttt{b}7$ 14.$\texttt{d}2$ $\texttt{e}8$ 15.$\texttt{ad}1$ $\texttt{e}7$ 16.$\texttt{h}6$ $\texttt{c}5$ 17. $\texttt{xg}7$ $\texttt{xg}7$ 18.$\texttt{e}3$ h6 19.$\texttt{d}2$

$\texttt{ad}8=$, followed by a6-a5, beginning to rearrange his pawns on squares opposite of the colour of his bishop, Lobron – Seirawan, Luzern 1982.

8...$\texttt{b}7$

9.$\texttt{b}4$

White fixes the enemy pawn on b5, but weakens his own queenside pawn-structure.

9.$\texttt{d}2$. White protects his pawn on e4, but his knight will be obviously misplaced on this square. 9...$\texttt{bd}7=$ Gazizov – Ioffe, Kazan 2006.

9.a3 $\texttt{bd}7$. Black is now ready to attack his opponent's pawn-centre.
After 10.d5, Yanofsky – Keene, Nice 1974, it seems very good for Black to continue with 10...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ex}e8}}??, preparing e7-e6.

White cannot equalise with 10.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wd}d2}}, because after 10...c5 11.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dc}c4}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{de}e2}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dc}}c5}, Black’s threat to capture on e4 would force White to part with his powerful dark-squared bishop. 13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{xc}xc5}} dxc5 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{we}e3}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wc}c7}}\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{f}}} Bukhari – Alattar, Al Ain 2015.

10.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ee}e1}} c5 11.d5 e6 12.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{de}f4}}, Ambartsumova – Socko, Plovdiv 2014 (after 12.dxe6 fxe6 13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{gg}g5}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wc}c7}}, Black would obtain a powerful pawn-centre, Afek – Gofshtein, Herzliya 1993) 12...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wb}b6}}?? – White’s centre needs permanent protection.

\textbf{9...c5}

Black obtains a very good game after this pawn-break.

\textbf{10.dxc5} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{fd}f7}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wd}d2}} dxc5 12.bxc5 \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wc}c7}}. He regains his pawn, while White must still worry about his weaknesses on the queenside. 13.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ac}a1}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{xc}c5}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dd}d5}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{xd}xd5}} 15.exd5 \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{xd}xd3}} 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wd}d3}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ec}ec8}}?= – Black’s prospects are not worse at all, Pecka – Nyvlt, ICCF 2012.

\textbf{B) 7.a4}

White prevents his opponent from occupying additional space on the queenside.

\textbf{7...b6}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\caption{Position after 7...b6}
\end{figure}

Black prepares the development of his bishop to b7 after which his fianchettoed bishops will exert powerful pressure against White’s centre.

We will deal now with \textbf{B1) 8.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dd}d3}} and \textbf{B2) 8.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ac}c4}}.}

About 8.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{wd}d2}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{bb}b7}} 9.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dd}d3}} e6 – see 8.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{dd}d3}}.

8.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{bh}h2}}??! White’s queenside pieces are not developed yet, so this transfer of the knight to g4 seems premature. 8...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{bb}b7}} 9.f3. He protects reliably the e4-pawn, but weakens the g3-square. 9...c5 10.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{gg}g4}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{bh}h5}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{ch}h6+}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{hh}h8}}\textcolor{red}{\text{\textsc{f}}} Bruned – Gurevich, Andorra 2005.
8.g3. This plan, connected with the fianchetto of White's bishop, does not seem appropriate, since following 8...\texttt{b}7, White will have difficulties with the protection of his e4-pawn and will be forced to remove his knight to a passive position. 9.\texttt{d}2 c5

It is now bad for White to play 10.dxc5, because of 10...bxc5 11.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{c}6 12.0-0 \texttt{b}8 13.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{d}7 14.e3 a5! After the removal of White's knight from the c3-square, Black does not need to fear the weakening of the b5-square. 15.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{a}6 and his bishop will exert powerful pressure against the enemy position from this square, Ermenkov – Kaiszauri, Copenhagen 1982.

10.d5 e6\textasciitilde Black has very good counterplay. 11.dxe6?! fx\texttt{e}6 12.\texttt{g}2 d5\textasciitilde Tringov – Bogdanovski, Skopje 1991.

8.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{b}7. White has problems with the protection of his e4-pawn, because his attempt to defend it with \texttt{d}3 will lead to the loss of a tempo.

(diagram)

9.e5 dxe5 10.dxe5 \texttt{d}5\textasciitilde Kris-

11.dxe6?! fx\texttt{e}6 12.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{c}6\textasciitilde I. Ivanov – Benjamin, Reno 1999.
11.\&c4?! exd5 12.exd5 b5. You can see now the consequences of the premature activity of White’s knight. The trade of the b and d-pawns would be clearly in favour of Black. 13.axb5 axb5 14.\&xa8 \&xa8 15.\&xb5 \&xd5 16.\&c1, Larsen – Fries Nielsen, Denmark 1989. Here, Black can exploit the defencelessness of the pawn on g2 and remove his knight with tempo 16...\&e7!? 17.0–0 d5+

11.\&b3 exd5 12.exd5 \&e8 13. 0–0 \&bd7= Kovalev – Seul, Clichy 1991.

11.\&f3 exd5 12.exd5 \&bd7 13. \&c4 \&e5 14.\&xe5 dxe5= Kreuscher – Mohrlok, Germany 2007.

8.e5. This move leads to a very sharp game. White outst the enemy knight from the f6-square and begins active actions on the kingside. 8...\&fd7

The move 9.exd6 does not seem so logical. 9...cxd6 10.g3 (10.d5 \&c7 11.\&e2, Zhigalko – Blit, Puerto Madryn 2009, 11...\&b7?! 12.0–0 \&f6=) 10...\&b7 11. \&g2 \&c6 12.0–0 \&f6 13.\&g5 d5= Thorhallsson – Petursson, Munkebo 1998.

9.e6!? This move is a consequent continuation of White’s plan begun with the move 8.e5 – he sacrifices a pawn in order to seize the initiative. 9...fxe6

10.h4 \&f6 11.\&d3 – see 10. \&d3.

10.\&g5. This move leads to a sharp position. 10...\&f6 11.h4 \&c6 12.h5 gxh5 13.\&d3, Teran Alvarez – Conquest, Calvia 2005. White’s initiative may look very powerful. Still, after 13...h6?! 14.\&f3 \&b4 15.\&g6 c5∞, he has not any direct threats, while Black has two extra pawns.

After 10.\&d3 \&f6 11.h4, Black should follow the classical principles and counter his opponent’s flank attack with a counter strike in the centre. 11...c5!? 12.h5 \&xh5 13.\&xh5 gxh5 14.\&g5 \&e8 15.dxc5 bxc5∞. In this sharp position White will not achieve much with a straightforward play for a checkmate. 16.\&xh7+ \&h8 17.\&d3?! \&c6! Black is not afraid of his opponent’s next move. 18.\&g8 \&f5. He covers the dangerous diagonal. 19.\&f7 \&f8 20.\&xh5, Tavoularis – Chapman, Coulsdon 2008, 20...\&h6–+
10.\texttt{Cc4}. White develops with tempo his bishop to an active position. 10...\texttt{Cf6} 11.d5 \texttt{C6}!? Black begins a fight for the central squares. 12.\texttt{Qg5} \texttt{Cc7} 13.dxe6 \texttt{d5}. He has given back the extra pawn, but has occupied the \texttt{d5}-outpost. 14.\texttt{xe2} \texttt{h6} 15.\texttt{f7} \texttt{xe6} 16.\texttt{xh6+} Black exchanges his e-pawn for the enemy h-pawn and wishes to exploit later the vulnerability of his opponent's king. Still, this would not be an easy task, because Black's pieces come rapidly to help in the defence of his king. 16.\texttt{h7} 17.\texttt{g4} \texttt{bd7} 18.0-0 \texttt{f5} 19.\texttt{xf6+} \texttt{xf6} 20.\texttt{g4} \texttt{g7} 21.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{xf5} 22.\texttt{b1} \texttt{e5} -- Black's powerful central pawns compensate the slight vulnerability of his monarch, Ljubicic -- Burghoff, ICCF 2012.

\textbf{B1) 8.\texttt{d3}}

White develops his bishop and fortifies the e4-pawn in the process.

\textbf{8...\texttt{C8b7}}

\textbf{9.0-0}

9.\texttt{C2d2}. White prepares the exchange of the dark-squared bishops. 9...\texttt{e6} 10.\texttt{h6} (10.0-0 \texttt{bd7} -- see 9.0-0) 10...\texttt{c5}. After the removal of the bishop from \texttt{e3}, the d4-square is weakened. 11.\texttt{xg7} \texttt{g7} 12.e5. White begins immediate active actions in the centre without losing time for castling. Still, Black's defensive resources are sufficient to maintain the balance. 12...\texttt{dxe5} 13.\texttt{dxe5} \texttt{d5} 14.\texttt{e4}. This pin of the knight is not dangerous for Black, because he can counter it with 14...\texttt{a7}!?, not only protecting his bishop, but also preparing \texttt{c6}, \texttt{d7}. 15.\texttt{d1} \texttt{c6} 16.0-0 \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 18.\texttt{xd5}, Okhotnik -- Chernin, Hungary 2000, 18...\texttt{xd5}!?=  

\textbf{9...\texttt{e6}?!}

Black does not play immediately \texttt{c5}, because White will counter it with \texttt{d4-d5}, restricting considerably the mobility of the bishop on \texttt{b7}. 

\textbf{10.\texttt{e1} \texttt{bd7}}
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 g6 4.♗f3 ♘g7 5.h3 0-0 6.♗e3 a6 7.a4 b6

The pin of the knight cannot create problems for Black.
11.♗h6 c5 12.♗f1 cxd4 – see 11.♗f1.
11.♗f1 c5 12.♗h6 cxd4 13.♗xd4 ♗c8 = Wagener – Parligas, La Pobla de Lillet 2006. There has arisen a good version for Black of the Sicilian Defence. White is incapable of exploiting the weakness of the enemy d6-pawn, because Black’s pieces are perfectly deployed,
11...♗b8?!
This is his most precise move. Black should better remove his queen away from the pin.

It seems premature for him to choose here: 11...e5 12.dxe5 ♘xe5 13.♗xe5 dxe5 14.♖d1 ♗d6 15.♕e2=, followed by ♗c4 and White maintains rather unpleasant pressure, Spassky – Sznapik, Thessaloniki 1988; or 11...c5 12.♗xe5 ♘xe5 13.♗d5= Kubikova – Chilingirova, Chrudim 1994. It has become unclear why Black has developed his bishop on b2 at the first place, since now, it will be restricted by the pawn on d5.

11.♗g5
12.\textit{\textbf{B}}f1 \textbf{c5}. This is the right moment for this move! 13.\textit{\textbf{B}}ad1 \textit{\textbf{cxd4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{B}}xd4 \textit{\textbf{w}}c7 15.\textit{\textbf{h}}6 \textit{\textbf{f}}c8 16.\textit{\textbf{Axg7}} \textit{\textbf{Xg7}} 17.\textit{\textbf{B}}b3 \textit{\textbf{c5}}= – Black’s active pieces and his dominance over the semi-open c-file compensate the slight weakness of his d6-pawn, Savic – Todorovic, Banja Koviljaca 2013.

\textbf{B2) 8.\textbf{c4}}

White develops his bishop to an active position. Still, besides pluses, the placement of his bishop on c4 has some defects as well.

\textbf{8...e6}

White must consider now the possibility d6-d5.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{9.0–0}

\textbf{9.g5 b7 10.\textit{\textbf{W}}e2 h6} – see \textbf{9.\textit{\textbf{W}}e2}.

\textbf{9.d5 exd5 10.exd5 b7 11.0–0 \textit{\textbf{e}}e8} – see \textbf{9.0–0}.

\textbf{9.\textit{\textbf{W}}e2 b7 10.g5}. White’s pieces are deployed very actively, but this is only at first sight. Following 10...h6 11.\textit{\textbf{h}}4 g5 12.\textit{\textbf{g}}3, Black inflicts an energetic strike against the enemy centre 12...d5! 13.\textit{\textbf{d}}d3 c5\textsuperscript{=} and seizes completely the initiative, Werner – Danailov, Toulouse 1990.

\textbf{9.\textit{\textbf{W}}d2 b7 10.d5}. White restricts the enemy bishop on b7, but after 10...exd5 11.exd5 \textit{\textbf{e}}e8 12.0–0 \textit{\textbf{e}}e4, Black manages to trade favourably the knights. 13.\textit{\textbf{d}}xe4 \textit{\textbf{exe4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{d}}d4, Kashtanov – Ong, Singapore 2003, 14...\textit{\textbf{xd4}}!\textsuperscript{=} 15.\textit{\textbf{xd4}} c5 16.dxc6 \textit{\textbf{xc6}} 17.c3 \textit{\textbf{xd4}} 18.\textit{\textbf{cxd4}} \textit{\textbf{c8}}=

\textbf{9.e5}. This activity in the centre does not provide White with much, since following 9...dxe5 10.\textit{\textbf{d}}xe5 b7, Black’s fianchettoed bishops are perfectly deployed. 11.0–0 \textit{\textbf{c6}}. He prepared the exchange of the powerful enemy knight. 12.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} (12.\textit{\textbf{xe2}} \textit{\textbf{exe5}} 13.\textit{\textbf{dxc6}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xd5}} \textit{\textbf{xd5}} 15.\textit{\textbf{xd5}} exd5 16.f4 f6\textsuperscript{=} – Black forces the trade of the pawn on e5, which was restricting the bishop on g7, Godena – Hodgson, Horgen 1994.) 12...\textit{\textbf{xc6}} 13.\textit{\textbf{we2}}. The threat against the pawn on a6 is not dangerous for Black. 13...\textit{\textbf{b7}} 14.\textit{\textbf{ad1}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} 15.\textit{\textbf{g5}} (15.\textit{\textbf{fe1}} \textit{\textbf{b4}} 16.\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}}= Sznapik – Zaischik, Tbilisi 1988) 15...\textit{\textbf{fe8}}. Black’s position is solid and his bishop on b7 exerts powerful pressure against the enemy kingside. 16.\textit{\textbf{xf6}} \textit{\textbf{xf6}} 17.\textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{exe4}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe4}}, Kavalek – Pfleger, Manila 1974, 18...c6=, followed by b6-b5.
Black has less space, so it would be useful for him to trade either the knights after \( \text{d}e4 \), or the rooks on the open e-file, or everything altogether.

12.\( \text{e}1 \text{ bd}7 \)

13.\( \text{d}4 \)

This is a logical move. Now, Black can begin exchanges on the e-file.

There arises a more complicated position after 13.\( \text{d}4 \text{ c}5 \) 14.\( \text{f}3 \), but even then, following 14...\( \text{d}f7!\)\( = \) and then \( \text{e}5 \), Black would have nothing to complain about, Rivas Romero – Castro Salguero, ICCF 2009.

13.\( \text{d}2 \text{ c}5 \) 14.\( \text{d}4 \text{ xe}1+ \) 15.\( \text{xe}1 \text{ f}8 \). Black prepares the trade of the other couple of rooks. 16.b4 \( \text{c}d7 \) 17.\( \text{d}3 \). White’s attempt to squeeze the rook on a8 with the protection of the pawn on a6 fails, because Black can counter it with the simple response 17...a5, for example: 18.\( \text{bxa}5 \text{ xa}5 \) 19.\( \text{b}b5 \text{ c}5 \) 20.\( \text{c}4 \text{ a}8= \) – White’s pieces are more
actively placed indeed, but Black has superior pawn-structure and a solid position, Blattner – Zaugg, ICCF 2015.

13...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe1+ 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}f8 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}f1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}c5 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d1}}}

White is reluctant to allow further exchanges, therefore, he does not place his rook on the e-file.

16...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e8!}

Black exploits the defencelessness of the enemy a4-pawn and transfers his queen to the d7-square with tempo. It can go later to f5 from there.

17.b3

17.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d7 18.b3 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e8=} Strautins – Barreras Garcia, ICCF 2006.

17...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d7 18.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}f5 19.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e2 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e8 20.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}f3 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}g5 21.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d3 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}fe4}}}

After this thematic move, the exchanges are unavoidable.

22.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xd4 23.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe4 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe4 24.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe4 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe4 25.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xe4 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}f6}}}

26.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}e8+}

26.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}h2 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}g7=} Yarmolyuk – Lanin, LSS 2007.

26...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}g7 27.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}b8 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}b5! This is Black’s simplest road to the draw. 28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xb7 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xc4 29.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xc4 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d2.}}}

White has an extra pawn, but Black’s queen is very active.

30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}b1 (30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xc7? } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d1+= 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}h2 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}xc2= ) 30...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}c3. Now, White has nothing better but to comply with the triple repetition. 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}a2 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}d2 32.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}b1 } \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbullet}c3=}}}}
This move is seemingly active and promising. This is however illusory, because White’s bishop on c4 is rather vulnerable. Black has a simplifying combination – this is the temporary sacrifice of the knight \(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe4} \), followed by \(\text{d6-d5}\). White must consider permanently this possibility. Meanwhile, the move 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textcelsius}}\text{c4},\) contrary to 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textcelsius}}\text{e2},\) does not prevent the pin of the knight – \(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{g4}.\)

5...0–0

Before playing \(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe4},\) Black should better castle at first, so that after \(\text{\texttt{\textbl}}\text{x7} \) he can capture the enemy bishop with his rook.

6.0–0

Besides this natural move, White has a choice between numerous other possibilities. Neither of them however, promises him any advantage and Black sometimes even seizes the initiative.

6.e5. This pawn-break is premature and only leads to simplifications. 6...\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe5} \) 7.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe5} \) 8.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}}\text{xd7!?\) White’s knight is very powerful at the centre of the board. Therefore, Black wishes to exchange it, or oust it, as quickly as possible.

8.\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}\text{e2} \) 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{b6} \) 10.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}}\text{xc4 \(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}}\text{xc4 \(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{c6= – He has maintained the material balance, but Black’s prospects are not worse thanks to his bishop-pair.\)

6.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}}\text{b3. Now, White does not need to worry about \(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}}\text{xe4 anymore. Still, he has lost a tempo for the retreat of his bishop and this enables Black to seize the initiative. 6...\(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{g4. Black pins the enemy knight and begins an attack against the d4-pawn. His further plan includes \(\text{\texttt{\textc}}\text{c6 and eventually e7-e5. 7.h3 (7.\(\text{\texttt{\texte}}\text{e3} \) \(\text{\texttt{\textc}}\text{c6 8.h3 \(\text{\texttt{\textxf}}\text{3 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textxf}}\text{3 e5 – see 7.h3) 7...\(\text{\texttt{\textxf}}\text{3 8.\(\text{\texttt{\textxf}}\text{3 \(\text{\texttt{\textc}}\text{6}\)\)}}\}

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9...e3 e5 10.dxe5 dxe5 11...d5 
\(\text{exd5} 12...\text{dxd5} \text{d4} 13...\text{dxd4} \text{exd4}
14.0-0 \text{c6} 15...b3, Pfieger – Gaprindashvili, Hastings 1964, 
15...\text{Wh}4?!\text{=} – In this position
with bishops of opposite colours
on the board, neither side has a
chance of obtaining an edge.

9...d1 \(\text{d7}, \text{Black increases his}
pressure against the enemy
centre. 10...e3 (10...e2, \text{White’s knight}
will be passive on this square. 10...
e5 11.dxe5 \(\text{cxe5} 12.0-0 \text{c5}\text{=} –
Now, \text{White can hardly neutralise}
the activity of his opponent’s piec-
es, Simon – Tal, Skopje 1972.)
10...e5 11.dxe5 \(\text{xe5} 12.0-0 \text{a5}\text{=},
followed by \(\text{x} b3 \text{with equality,
L.Hansen – Tukmakov, Copenhagen}
1996.

After 6...e3, the most reason-
able reaction for \text{Black would be}
to follow with the simplifying
combination immediately. 6...
\(\text{xe4}?!\text{ 7...xe4} \text{(White would not
achieve much with 7...xf7+ \(\text{xf7}
8...\text{xe4} \text{d5} 9...\text{e5} \text{f8} \text{=} – Black is
left with a backward pawn on the
e-file, but his powerful bishop-
pair compensates fully this defect
of his pawn-structure, Pavlovic –
Velikic, Paracin 2015.) 7...d5 8.
\(\text{d3} \text{dxe4} 9...\text{xe4} \text{c5} 10.c3 \text{c7}.
\text{Black is not forced to take on d4,
because he does not need to be
afraid of the capturing on c5. 11.
dxc5 \(\text{d7} 12.0-0 \text{xc5}. \text{Black rega-
gins his pawn and obtains at
least an equal position. 13...xc5
\text{xc5} 14...d5 \text{c7}\text{=} Sahu – King,
Kolkata 1993. His prospects are
not worse and later, he can even
play for a win with a chance of
proving the correctness of the fa-
mous statement of \text{Tarrasch:}
“Future belongs to the player with
the bishops.”

6...g5 \(\text{xe4} 7...xf7+?! \text{This is}
not a good decision for \text{White.}
(He should better choose 7...\text{xe4}
d5 8...\text{d3} \text{dxe4} 9...\text{xe4} \text{ – see
Chapter 8, variation B, 6...d3.)}
7...xf7 8...\text{xe4} \text{d5}?! \text{Black ex-
pl sinful the circumstance that
\text{White’s bishop deprives his
knight of the g5-square, so it must
retreat to a less favourable pos-
tion. 9...g3 \text{9...ed2 c5=} 9...g4+
Engel – Dreiseitel, Postbauer
2006.

6.h3. \text{White defends against}
\text{g4}, but \text{Black has something else
in mind. 6...dxe4.
Following 7.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \), there arises a variation similar to the main line, but instead of 0–0, White has played the less useful move h2–h3. This difference enables Black not only to equalise, but also to try to fight for the advantage in the opening. 7...d5 8.\( \text{\textipa{\text{d}3}} \) dxe4 9.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \) c5. Black wishes to enlarge the scope of action of his bishop on g7. 10.dxc5 \( \text{\textipa{\text{c}7}} \) 11.0–0 \( \text{\textipa{\text{d}7}} \) 12.c6. White creates pawn-weaknesses in the enemy camp, but Black seizes the initiative. 12...bxc6 13.\( \text{\textipa{\text{d}3}} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{c}5}} \) 14.\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}4}} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{a}4}} \)!
He transfers his knight to the b6-square with tempo. 15.c3 \( \text{\textipa{\text{b}6=}} \) 16.\( \text{\textipa{\text{e}2}} \)?! \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \) 17.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}c}4} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{a}6}} \) 18.\( \text{\textipa{\text{h}4}} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{d}5=}} \) Hort – Adorjan, Luhačovice 1973.

7.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}f}7+} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}f}7} \) 8.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \) d5. Black ousts immediately White’s knight from the centre. 9.\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}5} \) (Following 9.\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}3} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{c}6} \) 10.0–0, Kholmov – Rukavina, Dubna 1973, Black has an interesting plan, connected with the preparation of the advance of his g-pawn. 10...h6!? 11.\( \text{\textipa{\text{e}1} \) g5!\( \uparrow \) – The threat g5–g4 is very unpleasant for White.) 9...\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}6} \) 10.\( \text{\textipa{\text{e}3} \) c5. After this freeing move Black gets rid of his backward e-pawn and obtains a very good position. 11.dxe5 \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}5} \) 12.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}5} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}5} \) 13.0–0 b6 14.\( \text{\textipa{\text{d}3} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{g}7} \) 15.\( \text{\textipa{\text{d}2}}, \) I.Sokolov – Miles, Wijk aan Zee 1989, 15...\( \text{\textipa{\text{a}6}} \)!! 16.\( \text{\textipa{\text{f}1} \) c5 17.\( \text{\textipa{\text{h}6} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}h}6} \) 18.\( \text{\textipa{\text{x}h}6} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}d}3} \) 19.cxd3 \( \text{\textipa{\text{f}6}\perp} \) – There has arisen an endgame with major pieces and the chances of both sides seem approximately equal. Black’s king is not so safe (it is protected by only two pawns, while its counterpart is defended by three...), but his pawn-structure is better.

6.\( \text{\textipa{\text{e}2}} \) White defends against the threat \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \), but weakens his control over the d4-square. 6...
\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}6}} \). Black emphasizes immediately the drawbacks of White’s previous move.

\[\text{\textipa{\text{d}6} \) 2.\( \text{\textipa{\text{d}4} \) \( \text{\textipa{\text{f}6} \) 3.\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}3} \) g6 4.\( \text{\textipa{\text{f}3} \) g7 5.\( \text{\textipa{\text{c}4} \) 0–0 6.0–0 \( \text{\textipa{\text{x}e}4} \)\]
structure, Koistinen – Ruokokoski, ICCF 2015.

7.h3 White defends against the unpleasant pin of his knight. 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d7 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}a5!? White’s bishop on c4 is very powerful, so Black’s wish to exchange it soon is easily understandable. 9.0–0 (Following 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d3, Black obtains good counterplay against the d4-square. 9...c5 10.0–0, Chrz – Ksana, Czech Republic 2010, 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c6!?=) 9...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xc4 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xc4 b6 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}ad1 c5 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}fe1 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}b7 13.a4 a6\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}} – Black has the two-bishop advantage and a solid position, Reinhold – Vieth, Germany 2011.

\begin{center}

\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image.png}

\end{center}

6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xe4

This is Black’s simplest move.

