Tired of bad positions? Try the main lines!

QUALITY CHESS
Grandmaster Repertoire 8

The Grünfeld Defence

VOLUME ONE

by Boris Avrukh

Grandmaster Repertoire is a series of high quality chess books based on the main lines, written by strong grandmasters. The aim is to provide the reader with a complete repertoire at a level good enough for elite tournaments, and certainly also for the club championship.

Grandmaster Repertoire 8 – The Grünfeld Defence

Volume One offers a repertoire for Black after 1.d4 ♙f6 2.c4 ♙g6. This volume covers the Fianchetto Variation, the Russian Variation with 5.♗b3, the ♙f4 and ♙g5 lines, as well as all White’s minor tries. Grandmaster Repertoire 9 will complete the repertoire.

- Hundreds of novelties
- Busts many recommended lines
- Critical lines explained by an expert
- A world-class repertoire against 1.d4

Boris Avrukh is a grandmaster from Israel. He is an Olympiad gold medallist, former World Junior Champion and analysis partner of World Championship finalists. Avrukh’s two previous Grandmaster Repertoire books on 1.d4 received universal rave reviews and have been hugely influential on chess players all over the world, including at the very highest level.

€24.99 $29.95

ISBN 978-1-906552-75-6

QUALITY CHESS

www.qualitychess.co.uk
The Grünfeld Defence
Volume One

By

Boris Avrukh

Quality Chess
www.qualitychess.co.uk
After the great success of my first two *Grandmaster Repertoire* books (1.d4 for White), it was not long before the idea of writing about my favourite Black opening, the Grünfeld Defence, was discussed. Ironically this meant searching for an antidote to the line of the Fianchetto Variation on which I had worked so diligently in the second of my 1.d4 volumes. My solution to this problem can be found in Chapter 4 of the present book.

I would like to share the story of how I became a devotee of this great opening. After I moved to Israel in 1995 my opening repertoire was rather shaky, so during my first few months there I made a serious effort to improve it. Fortunately the Beer-Sheva Club and its manager Ilyahu Levant provided the best possible conditions for such work. My first coach in Israel was Mark Tseitlin, whom I continue to regard as something of a ‘Grünfeld guru’. I also received high quality support from Alex Huzman, a strong player who is best known for being the long-term coach of Boris Gelfand.

Ever since my first few lessons with Mark, I immediately understood that the Grünfeld was the opening for me. I was attracted by the combative and dynamic positions to which it leads, and relished the prospect of fighting for the initiative with the black pieces. It was especially helpful that all the strong players in my new club knew this opening well. Indeed, in the present work the reader will find plenty of references to the games of Mark Tseitlin, Alex Huzman, Alon Greenfeld, Victor Mikhalevski and Alex Finkel. At that time the influence of the computer was not so strong, and by analysing together we managed to discover a lot of interesting ideas. The Grünfeld has remained my first choice against 1.d4 for sixteen years (and counting!), whereas against 1.e4 I have changed quite a lot.

The Grünfeld is one of the most prominent openings at the highest level, with players such as Shirov, Svidler, Leko and Kamsky using it as their main weapon, while Anand, Carlsen, Topalov and Grischuk also employ it frequently. Let us not forget Garry Kasparov, who made huge contributions to Grünfeld theory from the late eighties until his retirement.

The recent Candidates matches paint a remarkable picture. Vladimir Kramnik refused even to allow Alexander Grischuk to play the Grünfeld (which is understandable given that one of Grischuk’s seconds was Peter Svidler), and opened all his white games with 1.d4. Gata Kamsky played only the Grünfeld against 1.d4, and his main second Emil Sutovsky is one of the leading Grünfeld experts in the world. Two of Kamsky’s clashes with Boris Gelfand in the fashionable 4.g5 system can be found in Chapter 23. Of course Grischuk lost his vital last game in the final against Gelfand with the Grünfeld, but as we shall see, he did not play the line I recommend!

I have always enjoyed the Grünfeld from either side of the board, as the rich positions offer considerable scope for creativity and investigation for both sides. I hope that after reading this book the reader will share my enthusiasm!