In some books about the Pirc Defence the preliminary move 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c6 is recommended to Black with the idea to increase the pressure against the d4-square and to postpone the move \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xe4 for better times. After this however, White has the rather unpleasant line: 7.d5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}a5 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e2 c5 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}f4 a6 10.a4\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}± and Black’s knight, isolated at the edge of the board, does not beautify his position at all, Praggnanandhaa – V. Onischuk, Al Ain 2014.

7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xe4

There arises a more complicated position after 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xf7+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xf7 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xe4 h6. Black covers the g5-square against the penetration of the enemy knight. 9.h3. White defends against \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}g4. (He would not obtain much with 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}f5 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c6 11.c3 e5= Anastasian – Ehlvest, New York 1998.) 9...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d5!? Black ousts the enemy knight away from the centre. 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c5 (It would be less reasonable for White to play 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}g3, because his knight would be rather passive on this square. 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c6 11.c3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e1 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d7. Black’s queen-rook joins into the actions. 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}af8\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}} – His pieces are much more actively placed and White must be permanently on the alert about the possibility \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xh3 and the exchange-sacrifice on f3, Weiler – Preiss, Baden 1993.) 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c6 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}c3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}f8. Black creates the threats e7–e5 and \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xh3 and prevents his opponent from occupying the e5-square with \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d3, \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e2, \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e1, \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}fe5. 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e5?! (White should better choose here 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}e3 and after 12...b6 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}d3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xh3 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}h4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}f5 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xf5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xf5 16.g4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}f7 17.f4 e6=, Black’s weak g6 and e6-pawns compensate the sacrificed pawn by White.) 12...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbullet}}xe5 13.dxe5, Medina Garcia – Andersson, Las
Palmas 1972. Here, Black could have tried an interesting plan, connected with the advance of his queenside pawns and the development of his bishop to the f1-a6 diagonal. 13...e6!? 14.\( \text{d}d3 \) c5 15.f4 b6∞, followed by b6.

7...d5

10...c5

8.\( \text{d}d3 \)

8.\( \text{xd}x5 \). White should not present his opponent with the two-bishop advantage. 8...\( \text{xd}x5 \) 9.\( \text{c}c3 \) c4 10.\( \text{e}e5 \) \( xxe5 \)! This is one of the fine points of having two bishops. One of them can be exchanged favourably for an enemy knight at an opportune moment. 11.\( \text{d}xe5 \) c6 12.\( \text{d}d5 \) b4∞, followed by c6, or f5, Aanevik – Bachmann, ICCF 2010.

8...dxe4 9.\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{d}d7 \)

Black is preparing c7-c5, as well as f6.

10.\( c \)c3

10.\( g \)g5 f6 11.\( \text{d}d3 \) g4 12.c3 \( \text{b}d5 \). Black manages to weaken his opponent’s pawn-structure on the kingside. 13.\( f \)xf3 \( xxf3 \) 14.\( \text{xf}x3 \) \( \text{xf}x3 \) 15.gxf3 c6∞ – White’s two-bishop advantage cannot compensate fully the defects of his pawn-structure, Team Rex – Team Randy, Saint Louis 2014.

11.\( \text{e}e3 \)

11.\( \text{c}c2 \) cxd4 12.\( \text{xd}4 \), Chiburdanidze – Donaldson-Akhmilovskaya, Tallinn 1977, 12...\( c7 \)?=

11.\( e \)e1 cxd4 12.\( \text{xd}4 \) c5 13.\( \text{c}c2 \) e5 14.\( \text{b}b3 \) e6 15.\( \text{xd}8 \) \( \text{xd}8 \)= Enricci – Rinaldi, Argentina 1998. There has arisen an approximately equal endgame. White has a pawn-majority on the queenside, but it is useless for him, because he can hardly create a passed pawn there. On the contrary, Black can easily advance his pawns on the opposite side of the board (f7-f5, e5-e4).

11.\( g \)g5 f6 12.\( \text{xf}6 \). White exchanges his powerful bishop, but
wins a pawn. (There arises a calmer position in the line: 12.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{c2}}}}}}\texttt{cxd4} 13.\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{c4}}}}}}\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xd4}}}}}} 14.\texttt{xf6} 13.\texttt{dx5} 15.\texttt{c7} 14.\texttt{d5} 15.\texttt{d8}. Black attacks the enemy queen and gains time for the development of his pieces. 15.\texttt{c4} 16.\texttt{e6} 17.\texttt{b4} 18.\texttt{d5}. He neutralises the pressure of the enemy bishop on e4. 17.\texttt{ad1} a5 18.\texttt{a4} 19.\texttt{xc5}. Black restores the material balance. Now, White must play precisely. For example, after 19.\texttt{xd5} 20.\texttt{xd5} 21.\texttt{d1}, Sollen – Lundkvist, Sweden 1992, Black could have tried to fight for the advantage with 21..b5!? 22.\texttt{xd5} 23.g3 e6 24.\texttt{c5} 25.\texttt{xa5} 26.\texttt{xa4} 27.\texttt{xc3} – In this endgame, White must be on the alert about the possible pawn-advances of his opponent, as well as for the transfer of his bishop to the g1-a7 for an eventual attack against the f2-pawn.

11...\texttt{cxd4}

12.\texttt{xd4} After 12.\texttt{xd4}, Black can advance with tempo 12...\texttt{e5} 13.\texttt{e3} 14.\texttt{e2} 15.\texttt{c2} 16.\texttt{d7}=– Hasidume – Degterev, ICCF 2006.

12...\texttt{a6} Here, before placing his queen on c7, it is important for Black to protect the b5-square against the penetration of White’s knight.

13.\texttt{e2} 14.\texttt{c2} \texttt{c7}

15.\texttt{f3}, Kazhgaliev – Tchischiev, Cannes 1999, 15...\texttt{d7}!? 16.\texttt{fe1} 17.\texttt{e2} 18.\texttt{d4} 19.\texttt{h3} \texttt{e5}. Black’s pieces are very active and capturing on e5 would lead to considerable simplification of the position. 20.\texttt{xe5} 21.\texttt{xe5} 22.\texttt{xe2} 23.\texttt{xc2} 24.\texttt{xe7} 25.\texttt{e8} 26.\texttt{xe8}+ 27.\texttt{d1} – There has arisen a position with bishops of opposite colours and rooks on the board and it seems drawish.
White should strive at first to develop his kingside pieces as quickly as possible and to castle there. We will analyse similar positions in our second volume in chapters, devoted to the classical system of the King’s Indian Defence, but with the difference that White has not played c2-c4 yet. This circumstance has some merits as well as some drawbacks. White has saved a tempo for a move with his pawn and can use it for the development of his pieces, as well as for active actions in the centre (for example e4-e5). On the other hand, if Black succeeds in completing the development of his pieces, there will be a very tough battle on the board and White may miss badly the absence of his pawn on the c4-square.

5...0-0

Now, White’s most logical and strongest move is – B) 6.0-0. At first however, we will pay some attention to A) 6.h3.

About 6...e3 e6 7.0-0 h6 – see 6.0-0.

After White’s alternatives, he has no chances of obtaining an edge. For example 6.a4, this move does not contribute to White’s development. 6...c6!? This is an energetic response. Black begins to exert immediate pressure against the d4-square.

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Following 7.0–0 e5 8.d5 \(\triangle_e7\) 9.a5, Alexandria – Chiburdanidze, Georgia 1981, 9...c6?! White will have problems with the protection of his d5-pawn. Here, he suffers due to the impossibility of the move c2-c4. 10.\(\triangle_g5\) cxd5 11.\(\triangle_xf6\). White holds on to the d5-square, but presents his opponent with the two-bishop advantage. 11...\(\triangle_xf6\) 12.\(\triangle_xd5\) \(\triangle_xd5\) 13.\(\triangle_xd5\) \(\trianglexc7=\) White is incapable of exploiting the vulnerability of the d5-square, because the transfer of his knight (\(\triangle_d2-b1-c3\) and after the retreat of the queen – \(\triangle_d5\)) would take too much time.

7.d5. White ousts the enemy knight from its active position, but now Black can attack the d5-pawn with the move c7-c6, or with e7-e6. 7...\(\triangle_b4\) 8.0–0 e6 9.a5, Kinnmark – Hillarp Persson, Sweden 2004, 9...exd5?! This is Black's simplest reaction. He has less space indeed, so exchanges are in his favour. 10.\(\trianglexd5\) \(\trianglexb5\) 11.exd5 \(\trianglexe8=\)

After 6.\(\triangle_g5\), Black should better play immediately 6...h6, not allowing \(\triangle_d2\), followed by \(\triangle_h6.\) 7.\(\triangle_h4\) (7.\(\triangle_e3\) \(\triangle_g4\) 8.\(\triangle_d2\) e5 9.\(\trianglexe5\) \(\trianglexe5\) 10.\(\trianglexe5\) dxe5 11.\(\trianglee3\) c6= Berezka – Burlai, Alushta 2011) 7...c6 8.0–0 g5 9.\(\triangle_g3\) \(\triangleh5\) 10.\(\triangle_d2\) e6?!\(\angle\) W.Huebner – Luetke, Germany 2000. In this complicated position Black's prospects are not worse at all. Later, he can either exchange on g3, ending up with the two-bishop advantage, or advance f7-f5, creating the threat f5-f4.

Following 6.\(\trianglef4\), Black has a very interesting idea 6...\(\trianglebd7!=\), after which White should be on the alert about the possible enemy strikes against his centre (c7-c5 and e7-e5).

It would be too precarious for White to opt here for 7.e5, since Black is perfectly prepared to counter this pawn-advance. 7...\(\triangleh5!=\) 8.\(\triangled2\) c5\(\angle\) If White goes after winning material 9.g4?! , he might have serious problems after 9...\(\trianglexd4\) 10.\(\triangleb5\) dxe5 11.gxh5 a6 12.\(\trianglea3\) \(\trianglec5=\) Black has two pawns for the sacrificed piece and a powerful pawn-centre.

After 7.0–0, Black can simplify the position with the move 7...e5, for example: 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ½f6 3.½c3 g6 4.½f3 ½g7 5.½e2 0-0 6.h3 c5 7.½e3 cd

½xe5 ½xe4 10.½xe4 ½xe5= Unterberger – Leitgeber, Zweifl 2003.

7.½d2 e5. Black frees his game with this simplifying move. 8. ½h6 (following 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.½xe5 ½xe4 10.½xe4 ½xe5 11.½xd8 ½xd8=, there arises an approximately equal endgame on the board, Milashevskaja – Butneva, Odintsovo 2008) 8...c6. Black takes the important d5-square under control and prepares counter-play on the queenside with b7-b5 if his opponent castles queenside. 9.½xg7 ½xg7 10.0–0–0 ½e7 11.h4, Azarov – Ahmadinia, Baku 2013, 11...½e8!? Black frees a square for his knight. 12.a4. White prevents b7-b5. 12...½f8∞

8.½e3, Tkachiev – Chernin, Biel 1994, 8...½b6 9.½c1 ½c6 10.0–0 ½d4 11.½d1 ½d8∞ – Black’s powerful centralised knight guarantees him against any bad surprises.

Now, White is faced with a choice – what pawn structure to have in the forthcoming fight.

7.½e3

7.dxc5. This is his simplest move. He would not mind trading queens. 7...dxc5

A) 6.h3

White defends against ½g4, but the delay of his castling may cost him later not only the chance of fighting for an advantage, but also may lead him to an inferior position.

6...c5

This energetic strike against the enemy centre is Black’s simplest road to equality.

8.½e3, Tkachiev – Chernin, Biel 1994, 8...½b6 9.½c1 ½c6 10.0–0 ½d4 11.½d1 ½d8∞ – Black’s powerful centralised knight guarantees him against any bad surprises.

8.0–0 ½c6 9.e5 (9.½e3 b6 10.e5 ½d7 11.e6 fxe6 – see 9.e5; 10.½c1 ½d4 11.e5 ½xe2+ 12.½xe2, Ostermeyer – Bischoff, Germany 1984, 12...½h5!? – Black’s two-bishop advantage provides him with the better position.) 9...½d7. White’s pawn has crossed the demarcation line and will be subjected now to a simultaneous attack by three enemy pieces. This circumstance forces him to sacrifice material. 10.e6 fxe6 11.½e3 (11.½e4 b6 12.c3, Dzhumaev – Milos, Milos 2012, 12...½de5∞) 11...b6 12.½g5 ½de5 13.½xd8 ½xd8∞ – White must still prove that his compen-
sation for the pawn is sufficient, Nijboer – Hendriks, Hilversum 2009.

8.\boxtimesxd8. He transfers to an approximately equal endgame. 8... \boxtimesxd8 9.\boxtimese3 b6 10.e5 (Following 10.0–0 \boxtimesc6 11.\boxtimesad1 \boxtimesb7 12.e5 \boxtimese8 13.e6 fxe6 14.\boxtimesg5 \boxtimesc7 15. \boxtimesc4, Pesonen – Porrasmaa, Espoo 2003, White’s piece-activity is not good enough even for maintaining the equality. 15...\boxtimesxd1 16. \boxtimesxd1 \boxtimesd4 17.\boxtimesxd4 \boxtimesxd4 18.\boxtimese2 \boxtimesd8 19.\boxtimesxe6 \boxtimesxe6 20.\boxtimesxe6+. He restores the material balance, but is still too far from equalising. 20...\boxtimesg7 21.\boxtimesxd4 \boxtimesxd4 22.\boxtimesxd4 cxd4 – Black has managed to fix the enemy c2-pawn on a square with the same colour as his bishop. White must still make numerous precise moves in order to manage to draw this endgame.) 10...\boxtimese8 11.\boxtimesg5 \boxtimesb7 12.e6 \boxtimesxc3+!? Before making the move f7-f6, Black trades his bishop on g7. 13. bxc3 f6 14.\boxtimesf7 \boxtimesc8 15.0–0–0 \boxtimesg7= – In this complicated position, White must watch carefully about his pawn on e6, since he might lose it at some moment, Khachiyan – Delemarre, Moscow 2011.

7.0–0 cxd4 8.\boxtimesxd4 \boxtimesc6 9. \boxtimesb3 (9.\boxtimese3 d5 – see 7.\boxtimese3; 9.\boxtimesf3 b6 10.\boxtimese1 \boxtimesb7 11.\boxtimesf1 \boxtimesc8= Vila Gazquez – Libiszewski, Spain 2013) 9...\boxtimese6 10.\boxtimese1 (Following 10.\boxtimese3, Black succeeds in advancing the freeing move 10...d5 and equalises completely. 11.exd5

8.\boxtimesd3 b4 9.\boxtimesd1 \boxtimesa6 10.\boxtimese3 \boxtimesxe2 11.\boxtimesxe2 \boxtimese8 12.\boxtimesg5 h6 13. \boxtimesh4, Cebalo – Velimirovic, Yugoslavia 1988, 13...g5!? 14.\boxtimesg3 e6= 8.\boxtimesd2 b4 9.\boxtimesc1. White is incapable of exploiting the vulnerability of the c4-square, because Black leads in development and inflicts a strike against the enemy centre. 9...e6 10.0–0 exd5 11.exd5 \boxtimesb7 12.a3, Timoshenko – Arkhipov, Naberezhnye Chelny 1993,
12...\texttt{xd5}\textsuperscript{?} – White has no compensation for the pawn at all.

8.e5. This move leads to the weakening of the pawn on d5. 8...dxe5 9.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{xe3} e4 11.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{xd5} 12.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5}\textsuperscript{+} – Once again it is inconceivable why White has sacrificed material at the first place, Shengelia – Boehmer, Graz 2010.

8.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{xe4}! If, instead of the move h3, White had castled, then, this sacrifice would not have been possible. Here, Black obtains at least an equal position. 9.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{a5+} 10.\texttt{c3} \texttt{xc3+} 11.\texttt{bxc3} \texttt{xb5}. He has restored the material balance. 12.\texttt{d2}, Mikrut – Markowski, Lubniewice 1998. (Now, White must act very accurately; otherwise, he may end up without any compensation for his inferior pawn-structure, for example: 12.\texttt{h6}. This is a routine move. White is likely to be incapable of supporting effectively his actively deployed bishop on h6. 12...\texttt{e8} 13.\texttt{d3} \texttt{a6} 14.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{xb5} 15.\texttt{d2} \texttt{d7}\textsuperscript{+} – Black’s superior pawn-structure provides him with a stable advantage in this endgame, Schweber – Andres Mendez, Buenos Aires 2000) 12...\texttt{a4}!? 13.\texttt{0–0} \texttt{f5} 14.\texttt{b3} \texttt{xe8}\textsuperscript{∞}

8.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{xe4}. Black has managed to exchange advantageously a flank pawn for the enemy central pawn. 9.\texttt{0–0} a6 10.\texttt{a3} \texttt{d7} 11.\texttt{e1} (11.\texttt{d3} \texttt{e6} 12.\texttt{c4} \texttt{b7} 13.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e8} 14.\texttt{c2} \texttt{c7}\textsuperscript{∞} M.Ivanov – Danielsen, Ballerup 2009) 11...\texttt{e6}!? 12.\texttt{c4}. White must fight for the d5-square, because the exchange on e6 only fortifies Black’s pawn-centre. (12.dxe6 \texttt{fxe6}\textsuperscript{?}) 12.\texttt{d6} 13.\texttt{g5} \texttt{xg5} 14.\texttt{xg5} \texttt{b8} 15.\texttt{b1} \texttt{e8} 16.\texttt{d2} \texttt{exd5} 17.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{e6} 18.\texttt{xe6} \texttt{fxe6}= – White’s pieces are not well coordinated, so he is incapable of exploiting the vulnerability of Black’s pawn-structure, Eansworth – Gardner, ICCF 2014.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Here, from the Pirc Defence, we have reached a position from the Dragon variation in the Sicilian Defence, but not in a very good version for White, because his move h2-h3 is not so useful in this opening.

9.\texttt{0–0}

It looks premature for White to play here 9.f4 \texttt{b6}! Black exploits the defenclessness of the enemy bishop on e3. 10.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xe3} 11.\texttt{xe7+} \texttt{h8} 12.\texttt{d2} \texttt{g3+} 13.\texttt{f1} \texttt{e8}\textsuperscript{?} He has more than sufficient compensation for his minimal material deficit. If White
captures a second pawn he loses immediately. 14.\( \text{xd}6?! \text{e}6 \) 15. \( \text{d}1 \text{f}8++ \) Purcell – Hedlund, ICCF 2006.

After 9.\( \text{d}2 \), Black can accomplish outright the freeing pawn-advance 9...d5, at least equalising. 10.exd5 \( \text{xd}5 \) 11.\( \text{xc}6 \) (Accepting the pawn-sacrifice – 11.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{xd}4 \) 12.\( \text{xe}7+ \) \( \text{xe}7 \) 13.\( \text{xd}4 \), would be tremendously risky for White, because Black would have a very unpleasant pin on the e-file. 13...\( \text{xd}4 \) 14.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 15. \( \text{e}3 \), Panchenko – Krogius, Sochi 1977. Here, Black’s most precise reaction would be 15...\( \text{b}4+! \)? 16.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{e}4\# \) Now, White cannot play 17.\( \text{e}3? \), because of 17...\( \text{c}6\# \) 11...bxc6 12.\( \text{xd}5 \) cxd5 13.c3 \( \text{b}7 \) 14.0-0 \( \text{c}7 \), followed by \( \text{e}7-\text{e}5 \), Ivanenko – Berdiuginna, Evpatoria 2006. Black’s pawn-majority in the centre provides him with at least equal prospects.

\[ \text{9...d}5!? \]

The move 10.\( \text{xc}6 \) would only fortify Black’s pawn-centre. 10...bxc6 11.e5 (Following 11.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{a}6 \) 12.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{xe}4 \) 13.\( \text{xe}4 \) dxe4 14. \( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{xb}2 \) 15.\( \text{h}6 \) \( \text{xd}1 \) 16.\( \text{axd}1 \) \( \text{fc}8 \), White’s compensation for the pawn would be insufficient, Barrientos Chavarriaga – Sanabria Rangel, Cali 2010; 11.exd5 \( \text{xd}5 \) 12.\( \text{xd}5 \) cxd5 13.c3 e5 14. \( \text{c}5 \) \( \text{e}8\# \) – Black’s chances are not worse, Juarez Flores – Blanco Sing, Linares 1997.) 11...\( \text{e}8 \)!? This is the simplest for Black. He plans to undermine the enemy pawn on e5 with f7-f6, but contrary to 11...\( \text{d}7 \), he does not cover the diagonal of his bishop on c8. 12.f4 f6\# Laine – Lovakovic, ICCF 2010.

\[ \text{10...}\text{b}4 \]

Now, Black wishes to regain his pawn under the most favourable circumstances.

\[ \text{11.d}6 \]

White deflects the enemy queen under the attack of his minor pieces. He would not achieve much with this though...
Following 11.b3 ∆fxd5 12. ∆xd5 13.d4 e5, Black’s pawn majority in the centre and on the kingside is not less impressive than White’s pawn-majority on the queenside. 14.∆c5 3e8 15. 3b5 3d7 16.3xd7 (16.a4 3xb5 17. axb5 b6 18.c4 3f4= N.Kosintseva – Gaponenko, Moscow 2010) 16... 3xd7 17.c4 3f6 18.3xd7 3xd7 19.3ad1 3xc5 20.3xc5 3ec8 21. 3xb7 3xc4† Hoen – Timman, Haifa 1976.

11.3d2 3bxd5 12.3xd5 3xd5 13.3h6 e5. Black ousts the enemy knight from its active position. 14.3xg7 3xg7 15.3f3 3f4 16.3e3 f6. Black’s pawns on e5 and f6 restrict considerably the enemy knight and also provide his knight with the magnificent f4-outpost. 17.3fd1 3c7 18.c4, Ljubojevic – Sosonko, Amsterdam 1975, 18...b6!? with his other knight. 12.3cb5 3d8 13.c4 e5 14.3b3 b6 15.a3 3c6 16.3xd8 3xd8= Mourato – Vecek, ICCF 2014.

12...3b8 13.a3

It is possible that White had better think about equalising: 13.3f3 a6 14.3c5 3c6=

13...3c6 14.3c1 a6 15.3d4 3xd4 16.3xd4 3g4. Black exchanges his knight for the powerful enemy bishop in a tactical fashion. 17.3xg4 3xg4 18.3e2 3a7?! On this diagonal, Black’s bishop will exert pressure against the f2-square. 19.3g5 3xg4 20. 3xg4 3e5† Ciocaltea – Beliavsky, Luzern 1982.

B) 6.0–0

This is no doubt White’s best move. He evacuates his king to a save haven and conceals his further plans for the moment.

11...3xd6

12.3db5

White would not achieve much if he attacks the enemy queen

6...e6!? This is an interesting move for
Black, although it is not the most popular. It is often played by the
Ukrainian grandmaster Ruslan
Ponomarev. Black is trying to en-
ter a complicated positional bat-
tle. His further plans include the
moves \( \text{c}6 \) and \( e7-e5 \), either im-
mediately, or after the prelimi-
nary move \( \text{e}7 \). He can also fian-
chettto his light-squared bishop
\((b7-b6, \text{b}7, \text{a}7-a6, b7-b5, \text{b}7)\). In some variations it would
be useful for him to play at first
\( h7-h6, \text{h}7 \), preventing the pos-
sible trade of his bishop on \( g7 \), af-
fter \( \text{e}3, \text{d}2, \text{h}6 \).

Following some other more
natural moves it would not be easy for Black to equalise. For ex-
ample: \( 6...\text{g}4 \) \( 7.h3! \) ? \( \text{xf}3 \) \( 8.xf3 \)
\( \text{c}6 \) \( 9.\text{e}2 \) \( e5 \) \( 10.c3 \) \( \text{h}8 \) \( 11.\text{b}3 \)
\( \text{b}8 \) \( 12.\text{e}3 \) \( \text{e}8 \), Malisauskas –
Labuckas, Kaunas 2001, \( 13.\text{c}2 \) –
White has the two-bishop ad-
vantage and a powerful pawn-
centre. What is even more im-
portant is that Black will have prob-
lems to create active counterplay
on the kingside, because White
does not need to be in a hurry to
advance \( d4-d5 \), since a flank
attack by Black is not likely to be ef-
fective due to the volatile situa-
tion in the centre.

Following \( 6...\text{c}6 \) \( 7.a4 \) \( \text{bd}7 \) \( 8.\text{h}3 \) \( e5 \) \( 9.dxe5 \) \( dxe5 \), White can de-
velop his bishop to an active posi-
ton, obtaining a slight, but stable
positional advantage. \( 10.\text{c}4 \) \( S.\)

7.\( h3 \)
This is a very useful move.
Now, after \( \text{e}3 \), Black will be inca-
cpable of attacking the enemy
bishop with the move \( \text{g}4 \). In ad-
dition, the freed \( h2 \)-square might
be useful for White’s knight (\( \text{h}2 \),
followed by \( \text{g}4 \), or \( f2-f4 \)).

7.a4. With the advance of his
rook pawn White wishes to pro-
voke a weakening of Black’s
queenside. \( 7...\text{c}6 \) \( 8.a5 \) \( a6 \). Black
should not allow the move \( \text{a}5-a6 \).
\( 9.\text{e}3 \) \( \text{e}5 \) \( 10.d5 \), Narciso Dublan –
Tjiam, Figueres 2013, \( 10...\text{a}7! \) ?
Strangely enough, Black’s knight
is better placed here than on \( e7 \).
The point is that it would have no
moves on \( e7 \), while from the \( a7-
\)square it might even go later to
\( d4 (\text{b}5-d4) \), \( 11.\text{d}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \) \( 12.\text{a}2 \).
White frees the way forward of his
c-pawn. There is no other way for
him to break his opponent’s de-
ference on the queenside. \( 12...\text{b}5 \)
\( 13.c3 \) \( \text{e}8 \) \( 14.f3 \) \( f5 \) – Black has
good chances of organising an at-
tack on the kingside. On the con-
trary, White’s prospects on the
opposite side of the board are not
so promising, since he cannot advance c3-c4, in view of d4.

7.g5. This move is not so dangerous for Black. In this variation he often pushes h7-h6 himself. Here, White enables his opponent to play this move even with tempo. 7...h6 8.e3 (Following 8.h4 g5 9.g3 h5, White's powerful dark-squared bishop is exchanged and Black obtains the two-bishop advantage. 10.c4 c6 11.d5 xg3 12.hxg3 e7∞ Ziatdinov – Benjamin, Philadelphia 1999.) 8...c6 9.c1 (9.h3 b6 – see 7.h3) 9...h7 10.d1, Moiseenko – Delchev, Porto Carras 2011, 10.g4!? 11.f4 xd4! 12.xd4 e5=, Black has regained the sacrificed piece and has ended up with a quite acceptable position.

7.e1 c6

8.f4 h6 – see 7.f4.
8.h3 a6 – see 7.h3.
8.d5 exd5 9.exd5 e7 10.a4, Brodsky – Goloshchapov, Ordzhonikidze 2001 (10.h3 e8!?=) 10...e8!?, followed by f5, preparing e4.
8.g5 h6 9.e3 g4 10.c1 e5 11.d5 d4 12.h3 xe2+ 13.xe2 f6∞ – The position is closed indeed, but Black's bishop-pair might still become a telling factor in the future, Tomek – Nogler, Remote 2012.

7.f4. White has in mind to advance e4-e5, or d2, h6. 7...c6. Black's knight joins in the fight for the central squares.

If White plays immediately 8.d2, Black can simplify the position with the line: 8...e5 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.xd8 xd8 11.xe5 d4. He has powerful initiative for the sacrificed pawn. 12.d1 e8 13.e3 xe4. Black restores the material balance with a simple tactical strike and the position is simplified even more. 14.xd4 xc3 15.xc3 xe5 16.e1 f6 17.f3 f7 18.xe5 fxe5 19.e3 c6 20.g4. White prevents the appearance of the enemy bishop on the f5-square. 20...f6= – Black has an only weakness – the pawn on e5, but it is easily protected, Zagorskis – Nyvlt, ICCF 2002.

8.e1 h6 9.h3 (9.e5 dxe5 10.dxe5 d5 11.xd5 exd5= – After the removal of the pawn from the
e6-square, Black solves easily the problem with the development of his bishop on c8) 9...b6. He prepares the flank deployment of his other bishop. 10.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}2 h7 11.a\texttt{d}1 b7}. White’s pieces are beautifully placed, but he is at a loss what to do later... Every possible pawn-advance in the centre would only lead to simplification of the position. 12.e5 (12.d5 exd5 13.exd5 e7\textit{$\infty$} Ghaem Maghami – Benjamin, ICC 2009) 12...dxe5 13.dxe5 xd2 14.xd2 g8. White’s pieces are squeezed with the protection with the pawn on e5. 15.xed1 a6. Black prevents b5. 16.a3 g5. He is threatening to play e7-g6, at an opportune moment increasing the pressure against the e5-square. 17.xd3+ h8 18.g3 ad8 19.h2 ge7= Poljak – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

7.e3 h6

8.e1 c6 9.h3 h7 10.a3 b6 11.d3 b7 12.e2 e7 13.g3 c5\textit{$\infty$} Binas – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

Following 8.c1 h7 9.d1, White is incapable of exploiting the juxtaposition of his rook and the enemy queen on the d-file, Ringoir – Aabling Thomsen, Helsingor 2016, 9...c6!? Black simply completes the development of his queenside pieces ignoring his opponent’s possible pawn-break in the centre – e4-e5. 10.h3 b6 11.e5 dxe5 12.dxe5 d7 13.f4 e7 14.e3 b7\textit{$\infty$} – Black has good counterplay against the pawn on e5.

8.h3 c6 9.d2 h7 10.ad1 e7 11.d3 (11.wc1 b6\textit{$\infty$}; 11.h2 b6 12.d3 b7 13.f3, Gutenev – Maletin, Nizhny Tagil 2015, 13...c5?! =) 11...b6 12.f1 (12.e2 b7\textit{$\infty$}) 12...b7 13.f4 (13.a3 d7\textit{$\infty$}; 13.a4 a6\textit{$\infty$}) 13...a6 14.a4 d7. Black has no pawn-weaknesses in his camp and although White has more space, he can hardly find an active plan. 15.h2 e8 16.b3 c8 17.e2 c6 18.g3 e5 19.h4 f6 20.xf6 xf6 21.d5 b8 =, followed by the transfer of the knight to c5, Martin Sanchez – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014.

7.e5. This move is a bit too straightforward. Black is well prepared for the opening in the game in the centre. 7...dxe5

White must choose now how to recapture on e5.
Taking with a pawn 8.dxe5, would not provide him with chances of obtaining an advantage. 8...\textit{\onor{xd1} 9.\onor{xd1} \onor{d7}. Black’s position has no pawn weaknesses and he should manage to equalise gradually. 10.\onor{b5} (10.\onor{f4} a6 11.\onor{e1} \onor{c6} 12.\onor{f1} h6 13.h4 \onor{d8} 14.\onor{ad1} b6. After he develops his bishop on c8, Black would have not a single problem to worry about. 15.\onor{d4} \onor{b7} 16. \onor{xc6} \onor{xc6} – Cavaoida – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009). White’s attempt to make use of the defencelessness of the pawn on c7 can be countered by Black with the surprising resource 10...a6! He offers his c7-pawn as a gift to his opponent. 11.\onor{xc7} (11.\onor{bd4} \onor{xe5} – White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient, Yermolinsky – Benjamin, Denver 1998.) 11...\onor{a7} – He has an extra pawn, but it looks like his knight on a7 is doomed.

The move 8.\onor{xe5} leads to a much more interesting game. Still, White can hardly obtain anything meaningful out of this line as well. 8...\onor{bd7} 9.\onor{g5} h6 10.\onor{h4} c6 11.f4 \onor{b6} 12.\onor{c4} \onor{c7} 13.a4 b6!? Black is preparing \onor{a6}. 14. \onor{g3} \onor{d8} 15.\onor{d2} \onor{a6} 16.\onor{e5} \onor{xe2}. The trade of the light-squared bishops is in favour of Black, because White’s pawns on f4 and d4 restrict considerably his bishop on g3 and it might turn out to be “bad” in the future. 17.\onor{xe2} \onor{c8} 18.\onor{ad1} a6. Black prepares b5. He rearranges his queenside pawns on squares opposite of the
colour of his bishop. 19.\onor{f3} \onor{d5} 20.\onor{e4} b5 21.\onor{e2} f5!? He sacrifices a pawn and enters an equal endgame. 22.\onor{xd7} \onor{xd7} 23.\onor{c5} \onor{c8} 24.\onor{xe6}+ \onor{xe6} 25.\onor{xe6} \onor{f8} 26.\onor{xe7} \onor{xe7} 27.\onor{f1} \onor{f7} 28. \onor{xe8} – Andriuschenko – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014, 28...\onor{xe8} 29.axb5 cxb5= – White can hardly improve his position.

7...\onor{c6}

We will analyse now \textbf{B1)} \onor{g5} and \textbf{B2)} \onor{e3}.

8.\onor{e1} a6. Black is preparing b7-b5, \onor{b7}.

9.\onor{e3} e5 – see 8.\onor{e3}.

9.\texttt{g}f1 h6 10.\texttt{g}f4 b5 11.a4 b4. Black is not afraid of the slight weakening of the c4-square, because during the time White will transfer his knight there, Black will manage to create counterplay against the enemy centre. 12.\texttt{c}a2 a5 13.\texttt{c}c1 \texttt{b}b7 14.\texttt{h}h2 \texttt{e}e7 15.\texttt{d}d3 c5\ldots – After the strike against the centre, Black prospects are at least equal, Tiemann – Nyvlt, ICCF 2002.

9.\texttt{g}g5 h6 10.\texttt{e}e3 (Following 10.\texttt{h}h4 b5 11.a3, Dumpor – Loncar, Rijeka 2001, 11...g5!? 12.\texttt{g}g3 \texttt{b}b7 13.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{d}d7!? 14.\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{e}e7 15.\texttt{h}h2 \texttt{g}g6\ldots, there arises a very complicated position. Fifteen moves have been made and not a single piece, or a pawn has been exchanged. White dominates in the centre indeed, but must watch carefully about Black’s possibilities c7-c5 and f7-f5, as well as for the possible transfer of the enemy knight to the c4-square.) 10...\texttt{h}h7!? (Black should not be in a hurry to force the issue: 10...b5 11.e5 \texttt{d}d5 12.\texttt{c}cxd5 exd5 13.exd6 \texttt{d}xd6 14.c3\ldots – The premature move b7-b5 has only led to the weakening of Black’s queenside, Jensen – Nyvlt, ICCF 2011.) 11.\texttt{d}d3. White weakens his control over the d4-square and enables Black to advance advantageously e6-e5. 11...e5 12.d5 \texttt{c}c7 13.a4 \texttt{d}d7 14.\texttt{c}d2 f5 15.f3 \texttt{f}f6 16.\texttt{e}e2 f4 17.\texttt{f}f2 g5\ldots – Black has excellent prospects to organise an effective kingside attack, Tsygankov – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

9.a4. White prevents b7-b5. 9...b6

10.\texttt{f}f4 h6 11.e5 dxe5 12.\texttt{x}xe5 \texttt{b}b7= Yu – Zhang, Moscow 2001.

After 10.\texttt{e}e3 \texttt{b}b7 11.\texttt{f}f1, Black can play 11...\texttt{d}d4!?, exploiting the fact that White cannot oust this knight with the move a2-a3, since his pawn is already on a4. 12.\texttt{f}f4 \texttt{e}e8\ldots Hungaski – Dolezal, Villa Ballester 2005.

10.\texttt{g}g5 h6 11.\texttt{h}h4 (11.\texttt{e}e3 \texttt{b}b7 12.\texttt{f}f1 \texttt{e}e7 13.\texttt{f}f4, Dimitrov – Kislinsky, Loutraki 2015. Now, Black can obtain a very good position by transferring his knight to g6. 13...g5!? 14.\texttt{h}h2 \texttt{g}g6\ldots) 11...\texttt{b}b7 12.\texttt{f}f1 \texttt{e}e7 13.\texttt{d}d2 g5 14.\texttt{g}g3 \texttt{g}g6\ldots Pribyl – Tseschkovsky, Presov 2000.

B1) 8.\texttt{g}g5 h6
9.\textbf{\textit{xe3}}

9.\textit{xf4}. This retreat of the bishop would not promise much to White. 9...\textit{b6} 10.\textit{\textle d2 \textle h7} 11.\textit{\textle ad1 \textle e7} 12.\textit{\textle e5 \textle fd5}. Now, you can see the defect of White’s move nine. He is forced to lose a tempo for the retreat of his bishop. 13.\textit{\textle xd5 \textle xd5} 14.\textit{\textle g3}, Azarov – Tukhaev, Alushta 2009, 14...\textit{\textle e7}?! Black is preparing to deploy his knight on the f5-square. 15.\textit{\textle h2 \textle b7} 16.\textit{\textle c3 \textle f5}∞

9...\textit{\textle b6} 10.\textit{\textle d2 \textle h7}

11.\textit{\textle ad1}

11.\textit{\textle h2 \textle e7} 12.\textit{\textle ad1 \textle b7}, or 11.\textit{\textle d3 \textle b7} 12.\textit{\textle ad1 e5} – see 11.\textit{\textle ad1}.

11.d5. This move only leads to the fact that White’s pieces will be squeezed with the protection of the pawn on d5 later. 11...\textit{\textle exd5} 12.\textit{\textle exd5 \textle e7} 13.\textit{\textle c4 \textle b7} 14.a4 a6 15.\textit{\textle fe1 \textle d7} 16.\textit{\textle ad1 \textle fe8} 17.\textit{\textle f4 \textle h5} 18.\textit{\textle h2 \textle f6} 19.\textit{\textle e2 \textle f5}∞ – White has a bit more space indeed, but he can hardly find an effective plan for his further actions, since Black’s pieces are harmoniously deployed, Werner – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009.

11.a3. White is preparing b2-b4. Meanwhile, the advance of his queenside pawns would not promise him anything meaningful. 11...\textit{\textle b7} 12.\textit{\textle d3 \textle e7} 13.\textit{\textle b4 \textle h5}. Black plans to follow with f7-f5. 14.\textit{\textle fe1 f5} 15.\textit{\textle xf5 \textle xf5} 16.\textit{\textle e4}. After the trade of the e-pawn, Black’s bishop on b7 has become very active, so White is forced to exchange it. 16...\textit{\textle xe4} 17.\textit{\textle xe4 \textle d7} 18.c4 d5 19.\textit{\textle xd5 \textle exd5} 20.\textit{\textle c3 c6}∞ Voiculescu – Nyvlt, ICCF 2012. Here, Black’s bishop seems to be much more active than its counterpart. In addition, he can also transfer his knight to the weakened c4-square.

11...\textit{\textle b7}

12.\textit{\textle h2}

Deploying the knight on the g4-square cannot create any problems for Black, because he will manage to protect his pawn
on h6 with the move \( \text{g8} \).

12.\text{d3} White protects in advance his pawn on e4, but weakens his control over the d4-square. 12...e5 13.d5. Now, the position is closed and Black’s hands are free for the organisation of active actions on the kingside. 13...\text{e7} 14.\text{fe1} \text{d7} 15.\text{e2} a6 16.h4 \text{f5} 17.h5 f4 18.hxg6+ \text{hxg6} 19.\text{c1} \text{g8= – He has excellent attacking prospects on the g-file, Saenko – Mehlhorn, ICCF 2010.}

The move 12.e5, Estrada Nieto – Horvath, Hungary 1999, would lead to considerable simplification of the position. 12...dxe5!? 13.\text{dxe5} \text{xd2} 14.\text{xd2} \text{d5} 15.\text{xd5} exd5 16.\text{xe5} \text{xe5} 17.\text{xf3} \text{xf3} 18.\text{xf3} \text{exe5} 19.\text{xa8} \text{xa8=}

12.\text{fe1} \text{e7}. Suddenly, White has problems with the protection of his pawn on e4. 13.\text{d3} (13.\text{d3} d5=) 13...d5 14.exd5 \text{fxd5} 15.\text{xd5} \text{xd5} 16.\text{c1} c5= Bester – Alonso Gonzalez, ICCF 2008.

12...\text{e7}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

13.\text{g4}


The move 13.f3, would only weaken the dark-squared complex on the kingside. 13...\text{h5} Garbett – Benjamin, Hawaii 1998.

13...\text{fg8}! Black not only protects his pawn on h6, but also prepares the pawn-advance f7-f5. 14.f3 f5 15.\text{f2} \text{f6= – The long manoeuvres of White’s knight have led to the weakening of the shelter of his own king, Glukhovtsev – Nyvlt, ICCF 2013.}

B2) 8.\text{e3} a6

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

9.a4

Or 9.\text{d3} e5 10.d5 \text{e7} 11.\text{e1}, Sadowski – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014 and here the most accurate retreat of Black’s knight would be – 11... \text{e8=}, preparing f7-f5, but not covering the diagonal of the bishop on c8.
9.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}e}1 e5!? 10.d5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}e}7. Here, Black will be preparing \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}7-f5}, while White should try to organise active actions on the queenside. 11.a4. His knight cannot retreat from the c3-square, due to the defencelessness of his pawn on e4, therefore, he can hardly accomplish the plan, connected with the advance of his c-pawn. 11...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}e}8 12.a5. White is preparing the transfer of his rook to b4, in order to increase his pressure against the enemy queenside. 12...f5 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}a}4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}7 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}8= Keuter – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

9.a3. White wishes to play \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}3, without being afraid of the enemy knight-sortie \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}4. Still, he can hardly fight for an advantage with such humble moves. 9...b6 10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}7 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}e}7. Black is creating the threat not only to play c7-c5, but also d6-d5, followed by the penetration of the knight to the e4-square. 12.b4. White is incapable of parrying simultaneously both his opponent’s threats. 12...d5 13.e5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}e}4 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}e4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}e4 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}5 c5. Black sacrifices a pawn and opens the position. 16. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}c5 (16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}x}e4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}x}d4 17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}x}d4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}x}d4 18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}x}d4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}6 19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}x}b6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}x}e5. White will hardly manage to maintain the material balance. 20.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}d}1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}b}8 21.f4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}7 22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}c}8 23.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}c3 24.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}c3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}4. After this move the material on the board will be equalised. 25. axb4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}c3= Dunlop – Nyvlt, ICCF 2012) 16...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}e5 17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}d}1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}x}d2 18. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}d2 bxc5 19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}xe4 cxb4 20. axb4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}e4 21.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}x}e4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}a}7= Ohtake – Nyvlt, ICCF 2013. There is just a few material left, so White’s passed c-pawn is not so dangerous anymore.

9.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}2 b5 10.a3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}7 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}d}1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}7 12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}8. Black prepares c7-c5. 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}6. White ignores his opponent’s threat and wishes to organise an attack against the enemy king. This is not going to be an easy task though... (The move 13.b4 prevents Black’s pawn-advance c7-c5, but weakens White’s queenside pawn-structure. 13... \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}5 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}1 f5= – Black has very good counterplay, Brzeszkiewicz – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014.) 13...c5 14.e5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}e5 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}e5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}f}d5 16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}d5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}d5 17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e}4 c4 18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}c}1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}7 19.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}d}8 20.h4. White’s h-pawn joins in the actions. 20...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}7. Black is trying to trade some pieces in order to diminish his opponent’s attacking potential. 21.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}b}1 22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}x}d1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}7 23.h5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}x}h5! Black is not afraid of ghosts! 24.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}6 25.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}4 b4! He advances his queenside pawns and wishes to deflect his opponent from his attack of the other side of the board. 26.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}x}g7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}x}g7 27.a4 c3 28.b3 a5 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}x}h5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}5 30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}5 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}4, Draw, Pecafiel Lopez – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014. Following 31...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g}8 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}c}4 (White loses after 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}5?, in view of 32...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}d}1+ 33.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}h}2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}e}4 34.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}4+ 35.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}f}4—+. After the exchange of the queens, there arises an endgame in which the vulnerability of White’s pawn on c2 and the far-advanced Black’s
queenside pawns would be decisive.) 32...\textit{g}g7= – White's offensive has reached its dead end.

9...b6 10.\textit{d}d2 \textit{b}b7

Black has less space indeed, but his pieces are harmoniously deployed and after the removal of his knights from the f6 and c6 – squares, his fianchettoed bishops will exert powerful pressure against the enemy centre.

11.\textit{e}ad1

11.\textit{d}d3 \textit{b}b4 12.\textit{g}g5 \textit{x}d3 13.\textit{x}d3, Kamsky – Tischbierek, Gibraltar 2016, 13...c5!?=, Black is not afraid of 14.e5?!, since he can counter that with 14...\textit{x}d4 15.\textit{xf}6 dxc6 16.\textit{xc}3 (16.\textit{gx}g7?! \textit{xd}2 17.\textit{hx}d8 \textit{f}x\textit{d}8\textit{f}?) 16...\textit{h}8\textit{f} – He has the two-bishop advantage, while White's pawn on f6 would need additional protection. Black can try to annihilate it immediately (e6–e5 and \textit{xf}6), or with the inclusion of the preliminary moves \textit{f}8–e8, e6–e5, \textit{e}e6.

11.\textit{g}g5. White weakens his control over the d4-square. Black can exploit this circumstance immediately. 11...e5!? 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.\textit{ad}1 \textit{xd}2 14.\textit{xd}2, Rohl Montes – Arencibia Rodriguez, Merida 2000, 14...\textit{fd}8!? Black has no problems in this endgame. 15.\textit{fd}1 (The position will be simplified in the line: 15.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xd}2 16.\textit{xd}2 \textit{xf}6 17.\textit{d}d5 \textit{g}5 18.\textit{f}f3 \textit{d}d4 19.\textit{xd}4 \textit{exd}4=) 15...\textit{xd}2 16.\textit{xd}2 \textit{e}e8 17.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 18.\textit{d}d5 \textit{d}d8\textit{f} – Black's prospects are not worse. Later, he can try to out the enemy knight from the d5-square and even fight for the initiative with the help of his powerful bishop-pair.

White would not achieve much with 11.\textit{h}h6 e5 12.\textit{xe}g7 \textit{xe}g7 13.\textit{d}d5 (After 13.\textit{fe}1, I.Popov – Grischuk, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013, Black’s simplest road to equality would be 13...\textit{xd}4!? 14.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 15.\textit{xd}4 c5 16.\textit{d}d3 \textit{e}e8 17.\textit{f}f1 \textit{c}c7 18.\textit{ad}1 \textit{ad}8= – His counterplay against the pawn on e4 compensates the vulnerability of Black's d6-pawn.) 13...\textit{b}b4. From this square, his knight can be transferred to c5, after the preliminary move a6–a5. 14.\textit{e}e1 a5 15.\textit{c}c4 \textit{a}a6 16.\textit{ad}1 \textit{c}c5 17.\textit{b}b3 \textit{h}5\textit{f} – Black’s prospects are not worse, Avotins – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009.

11...\textit{e}e7 12.\textit{e}5

Here, White does not need to protect his pawn on e4, but his opponent’s knight gains access to the f5-square.

12...\textit{d}xe5 13.\textit{d}xe5 \textit{f}f5 14.\textit{f}f3 \textit{xf}3 15.\textit{xf}3 \textit{d}d5= – Black has obtained a quite acceptable position, Newerovski – Kornev, Tula 2003.
Chapter 24  1.e4 d6 2.d4 ¤f6 3.¤c3 g6 4.f4

This chapter, as well as the last two, will be devoted to the analysis of the move 4.f4 – the so-called three pawns variation. In the chess literature in the English language it is known as the Austrian Attack. This variation illustrates in the best possible way the plans of both sides in the Pirc Defence. White occupies immediately the centre with his pawns, while Black plans to exploit the rather exposed placement of the enemy pawns in order to inflict counter strikes against his centre with c7-c5, or e7-e5 (as a rule after the preliminary move ¤c6).

4...¢g7

We will analyse in details now: A) 5.e5 and B) 5.¤f3.

5.a3 0–0 6.¤f3 c5 – see variation B.

5.¤e3 0–0 6.¤f3 (6.¤e2 ¤a6 – see 5.¤e2; 6.h3 c5 – see 5.h3) 6...b6 – see variation B2.

5.¤d3 0–0 6.e5 (6.¤f3 ¤c6 – see Chapter 26) 6...dxe5 7.dxe5 ¤d5 8.¤xd5 ¤xd5 9.¤f3 ¤c6 – see Chapter 26, variation B1.

White would not achieve much with 5.¤c4, because Black can counter that with 5...¤xe4 6.¤xf7+ ¤xf7 7.¤xe4 ¤f8, preparing artificial castling. 8.¤f3 ¤g8 9.0–0 e6. He covers the a2-g8 diagonal. 10.c3 ¤c6 11.¤e1 ¤d7 12.¤eg5 ¤f6 13.¤d2 h6 14.¤e4 ¤f7 15.¤h4 ¤e7∞ – Black has a very solid position and the power of his two bishops may become a telling factor in the future, Martin Gonzalez – Torre, Torremolinos 1974.

5.h3. White defends against ¤g4 and prepares ¤e3. 5...0–0 6.¤e3 (6.¤f3 c5 – see variation B) 6...c5. Black inflicts a strike against the enemy centre. 7.dxc5
Chapter 24

\( \text{\textcopyright a5. He creates the threat } \text{\textcopyright x e4,}\)
\( \text{regains his pawn and equalises. } 8.\text{\textcopyright d3 dxc5 9.e5 } \text{\textcopyright d5 10.}\)
\( \text{\textcopyright d2 } \text{\textcopyright x c3 11.e xc3 } \text{\textcopyright b6 12.\text{\textcopyright f3}}\)
\( \text{\textcopyright c6=} – \text{White lags in development, while Black is perfectly prepared to penetrate with his knight to the d4-outpost, Mitkov – Bogdanovski, Skopje 1991.) 9...e5. He begins the fight for the e5-square.}\)
\( \text{Black is not afraid of the weakening of the d5-square, because White’s knight there cannot create any real threats. 10.fx e5 } \text{\textcopyright f d7 11.\text{\textcopyright f3 x e5 12.x e5 x e5 13.\text{\textcopyright f3}}}\)
\( \text{\textcopyright e6 14.\text{\textcopyright d5 x d8 15.0–0–0 x g7 16.\text{\textcopyright f4 c6 17.c3 a5 18.\text{\textcopyright b1}}}}\)
\( \text{\textcopyright e5=} \text{Gavrilakis – Hasselmeyer, ICCF 2010. Both sides have excellent squares for their knights at the centre of the board, but Black’s king is more reliably protected. If he manages to advance his queenside pawns, he would obtain excellent attacking prospects.}\)

\(\text{Or 5.\text{\textcopyright e2 0–0 6.e3 (6.\text{\textcopyright f3 c5 – see Chapter 25) 6...\text{\textcopyright a6?} Black is preparing c7-c5. 7.\text{\textcopyright f3 (7.e5}}}\)
\(\text{\textcopyright d7 8.\text{\textcopyright f3 c5=} 7...c5}\)

8.d5, Wainer – Pierucci, Buenos Aires 2000. White’s attempt to enter a position, similar to the Benoni Defence, can be countered by Black with a typical tactical strike: 8...b5?! 9.\text{\textcopyright x b5 } \text{\textcopyright x e4 10.}\)
\(\text{\textcopyright x e4 a5+ 11.c3 x c3+ 12.x c3 x b5=} – \text{His superior pawn-structure provides him with a stable advantage.}\)

Following 8.dxc5 \text{\textcopyright x c5 9.e5, Black can redeploy his knight with tempo 9...g4? and it would be bad for White to reply with 10.g1?!, because of 10...e6=, and he would suddenly have difficulties with the protection of his pawns on f4 and e5, Schneider – Fries Nielsen, Gladsaxe 1979.}\)

8.\text{\textcopyright x a6, Limp – Correa, Cabo Frio 1984, 8...g4?! This is a very strong intermediate move. Black opens with tempo the diagonal for his bishop on g7. 9.g1 bxa6 10.}\)
\(\text{h3 (10.dxc5?! It is very risky for White to open the a1-h8 diagonal. 10...b8=} 10...f6 11.dxc5 b7=} \text{Black’s lead in development and his two powerful bishops compensate the sacrificed pawn. White will need to play very precisely, because the straightforward reaction 12.e2?! h5 13.}\)
\(\text{h2 a5 14.e3, would lead to great difficulties for him after 14...ac8=, His attempt to gobble some material 15.g4?! would end in a crush for him after 15...xc5!}\)
\(16.gxh5 x c3+ 17.bxc3 x c3 18.}\)
\(\text{\textcopyright d2 x e4=} +\)

A) 5.e5

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This move seems a bit premature. White plays too many pawn-moves and does not develop his pieces.

5...\(\text{d}f\text{d}7\)

7.\(\text{d}f3\) 0–0 – see 6.\(\text{d}f3\).

7.\(\text{b}5\) 0–0 8.\(\text{f}3\) cxd4 9.\(\text{xd}4\) dxe5 10.fxe5. There has appeared a weak isolated pawn in White’s camp. Black’s prospects already seem preferable. 10...a6 11.\(\text{a}4\), Gurgenidze – Timman, Tbilisi 1971, 11...b5?!?

7.\(\text{c}4\) cxd4 8.\(\text{xd}4\) dxe5?!?

(Black should not even think about the move 8...\(\text{c}6\)??, since White can counter that with a tactical strike. 9.\(\text{xf}7\)+! \(\text{x}f7\) 10.e6+! \(\text{f}8\) 11.\(\text{xf}7\)+ \(\text{xf}7\) 12.\(\text{ex}d7\) \(\text{xd}7\) 13.\(\text{d}2\)+, followed by 0–0–0, Velimirovic – Svetac, Belgrade 2009).

6.\(\text{e}4\). White plans to defend against c7-c5 with the move c2-c3, but infringes a well known principle in the opening – not to make numerous moves with one and a same piece before the completion of the development. 6...c5 7.c3 cxd4 8.cxd4 0–0 9.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{b}6\) 10.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 11.0–0 \(\text{f}5\) 12.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{c}8\)+ Bronstein – Ermenkov, Wijk aan Zee 1992.

After 6.\(\text{e}3\) c5, White will hardly manage to protect his pawns on d4 and e5 without positional, or material concessions.

6.\(\text{c}4\) c5 7.exd6 (It is preferable for White to opt here for 7.\(\text{f}3\) cxd4 – see 6.\(\text{f}3\).) 7...0–0! Black sacrifices a pawn and seizes the initiative. 8.dxc5 \(\text{xc}5\) (8...\(\text{c}6\)??) 9.\(\text{f}3\), Lombardy – Hurme, Nice 1974 (It would be very precarious for White to accept here the gift 9.dxe7, since following 9...\(\text{xe}7\)+ 10.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{e}8\) 11.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{xe}7\)+ 12.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{xc}3\) 13.\(\text{bxc}3\) \(\text{e}4\)+, Black would restore the material balance, preserving better prospects in this
endgame, Voitsekhovsky – Gipslis, Pardubice 1994) 9...\textit{\$}\text{xd6}!?=

6...\textit{\$}c5

7.\textit{\$}xd6

7.\textit{\$}e3 0–0 8.\textit{\$}xd6 \textit{\$}xd6 – see 7.\textit{\$}xd6.

7.\textit{\$}c4. During the 70ies of the past century this position could be often encountered in the games of Ljubomir Ljubojevic. Still, gradually Black found an antidote to his opponent’s aggressive plan. 7...\textit{\$}xd4 8.\textit{\$}xf7+ (Following 8. \textit{\$}xd4 0–0 9.\textit{\$}e4 \textit{\$}c6 10.\textit{\$}e6 \textit{\$}xe6 11.\textit{\$}xe6+ \textit{\$}h8 12.\textit{\$}e2, Ljubojevic – Jansa, Skopje 1972, Black could have exploited the lag in White’s development with the line: 12... \textit{\$}de5!? 13.\textit{\$}xc8 \textit{\$}xf3+ 14.\textit{\$}xf3 \textit{\$}xc8 15.0–0 e5+?) 8...\textit{\$}xf7 9.\textit{\$}e6+ \textit{\$}e8 10.\textit{\$}xd7+ \textit{\$}xd7 11.\textit{\$}xd4. White has deprived his opponent of his castling rights indeed, but Black’s chances are preferable thanks to his two powerful bishops. 11...\textit{\$}b6 12.\textit{\$}b3, Maroszczyk – Radojevic, Prieviţda 1973, 12...\textit{\$}a6!?)

There arises a complicated double-edged position after 7. dxc5 dxe5 8.\textit{\$}xe5 0–0 9.\textit{\$}e6 \textit{\$}xe6 10.\textit{\$}c4 \textit{\$}xc5 11.\textit{\$}e2, Bronstein – Tringov, Reykjavik 1974. The activity of White’s pieces compensates the sacrificed pawn, but not more than that. 11...\textit{\$}b6 12.0–0 \textit{\$}c6 13.\textit{\$}e3 \textit{\$}xb2 14.\textit{\$}b5 \textit{\$}e4 15. \textit{\$}c7 \textit{\$}b8 16.\textit{\$}xe6+ \textit{\$}h8∞

7.e6 \textit{\$}xe6 8.\textit{\$}g5 (8.\textit{\$}e3?! Giri – Ivanchuk, Leon 2013, 8...\textit{\$}a5!?) 8...\textit{\$}f6 9.dxc5 \textit{\$}c6. Black’s first priority is the development of his pieces. 10.\textit{\$}xd6 (It is bad for White to choose here 10.\textit{\$}c4, in view of 10...d5 11.\textit{\$}b5 d4 and he will have to comply with the exchange of his powerful bishop in order not to lose a piece. 12.\textit{\$}xc6+ \textit{\$}xc6 13.\textit{\$}e2, Vasiukov – Tseshkovsky, Leningrad 1974, 13...\textit{\$}d5 14.0–0 \textit{\$}e4!? 15.\textit{\$}xe4 \textit{\$}xe4+ – Black’s two powerful bishops and the vulnerability of White’s pawn on c5 make us evaluate this position in favour of Black.) 10...\textit{\$}xd6 11.\textit{\$}c4 d5 12.\textit{\$}b3 0–0. He has completed his development and castled. White would be incapable of exploiting the slight weakness of the pawn on e6. 13.0–0, Shirazi – L.Christiansen, Palo Alto 1981, 13...h6 14.\textit{\$}f3 \textit{\$}h7 15.\textit{\$}d3 a5∞

7...0–0

But not 7...\textit{\$}xd6?, due to 8. \textit{\$}e2+ \textit{\$}e7! 9.\textit{\$}d5 \textit{\$}xe2+ 10. \textit{\$}xe2 \textit{\$}d8 11.\textit{\$}g5+– Annoni – Bardi, Florence 2009.
8.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e3}}}

White develops his bishop and fortifies his d4-square.

It will be too risky for him to choose here 8.dxc5, because he lags considerably in development and cannot afford to go after material gains. 8...\textit{\textit{\textbf{wxa5}} 9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e2}}} (9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5\dagger}}}}) 9...\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc3}}}+ 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{bxc3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xc3}}}+ 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}}+ Now, White will have serious problems to castle kingside. 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{dxe7}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{exe8}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b1}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{exe7}}} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{b6}}} 16.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} 17.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{c5\dagger}}} – White has managed to oust the enemy queen from the g1-a7 diagonal and castled, but Black’s prospects are preferable thanks to his superior pawn-structure, Ivanovic – M. Gurevich, Luzern 1989.

White’s plan with castling kingside would lead to problems for him. 8.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e2}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{exd6}}} 9.0-0 (9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e3}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 10.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} – see 9.0-0) 9...\textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e3}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} (It is possibly even stronger for Black to play here 10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{cxd4}}}!?) 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{wb6}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d5}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb6}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{exe3+}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{h1}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xb6\dagger}}} – White’s queen seems to be obviously weaker than Black’s three minor pieces.) 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{h1}}} White wishes to have the possibility to retreat his bishop to g1 after a possible knight-sortie by Black – \textit{\textit{\textbf{g4}}} (11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{dxc5?! g4}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5\dagger}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{Voedvin – Grischuk, Moscow 2007}}}) 11...\textit{\textit{\textbf{b6}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{g1}}, Corrales Jimenez – Tjiam, Sitges 2007, 12...\textit{\textit{\textbf{b7?! \dagger}}} – Black’s pieces are harmoniously deployed. His fianchettoed bishops are particularly strong, since they exert powerful pressure against the enemy position.

White should better refrain from 8.\textit{\textit{\textbf{dxe7}}, because after 8...\textit{\textit{\textbf{exe7+}}}, his defence would be very difficult.

9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e2}}}! cxd4 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}} (10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4? b6}}} 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d8}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c4-+ Valickova – Blaszczok, Trinec 2001}}}) 10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 11.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{c5}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d3}} a6 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{a3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{b6}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d5\dagger}}} – It would be sufficient to compare the placement of the knights on a3 and d5 in order to evaluate correctly this position, Vesely – Gibiec, Czech Republic 2013.

9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{wxe2 d8?!}} Black is reluctant to trade the queens. 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e3}} cxd4 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}} cxd4}! 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4 e8}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{h3}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{f2 ft5}}} 16.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d2}}}
8...exd6 9.\textit{d}2

9.\textit{e}2?! \textit{c}6 – see 8.\textit{e}2.

9...\textit{c}6

\textbf{10.0–0–0}

Following 10.\textit{b}5 \textit{b}6 11.0–0–0 \textit{f}6 12.dxc5 dxc5 13.\textit{xc}6, Matulovic – Sigurjonsson, Vratsa 1975, Black can simply grab a pawn 13...\textit{bxc}6?!+, opening files for an attack. White will have difficulties to capture the weak pawn on c5, since after the straightforward line: 14.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}5 15.\textit{xc}5?!, he will have problems following 15...\textit{e}4 16.c4 \textit{xd}2 17.\textit{xb}5 \textit{xf}3 18.\textit{gx}f3 \textit{xb}5++; Black has the two-bishop advantage and a superior pawn-structure in this endgame.

\textbf{10...\textit{a}5}

Black wishes to begin an offensive against the enemy king, but at first he must complete the development of his queenside \textit{f}6, \textit{g}4(f5).

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{chess_board}
\end{center}

\textbf{11.f5}

This pawn was restricting considerably the scope of action of the bishop on e3. Now, White can play \textit{h}6.

11.g4?! He has no time to prepare a pawn-offensive on the kingside. 11...\textit{f}6 12.h3, Rogulj – Slogar, Sentjur 2009, 12...\textit{e}6!? 13.a3 \textit{d}5. Black transfers to a better endgame. 14.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}2+ 15.\textit{xd}2 \textit{xd}5 16.\textit{h}2 \textit{a}e8 17.\textit{g}1 \textit{xd}4++; White has no compensation for the pawn.

The prophylactic move 11.\textit{b}1 is too slow in this position. 11...\textit{f}6 12.h3 (Black is better following 12.\textit{c}4 \textit{f}5 13.dxc5 dxc5++; it would not work for White to play here 14.\textit{d}5?, in view of 14...\textit{xd}5 15.\textit{xa}5 \textit{xc}2++; this intermediate tactical strike is decisive.
16.\(c1\) \(\text{\&xa5}\) 17.\(\text{\&xd5}\) \(\text{\&xd1}+-\) Zelic – Ribli, Pula 1999.) 12...\(\text{\&xf5}\) 13.\(\text{\&d3}\), Kaspret – Klauner, Groningen 1977. Here, Black could have played immediately 13...b5!? without being afraid of 14.\(\text{\&xf5}\) \(\text{gxf5}\), because White would be incapable of exploiting the slight weakening of Black's pawn-structure on the kingside.

11.a3. White removes in advance his pawn from the possible attack after \(\text{\&f6}\), \(\text{\&e6}\) and \(\text{\&b4}\). Still, he creates a target for Black for an eventual pawn-offensive on the queenside. If he manages to advance b5-b4, his attack will become very powerful. 11...\(\text{\&f6}\)

12.h3. White covers the g4-square against the penetration of the enemy minor pieces. 12...\(\text{\&e8}\) 13.\(\text{\&c4}\) (13.\(\text{\&b5}\), Rogulj – Hribar, Slovenia 2014, 13...\(\text{\&d8}\)!?? 13...b5!? Black sacrifices a pawn and opens the b-file for an attack. 14.\(\text{\&xb5}\) (After 14.\(\text{\&xb5}\) d5 15.\(\text{\&f1}\) \(\text{\&d8}\) 16.\(\text{\&e5}\), Rogulj – Kuljasevic, Sibenik 2012, Black could have obtained an advantage following 16...\(\text{cxd4}\)!?? 17.\(\text{\&xd4}\) \(\text{\&xd4}\) 18.\(\text{\&xd4}\) \(\text{\&h5}\), threatening after \(\text{\&xf4}\), to undermine the pawn-base under the knight on e5.) 14...\(\text{\&d7}\) 15.\(\text{\&xc6}\) \(\text{\&xc6}\) 16.\(\text{\&xc5}\) \(\text{\&xf3}\) 17.\(\text{\&xf3}\) dxc5 18.\(\text{\&e4}\) \(\text{\&b6}\) – Black is a pawn down indeed, but has a very good game thanks to his attacking prospects against the enemy king, Bogut – Saric, Bol 2015.

It is possible that White’s most practical decision here might be to play in the centre and to exchange pieces in order to avoid an eventual attack against his king in the future. 12.\(\text{dxc5}\) \(\text{dxc5}\) 13.\(\text{\&c4}\) \(\text{\&g4}\) 14.\(\text{\&he1}\) \(\text{\&fd8}\) 15.\(\text{\&d5}\) \(\text{\&xd2}\) 16.\(\text{\&xd2}\) \(\text{\&xf3}\) 17.\(\text{\&xf3}\) \(\text{\&xd5}\) 18.\(\text{\&xd5}\) \(\text{b6}\) – In this endgame White’s two-bishop advantage compensates his compromised kingside pawn-structure, Kostal – Dedina, ICCF 2010.

11...\(\text{\&f6}\) 12.\(\text{fxg6}\) \(\text{hxg6}\) 13.\(\text{\&h6}\) \(\text{\&g4}\) 14.\(\text{\&xg7}\) \(\text{\&xg7}\)

15.\(\text{dxc5}\)

15.\(\text{d5}\)!? \(\text{\&xf3}\) 16.\(\text{gxf3}\) \(\text{\&d4}\) – White’s pawn-structure has been weakened, while Black’s knight is very powerful at the centre of the
board, Sax – Sigurjonsson, Vratsa 1975.

15...\texttt{xf3} 16.gxf3 dxc5 17.\texttt{g5} \texttt{ad8} 18.\texttt{d3} c4!?

Black forces a transfer into an endgame.

19.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{xa5}

In this chapter we will analyse \textbf{B1)} \texttt{6.e5} and \textbf{B2)} \texttt{6.e3}. The moves \texttt{6.e2} and \texttt{6.d3} will be dealt with in Chapters 25 and 26 of our book.

\texttt{6.e2} c5 – see Chapter 25.

\texttt{6.d3} \texttt{c6} – see Chapter 26.

It would be a loss of time for White to play here \texttt{6.h3}, moreover that the pawn-move weakens the g3-square. \texttt{6...c5} 7.d5 (7.e3 cxd4 8.cxd4 \texttt{b6!} 9.d2 \texttt{xb2} 10.b1 \texttt{a3} – White’s compensation for the pawn is insufficient, Kadonas – Lucas, ICCF 2011.) \texttt{7.e6} 8.dxe6 \texttt{xe6} 9.e2, Luisetto – Szabo, Balatonbereny 1994, 9...d5!?\textsuperscript{7}

White should better avoid \texttt{6.c4}, due to \texttt{6..xe4}.

\textbf{(diagram)}

It is just bad for White to play here \texttt{7.xf7+}, because Black has already castled and can capture
the enemy bishop with his rook. 7...\textit{xf7} 8...\textit{xe4} d5!? Black ousts immediately the enemy knight away from the centre. 9...\textit{eg5} \textit{f8} 10...\textit{e5} c5. He has the two-bishop advantage, so he should strive to open the position. 11.dxc5 \textit{a5}+ 12.c3 \textit{xc5} 13...\textit{d3} \textit{c4} 14.0–0 \textit{c6}+ Kern – Pacheco, IECG 1998.

7...\textit{xe4} d5 8...\textit{d3} dxe4 9...\textit{xe4} c5 10.c3 cxd4 11...\textit{xd4} \textit{b6} 12...\textit{f3} \textit{d7}+, followed by \textit{c5}, or \textit{f6}, Galant – M.Gurevich, Tulsa 2008.

The move 6.a3 has some venom. White wishes to impede the enemy pawn-advance c7–c5. 6...c5 (After 6...\textit{c6}, Black will have problems following 7...\textit{e2} e5 8...dxe5 dxe5 9...\textit{xd8} \textit{xd8} 10.fxe5 \textit{g4} 11...\textit{g5}+) 7.dxc5 \textit{a5} 8.b4. The preparation of this move was the idea behind 6.a3. 8...\textit{d8}!? This is the most precise retreat of Black’s queen. 9...\textit{b1}. White defends against \textit{xe4}. 9...\textit{fd7} 10. \textit{d2} dxc5. Black has regained the pawn, but still needs to play several precise moves in order to equalise completely. 11.e5. White restricts the enemy bishop on g7. 11...\textit{xb4} 12.axb4 \textit{b6} 13...\textit{d3} \textit{c6} 14...\textit{f2} (14.0–0 \textit{f5}!?=) 14...\textit{g4} 15...\textit{e4}, Motwani – McNab, Aberdeen 2001, 15...f6?! = – White’s e5-pawn cramps Black’s position, so his desire to exchange it is easily understandable.

\textbf{B1) 6.e5}

This move seems a bit premature. White begins active actions in the centre before the completion of the mobilisation of his pieces and this lag in development might hurt him in the future.

\textbf{6...dxe5}?

This is the simplest move for Black.

There arises a more complicated position following 6...\textit{fd7}. For example: 7.h4 c5 8.h5 cxd4 9.hxg6 dxc3 10.gxf7+ \textit{xf7} 11...\textit{e4} e6 12...\textit{g5} cxb2 13...\textit{xb2} \textit{a5}+ 14...\textit{e2}∞ Sutovsky – Ivanchuk, Khanty-Mansiysk 2011. Ivanchuk managed somehow to win this game, but his position seemed worrisome for a long period of time and every mistake, he could
have made, might have led to the opposite result in this game.

Now, White is faced with a choice. He can enter an endgame after B1a) 7.dxe5, or can continue playing in the middle game with B1b) 7.fxe5.

7...\(\text{dxe5}\)?! c5 8.d5 e6 9.d6, Hecht – Elstner, Berlin West 1959, 9...\(\text{cxd5}\)?

**B1a) 7.dxe5 \(\text{bxd1+}\) 8.\(\text{exd1}\)**

8...\(\text{dxd5}\) 9.c4 (9.\(\text{cxd4}\) \(\text{exd6}\)= 10.0–0? \(\text{dxf4+}\) Kun – Ats, Debrecen 1995) 9...\(\text{b6}\) 10.\(\text{e3}\), Onischuk – T.L.Petrosian, Al Ain 2014, 10...\(\text{c5}\)?=, followed by \(\text{c6}\) and \(f7-f6\).

8...\(\text{h5}\)!?

Black cannot equalise with 8...\(\text{g4}\) 9.\(\text{e2}\)?±

(diagram)

9.\(\text{e1}\)

9.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 10.\(\text{e1}\) (10.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{g4}\) – see 9.\(\text{c4}\)) 10...\(\text{g4}\).

9.d2 \(\text{c6}\) 10.\(\text{c1}\) \(\text{g4}\) 11.\(\text{e2}\), Cruz – Moskalenko, Spain 2014, 11...\(f6\)?= – White has failed to hold on to the \(e5\)-square.

After 9.\(\text{g1}\), naturally, Black should not allow g2-g4: 9...\(\text{g4}\) 10.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{c6}\) 11.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{ad8+}\) 12.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{xf3}\) 13.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{d4}\) 14.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{h6}\) 15.g3 \(f6\) – White has the two-bishop advantage, but lags in development, while Black’s pieces have been very actively deployed, Laengl – Hamm, Wuerttenberg 1999.

9.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{c6}\) 10.\(\text{e3}\) (10.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{h6}\).

Black attacks a pawn and frees with tempo the \(g7\)-square for his knight. 11.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{d8+}\) 12.\(\text{e1}\), Zhravlov – Adorjan, Sochi 1977, 12...\(\text{g7}\)?! 13.a3 \(\text{e6}\)=) 10...\(\text{g4}\)

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11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e1?! White allows the doubling of his pawns on the f-file. This is not good for him, because after 11...\texttt{\textasciitilde}xf3 12.gxf3, Gallagher – Bell, Blackpool 1988, 12...\texttt{\textasciitilde}h6!?\textasciitilde, his f4-pawn would need protection.

11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2?! \texttt{\textasciitilde}a5. Now, in order for Black to advance f7-f6, he would need to oust the enemy bishop from the a2-g8 diagonal. 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}d3 f6 13.exf6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xf6\textasciitilde Beach – Carpenter, New Zealand 1980.

11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}f1 g5 12.g3 gxf4 13.gxf4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}h8\textasciitilde, followed by \texttt{\textasciitilde}h6 and White will have to worry permanently about the fate of his pawn on f4, Svidinisky – Churkin, St Petersburg 2005.

9...\texttt{\textasciitilde}c6

10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c4+ (12.exf6?! \texttt{\textasciitilde}xf6\textasciitilde – After the opening of the f-file Black’s pieces may manage to capture the enemy f4-pawn, Afek – Gruenfeld, Rishon Le Ziyyon 1993.) 12...\texttt{\textasciitilde}h8 13.e6. This is the correct decision by White. He lags in development, so he should better prevent the opening of the position. 13...\texttt{\textasciitilde}h6 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2 \texttt{\textasciitilde}a5 15.\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5 \texttt{\textasciitilde}g7\textasciitilde Mullon – Tkachiev, Pau 2012.

10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5 \texttt{\textasciitilde}f5 11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}b5 \texttt{\textasciitilde}e4 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc6 bxc6 13.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe7+ \texttt{\textasciitilde}h8 14.\texttt{\textasciitilde}f2 \texttt{\textasciitilde}ae8 15.g4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xf4! 16.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xf4 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xe7\textasciitilde – The activity of Black’s pieces compensates with an interest the slight weakening of his pawn-structure, Tanti – Pyrich, ICCF 2015.

10...\texttt{\textasciitilde}g4 11.\texttt{\textasciitilde}f2 f6

It is an endgame indeed, but Black’s lead in development is quite real.

12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c4

It would be too aggressive for him to opt for 10.\texttt{\textasciitilde}b5 f6 11.exf6 \texttt{\textasciitilde}xf6 12.\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc6 bxc6 13.\texttt{\textasciitilde}f2, Makarichev – Gedevanishvili, Moscow 1972, 13...\texttt{\textasciitilde}h5!?\textasciitilde

B1b) 7.fxe5 \texttt{\textasciitilde}d5

(diagram)

8.\texttt{\textasciitilde}c4

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8.h4. This move has been often played by Hikaru Nakamura in blitz games, but White’s flank attack still seems premature. 8...c5! 9.h5 \text{Q}c6\text{f} I.Vovk – Karner, Tallinn 2001.

8.Qe4 \text{f}5 9.Qg3 \text{g}4 10.c4 (10.Qe2? c5 11.c4, Balinas – Chandler, London 1979, 11...Qc7?!\text{f}?) 10...Qb6 11.c5 Qd5 12.Qe2, Aaron – Torre, Bangalore 1981, 12...Qc6?!\text{f} – Black’s pieces exert rather unpleasant pressure against White’s centre.

8.Qxd5 Qxd5

There arises a complicated endgame after the line: 9.Qe3 c5 10.dxc5 Qe4 11.Qd3 Qb4+ 12.Qc3 \text{Q}xc3+ 13.bxc3. White has an extra pawn, but all his queenside pawns, as well as his e5-pawn, are horribly weak. 13...Qc6 14.Qd4 \text{Q}d8 15.h3 \text{Q}e6= Madsen – Kvarme, Norway 2004.

9.Qc4 Qe4+

Following 10.Qe2 c5, White will have problems to protect his pawn-centre. 11.d5 Qd7\text{f} Lauer – Van Dijk, LSS 2011.

10.Qe2 Qf5 11.Qxe4 Qxe4 12. Qe3 c5 13.d5, Saakian – Gelman, Krasnodar 1997, 13...Qd7?!\text{f} – Black has an advantage in this position, because White lags in development and cannot protect his e5-pawn.

It seems rather risky for him to opt for 10.Qf2, Burckhardt – Klerks, Bad Sooden 2002, since there are still too many pieces on the board and White’s king on f2 may come under a dangerous attack. 10...f6?! 11.Qd3 Qc6 12.Qe1 fxe5 13.Qg5 e6\text{f}

8...Qe6 (diagram)

9.Qe2

White defends against Qxc3.

9...\textbf{b}3. White parries the threat of capturing on c3. 9...c5 10.\textbf{e}2 cxd4 11.\textbf{exd}4 \textbf{c}6 12. \textbf{xe}6 fxe6 13.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{b}6∞ Blomqvist – Martins, London 2015. His king has remained stranded in the centre for too long. Black is not worse, despite the vulnerability of his doubled pawns on the e-file.

The position is simplified after 9.\textbf{xd}5 \textbf{xd}5 10.\textbf{xd}5 \textbf{xd}5 11. \textbf{e}2 f6!? Now, in order to equalise, Black only needs to get rid of the enemy pawn on e5, which cramps his position. 12.c4 \textbf{e}6 13.\textbf{e}3. White sacrifices a pawn for the initiative. (There arises an equal endgame, following 13.exf6 \textbf{xe}2+ 14.\textbf{xe}2 \textbf{xf}6 15.\textbf{d}2 f5= Prochazka – Weiss, IECG 2000.) 13...fxe5 14.d5 \textbf{a}6 15.0-0 \textbf{d}7 16.\textbf{g}5. White’s positional pluses compensate his sacrificed pawn, but not more than that. 16...\textbf{xf}1+ Trading pieces is Black’s most direct road to equality. 17.\textbf{xf}1 \textbf{ef}8 18.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{h}6 19.\textbf{e}6 \textbf{xe}3+ 20. \textbf{xe}3 \textbf{f}7 21.c5 \textbf{f}8 22.\textbf{xe}5 \textbf{xe}6 23.dxe6 \textbf{f}5 24.\textbf{xc}7 \textbf{xe}6 25. \textbf{xe}7 \textbf{xe}7 26. \textbf{f}4+ \textbf{d}5 27.\textbf{e}3+ DRAW, Schroeder – Ludgate, ICCF 2013. After 26.\textbf{h}1 \textbf{xc}5 27.h3 \textbf{c}1+ 28.\textbf{xc}1 \textbf{xc}1+ 29.\textbf{h}2 \textbf{f}4=, there would arise an equal king and queen ending.

9...\textbf{xc}3 10.\textbf{xc}3

White has weakened his pawn-structure, but has fortified his d4-pawn.

10...\textbf{xc}4 11.\textbf{xc}4 \textbf{c}6

12.\textbf{g}5

Following 12.h4, Kumeric – Rabrenovic, Kragujevac 2015, Black can begin a fight for the c4 and d5-squares with the line: 12...\textbf{a}5!? 13.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{d}5=

12.0–0 \textbf{a}5 13.\textbf{b}4 \textbf{b}6 14.\textbf{a}3, Khuseinov – Zaitchik, Sevastopol 1986, 14...\textbf{e}8!? 15.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{f}5 16.\textbf{e}6 \textbf{d}7 17.\textbf{x}g7 \textbf{x}g7∞ – If Black manages to play \textbf{d}5 and \textbf{c}4, he would maintain an edge.

12...h6. Before playing \textbf{a}5 and \textbf{d}5, it would be essential for Black to oust the enemy bishop from the h4–d8 diagonal in order
to eliminate his attack against the pawn on e7. 13.\textit{h4} g5 14.\textit{f2}\textit{a5} 15.\textit{d3} \textit{d5} 16.0-0 \textit{c4} 17.\textit{h4} f6\textit{O} Harding – Hansen, ICCF 2015.

**B2) 6.\textit{e3}**

This is an aggressive move. White prevents c7-c5 and prepares at the same time his castling queenside (\textit{d2}, 0–0–0). He is not afraid of \textit{g4}, because he will simply retreat with his bishop to g1 and follow this with h2-h3.

6...b6

Black is preparing c7-c5 and \textit{b7}. He must try to create pressure against the enemy centre as quickly as possible; otherwise, he may end up quickly in a difficult position.

We will analyse now **B2a)** 7.\textit{c4}, **B2b)** 7.\textit{d3}, **B2c)** 7.e5 and **B2d)** 7.\textit{d2}.

7.\textit{e2} \textit{a6} 8.\textit{d2} \textit{b7} – see 7.\textit{d2}.

**B2a)** 7.\textit{c4} c5

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image}
\caption{Diagram showing the position after 7.\textit{c4} c5.}
\end{figure}

8.\textit{e2}

White plans to castle queenside, but weakens his control over the d4-square.

After 8.\textit{d2}, Khatanbaatar – Smirin, Elista 1998, Black has a very promising pawn-sacrifice: 8...\textit{c6}?! 9.d5 \textit{a5} 10.\textit{e2} b5!? 11.\textit{xb5} \textit{b8=\textit{e}}\textit{b}, threatening a7-a6 and \textit{xe4}.

The move 8.dxc5 cannot be recommended. White not only exchanges a central pawn for a flank pawn, but also opens the b-file for the enemy major pieces. 8...\textit{bxc5} 9.0–0 \textit{bd7} 10.\textit{e2} \textit{b6} 11.\textit{a6} \textit{xa6} 12.\textit{xa6} \textit{c8} 13.\textit{d3}, G. Kuzmin – Zubov, Alushta 1999, 13...\textit{d8}!!\textit{f}

It would be premature for White to play here 8.e5, because of 8...\textit{g4}, for example: 9.\textit{d2}, Shirov – Simonenko, Bilbao 2001 (9.\textit{g1} \textit{b7} – see 7.e5) 9...\textit{cxd4}?! 10.\textit{xd4} \textit{dxe5} 11.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 12.\textit{xe5} \textit{xd2+} 13.\textit{xd2} \textit{xe5} 14.\textit{fxe5} \textit{b7} – After his premature activity in the centre, White has
ended up in an inferior endgame, since a weakness on e5 has appeared in his camp.

8...c6 9.e5 g4 10.0–0–0

White has completed his development.

10...dxe3
Black exchanges the powerful enemy bishop.

11.xe3 cxd4!? 
This is his most precise move.

There arise unnecessary complications for Black following 11...g4, Nisipeanu – Avrukh, Wijk aan Zee 2000, 12.e6! cxd4 13. exf7+ h8 14.xd4! xd4 15. xd4 xd4 16.xd4+ e5 17.e4  
He has an extra exchange, but his defence will be very difficult due to the vulnerability of his king.

12.xd4 xd4 13.xd4 b5!?  
Black sacrifices a pawn and seizes the initiative. White should not accept the gift 14.xb5?!, because after 14...b6 15.e1 dxe5, Black destroys his centre. White would lose the exchange following 16.fxe5? h6! 17.xh6 xd4+

B2b) 7.d3
White has deployed beautifully his bishops, but after 7...e5  
his centre just crumbles.

8.h3
After White’s alternatives, Black has no problems whatsoever. In addition, he is very likely to even seize the initiative.

8.d2 cxd4 9.xd4 b7 10.0–0–0 db7 11.he1 c5 12.g1, Hjartarson – Thorsteins, Gardabaer 1991, 12...h6??, with the rather unpleasant threat e5 either immediately, or after the preliminary move x3d3.

White cannot be happy with the results of the line: 8.dxc5 bxc5 9.e5 g4 10.xc5 (10.e2 c6 11.e4 b6+ A.Sokolov – Gerber, Lenk 2012) 10...d7! 11..a3 dxe5. Black has destroyed his oppo-
nent's centre and after 12.\_e4 \_e3! 13.\_e2 exf4 14.\_xax8 \_a5\_f, his attack became decisive, Ninov - Czerwonski, Guben 2008.

Following 8.d5, Black should better undermine immediately his opponent's centre with 8...e6?! (It would be too slow for him to choose 8...\_d4 9.0-0 \_c7 10.\_a4 a6 11.\_e1\_f, followed by \_h4, \_f5, \_h6, \_g5, P.Smirnov - Mateuta, Aviles 2000.) 9.dxe6 fx5\_f. Black's prospects are not worse and after 10.\_c4 \_c6 11.0-0, Grosar - Manca, Formia 1994, he could have even tried to seize the initiative with the move 11...d5?!\_f, because White would not be able to play 12.exd5?! \_a5\_f - Black regains his pawn and preserves all the pluses of his position.

Or 8.\_e2 \_c6 9.e5 \_g4 10.\_e4, Bologan - Gipslis, Ostrava 1993, 10...\_d7?!∞

8...cxd4 9.\_xd4 \_b7 10.\_f3 \_bd7 11.0-0 \_e8 12.\_de2, Vavric - Itkis, Kishinev 2013, 12...e6?!\_f 9...\_b7 10.\_d2 \_c6 11.\_f2 \_e8 12.0-0 \_d4. Black has obtained a position, which is a good version for him of the Sicilian Defence. 13.\_b1, McShane - Tkachiev, Hastings 1998. Here, Black overlooked a concealed rook-sacrifice. 13...\_xd3?! 14.cxd3 \_xc3! 15.bxc3 \_xe4! 16.dxe4 \_xe4 17.\_e3 \_xc3+ 18.\_c2 \_c8. He has three pawns and a very powerful attack for the rook. 19.\_d2 \_a6! 20.\_c1 \_e8 21.\_d3 \_a5 22.\_e3 \_xa2+ 23.\_e2 \_xc1+ 24.\_xc1 \_xc1 25.\_xc1 \_a2+ 26.\_d2 d5\_f. The tactical complications are over and Black's four pawns will be obviously stronger than White's knight in this endgame.

**B2c) 7.e5 \_g4**

8.\_g1

8.\_d2 \_b7 - see variation B2d.

8.\_e2. This move has the drawback that Black can develop his bishop with tempo. 8...\_a6 9.\_d2 \_xf1 (9...\_b7 - see variation B2d) 10.\_xf1 c5 11.0-0-0, A.Sokolov - Tseleshkovsky, Igalo 1994, 11...cxd4!? 12.\_xd4 dxe5 13.\_xe5 \_xe5 14.\_xe5 \_xd2+ 15.\_xd2 \_xe5 16.\_xe5 \_c6 17.\_e1 \_fd8=

8...c5  (diagram)

9.h3

White should better oust immediately the enemy knight to the
1.e4 d6 2.d4 f6 3...c3 g6 4.f4 g7 5...f3 0-0 6...e3 b6

12...xc3 a6 13...h4 wc8+ Koch – Seret, Angers 1990.

9.dxc5. White wishes to exploit the circumstance that Black’s bishop has not been developed to the b7-square yet. Still, his plan, connected with the preparation of...d5, backfires. 9...bxc5 10.h3 (10...c4 b7 – see 9...c4) 10...h6

9...c4 b7 10.dxc5 (10.e6?! f5
11.d5 c6 12.wd2 f6 13...xc6. White must comply with the trade of his powerful bishop. 13...xc6+ – Black’s bishops are very strong, Renet – Sznapi, Dortmund 1989.) 10...bxc5 11.d5 (11.h3...h6 12.e6, Baramidze – Bezold, Pulvermuhle 2004, 12...a5!?) 11...c6+ Black’s position is already more promising. 12.wd2 b8 13.0-0-0 wb6. His threats on the b-file are very unpleasant for White. 14...b3 a5+ Black prepares the trade of the powerful enemy bishop. 15...b1 wb4 16.h3...h6 17...e3 d5 18...d2 g3+ Nisipeanu – Seul, Gelsenkirchen 1999.

9.d5. White weakens his control over the e5-square. 9...dxe5 10.h3. He wishes to oust the enemy knight from g4 and to capture on e5, but Black has at his disposal a very strong intermediate move: 10...e4!? 11.hxg4...xc3+!?
the early sortie of White’s queen turns out to be a fiasco. 12.0–0–0, Grippo – Blasi, ICCF 2008 (12.\texttt{\textsubscript{g}xa8? \textsubscript{d}b7–+}) 12...\textsubscript{d}b7!?\textsuperscript{±}

\textbf{9...\textsubscript{d}h6 10.d5}

10.dxc5 bxc5 – see 9.dxc5.

Unfortunately for White, he cannot restrict the enemy knight on h6, because it would be bad for him to choose 10.g4?! in view of 10...\textsubscript{c}xd4 11.\textsubscript{d}xd4 \textsubscript{d}b7!?\textsuperscript{±}

\textbf{10...\textsubscript{d}b7 11.\textsubscript{d}d2}

11.\textsubscript{h}h2?! \textsubscript{d}f5 12.\textsubscript{d}d3 \textsubscript{g}a6± 13.0–0–0?! dx5 14.\textsubscript{d}xe5 \textsubscript{g}b4 15.\textsubscript{d}d2 \textsubscript{d}d4 16.\textsubscript{g}g1 \textsubscript{b}xc2± Campo- ra – M.Marin, Andorra 1999

\textbf{11...\textsubscript{f}f5}

\textbf{12.\textsubscript{h}h2}

White defends against the penetration of the enemy knight to the g3-square.

Following 12.\texttt{f}f2 dx5 13.fxe5 e6±, White’s seemingly powerful pawn-centre can be only a cause of worries for him, Schneider – Hermansson, Borlange 1992.

After 12.\texttt{d}d3, Hoskyn – Wha- ley, New Zealand 2002, 12...\texttt{g}g3!? 13.\texttt{h}h2 dx5 14.fxe5 \texttt{d}d7!?\textsuperscript{±} his displaced rook on h2 obviously does not beautify his position.

\textbf{12...dxе5 13.fxe5}

The endgame is worse for White after 13.\texttt{h}xe5, Espindola – Praznik, Argentina 1994, 13...e6!? 14.\texttt{d}xe6 \texttt{d}d2+ 15.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{d}d8+ 16.\texttt{c}c1 fxe6± and he will have problems to complete his development, despite its being an endgame.

\textbf{13.e6 14.0–0–0 exd5 15.\texttt{d}xd5 \texttt{c}6±}

There is nothing left of White’s once powerful centre. His d5- pawn has been exchanged, while without it, his other central e5- pawn has turned into an isolated pawn.

\textbf{16.c3}
16.\texttt{b1}, Garma – Torre, Manila 1991, 16...\texttt{cd4}!? 17.\texttt{xd4 cxd4}\


16...\texttt{cd4}!
Black seizes completely the initiative with this simple tactical strike.

17.\texttt{f6+ xf6 18.cxd4 g7 19.d5 c4}!
His plans include \texttt{ec8} and \texttt{c4-c3}.

20.\texttt{e2 c8 21.b1 h6 22.f4 xf4 23.xf4 xd5} – Black has an extra pawn and excellent attacking prospects, Beliavsky – Anand, Munich 1991.

9.e5 \texttt{g4 10.g1 c5} Wang – Ye, Qingdao 1999.

9.a3. White prevents \texttt{b4}, but Black can change the route of his knight. 9...\texttt{c5} 10.d5 \texttt{c7} 11.h3, Nguyen – Ho Thi Minh, Vung Tau 2000, 11...\texttt{e6}?

9.0–0–0 \texttt{b4 10.e5 xd3+ 11.xd3, Kriebel – Bartel, Caleta 2013, 11...dxe5!? 12.fxe5 xd5} – Black has a good position thanks to his two powerful bishops.

8...\texttt{g4} 9.0–0–0

Besides this move, White has tried in practice 9.e6, Kotronias – Smirin, Moscow 2004, 9...f5!? and his pawn on \texttt{e6}, isolated from the rest of his forces, might become very weak later.

9.h3 \texttt{xe3} 10.\texttt{xe3 c5} 11.0–0–0 \texttt{cxd4} 12.\texttt{xd4 c6} 13.exd6, Osma – Gaponenko, Lvov 2015 (13. \texttt{xc6 xc6= Mista – Peralta, Warsaw 2007}) 13...\texttt{xd4}!? 14. \texttt{xd4 xd4} 15.dxe7 \texttt{d6} 16. \texttt{exf8+ xf8} 17.\texttt{g3 c6}! – White has an extra pawn indeed, but Black has created powerful pressure against the g2-square, so White will hardly manage to com-

B2d) 7.\texttt{d2 b7}

8.e5
After 8.\texttt{d3 a6}!, Black’s knight is headed immediately to the b4-square in order to trade the powerful enemy bishop.
plete the development of his kingside without material losses.

9...c5 10.\textsc{dxc5} 

White's pawn-structure is weakened after 10.h3 \textsc{xf3}!? (10... \textsc{xe3} 11.\textsc{xe3} cxd4 – see 9.h3) 11.\textsc{gxf3} \textsc{xe3} 12.\textsc{xe3} \textsc{c6}+ 

10...\textsc{bxc5} 11.\textsc{xc5} 

11.\textsc{c4} \textsc{c6}+ Kekelidze – Leski, Cannes 2006. 

11.h3 \textsc{xe3} 12.\textsc{exe3} \textsc{c6}+ Plaskett – McNab, Birmingham 2005. 

11...\textsc{wa5} 12.\textsc{a3} \textsc{dxe5} 

13.h3 

Following 13.\textsc{d5} \textsc{xd2}+ 14. \textsc{xd2} \textsc{d5} 15.\textsc{xd5} \textsc{e3}, Black should gradually equalise after an accurate play. 

(diagram)  

16.\textsc{xd3} \textsc{exf4} 17.\textsc{xe7} \textsc{c8} 18.\textsc{c3} \textsc{c6} 19.\textsc{d6} \textsc{h6} 20.\textsc{b1} \textsc{a5} 21.g3 \textsc{f5} 22.\textsc{xg3} \textsc{ac4} 23.\textsc{e2} \textsc{f5} 24.\textsc{e7} \textsc{yg3}. Black deprives his opponent of his two-bishop advantage. 25.\textsc{hgx3} \textsc{g7}= Bredenhof – Hoof, ICCF 2015. 

16.\textsc{d2} \textsc{xf1} (It seems less precise for Black to choose here 16... \textsc{c6} 17.\textsc{b5} \textsc{fc8} 18.\textsc{xc6} \textsc{xc6} 19. \textsc{xe5} \textsc{xe5} 20.\textsc{xe5} \textsc{c4}, Kasimdzhanov – Svidler, San Luis 2005, 21.\textsc{d3}!? \textsc{xe5} 22.\textsc{d5}+ and White’s bishop may prove to be stronger than Black’s knight in actions on both sides of the board.) 17.\textsc{xf1} \textsc{c6} 18.\textsc{xe5} \textsc{xe5} 19.\textsc{xe5} \textsc{h6} 20. \textsc{xe7} \textsc{fb8} 21.\textsc{fd1} (21.\textsc{ff2} \textsc{b5} 22.\textsc{f6} \textsc{xd5}= Shirov – McNab, Gibraltar 2006) 21...\textsc{b5} 22.\textsc{d6} \textsc{d5} 23.c4 \textsc{c8} 24.b3 \textsc{f6}! It is essential for Black to activate his king as quickly as possible. 25.\textsc{c2} \textsc{xd2}+ 26.\textsc{xd2} \textsc{xd2} 27.\textsc{xd2} \textsc{f7} 28. \textsc{xf6} \textsc{xf6}= – Black’s rook can hold convincingly the defence against White’s bishop and pawns, Abdulla – M.Socket, Chakvi 2015. 

13...\textsc{h6} 14.\textsc{g5} \textsc{exf4} 15. \textsc{xf7} \textsc{xf7} 16.\textsc{hxg4} \textsc{g5} 

(diagram) 

17.\textsc{e4} 

17.\textsc{b1} f3 18.\textsc{d8}+ (18.\textsc{f2}?! fxg2 19.\textsc{xg2} \textsc{xf2} 20.\textsc{xb7}, CHAR- bonneau – Lagno, Montreal 2004,
20...\=d7!?† – White’s compensation for the queen is insufficient.) 18...\=xd8 19.\=xd8+ \=g7 20.gxf3 \=xf3 21.\=g1 e6!=, followed by \=d7. Black gets rid of the pin on the last rank and equalises completely.

17...\=xd2+ 18.\=xd2 f3 19. gxf3 \=xf3 20.\=c4 \=xh1 21.\=xh1 \=c6 22.\=xf7+ \=xf7 23.\=xh7+ \=f6

White has managed to win a pawn indeed, but the pin of his knight on d2 and the vulnerability of the pawn on d4 enables Black to equalise.

24.\=h2

24.b3 \=f4 25.\=h3 (25.c4 \=d8 26.\=b2+ \=g5 27.\=c3 \=xg4= Dunn – McNab, Gibraltar 2006) 25... \=d8 26.\=d3 \=xd3 27.cxd3 \=g5 28.\=c5 \=xg4 29.b4 a6 30.a4 \=d6 31.\=xd6 exd6= Illescas Cordoba – M.Marin, Mondariz 2002.

24...\=f4 25.\=g2 \=d8 26.\=c5 \=d5 27.b4 \=e5 28.\=f2 \=g5 29.\=xa7. White has already three passed pawns on the queenside, but Black’s pieces are very active and the pin of the knight on d2 is very unpleasant for White. 29... \=xg4 30.\=b8 \=e3 31.\=g2+ \=h3 32.\=e2 \=c4 33.\=xe3+!

This is a very clever move, but still insufficient to obtain chances of winning the game. 33...\=xe3 34. \=a7 \=g4 35.a4 \=e5 36.\=e3 g5!

Black sacrifices a pawn and deflects his opponent bishop to a disadvantageous square. 37.\=xg5 \=c6 38.\=e4 \=e5 39.b5 \=d8 40. \=f2+ \=g3 41.\=f4+ \=xf4 42.\=d3+ \=f5 43.\=xe5 \=xe5.

Black manages to hold his opponent’s connected passed pawns. In the meantime, White captures his enemy only remaining pawn on the board. 44.a5 \=e6 45. \=d2 \=d4 46.b6 \=c5 47.\=e2 \=c4 48.b7 \=a6 49.\=e3 \=b5 50.\=e4 \=xa5 51.\=e5 \=b6 52. \=e6= Lakatos – Gazi, ICCF 2009.
This development of the bishop is not so ambitious. White prepares castling kingside, but on e2 his bishop does not protect the e4-pawn and does not prevent the enemy pawn-advance c7-c5.

6...c5

Black inflicts a timely strike against the enemy centre. Now, White must define the future pawn-structure. He may allow his opponent to enter a good version of the Dragon variation A) 7.0-0, or can transpose to the pawn-structure of the Benoni Defence B) 7.d5, or choose C) 7.dxc5.

It would be premature for White to opt here for 7.e5, since following 7...f6d7 8.exd6 exd6 9.0-0 c6, he would have difficulties with the protection of the d4-square. 10.dxc5 (10.e3?! cxd4 11.exd4 b6! 12.d5 xd4 13.xb6 xe3+ 14.xh1 xb6= – Black’s three minor pieces are obviously stronger than White’s queen.) 10...xc5 11.h1 f5= – Black’s pieces are evidently more active, Needleman – Quiroga, Buenos Aires 1993.

7.e3. White’s bishop is not stable on this square and he must be constantly on the alert about the possibility – g4. 7...a5 8.d2 (8.0-0?! g4=) 8...c6 9.d5, Parkanyi – Lorscheid, Vienna 1996, 9...d4!? 10.xd4 cxd4 11.exd4 e4 12.xe4 x2d2+ 13.xd2 xd4= – Black’s prospects are not worse thanks to his bishop-pair.

A) 7.0-0 cxd4 8.xd4 b6

Black emphasizes the vulnerability of the g1-a7 diagonal and obtains at least an equal position. Now, White must play very pre-
1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♜f6 3.♗c3 g6 4.f4 ♗g7 5.♘f3 0-0 6.♗e2 c5
cisely in order to get rid of the rather unpleasant pin of his knight and not to worsen his position in the process.

9.♗e3
9.♕h1? ♛xe4!
9...♗c6

10.♗d3

White loses material after 10. ♕h1?! ♛xe4! 11.♗xc6 ♛xc6 12. ♙d5 ♚e8† Chemin – Resende, Sao Paulo 1995, as well as following 10.♗d2?! ♛xe4! 11.♗xc6 ♛xc6 12.♗xe4 ♛xe4 13.♗f3 ♛a4 14.c3 ♛b8 15.♗f2 b6† Cifuentes – Filipowicz, Moscow 1968. His compensation for the pawn is insufficient in both variations.

10.e5. This pawn-break in the centre seems rather premature, because Black is well prepared to counter it. 10...dxe5 11.fxe5 ♛xe5 12.♗f5 ♛xb2 13.♗xe7+ ♕h8. He has an extra pawn, while White would be incapable of exploiting the exposed placement of the enemy queen on b2, because it would manage to come back easily to Black’s own camp. 14.♗d4 ♛b4 15.♗xe5 (15.♗xc8?! White deprives his opponent of his two bishops, but this only enhances the development of his pieces. 15...♕d8 16.♗b5 ♛xc8 17.c3 ♛e7 18.♕b3, Grechkin – Shcherbakov, Riga 1954, 18...a6!? 19.♗a3 ♛c6 20.♗xf6 ♛xf6† – with a solid extra pawn for Black.) 15...♛xe7 16.♗d4 ♔h5. He eliminates the rather unpleasant pressure on the a1-h8 diagonal. 17.♗xg7+ ♔xg7 18.♗f3 ♔e6. He has managed to coordinate his rooks. Now, White must fight to save the day, because he has no compensation for the sacrificed pawn at all. 19.♗ab1 ♛d8 20.♗d5 ♛d6 21.c4 b6 22.♗h1 ♛ac8† Olszewski – Duda, Germany 2015. Black has an extra pawn and a superior pawn-structure. White’s knight is very powerful at the centre of the board, but he still needs to fight long and hard for a draw.

Following 10.♗a4, Black can even try to seize the initiative. 10...♛b4?! (It would be sufficient for Black to draw after the line: 10...♕a5 11.♕c3 ♛b6=) 11.c3 ♛a5 12.b4. White occupies space on the queenside. Still, we all know that pawns do not retreat ever, so this weakening of his queenside pawn-structure might hurt him in the future. 12...♗c7 13.♗f3 ♖d7 14. ♗c1 ♗ac8 15.a3 ♛b8∞ Westerinen – Miles, Metz 1985.

10...♗g4
Chapter 25

11. \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4}

11. \texttt{\textunderline{d}5} \texttt{\textunderline{x}d4}

Winning the enemy queen with 12. \texttt{\textunderline{x}xb6}, would lead to difficulties for White after 12...\texttt{\textunderline{x}xe3+}
13. \texttt{\textunderline{h}1} \texttt{\textunderline{x}b6} 14. \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4} \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4} 15. \texttt{\textunderline{f}5}
\texttt{\textunderline{h}5} 16. \texttt{\textunderline{a}4} \texttt{\textunderline{e}5} 17. \texttt{\textunderline{w}g3}. Black’s three minor pieces are perfectly coordinated, while White’s queen has no target to attack at all. 17...
\texttt{\textunderline{e}2}. Black transfers his bishop to the queenside. White could have tried to trap it on the kingside after h2-h3 and g2-g4. 18. \texttt{\textunderline{w}e1} \texttt{\textunderline{a}6} 19. \texttt{\textunderline{a}3} \texttt{\textunderline{c}5} 20. \texttt{\textunderline{b}3}, Olofsson –
Jaederholm, ICCF 2007, 20...
\texttt{f6}?!+

12. \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4} \texttt{\textunderline{x}e3+} 13. \texttt{\textunderline{w}xe3} \texttt{\textunderline{w}xe3+}
14. \texttt{\textunderline{x}e3} \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4} 15. \texttt{\textunderline{x}g4}. The position has been considerably sim-
plified and there has arisen an approximately equal endgame on the board. 15...\texttt{\textunderline{f}c8} 16. \texttt{\textunderline{e}e3} \texttt{\textunderline{a}5}= Salamon – Walter, ICCF 2009.

11...\texttt{\textunderline{x}d4} 12. \texttt{\textunderline{x}d4}

12. \texttt{\textunderline{d}5} \texttt{\textunderline{x}e3} – see 11. \texttt{\textunderline{d}5}.

12...\texttt{\textunderline{w}xd4+} 13. \texttt{\textunderline{w}xd4} \texttt{\textunderline{x}d4} 14. \texttt{\textunderline{d}1}

14. \texttt{\textunderline{x}c8} \texttt{\textunderline{x}c8} 15. \texttt{\textunderline{f}f2} \texttt{\textunderline{c}5}= – It looks like a dead draw on the board, Commons – Torre, Lone
Pine 1975.

14...\texttt{\textunderline{e}6}

15. \texttt{\textunderline{f}f2}

White prepares the transfer of his rook to d2. He wishes to oust
the enemy knight from its powerful placement at the centre of the
board, but this is not going to be an easy task at all.

Following 15. \texttt{\textunderline{d}5} \texttt{\textunderline{x}d5} 16.
\texttt{exd5}, the position seems to be rather closed, so White will hardly
manage to exploit the superiority
of his bishop over the enemy knight. 16...\texttt{\{f}c8 17.c3 \texttt{\{}f5 18.e1 h5 19.\texttt{\{}c2 (The move 19.g4 would only lead to unnecessary pawn-weaknesses in White's camp. 19...hxg4 20.\texttt{\{}xg4 \texttt{\{}c7 21.\texttt{\{}xf5 gx\texttt{\{}f5 22.\texttt{\{}f2 \texttt{\{}g7 23.\texttt{\{}g1+ \texttt{\{}f6 24.h4 \texttt{\{}h8 25.\texttt{\{}h1 \texttt{\{}h5\textsuperscript{=} – White's h-pawn has been reliably blocked, M.Petrov – Stanojoski, Plovdiv 2013.) 19...\texttt{\{}f8= Radulski – Berbatov, Bankia 2011.

15...\texttt{\{}ac8
Black’s rook is in a hurry to assist his knight.

16.\texttt{\{}d2

16.a4 \texttt{\{}c4=

16...\texttt{\{}c4

17.\texttt{\{}b1
White creates the threat \texttt{\{}a3 and ousts the enemy knight in the process.

17.\texttt{\{}f2 \texttt{\{}f8 18.a3 \texttt{\{}g7 19.\texttt{\{}c1, Podlesnik – S.Savchenko, Ljubljana 1996. Black could have fortified reliably his knight with the

line: 19...\texttt{\{}d7!? 20.\texttt{\{}e3 e5 21.fxe5 dxe5\textsuperscript{=}

17...\texttt{\{}c6 18.\texttt{\{}f3 \texttt{\{}c5= – Black has no pawn-weaknesses in his position, Podlesnik – Beliavsky, Portorož 1996.

B) 7.d5
White occupies space, but this would not promise him much.

7...e6!?}

Now, he will have problems to hold on to the d5-square.

8.dxe6
This is a sad necessity.

If White refrains from this exchange, things might end up badly for him. 8.0–0 exd5 9.exd5 (9.e5 \texttt{\{}fd7 10.\texttt{\{}xd5 dxe5 11.fxe5 \texttt{\{}xe5 12.\texttt{\{}xe5 \texttt{\{}xd5 13.\texttt{\{}xd5 \texttt{\{}xe5\textsuperscript{=} – There has arisen a transfer to an endgame in which White’s lead in development does not compensate fully the sacrificed pawn, Muheim – Yilmazyerli, Herceg Novi 2008) 9...\texttt{\{}a6. Black is preparing to transfer his knight to the c7-square in order to

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increase the pressure against the enemy pawn on d5 and to help in the preparation of b7-b5. 10.h3 \(\texttt{\textit{d}c7}\) 11.a4 \(\texttt{\textit{d}e8}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{c}c4}\), Kunte – Wojtkiewicz, Dhaka 1999, 12... b6!?\(\pm\), followed by a7-a6, \(\texttt{\textit{d}b8}\), b6-b5, seizing completely the initiative on the queenside.

\[8...\texttt{\textit{x}e6}\ 9.0-0\]

9.\(\texttt{\textit{g}g5}\) \(\texttt{\textit{c}c6}\) 10.\(\texttt{\textit{x}e6}\) (10.0-0 \(\texttt{\textit{d}d4}\) – see 9.0-0) 10...\(\texttt{f}xe6\) 11.0-0 \(\texttt{\textit{w}e7}\) 12.a4 \(\texttt{\textit{a}e8}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{h}h1}\) \(\texttt{\textit{h}h8}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{a}a3}\) a6\(\infty\) Poletaev – Ilyasov, ICCF 2014.

\[9...\texttt{\textit{c}c6}\]

\[10.\texttt{\textit{g}g5}\]

White plans to continue with f4-f5, or eventually to trade his knight for an enemy bishop.

He can also play immediately 10.f5, but in this case his activity would be only sufficient to compensate his missing pawn. 10...\(\texttt{gxf5}\)

(diagram)

11.\(\texttt{\textit{g}g5}\) \(\texttt{\textit{f}xe4}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{x}e4}\) d5 13.\(\texttt{\textit{d}f6}\) + \(\texttt{\textit{x}f6}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{d}d2}\) (14.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f6}\)?? \(\texttt{\textit{x}f6}\)\(\pm\) Hagstroem – Nilsson, Denmark 1997) 14...\(\texttt{\textit{d}d4}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f6}\) \(\texttt{\textit{x}e2+}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{x}e2}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xf}6}\) 17.\(\texttt{\textit{e}e5}\) \(\texttt{\textit{h}h4}\) – The activity of White’s pieces compensates the sacrificed pawn, but not more than that.

11.\(\texttt{\textit{e}x}f5\) \(\texttt{\textit{xf}5}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{g}g}5\) (12.\(\texttt{\textit{h}h4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{g}6}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{f}f}5\) \(\texttt{\textit{x}f}5\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f}5\) He has succeeded in forcing the exchange of his opponent’s powerful light-squared bishop, but the maneuver of his knight has consumed too much time. In addition, White’s exposed rook would come under attack by the enemy minor pieces. 14...\(\texttt{\textit{d}d4}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{g}5}\), Krisko – Plachetka, Hlobovec 1975, 15...d5!??) 12...\(\texttt{\textit{g}g}6\)? This is Black’s most precise reaction. From this square his bishop will cement his compromised kingside pawn-structure. (12...\(\texttt{\textit{h}h}6\)!? 13.\(\texttt{\textit{h}h4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{d}d7}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f}6\) \(\texttt{\textit{x}f}6\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{d}d}5\) \(\texttt{\textit{g}7}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{h}h}4\) – White’s pieces exert powerful pressure, Saradarov – Gipslis, Kishinev 1964) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{d}d}5\) \(\texttt{\textit{b}b}4\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f}6\) + \(\texttt{\textit{x}f}6\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{x}f}6\) \(\texttt{\textit{w}xf}6\) 16.c3 \(\texttt{\textit{c}c}6\) \(\infty\)

After 10.\(\texttt{\textit{h}h}1\), the simplest response by Black would be 10...h6!?, covering reliably the g5-
square against the enemy knight. (Black would not equalise with the line: 10...d5
11.e5 Ḟe8 12.♗g5† Acs – Konopka, Balatonlelle 2002.) 11.♗e3, Dudys – Walentukiewicz, Leba 2006, 11...♗e8!?=

10...♗d4
This move impedes White’s pawn-offensive.

11.f5
Still, he accepts the challenge!

There would arise a much calmer position following 11.♗e3
♗xe2+ 12.♕xe2 ♘e7 13.♗xe6 fxe6
14.♗d2 ♗ad8= Engqvist – Malakhov, Budapest 1995, or 11.♗xe6
♗xe2+ 12.♕xe2 fxe6 13.♗e3 ♘b6
14.♗ab1 ♘c6∞ – and in both cases White would be incapable of exploiting Black’s somewhat vulnerable pawns on d6 and e6, Ingersol – Benatar, IECC 1998.

11...gxf5 12.♗d3 ♗d7

13.♗d5
This move seems to be too active.

It is more remarkable for White to choose here 13.exf5, Kovacevic – Velimirovic, Zagreb 1972, 13...d5!?= Black has no problems at all here, but White is not worse either. 14.♗xd5 ♗xd5
15.♗xh7 ♘h4 16.♗g5 ♘xh7 17.f6
♗h8 18.fxe7 ♘xg7 19.♗h5 c4! 20.
♗xc4 ♘e6 21.♗ad1 ♘c6 22.♗h6
♗xg2+! 23.♗xg2 ♘df4+ 24.♗g1
♗xh5 25.♗xf8 ♘xf8 26.♗d5 ♘xd5
27.♗xd5 ♘hf4 28.♗a5 a6∞ – Black’s two knights do not seem to be inferior to White’s rook and pawns in this endgame.

13...h6. Now, White’s knight is forced to retreat to the edge of the board. 14.♗h3 fxe4 15.
♗xf6+ ♘xf6 16.♗xe4 d5! Black seizes the initiative. 17.♗f3 ♘xh3
18.gxh3, Le Roux – I.Popov, Aix les Bains 2011. Here, Black could have simply deprived his opponent of his two-bishop advantage. 18...♗xf3+ 19.♗xf3 ♘g7 20.
♗h1 ♘c8!†, followed by ♘c6, ♘g6, parrying the threats on the g-file. White has no compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

C) 7.dxc5
White trades his central pawn for a flank pawn with the idea to use the time his opponent needs to regain it in order to develop his pieces.

7...♗a5
(diagram)

8.0–0
This is White’s most logical
move. He should better evacuate his king to a safe shelter before Black's queen has occupied the g1-a7 diagonal.

White should refrain from 8. cxd6?! , because after 8...\( \square \)xe4 9.dxe7 \( \triangle \)e8 10.0–0 \( \diamond \)xc3 11.bxc3, Kashlinskaya – Bodnaruk, Vladivostok 2014, 11...\( \mathcal{E} \)xe7!\( ^{\ddagger} \), his pawn-structure on the queenside would be horribly compromised.

8.\( \mathcal{D} \)d3. This is a second move in the opening with the same piece by White and it cannot be recommended at all. 8...\( \mathbb{W} \)xc5 9. \( \mathbb{W} \)e2 \( \square \)c6 10.a3 e5. Black wishes to open the position in order to manage to attack the enemy king, stranded in the centre. 11.fxe5 dxe5 12.\( \mathcal{G} \)g5 \( \triangle \)e6 13.\( \mathcal{D} \)d2 \( \mathcal{D} \)d4\( ^{\ddagger} \), Sax – Jasim, Istanbul 2000.

8.\( \mathcal{D} \)d2. The preparation of the transfer of White's knight to the b3-square seems a bit artificial. 8...\( \mathbb{W} \)xc5 9.\( \mathcal{D} \)b3 \( \mathbb{W} \)b6 10.\( \mathcal{D} \)d3. He is preparing \( \mathcal{D} \)e3. 10...\( \mathcal{D} \)c6 11.\( \mathcal{D} \)e3 \( \mathcal{D} \)b4 12.\( \mathcal{D} \)xb6 (12.\( \mathcal{D} \)d2? \( \mathbb{W} \)xe3! 13.\( \mathbb{W} \)xe3 \( \mathcal{D} \)xc2\( ^{\ddagger} \)) 12...\( \mathcal{D} \)xd3+ 13. cxd3 axb6\( ^{\ddagger} \) – Black's two-bishop advantage compensates the defects of his pawn-structure, Lenciart – Bluvshtein, Collado Villalba 2010.

8...\( \mathbb{W} \)xc5+ 9.\( \mathcal{D} \)h1 \( \mathcal{D} \)c6

10.\( \mathcal{D} \)d3

This is White's main line and although he makes a second move in the opening with the same piece, now, he would have no problems with the protection of his pawn on e4.

It would be premature for White to play here 10.\( \mathbb{W} \)e1, since Black could counter that with the strike 10...d5?! in the centre. 11.e5 (11.exd5 \( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 12.\( \mathcal{D} \)xd5 \( \mathbb{W} \)xd5 13.c3 \( \mathcal{F} \)f5 14.\( \mathcal{E} \)e3 \( \mathcal{D} \)f8\( ^{\ddagger} \) – Black's pieces are obviously more actively deployed, Zhukova – Nisipeanu, Koszalin 1998.) 11...\( \mathcal{D} \)e4 12.\( \mathcal{D} \)d3 \( \mathcal{D} \)xc3 13.bxc3 \( \mathcal{G} \)g4 14.\( \mathcal{B} \)b1 \( \mathbb{W} \)a5 15. \( \mathcal{X} \)xb7 \( \mathcal{X} \)f3 16.\( \mathcal{X} \)xf3, Stein – Paulsen, Germany 1988 and here Black's simplest reaction would be 16...e6!? 17.\( \mathcal{D} \)d2 \( \mathbb{W} \)xa2=, regaining the pawn.
The defects of the move 10. \( \diamond d2 \) have been demonstrated in the world – famous game Fischer – Korchnoi, Curacao 1962, 10...a5.

About 11.a4 \( \diamond b4 \) 12.\( \diamond b3 \) \( \boldsymbol{\text{\textnumero}b6} \) – see 11.\( \diamond b3 \).

11.\( \diamond c4 \). White is trying to exploit the somewhat exposed position of the enemy queen. 11...\( \boldsymbol{\text{\textnumero}g4} \). Black exploits the defencelessness of the enemy knight on c4 and forces the trade of the lightsquared bishops. (It would be less reliable for him to choose here 11...\( \diamond g4 \). After 12.\( \diamond d5 \) \( \boldsymbol{\text{\textnumero}f2} \) + 13. \( \boldsymbol{\text{x}} f2 \) \( \boldsymbol{\text{x}} f2 \) 14.\( \text{x} e3 \) \( \boldsymbol{\text{w}} \) h4 15.\( \text{c} b6 \) \( \text{b} 8 \) 16.\( \text{c} x c8 \) \( \text{f} x c8 \) 17.\( \text{g} 3 \), Black succeeds in winning the exchange indeed, but his queen remains horribly endangered. 17...\( \text{w} h6 \) 18. f5 \( \text{g} 5 \), Filipowicz – Plater, Warsaw 1964, 19.\( \text{w} d2 \) \( \text{f} f6 \) 20.c3\( \infty \) – The position may be objectively balanced and has not gone outside of equality; nevertheless, White's play is considerably easier.) 12. \( \text{e} e3 \) \( \text{w} h5 \) 13.\( \text{x} g4 \) \( \text{x} g4= \) Johansson – Hermansson, Borlange 1992.

11.\( \diamond b3 \) \( \text{b} 6 \) 12.a4. White is forced to weaken the b4-square; otherwise, after a5-a4, his knight will have to retreat back to the d2-square. 12...\( \diamond b4 \). Black is eyeing the weak c2-square.

In the above mentioned game Fischer – Korchnoi, Curacao 1962 White played rather carelessly 13.\( \text{g} 4 \)?! and that enabled Black to inflict a crushing tactical strike: 13...\( \text{w} x g4 \) 14.\( \text{x} g4 \) \( \text{x} g4 \) 15.\( \text{w} x g4 \) \( \text{x} c2 \) 16.\( \text{b} 5 \) \( \text{x} a1 \) 17.\( \text{a} x a1 \) \( \text{w} c6 \). White has two minor pieces for the enemy rook and two pawns, but his knight on a1 is absolutely misplaced. 18.f5 \( \text{c} 4 \) 19.\( \text{f} 3 \) \( \text{w} a4++

13.\( \text{f} 3 \) \( \text{e} 6 \). Black is threatening to compromise his opponent's pawn-structure by capturing on b3. 14.\( \text{a} 3 \). White defends his knight indeed, but his rook will be rather isolated on this square. 14...\( \text{c} c8 \) 15.\( \text{e} 1 \) \( \text{g} 4 \) ! In this variation the g4-square attracts the enemy pieces like magnet. 16. \( \text{x} g4 \) \( \text{x} g4 \) 17.\( \text{x} g4 \) \( \text{x} c3 \) ! 18.\( \text{e} 2 \) (18.bxc3?! \( \text{c} x c2 \) 19.\( \text{d} 1 \) \( \text{a} x a3 \) 20. \( \text{a} x a3 \) \( \text{x} c3++ \) ) 18...\( \text{x} b2 \) 19.\( \text{x} b2 \) \( \text{x} c2 \) 20.\( \text{f} 3 \) \( \text{x} a3 \) 21.\( \text{a} x a3 \) \( \text{c} 4++ \) – Black manages to gobble the pawn on a4, after which his rook and three pawns would be obvi-
ously stronger than the enemy knight and bishop, Roedl – Engels, Bad Nauheim 1935.

13...a3 d8 14...f3, Pietrusiak – Pacl, Havirov 1971, 14...e5!?

10...g4

11.e1

It seems less precise for White to pay here 11.h3, because after that he would not have the typical transfer of his rook to the h-file (f3-h3) for this variation. Without this manoeuvre, he would be incapable of creating any meaningful threats against the enemy king. 11...xf3 12.xf3 d7 13. d2 b6 Sax – Volokitin, Bad Wiessee 2001.

11...xf3

Black should better exchange immediately the knight; otherwise, after e3, it would manage to go either to d4, or d2.

12.xf3 ac8

It would be premature for Black to choose here 12...b4 13. e3 xd3 14.cxd3 w b4 15.b1± – He has spent too much time for the manoeuvre with his knight and that has only fortified his opponent’s centre, because his e4-pawn is reliably protected by his pawn on d3.

13.e3 a5

14.a3

White prevents b4.

There arise complicated double-edged positions after 14.h3 b4 15.f5 (15.h4 h5 16.f1 xd3 17.cxd3 w b4 18.e1 e6∞ Ahn – Verduyn, Belgium 2005) 15...xd3 16.cxd3 e6 17.h4, Koesbay – Johansson, ICCF 2001, 17...h5!? – In both lines Black has succeeded in parrying the direct threats against his king, preserving the possibility to organise counterplay on the queenside.

14...d5!?

This pawn-strike in the centre is Black’s simplest way of equalising.

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Following 14...\textit{d}d7 15.\textit{h}h3\uparrow, White has a clear-cut plan for actions, connected with an attack on the h-file.

17...dxe3 18.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 19.\textit{xe}3

White cannot obtain an edge even if he captures with his queen. 19.\textit{xe}3 \textit{fe}8 20.\textit{f}f2 \textit{f}5. Black prevents f4-f5. 21.\textit{e}3 \textit{xe}3 22.\textit{xe}3 \textit{d}d5 23.\textit{d}d1, Gaponenko – Hamdouchi, Baile Tusnad 2005, 23...\textit{a}2!? After this move White’s queen is stuck with the protection of the pawn on b2. 24.\textit{c}1 \textit{a}5\uparrow

19...\textit{b}6 20.\textit{b}1 \textit{f}5=

15.e5

The position will be simplified considerably after 15.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 16.\textit{xa}5 \textit{xa}5 17.exd5 \textit{xb}2 18.\textit{b}1 \textit{xa}3 19.\textit{xa}7 \textit{c}5= – Black deprives his opponent of his bishop-pair and equalises, Baklan – Chernin, Panormo 2001.

15...d4 16.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 17.\textit{e}4

17.b4 \textit{d}8 18.b5, Lanc – Sulyok, Austria 2001, 18...\textit{a}5!?= – The advance of White’s b-pawn has only led to the weakening of his queenside.

White’s pawn-structure is better indeed, but Black’s pieces are very active, while his opponent’s kingside has been weakened by the pawn-advance f2-f4, De Firmian – Chernin, Moscow 1990.
1.e4 d6 2.d4 \( \text{d}f6 \) 3.\( \text{c}3 \) g6 4.f4 \( \text{g}7 \) 5.\( \text{f}3 \) 0–0 6.\( \text{d}3 \)

White develops his bishop to an active position and prepares to castle kingside. The bishop protects reliably the pawn on e4 from the d3-square, so Black is deprived of the possibility to undermine White’s centre with the move c7-c5, followed by 8...a5, since he would not have the possibility \( \text{dxe}4 \).

6...\( \text{c}6 \)

White’s last move however, has some drawbacks too. The defect of the placement of the bishop on d3 is the fact that the d4-pawn is not protected now by White’s queen. In addition, Black should not be afraid of the move 7.d5, because he would retreat his knight with tempo to the b4-square.

He is perfectly prepared now for the pawn-advance e7-e5 and White may either ignore this threat A) 7.0–0, or push himself B) 7.e5.

It would not be good for White to play here 7.\( \text{b}5 \), making a second move in the opening with one and the same piece. 7...\( \text{g}4 \) 8.\( \text{e}3 \) e5! This energetic strike against the enemy centre is aimed at exploiting Black’s lead in development. 9.dxe5, Simacek – Kulhanek, Czech Republic 2014, 9...dxe5!? 10.\( \text{f}xd8 \) \( \text{fxd}8 \) 11.\( \text{xc}6 \) exf4! This intermediate capturing is the fine point behind Black’s strategy. Now, the position is quickly simplified after the numerous exchanges. 12.\( \text{xf}4 \) (12. \( \text{xb}7?! \) \( \text{ab}8 \) 12...\( \text{bxc}6 \) 13.\( \text{xc}7 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 14.\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 15.0–0 \( \text{xf}3 \) 16. \( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 17.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{xc}3 \) 18.\( \text{xc}3 \) \( \text{xe}4 \) 19.\( \text{xc}6 \). White has an extra pawn, but Black’s rook penetrates to the penultimate rank. 19...\( \text{e}2 \) 20.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{dd}2 \) 21.\( \text{g}1 \) \( \text{xc}2 \) 22.\( \text{xc}2 \) \( \text{xc}2 \) = – He restores the material balance. In fact, White must play accurately now in this endgame,
because Black’s rook is obviously more active.

7.f5. After this move, White weakens his control over the e5-square. 7...b4. Black wishes to trade his opponent’s powerful bishop. In addition, his knight frees the way forward of his c-pawn. 8.0–0 (8.fgx6 \(\mathcal{N}d3\) 9.\(\mathcal{N}xd3\) hgx6 10.\(\mathcal{N}g5\) c6 11.0–0–0 b5 12.\(\mathcal{N}xf6\), Laine – Koskinen, Finland 1974, 12...exf6!?? – Black’s bishops are very powerful, while White can hardly create any meaningful threats on the kingside.) 8...c5\(\infty\). His centre needs additional protection. It would not work for White to play here 9.d5?!, due to 9...gxf5 10.exf5 \(\mathcal{N}xd3\) 11.\(\mathcal{N}xd3\), Maryasin – Dydyshko, Minsk 1972, 11...b6!? 12.\(\mathcal{N}h1\) \(\mathcal{W}a6\)? – Now, he must either enter an inferior endgame, or make a sacrifice of the pawn on f5, for which he would not have sufficient compensation.

7.h3. White defends against \(\mathcal{G}g4\), but weakens the g3-square. In addition, the move 7.h3 does not contribute to the development of his pieces. 7...e5 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.dxe5 \(\mathcal{D}d7\) 10.\(\mathcal{G}g5\) \(\mathcal{W}e8\) 11.\(\mathcal{D}d5\). White must play very energetically. If Black regains the pawn on e5, then the vulnerability of White’s isolated e4-pawn may hurt him in the future. 11...\(\mathcal{C}xe5\) 12.\(\mathcal{C}xc7\) \(\mathcal{C}xf3\) 13.\(\mathcal{W}xf3\) \(\mathcal{W}e5\) 14.\(\mathcal{F}f4\), Maslik – V.Ianov, Hloholvec 1996 (14.\(\mathcal{D}xa8?\) \(\mathcal{W}xg5\)? – White’s knight on a8 is doomed, because after 15.\(\mathcal{C}c7?\), Black has the move 15...\(\mathcal{W}a5\)?! 15.\(\mathcal{D}d1\) (15.0–0 \(\mathcal{C}e5\) 16.\(\mathcal{F}f2\) \(\mathcal{C}xd3\) 17.\(\mathcal{C}xd3\) \(\mathcal{W}xf2\) + 18.\(\mathcal{F}xf2\) \(\mathcal{X}xa1\) 19.\(\mathcal{X}xa1\) \(\mathcal{W}b8\) 20.\(\mathcal{C}d5\) \(\mathcal{A}a8\)=) 15...\(\mathcal{E}e5\) 16.\(\mathcal{C}xe5\) \(\mathcal{W}xe5\) 17.\(\mathcal{D}xa8\) \(\mathcal{W}c3\). Black is presently a rook down, but White’s king is vulnerable and his knight on a8 will be soon lost. 18.\(\mathcal{E}e2\) \(\mathcal{E}e6\) 19.\(\mathcal{B}b1\) \(\mathcal{X}xa8\) 20.\(\mathcal{C}xb7\) \(\mathcal{A}d5\)?! This move leads to a forced draw. 21.\(\mathcal{C}xd5\) \(\mathcal{E}e8\) + 22.\(\mathcal{A}e4\) (White must comply now with the perpetual check, because the move 22.\(\mathcal{F}f2\) would lead to an inferior position for him after 22...\(\mathcal{C}d4\) + 23.\(\mathcal{C}g3\) \(\mathcal{E}e3\)? – Black’s queen and bishop will be the cause of permanent worries for White’s monarch.) 22...\(\mathcal{X}xc2\) + 23.\(\mathcal{F}f1\) \(\mathcal{W}c1\) + 24.\(\mathcal{F}f2\) \(\mathcal{C}d4\) + 25.\(\mathcal{C}g3\) \(\mathcal{E}e5\) =

7.d5 \(\mathcal{B}b4\). Now, Black is perfectly prepared to undermine his opponent’s centre with the move c7-c6.

8.\(\mathcal{C}c4\) c6 9.0–0 \(\mathcal{C}xd5\) 10.\(\mathcal{C}xd5\) \(\mathcal{F}f5\) 11.\(\mathcal{B}b3\), Krasenkow – Goldin, Vilnius 1988, 11...a5?!? – The bishop on b3 is misplaced, because it is severely restricted by White’s own pawn on d5.

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8.0–0 c6 9.a3 (9.dxc6 bxc6 10.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h1 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd3 11.cxd3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)a5∞ Bronstein – Parma, Vinkovci 1970) 9... \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd3 10.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd3 cxd5 11.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd5 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)b6+ 13.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h1 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d7 – Black's bishops are very powerful, Yanofsky – Botvinnik, Tel Aviv 1964.

8.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e2 c6 9.a3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)a6 10.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xa6 (Following 10.dxc6, Ratsch – Zimpel, DDR 1988, Black could try the move 10...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)b6!??, impeding his opponent's castling kingside. 11.cx\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)b7?! It would be too dangerous for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice, because of his considerable lag in development, moreover that his king is stranded in the centre. 11...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xb7 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d2 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)c5++ 10...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xa6 11.dxc6 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)b6 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd5 13.exd5 e6. The protected passed pawn on c6 seems to be very powerful, but the cause of White’s demise is his horrible lag in development and his misplaced king. 14.c3 exd5 15.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d4 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e8+ 16.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f2, Shebsh – Simutowe, Abuja 2003, 16...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f5?!++)

White's centre needs protection.

9.dxe5. This is a quiet move. After the disappearance of White’s d-pawn off the board Black has nothing to worry about, because White cannot gain additional space with the move d4-d5. 9... dxe5 10.h3 (10.f5?! gxf5 11.exf5 e4! 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xe4, Nikolaidis – Poplechev, Ankara 1993, 12...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e8!? White lags in development and the pin on the e-file is very unpleasant for him. 13.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f1 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xf5++) 10...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e6 11.fxe5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d7 12.e6 fxe6= – Black enjoys a much better development, Mortensen – Smiejkal, Kiel 1978.

9.d5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d4 10.h3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h6 11.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xd4 (11.fxe5 dxe5 – see 9.fxe5) 11... exd4 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e2 f5! With this timely counter-strike in the centre Black obtains a very good position. 13.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d2 fxe4 14.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xe4, Ribli – Vadasz, Budapest 1971, 14...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e8!?∞

9.fxe5 dxe5 10.d5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d4 11.h3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h6 12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d2 (12.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)c4 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d7∞ 13.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d2?! G.Kuzmin – Garcia Gonzales, Cienfuegos 1973, 13...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h5! 14.exf5 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xf3+ 15.gxf3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h4+ 16.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f2 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xc4++) 12...\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f5 13.0–0–0 fxe4. Black frees the f5-square for his knight and complies with the appearance of a weak isolated e5-pawn on his position. His actively placed pieces however, compensate fully this defect of his pawn-structure. 14.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xe4 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)h5 15.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e1 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xf3 16.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)xf3 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d4 (It also seems very good for Black to deploy his knight to a blocking square 16... \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)d6!?∞) 17.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)e4 \(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)f5 18.\(\text{\texttt{\#}}\)b1 (18...
g4 \(\text{xe}4\) 19.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{d}d7\) 20.\(\text{e}e3\) b5∞
Van der Weide – Donner, Leeuwarden 1971) 18...\(\text{xe}4\) 19.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{d}d7\) 20.\(\text{h}h2\) \(\text{e}ae8\) 21.\(\text{he}h1\) b5∞

A) 7.0–0 e5

8.fxe5

8.d5 \(\text{d}d4\) 9.fxe5 dxe5 – see 8.fxe5.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.f5 \(\text{b}b4\)

10.\(\text{h}h1\) gxf5 11.exf5, Parma – Lijterink, Buenos Aires 1978 (11.\(\text{g}g5\) \(\text{xd}3\) 12.cx\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{d}d6\) – see 11.\(\text{g}g5\) 11...e4!? This is the simplest road to equality for Black. 12.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xd}3\) 13.cx\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{xf}5\) 14.\(\text{c}c2\) \(\text{xe}4\) 15.dxe4 \(\text{g}g6\)= – On this square Black’s bishop cements his kingside and compensates the drawbacks of his pawn-structure.

10.fgx6 hxg6 11.\(\text{g}g5\) \(\text{xd}3\) 12.\(\text{cx}d3\) c6. Black defends against \(\text{d}d5\). 13.\(\text{h}h1\) \(\text{wd}6\). He removes his queen away from the pin. 14.d4 (14.\(\text{w}e2\), Padevsky – Udovcic, Zagreb 1965, 14...\(\text{h}h5\)!∞) 14...\(\text{h}h7\) 15.d5 \(\text{ax}g5\) 16.\(\text{ax}g5\), Sax – Donner, Buenos Aires 1978, 16...\(\text{wd}8\)∞? 17.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{cx}d5\) 18.\(\text{ax}d5\) \(\text{e}e6\)= – Black’s prospects are not inferior thanks to his two-bishop advantage.

10.\(\text{g}g5\) \(\text{xd}3\)

11.\text{cx}d3 gxf5 12.h1 (12.\text{xf}5, Hansen – Van Damme, ICCF 1967, 12...\text{xf}5!? 13.d4 \text{ex}d4 14.\text{dx}d4 \text{g}6 15.\text{f}f3 \text{xd}1 16.\text{ax}d1 \text{xf}5 17.\text{xf}5 \text{g}4∞ – White’s pieces are active, but Black still has an extra pawn.) 12...\text{d}d6 13.\text{e}1, Eraschenkov – Zakharevich, Voronezh 2003 (13.\text{e}2, Andriasian – Smirin, Minsk 2015, 13...\(\text{e}e8\)∞) 13...\(\text{e}e8\)∞ – White must still prove that his attacking prospects compensate the sacrificed pawn.

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11.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{x}}}}\text{d3}\). He would not achieve much if he enters an endgame. 11...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{x}}}}\text{d3}\) 12.cxd3 c6 13.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{ae1}\) (13. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{2}\) \(\text{h6}\) 14.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{h}}}}\text{4}\) g5 15.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{3}\) \(\text{h5}\) 16.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c}}}}\text{4}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{x3}\) 17.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{h}}}}\text{xg3}\), Sayadyan – Rambaldi, Biel 2015, 17...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{8}!\) 18.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{ad1}\) f6\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\) – Black has the two-bishop advantage indeed, while the d3-pawn is vulnerable in White’s position.) 13...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{d7}\) 14.g4 b6 15.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{f2}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{e8}\) 16.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{d2}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{8}\) 17.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{2}\) a5 18.d4, Karjakin – Ivanchuk, Ningbo 2011, 18...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{d4}\)! 19.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe4}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{5}\) 20.h3 \(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{7}!\) – Black will have no problems at all due to his powerful centralised knight.

**8...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe5}\)**

![Chess Diagram](image)

**9.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{5}\)**

White cannot obtain an edge with the move 9.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe5}\), because Black has the resource 9...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe5}\), for example: 10.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe5}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{d4}\) 11. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{h}}}}\text{1}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{xe5}\) 12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{4}\) (12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{xf3}\) c6 13. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{4}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{c}}}}\text{5}\) – see 12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{4}\)) 12...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c}}}}\text{5}\) 13.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{1}!\) White prepares the transfer of his queen to h4 in order to attack the enemy king.

**Black must defend precisely in order to neutralise his opponent’s initiative. (Following 13.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{3}\) c6 14.e5 \(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{4}\), White will have problems with the protection of his pawn on e5, Nadig – Movsziszian, Sort 2008.) 13...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{6}\) 14. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{h4}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{4}\) 15.e5. He sacrifices a pawn in order to free the e4-square for his knight. 15...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{xe5}\) 16.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{e4}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{c}}}}\text{6}\) 17. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{xe5}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{xe5}\) 18.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{5}\) h5= – White’s pieces are very active, but Black has an extra pawn and has neutralised the direct threats against his monarch, Gruenfeld – Hoi, Randers 1982.**

**9...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{d4}\)**

Black’s knight is headed for the centre of the board and he does not worry about the fate of his e5-pawn, since he will easily regain it.

**10.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{5}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{g}}}}\text{4}\) 11.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{e2}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{x3}\) 12. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{x3}\) c6\(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\) Bergmann – Oetzel, Leipzig 1972.**

10.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{1}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{f}}}}\text{x3}\) + 11.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{x3}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{8}!\)? Black’s knight is transferred to the blocking d6-square, from where it will exert pressure against the e4-square, as well as it will assist in the preparation of the pawn-advance f7-f5. 12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e}}}}\text{3}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{6}\) Oksanen – Serner, ICCF 1996.

**10...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}}\text{x5}\)**

Black regains his pawn.
11. \( \text{Qxd5} \)

White complies with the appearance of an isolated pawn in his position in his fight for the initiative.

The intermediate capturing on f7 would not work for White, because after 11. \( \text{Qxf7?! Qxc3} \) 12. \( \text{Qxd8 Qxd1} \) 13. \( \text{Qc4+ Qh8} \) 14. \( \text{Qf7+ Qxf7} \) 15. \( \text{Qxf7 Qxc2} \) 16. \( \text{Qh6 Qxh6} \) 17. \( \text{Qxd1 Qg4+} \), Black’s two minor pieces would be more powerful than White’s rook, Muir – Berry, corr. 1978.

The position would be approximately equal following 11. \( \text{exd5} \) 12. \( \text{Qf4 Qg7} \) 13. \( \text{Qd2} \) c6 14. \( \text{dxc6} \) (14. \( \text{d6 Qe6} \) 15. \( \text{Qh1 Qxf4} \) 16. \( \text{Qxf4} \), Renet – Slobodjan, Montpellier 1993, 16... \( \text{Qb6?} \infty \) – Black has two powerful bishops, while White’s pawn is too far away from the rest of his forces and may turn out to be strong, as well as a liability.) 14... \( \text{Qxc6} \) 15. \( \text{Qh1 Qe5} \) 16. \( \text{Qh6 f6=} \) Mrkvicka – Bartsch, ICCF 2007.

11... \( \text{Qxe5} \) 12. \( \text{Qf4 Qc6} \)

13. \( \text{Qd2} \)

13. \( \text{Qe1 Qe6} \) 14. \( \text{Qxe5 Qxe5} \) 15. \( \text{Qf6+ Qg7} \) 16. \( \text{Qc3 Qd6} \) – see 13. \( \text{Qd2} \).

13. \( \text{c3 Qe6} \) 14. \( \text{Qc2 Qxf4} \) 15. \( \text{Qxf4} \), Mikheev – Zakharevich, Togliatti 2001, 15... \( \text{Qxd5?!} \) 16. \( \text{exd5 Qd6} \) 17. \( \text{g3 Qe5} \infty \) – White can hardly advance his queenside pawns, while the vulnerable position of his king may hurt him in the future.

Following 13. \( \text{Qf3 Qe6} \) 14. \( \text{Qxe5 Qxe5} \) 15. \( \text{Qf6+ Qg7} \) 16. \( \text{Qg3} \), Zdebskaja – Kunin, Bad Wiessee 2010, the simplest for Black will be to play 16... \( \text{Qd6?!} \) and White has nothing better than complying with the repetition of moves 17. \( \text{Qh5+ Qh8} \) 18. \( \text{Qf6 Qg7=} \)

The position will be simplified in the line: 13. \( \text{b5 Qxf4} \) 14. \( \text{Qxf4 Qe6} \) 15. \( \text{Qxc6 bxc6} \) 16. \( \text{Qf6+ Qg7} \) 17. \( \text{e5} \) (17. \( \text{b3 c5} \) 18. \( \text{e5} \), Eitel – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009, 18... \( \text{Qxd1+} \) 19. \( \text{Qxd1 Qfd8=} \)) 17... \( \text{Qxd1+} \) 18. \( \text{Qxd1 Qfd8} \) 19. \( \text{Qf1 a5} \) 20. \( \text{b3 Qxd1} \) 21. \( \text{Qxd1 a4} \) 22. \( \text{Qd2 h5} \) 23. \( \text{Qf2 axb3} \) 24. \( \text{axb3} \)

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\[ \text{a5= – The doubled pawns on the c-file and the e5-pawn are about equally vulnerable, moreover that there is just a few material left on the board, Pheby – Nyvlt, ICCF 2011.} \]

13...\text{e6}

14.\text{xe5} 15.\text{f6+ g7}

14.\text{xe5}

After this exchange White would like to penetrate with his knight to the f6-square and to create threats against the enemy king, but this would be a hard task to accomplish, because Black's centralised knight cements reliably his defensive fortress.

There arise simplifications after 14.\text{c4, Balogh – Narciso Dublan, Barcelona 2015, 14...xf4!? 15.xf4 xxd5 16.xd5 e7=}

14.\text{h6 d4+! This is an important intermediate check. There will soon arise an endgame and it would be very reasonable for Black to oust the enemy king farther from the centre. 15.h1 g7 16.xg7 fxg7 17.c3+ f6 18.}

16.\text{c3}

This is White's most precise decision. After his alternatives Black will gradually neutralise his opponent's initiative and will maintain an edge thanks to his superior pawn-structure.

16.g5?! g4 17.h5+ h8 18.f6 (18.xd8, Stambulian – Zakharevich, St Petersburg 2000, 18.axd8!? 19.f4 d7=) 18.d4+ 19.h1, Maiorov – Zakharevich, Moscow 1999, 19.exf6? 20.xf6+ (20.xf6 c5!=?) 20...\text{xf6 21.xf6 g7?!?}

16...\text{d6 17.ad1}

White wishes to oust the enemy queen from the d6-square in order to exploit the unstable placement of the enemy knight on

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e5. Black can defend against this, however.

About 17.\( \check{\text{e}}2 \) \( \text{f}d8 \) 18.\( \text{f}d1 \) \( \text{b}6 \), or 17.\( \check{\text{h}1} \) \( \text{f}d8 \) 18.\( \text{f}d1 \) \( \text{d}4 \) – see 17.\( \text{f}d1 \).

17...\( \text{f}d8 \)

18.\( \text{e}2 \)

18.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{d}4 \) 19.\( \text{xc}7 \) (19.\( \text{e}1?! \) \( \text{xb}2 \) 20.\( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{h}6 \) – White has no compensation for the pawn in sight, Kokarev – Zakharevich, Moscow 1999.) 19...\( \text{xb}2 \) 20.\( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{d}4 \) – Black’s pieces are perfectly centralised and this provides him with a very good position, Taylor – Nyvlt, ICCF 2007.

18...\( \text{b}6 \) 19.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{xd}1 \) (diagram)

20.\( \text{h}5 \)

With this intermediate check White weakens his opponent’s pawn-structure, but this is still insufficient to fight for the win.

If White plays calmly, he may end up even worse: 20.\( \text{xd}1 \) \( \text{xf}6 \)

We will deal now with: B1) 8.\( \text{dxe}5 \) and B2) 8.\( \text{fxe}5 \).
B1) 8.dxe5 \(\mathcal{Q}d5\)

The pawn on e5 restricts considerably the bishop on g7, but Black has no pawn-weaknesses in his position, so he should gradually equalise.

9.\(\mathcal{Q}xd5\)

After 9.0–0 \(\mathcal{Q}xc3\) 10.bxc3, it seems reasonable for Black to try 10...\(\mathcal{Q}d5\). This move is only seldom played, but is not bad at all. He prepares \(\mathcal{Q}d8\). 11.\(\mathcal{Q}e1\), Gutzeit – Graham, England 1992 (There arises an approximately equal endgame following 11.\(\mathcal{Q}h1\) \(\mathcal{Q}f5\) 12.\(\mathcal{Q}xf5\) \(\mathcal{Q}xd1\) 13.\(\mathcal{Q}xd1\) gxf5 14.\(\mathcal{Q}e3\) \(\mathcal{Q}fd8\) 15.\(\mathcal{Q}d4\) \(\mathcal{Q}xd4\) 16.cxd4 e6=) 11...\(\mathcal{Q}d8\)!. 12.\(\mathcal{Q}e3\) \(\mathcal{Q}f5\) = Black has obtained a quite acceptable position.

After 9.\(\mathcal{Q}d2\), Black can simply retreat with his knight 9...\(\mathcal{Q}b6\), to prepare \(\mathcal{Q}b4\) and to undermine the enemy e5-pawn with f7-f6.

(diagram)

10.a3. White defends against \(\mathcal{Q}b4\), but this move seems rather slow. 10...f6 11.exf6 exf6. Black exchanges the pawn on e5 and equalises completely. 12.0–0 \(\mathcal{Q}g4\) 13.h3 \(\mathcal{Q}xf3\) 14.\(\mathcal{Q}xf3\) f5 15.\(\mathcal{Q}ad1\) \(\mathcal{Q}f6=\) Kivisto – Ebeling, Pori 1986.

10.0–0 \(\mathcal{Q}b4\) 11.\(\mathcal{Q}e2\) (11.\(\mathcal{Q}e4\) f5 12.exf6 exf6 13.a3, Bronstein – Goodman, London 1976. Here, Black could have complicated the game very advantageously with 13...f5!? 14.axb4 \(\mathcal{Q}xe4\) 15.\(\mathcal{Q}xe4\) \(\mathcal{Q}xb2\) 16.\(\mathcal{Q}b1\) \(\mathcal{Q}g7=\) – His two bishops may become a telling factor in the future.) 11...\(\mathcal{Q}f5\). White’s pieces are squeezed with the protection of his pawn on c2. 12.\(\mathcal{Q}c1\) f6 13.\(\mathcal{Q}b5\), Ivanovic – Adorjan, Skopje 1976, 13...c5!?∞

10.\(\mathcal{Q}e2\) \(\mathcal{Q}b4\) 11.\(\mathcal{Q}e4\) f5

12.\(\mathcal{Q}d3\) \(\mathcal{Q}xd3\)+. Black’s two-bishop advantage provides him with at least equality. 13.cxd3 (13. \(\mathcal{Q}xd3\) \(\mathcal{Q}xd3\) 14.cxd3 \(\mathcal{Q}d8\) 15.\(\mathcal{Q}e2\) \(\mathcal{Q}d7\) 16.\(\mathcal{Q}e3\), Marjanovic – Grubi-
sic, Vrsac 1979, 16...c6=) 13...d5 14.d4 b6∞, followed by b7, Wesely – Franke, ICCF 1984. The light squares in White’s camp may turn out to be quite vulnerable in this middle game.

12.exf6. The opening of the e-file may be rather risky for White, since his king, queen and bishop are placed on it. 12...exf6 13.a3 f5 14.axb4 fx e4 15..xe4 (His situation would be horrible after 15. e5?! xe5 16.fxe5 wh4+ 17.g3 wh3. Now, he cannot castle queenside, since Black would counter this with g4. 18..xe4 g4 19..g5 wh5 20..e3, Pinter – Adorjan, Hungary 1975, 20... c4!? Black’s knight joins into the attack. 21.b3 b5+ – White’s king is stranded in the centre, while Black’s pieces are very active.) 15..xb2 ! – He regains his pawn and maintains an advantage thanks to his two powerful bishops, Ljubojevic – Timman, Valetta 1980.

9...xd5 10.e2 g4

11.e4

11.c3 ad8 12.e4 wd7 13.0–0, Arizmendi Martinez – Vassallo Barroche, Valencia 2009, 13...f6?=

11.a5+

Black transfers his queen to b6 with tempo and it will exert pressure from there against the pawn on b2 and will impede White’s castling kingside.

12.d2

12.c3 d4 13.b4 xe2 14.bxa5 xc1 15.xc1, Motylev – Minsky, Briansk 1995, 15...ad8!? 16.0–0 xf3 17.xf3 b6=

12.b6

13.0–0

It would be too risky for White to opt for 13.e3 wb4+!? This is a precise intermediate check. 14.d2. The bishop is less active here than on the e3-square. 14...xb2 15.0–0 ad8 16.f1, Berelowitsch – Volokitin, Ordzhonikidze 2001, 16...xf3!? 17.xf3 d4+ 18.e3 c3 19.xc6 bxc6

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20. \( \text{x}a7 \text{xc2}^+ \) – White must still prove that he has compensation for the pawn.

Following 13. \( \text{c}c3 \text{ad8} 14. \text{wf2} \), there arises an approximately equal endgame. 14...f6 15. \( \text{xb6} \text{xb6} 16.0-0 \text{xf3} 17. \text{xf3 \text{f}xe5} 18. \text{xe5 \text{xe}5 19. \text{xe}2 \text{xf1+} 20. \text{xf1 \text{c}c4 21. \text{xe}g7 \text{xe}g7 22. \text{b}3 \text{xe}3 23. \text{e}1 \text{d}d1 24. \text{xd}d1 \text{xd}d1 25. \text{f}3 \text{d}d3 26.a4 \text{e}5 27. \text{f}2 \text{e}4 28. \text{xe}2 \text{f}6 29. \text{e}3 \text{e}5= \) Hughes – Narciso Dublan, Badalona 2015. White must play accurately in this endgame, because his pawn on c2 is blocked by the enemy knight and he must watch carefully about the possible elimination of the blockade against the pawn on e4 (\( \text{d}5, \text{d}2, \text{e}3 \)).

13... \( \text{d}d4 14. \text{c}4 \text{c}5 15. \text{e}3 \)

This position was reached in the game Zaw – Sitanggang, Jakarta 1997. At this moment, Black could have tried a very promising pawn-sacrifice. 15...f5!? 16. \( \text{h}1 \) (16. \( \text{xc}5 \text{ac}8 17. \text{xb6 \text{xc}4 18. \text{d}5 \text{xf4 19. \text{x}a7 \text{a}4 20. \text{f}2} \))

At first sight, this move seems to be more promising for White than 8.dxe5, because his central d4-pawn remains on the board and he also opens the f-life for his rook and the c1-h6 diagonal for his bishop. Still, things are far from simple.

8...f5!?

Now, White must lose a tempo to protect his d4-pawn and Black manages to exert pressure against
his opponent’s centre with $\text{g}4$ and $f7$-$f6$.

9.$\text{g}e3$

9.$\text{c}4$ $\text{g}4$ 10.$\text{g}e3$ $\text{a}5$ – see 9.$\text{g}e3$.

Following 9.$\text{g}e4$ $f6$! 10.$\text{exf}6$ $\text{xf}6$, it becomes clear that the bishop on $e4$ comes under attack. 11.$\text{xc}6$. White compromises his opponent’s pawn-structure on the queenside, but Black’s bishops will be very powerful in this open position. 11...$\text{bxc}6$ 12.0–0 $\text{d}6\infty$. Black has seized the initiative. White must play very accurately in order to neutralise the activity of the enemy pieces. For example, it would be bad for White to continue here with 13.$\text{xe}2$?! in view of 13...$\text{g}4$!? 14.$\text{g}3$ $c5\uparrow$

9.$\text{g}e2$ $f6$. Black exchanges immediately his opponent’s powerful pawn and obtains a very good position. 10.$\text{exf}6$ $\text{xf}6$ 11.$c3$ (11. 0–0 $\text{e}6$ 12.$c3$ $\text{e}8$ – see 11.$c3$) 11...$\text{e}6$ 12.0–0 $\text{e}8$ 13.$\text{f}4$ $\text{xf}4$ 14.$\text{xf}4$, Shamrenko – Windhaus-

... ICCF 1991. The knight is very passive on the c6-square, because it is severely restricted by White’s pawns on d4 and c3, therefore, Black should better continue here with 14...$\text{e}7$!?, preparing its transfer to f5, or d5.

9.$\text{g}e2$ $\text{g}4$ 10.d5 (10.$\text{g}e3$ $f6$ – see 9.$\text{g}e3$) 10...$\text{xf}3$ 11.$\text{xf}3$ $\text{xe}5$ 12.$\text{xc}5$ $\text{g}xh5$ 13.$\text{xc}5$. White is incapable of exploiting the slight weakening of Black’s king shelter. (13.0–0?! $c6$!?) Van der Sterren – Timman, Wijk aan Zee 1978) 13...$\text{d}6$. Black defends against $\text{h}6$ and is ready to play $\text{g}6$ at an opportune moment. 14.0–0, Scholz – Heimbrodt, DDR 1978, 14...$\text{ad}8$!?

9...$\text{g}4$

10.$\text{g}e2$

White’s bishop will be more stable on this square than on e4.

10.$\text{g}e2$. This move is too passive. 10...$f6$ 11.$\text{xf}6$ $\text{xf}6$ 12.$\text{c}4+$, Michalczak – Narciso Dublan, Kusadasi 2006, 12...$\text{h}8$!?\uparrow
After 10...\textit{c}4, Black can reply with 10...\textit{\texttt{d}}a5, ousting the enemy bishop from its active position and preparing c7-c5. 11.\textit{\texttt{d}}e2 c5 12. dxc5 (12.d5, Sax – Butler, Graz 1972, 12...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}b8?\textsubscript{∞} and White’s seemingly beautiful pawn-centre would need additional protection) 12...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}b8 13.0–0 \textit{\texttt{d}}d8 14.\textit{\texttt{e}}1 \textit{\texttt{xf}}3 15.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 \textit{\texttt{xe}}5. Black restores the material balance. 16.\textit{\texttt{f}}2 \textit{\texttt{c}}4 17.\textit{\texttt{c}}1 \textit{\texttt{e}}6?\textsubscript{∞} – The activity of his pieces compensates White’s bishop-op-pair, Ivanovic – Nyvlt, ICCF 2009.

10.\textit{\texttt{e}}4 f6 11.\textit{\texttt{xf}}6 \textit{\texttt{xf}}6! Black emphasizes the defects of White’s move ten. 12.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}c6 (12.h3?! \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}xe4 13.\textit{\texttt{hxg}}4 \textit{\texttt{dx}}c3 14.bxc3 \textit{\texttt{d}}d5 15. \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d3 e5\textsuperscript{∞} – Black leads in development and his pawn-structure is preferable, Sveshnikov – A.Moiseenko, Dagomys 2008.) 12...\textit{\texttt{b}}xc6 13.0–0 \textit{\texttt{d}}d5 14.\textit{\texttt{xd}}x5 \textit{\texttt{xd}}5 Black’s pieces are very active. This compensates the drawbacks of his pawn-structure. 15.c3 (15.h3 \textit{\texttt{e}}6= 16.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}e2?\! \textit{\texttt{xf}}3 17.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}x}d4\textsuperscript{∞} Nelson – Hort, New York 1974) 15...a5 16.h3, Zeberski – Rasik, Czech Republic 2011, 16...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}}f3! 17.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 \textit{\texttt{xf}}3 18.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}}xf3 19.\textit{\texttt{g}}xf3. The position has been simplified considerably. White cannot exploit the defects of the enemy pawn-structure in this endgame, because his own pawns on h3 and f3 are vulnerable. In addition, Black has some initiative. 19...\textit{\texttt{b}}b8 20. \textit{\texttt{b}}3 a4 21.\textit{\texttt{bxa}}4 \textit{\texttt{a}}8 22.a5 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}xa5} 23.a4 c5=

\textbf{10...\textit{f6}}

11.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}xf6

It would be too precarious for White to opt here for 11.e6?! because after 11...f5 12.d5 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}b4, he would hardly manage to hold on to his pawns on d5 and e6 without suffering material losses. 13.\textit{\texttt{c}}4 \textit{\texttt{xf}}3 14.\textit{\texttt{gxf}}3 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}d}6 15.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d2 (15.a3 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}c3+ 16.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{b}}}xc3, Eck – Tanner, DDR 1985, 16...f4?! 17.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}2 \textit{\texttt{e}}5+ 18.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}1 \textit{\texttt{xc}}3\textsuperscript{∞}) 15...f4 16.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}2 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}xc}3 17.\textit{\texttt{bxc}}3, Hoehne – Jonsson, ICCF 1986, 17...\textit{\texttt{d}}d8 18.\textit{\texttt{d}}1 (18.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}}xb4? \textit{\texttt{e}}5–+) 18...\textit{\texttt{e}}5+ 19.\textit{\texttt{f}}1 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}d5 20.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}xd}5 c6\textsuperscript{∞}

11.0–0 \textit{\texttt{xf}}3 12.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 fxe5 13. dxe5, Mozaliov – Zakharevich, Tula 1998 (13.d5?! \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d4 14.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}xd}4 exd4 15.\textit{\texttt{e}}4 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}f4\textsuperscript{∞} Borocz – Beliaevsky, Hungary 1997) 13...\textit{\texttt{x}}e5?=

The positional pawn-sacrifice 11.d5 would be insufficient for White to obtain an advantage. 11...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}x}e5 12.\textit{\texttt{x}}e5 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}x}e2 13.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}xe2 fxe5 14.0–0–0 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}d}7 15.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}c}4 (Following 15.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}b}5, Browne – Tim-
man, Amsterdam 1971, Black can enter an endgame. 15...\(h6\)!. 16. \(\text{d}x\text{d}x5 \text{a}c8 17. \text{d}x\text{e}7 \text{d}8 18.\text{c}x\text{f}4 \text{c}4 19.\text{d}d2 \text{e}6 20.\text{h}d1 \text{ex}d5 21.\text{c}x\text{d}5 \text{d}7= - White has managed to restore the material balance, but in the meantime Black has succeeded in activating his pieces. The pawn on a2 is defenceless, so White's knight cannot be evacuated from the a7-square.) 15...\(h8\) 16.\(h6\b) (16.g4, Hansen – Hil-larp Persson, Barcelona 2013, 16...\(f4?!\infty\) 16...\(g4\) 17.\(\text{w}x\text{b}7 \text{w}xg2 18.\(wxc7\). The position has been sharpened, but Black's defensive resources are sufficient to maintain the balance. 18...\(f3\) 19.\(c5\) \(\text{c}x\text{c}8\) 20.\(\text{w}a5 \text{f}4 21.\text{h}e1 \text{g}2\) 22.\(f1 \text{g}4\) 23.\(b1 \text{c}4\) 24.\(x\text{e}7\). White sacrifices the exchange and wishes to advance his passed d-pawn. Still, this is insufficient for him to maintain an edge. 24...\(e3\) 25.\(d6 \text{xf}1\) 26.\(d7 \text{g}8\) 27.\(d8\text{w} \text{a}x\text{d}8\) 28.\(x\text{d}8 \text{h}5= - Black's passed e-pawn provides him with good counterplay, Cacicazes Cua-dra – Varela Mourin, ICCF 2016.

11...\text{ex}f6

12.0–0

12.\(d3 \text{d}6\). Black is preparing \(f4\). 13.0–0 \(f4\) 14.\(e4+\) \(h8\) 15.h3. White sacrifices a pawn in an attempt to seize the initiative. 15...\(xg2\) 16.\(hxg4 \text{x}e3\) 17.\(d3 \text{x}g4\) 18.\(xg6 \text{h}6+\). Black wins the exchange with a small, but elegant combination. 19.\(xh6 \text{f}4+\) 20.\(b1 \text{hx}6\) 21.\(h5 \text{g}8\) – Black's king is vulnerable indeed, so this compensates White's loss of material, but not more than that, Pecka – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

12.d5 \text{e}7

The position is simplified after 13.\(dxc6 \text{e}3\). Now, White is forced to enter an endgame in order to avoid coming under attack. 14.\(d4 \text{xd}4\) 15.\(dxc4 \text{xe}2\) 16.\(x\text{b}7\) (16.\(dxe2 \text{f}5\) 17.\(cxb7 \text{ab}8\) 18.0–0 \(\text{x}b7=\) Vesselovsky – Lutikov, Krasnoyarsk 1980) 16...\(\text{ab}8\) 17.\(\text{d}x\text{e}2\) \text{f}5 18.\(\text{e}6 \text{fe}8\) 19.\(xg7 \text{x}g7\) 20.\(xf2 \text{f}6\) 21.\(\text{e}1 \text{xb}7\) 22.\(b3 \text{b}6=\) Koziaik – Scher-er, Untergrombach 2016. Black has restored the material balance. White cannot exploit the vulnera-

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bility of his opponent’s isolated pawns on a7 and c7, since Black’s pieces are very active and his knight has the access to the wonderful e4-square and it can also be transferred to e3 (f6-g4-e3) at an opportune moment.

13.\textit{Qd2}. This move leads to a more complicated battle than capturing on c6. 13...\textit{Qe}5 14.0-0 0-0 (14.\textit{Qd}4 \textit{xe}2 15.\textit{Qxe}2, Cabrera – Bjazevic, ICCF 2009, 15...\textit{Qb}4!? 16.0-0 f5 17.a3 \textit{Qc}4. After the trade of the queens, the dominance over the e6-square would not promise much to White. 18. \textit{Qe}6 \textit{Qxe}2 19.\textit{Qxe}2 \textit{Qf}7=) 14...\textit{Qf}e8 15.\textit{Qhe}1 (15.\textit{Qd}4 f5!? 16.\textit{Qe}6 \textit{Qxe}2 17.\textit{Qxe}2 \textit{Qg}4 18.\textit{Qd}2 c6! Black eliminates the base under the enemy knight on e6. 19.\textit{Qhe}1 \textit{Qf}6 20.\textit{Qc}4 \textit{Qf}7 21.\textit{Qg}5 \textit{Qxg}5 22. \textit{Qxg}5 \textit{Qhf}6 23.\textit{Qd}4 \textit{Qxd}5= Lipecki – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014) 15...\textit{Qxf}3 16.\textit{Qxf}3 (There arise simplifications following 16.\textit{gxf}3 \textit{Qxe}3 17.\textit{Qxe}3 \textit{Qxe}3 18.\textit{fxg}4 \textit{Qf}4 19.\textit{Qc}4 \textit{Qxe}1 20.\textit{Qxe}1 \textit{Qf}8 21.\textit{Qb}5 \textit{Qh}6 22. \textit{Qb}1 \textit{Qe}8 23.\textit{Qxe}8+ \textit{Qxe}8 24. \textit{Qxc}7+. White cannot obtain much if he wins a pawn, because the drawish tendencies in endgames with bishops of opposite colours are well known. 24...\textit{Qd}7 25.\textit{Qe}6 \textit{Qd}6= Rosen – Shields, ICCF 2014) 16...\textit{Qxf}3 17.\textit{gxf}3 f5. Black enlarges the scope of action of his bishop on g7. 18.\textit{Qb}5 \textit{Qd}7 19.c4 c6 20.\textit{Qc}3 \textit{cx}d5 21.\textit{cx}d5 \textit{Qe}5 22.\textit{Qb}1 \textit{Qae}8= – His pieces are tremendously active, while White’s kingside pawn-structure has been compromised, Kharlamov – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

After 12.\textit{Qd}2, just like in the main line, Black obtains a good position with the move 12...\textit{Qe}7.

13.\textit{Qg}5. White’s attempt to exploit the vulnerability of the e6-square leads to difficulties for him. 13...\textit{Qxe}2 14.\textit{Qe}6, Shim Ng Min – Koziol, LSS 2011, 14...\textit{Qd}6!? 15.\textit{Qxg}7 \textit{Qxg}7 16.\textit{Qxe}2 \textit{Qgf}5+

13.\textit{Qd}3 c6 14.0-0 0-0 (14.0-0 \textit{Qf}5 15.\textit{Qxf}5 \textit{Qxf}5 16.d5 \textit{cx}d5 17.\textit{Qae}1 \textit{Qd}7 18.\textit{Qxd}5+ \textit{Qf}7= – Black has two powerful bishops and a solid position, Volovici – Nyvlt, ICCF 2012) 14...\textit{Qe}8 15.\textit{Qb}1 (15. \textit{Qhe}1 \textit{b}5?! 15...\textit{b}5= – Black organises good counterplay by advancing his queenside pawns, Szafraniec – Ludgate, ICCF 2013.

After 13.0-0, he can continue with 13...\textit{Qf}5!? (This move seems much more energetic than 13...\textit{Qe}8 – see 12.0-0.) 14.h3 (It would be inferior for White to choose here 14.\textit{Qf}2, because after 14...\textit{Qh}6 15.\textit{Qd}3 \textit{Qf}4, Black’s minor pieces would become very active.

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16. \( \text{c4+} \) \( \text{h8} \) 17.\( d5 \), Lampert – Ftacnik, Hamburg 2014, 17...
\( \text{d7?!=} \) 14...\( \text{dxe3} \) 15.\( \text{exe3} \) \( \text{e8} \) 16.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{e6=} \) – White must play very carefully in this middle game, since Black’s two powerful bishops might become really
13.0–0–0 \( \text{f5} \)

14.\( \text{c4=} \). The transfer of the bishop to the e6-square is not
good for White, because Black succeeds in compromising his opponent’s pawn-structure on the
kingside. 14...\( \text{h8} \) 15.\( \text{e6} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 16.\( \text{gxf3} \) \( \text{xe3} \) 17.\( \text{exe3} \), Szabo –
Manolache, Cappelle la Grande 2014, 17...\( \text{e8=} \) 18.\( d5 \) \( \text{f5=} \)

Following 14.\( \text{d3} \), Hector – Kristiansen, Denmark 2013, Black obtains a good position preparing the penetration of his
knight to the e3-square. 14...\( \text{e8=} \) 15.\( \text{c4=} \) \( \text{h8} \) 16.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e3} \) 17.\( \text{xe3} \)
\( \text{exe3} \) 18.\( \text{g5} \). This tactical strike is only sufficient to give a perpetual check. 18...\( \text{xe2} \) 19.\( \text{f7=} \) \( \text{g8} \).
White fails to capture the enemy queen, because his own queen is hanging. 20.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{e7} \) 21.\( \text{h6=} \) \( \text{h8} \) 22.\( \text{f7=} \) \( \text{g8} =\)

16.\( \text{e4=} \). White is trying to maintain an edge, but he overestimates his prospects. 16...\( \text{h8} \)!
Black evacuates prudently his king away from the \( a2-g8 \) diagonal. He is threatening to win a
piece after \( \text{xe3} \) and \( f6-\text{f5} \), because White will be deprived of the possibility to remove his
queen from the e-file (\( \text{b3} \)) with tempo. 17.\( g4 \) \( \text{xe3} \) 18.\( \text{xe3} \) \( \text{g3} \) 19.\( \text{h1} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 20.\( \text{xe4} \) \( f5 \) 21.\( \text{xf5} \)
\( \text{h4} \). Black is threatening \( \text{h6} \). 22.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{h6} \) 23.\( \text{exh4} \) \( \text{xe3=} \) 24.\( \text{b1} \) \( g5 \) 25.\( \text{g4} \) \( h5 \). The bishop is
beyond salvation. The endgame seems hopeless for White. 26.\( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{hxg4} \) 27.\( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \). This is
Black’s most reliable move (but he can also win with the sharper resource 27...\( \text{g3} \)!! and his
connected passed pawns on the g and h-files should provide him with victory, Pruijssers – Ten
Hertog, Hilversum 2016) 28.\( \text{hxg4} \) \( \text{g7} \). Black’s bishop turns out to be more powerful than White’s
three pawns. 29.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{h8} \) 30.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{h2} \) 31.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{f4} \) 32.\( \text{e7=} \) \( \text{f6} \) 33.\( \text{e6=} \)
\( \text{f7} \) 34.\( \text{a6} \) \( \text{h4} \) 35.\( \text{xa7} \). White
wins a pawn, but this is irrelevant,
since Black's passed g-pawn is decisive. 35...\textit{\textbackslash}xg4 36.a5 \textit{\textbackslash}g1+ 37.\textit{\textbackslash}a2 g4 38.\textit{\textbackslash}a6 \textit{\textbackslash}d6!++ This is the last fine point. It is essential for Black not to allow \textit{\textbackslash}g6, Zielinski – Carstensen, DESC 2004.

16.\textit{\textbackslash}e4! \textit{\textbackslash}xe3 17.\textit{\textbackslash}xex3 f5 18.\textit{\textbackslash}d5+ \textit{\textbackslash}f8 19.\textit{\textbackslash}f2. Black's king is misplaced and he has nothing better than entering an approximately equal endgame. 19...\textit{\textbackslash}g5+ 20.\textit{\textbackslash}b1 \textit{\textbackslash}e3 21.\textit{\textbackslash}xex3 \textit{\textbackslash}xex3=

12...\textit{\textbackslash}e8 13.\textit{\textbackslash}d2 \textit{\textbackslash}e7!

The pawn on d4 restricts considerably Black's knight on c6, so with his last move he prepares its transfer to f5, or d5.

14.\textit{\textbackslash}c4+

White prevents \textit{\textbackslash}d5.

14.h3. He only helps Black to cover the weakened a2-g8 diagonal. 14...\textit{\textbackslash}e6 15.\textit{\textbackslash}d3 \textit{\textbackslash}d5 16.\textit{\textbackslash}xd5 \textit{\textbackslash}xd5 17.c4 \textit{\textbackslash}xf3 18.\textit{\textbackslash}xf3 f5. He is perfectly prepared to centralise his knight with \textit{\textbackslash}f6-e4. 19.d5 c6 20.dxc6 bxc6 21.\textit{\textbackslash}d1 \textit{\textbackslash}c7 22.b4 \textit{\textbackslash}ad8= – Black's pieces are harmoniously deployed and this compensates fully White's two-bishop advantage, Ziejewski – Wimmer, ICCF 2014.

The move 14.\textit{\textbackslash}d3 is interesting, but still insufficient to maintain an edge. 14...\textit{\textbackslash}f5 15.\textit{\textbackslash}xf5. White trades the enemy knight and prepares d5-d4 and \textit{\textbackslash}d4. 15...\textit{\textbackslash}xf5 16.d5 \textit{\textbackslash}g4 17.\textit{\textbackslash}d4 a6 18.h3 (18.\textit{\textbackslash}b3 b6=) 18...\textit{\textbackslash}d7 19.\textit{\textbackslash}b3 f5 20.\textit{\textbackslash}fe1 \textit{\textbackslash}f8 21.\textit{\textbackslash}ad1. His pieces are quite active indeed, but breaking Black's position is a difficult task to accomplish. 21...b6. Black restricts the enemy knight on b3. 22.\textit{\textbackslash}g5 \textit{\textbackslash}c8 23.d6!? White must play energetically; otherwise, Black's two bishops might become a powerful factor. 23...\textit{\textbackslash}xd6 24.\textit{\textbackslash}d5 \textit{\textbackslash}xe1+ 25.\textit{\textbackslash}xe1. White has sacrificed a pawn, seizing the initiative, but Black's defensive resources are sufficient to maintain the balance. 25...\textit{\textbackslash}b7 26.\textit{\textbackslash}e7+ \textit{\textbackslash}f7 27.\textit{\textbackslash}c3 \textit{\textbackslash}e8 28.g4 \textit{\textbackslash}xe7. Black accomplishes a planned exchange-sacrifice and manages to reduce the tension and to transfer into an endgame with the rather non-standard material ratio. 29.\textit{\textbackslash}xe7 \textit{\textbackslash}xe7 30.gxh5 \textit{\textbackslash}c6 31.\textit{\textbackslash}xc6 \textit{\textbackslash}xc6 32.hxg6+ hxg6. Black's two bishops and the pawn defend easily against White's rook and knight. 33.c3 \textit{\textbackslash}d6 34.\textit{\textbackslash}d1 \textit{\textbackslash}f3 35.\textit{\textbackslash}f1 \textit{\textbackslash}e4 36.\textit{\textbackslash}f2 g5 37.\textit{\textbackslash}d4 a5 38.\textit{\textbackslash}g1 \textit{\textbackslash}f6 39.\textit{\textbackslash}d1 \textit{\textbackslash}c5 40.\textit{\textbackslash}e1 \textit{\textbackslash}e5= – Black's pieces are very active, so White can hardly improve his position, Gerola – Nyvlt, ICCF 2012.
14...\h8

15.\h4

He wishes to exploit at an opportune moment the unfavourable placement of the enemy bishop on g4 and the knight on h5 (h3, g2-g4). Black finds a tactical solution of his strategic problems.

After 15.\d3, Black's obtains a good game with the patient move 15...a6, for example: 16.\f2 (16.\e4 \f5 17.\xf5 \xf5∞ Markus – Torell, LSS 2013) 16...\xf3 17.\xf3 f5. Now, the bishop on g7 will become considerably more active. 18.ead1 \c6 19.\h1 \b4 20.\g1 \xd3. Black deprives his opponent of his two bishop-advantage. 21.ead3 \f6. This knight was idle at the edge of the board for a long time, but would join in the actions again. 22.efe1 \d6∞ Adams – Nyvlt, ICCF 2014.

15...\c6!

This is the point! Suddenly, the knight goes back to c6, increasing the pressure against the d4-square.

16.\f2

After 16.h3?! Black has a very dangerous exchange-sacrifice. 16...\e3! 17.\x3 (17.\d5? \e4++ 18.\xg4 \xd4 19.\xd4 \xd4. White's compensation for the queen is obviously insufficient. 20.gxh5 \b5 21.ead1 bxc4 22.ea4 \f5 23.eff4 \xd4+ 0-1 Kulhanek – Rasik, Czech Republic 2011) 17...f5 18.\b5 \xh4 19.hxg4 \g3± with a very powerful attack for Black.

16...g5!

With this move he plans to seize the initiative.

It would be sufficient for Black to equalise with the prosaic line: 16.\e5 17.\d5 c6 18.h3 \xd5 19.dxe5 \e6 20.exf6 \xf6 21.\d4 \e4 22.\xg7+ \xg7 23.\d4+ \g8 24.\f3, Karjakin – Jones, Bilbao 2014, 24...\xa5=

17.h3 \xh3! 18.gxh3 \xh4 19.\f7 \e5

Black exploits the defencelessness of the enemy queen and removes his rook under the attack,
defending his knight on h5 in the process.

20.\texttt{axe3}

20.\texttt{axh4}. White will have difficulties after this move. 20...
\texttt{\texttt{cxd4}} 21.\texttt{\texttt{d1}} \texttt{d7} 22.\texttt{\texttt{xh5}} \texttt{xh3}
23.\texttt{\texttt{g4}} \texttt{e3+} 24.\texttt{\texttt{f2}} \texttt{f5}. Black’s initiative seems to be very powerful, but with a precise play White still manages to avoid being crushed in the middle game. 25.\texttt{\texttt{f1}} (25.\texttt{\texttt{f7}?! \texttt{h6}} 26.\texttt{\texttt{c4}} b5 27.\texttt{\texttt{d3}} \texttt{\texttt{xh3}} 28.\texttt{\texttt{cxd3}} \texttt{xf7} 29.\texttt{\texttt{xf6}}
\texttt{xf6} 30.\texttt{\texttt{xf6}} \texttt{g8+} 31.\texttt{\texttt{f2}} \texttt{g5+} – Black has an extra pawn in this endgame, but its realisation will be very difficult, Thoma – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.) 25...\texttt{xh3}! He simplifies the position with this tactical strike and ends up with a material advantage. 26.\texttt{xf5}
\texttt{xf5}+ 27.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{c4+} 28.\texttt{g2}
\texttt{h4} 29.\texttt{g4} \texttt{h6} 30.\texttt{h1} \texttt{d2+}
31.\texttt{g3} \texttt{d6+} 32.\texttt{h3} \texttt{g8+} White’s situation seems to be very difficult, but still he manages to save the day thanks to the drawing tendencies in positions with bishops of opposite colours. 33.\texttt{h1} \texttt{b6}
34.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e3} 35.\texttt{d7} b6 36.\texttt{f7}
\texttt{h6+} 37.\texttt{h5} \texttt{f4} 38.\texttt{g4} \texttt{h6}
39.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{xf4} 40.\texttt{e4} \texttt{g3+} 41.\texttt{h4} \texttt{g7} 42.\texttt{f8+}, Draw. Florian – Zejewski, Germany 2011.

20...\texttt{d7} 21.\texttt{dxe5} \texttt{xf7}

22.\texttt{ae1}

22.\texttt{d5} \texttt{g6+} 23.\texttt{g2} \texttt{g3} 24.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 25.\texttt{f2} \texttt{g8+} – White has an extra exchange indeed, but his play would be more difficult, due to the vulnerability of his monarch, Cardelli – Nyvlt, ICCF 2015.

22...\texttt{f5} 23.\texttt{f4} \texttt{xe5} 24.\texttt{xe5}
\texttt{g7+} 25.\texttt{g2} \texttt{g2+} 26.\texttt{g2}
\texttt{xf4+} 27.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{xe5} 28.\texttt{xf5}
\texttt{g8=} Balabanov – Nyvlt, ICCF 2013.
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