Boris Avrukh,
Beer-Sheva, May 2011
### Contents

Key to Symbols used & Bibliography 6

Early Deviations 1.d4  f6 2.c4 g6

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rare Third Moves</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.f3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fianchetto Systems 1.d4  f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 d5 4.cxd5  xd5 5.e4  b6

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rare Seventh Moves</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>White exchanges on d5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Various 4th Moves 1.d4  f6 2.c4 g6 3.c3 d5

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Closed Variation 1.d4  f6 2.c4 g6 3.c3 d5 4.e3  g7

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Various Fifth Moves</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.d4  f6 2.c4 g6 3.c3 d5 4.f4

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.e3 c5 – Introduction and Sidelines 172
7.c1 – Sidelines and 9. ge2 187
9.f3 203
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗g5

18 Sidelines 226
19 5.♗f4 242
20 5.♕h4 – Sidelines 255
21 7.e3 – Sidelines 259
22 8.♗b1 266
23 8.♕f3 275

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗f3 ♗g7

24 Rare Fifth Moves 291

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗f3 ♗g7 5.♗g5 ♘e4

25 6.♕h4 296
26 6.cxd5 304

Russian System 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗f3 ♗g7 5.♗b3 dxc4
6.♗xc4 0–0 7.e4 ♘c6

27 Without 8.♗e2 317
28 8.♗e2 327

Variation Index 341
Key to symbols used

±   White is slightly better
±±  Black is slightly better
±±± Black is better
+-  White has a decisive advantage
-+  Black has a decisive advantage
=   equality
★   with compensation
★★  with counterplay
•   unclear
→   with attack
↑   with initiative

?   a weak move
??  a blunder
!   a good move
!!  an excellent move
!?  a move worth considering
?!  a move of doubtful value
#   mate

Bibliography

Avrukh: *Grandmaster Repertoire 2 – 1.d4 Volume Two*, Quality Chess 2010
Davies: *The Grünfeld Defence*, Everyman 2002
Dembo: *Play the Grünfeld*, Everyman 2007
Grivas: *Beating the Fianchetto Defences*, Gambit 2006
Rowson: *Understanding the Grünfeld*, Gambit 1999

Periodicals
New in Chess Yearbooks
Secrets of Opening Surprises (SOS)

Electronic/Internet resources
ChessBase Magazine
ChessPublishing.com
Early Deviations

Rare Third Moves

Variation Index

1. d4  d5 2. c4

2...g6

A) 3. c2
B) 3. d5
C) 3. g5  e4 4. f4 c5
   C1) 5. d5
   C2) 5. c2

A) after 9...d4
B) note to 5.bxa6
C) note to 7.f3

White has lost control of the d4-square

9...xd5!

8...a6!N
1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6
The starting point of our journey into the Grünfeld Defence. Why not start earlier? Sometimes you cannot cover everything; I am sure you will find this book heavy enough as it is. Besides, there should also be room for another book later on...

In this chapter we shall look at A) 3.Wc2, B) 3.d5 and C) 3..g5. Obviously there are many more possible moves, but some of them do not have any point and are not worth studying. And the rest we shall consider in the following chapters.

3.h4!?
This outlandish move has been championed by Simon Williams, who recently wrote an SOS article on the subject.

3...c5!
Black steers the game towards a position where the move h2-h4 is of limited value.

4.d5 b5
4...e6!?N also deserves attention, angling for an improved version of a Modern Benoni.

5.e4?!
A bit too creative. Williams suggests the improvement 5.h5!?N e5 6.axb5 a6 7.e4 d6, reaching an unusual kind of Benko position which should be roughly equal.

5...e5 6.dxe5 Wb4t 7.Wd2 g7 8.Wb3 Wd6 8...f5!?N is also good.

9.cxb5 b7 10.hxg6 hxg6 11.EXh8† g8 12.a4 a6 13.a3
This was Vinoth Kumar – Shivananda, New Delhi 2009. White's play has been enterprising but ultimately unsound, and in this position both 13...c4N and 13...Wb4N give Black some advantage.

A) 3.Wc2

Maybe not such a bad idea against the Grünfeld, but the problem is that White gets a poor version of the King's Indian Defence, where he can have trouble fighting for the vital d4-square. Here is one illustrative example:

3...g7
Certainly 3...d5 4.f5 d5 5.e4 Wb6 6.f3 is not such a bad version of the Anti-Grünfeld for White.

4.e4 0–0 5.Wc3 d6 6.Wc2 Wc6

7.Wc3
After 7.Wf3 Black has a pleasant choice between 7...Wg4 8.We3 Wd7 and 7...e5, in both cases winning the battle for the d4-square.

7...e5 8.dxe5
Obviously 8.d5 Wd4 couldn't satisfy White either.

8...Wxe5 9.Ed1 Wd4
White has lost the battle for the d4-square, and very soon finds herself in a clearly inferior position.

10.Ed4
10.Wd2 We6†

10...exd4 11.c5 We7 12.Ed4 Wxc5†
B) 3.d5

When this chapter was almost ready, I was playing in a rapid tournament and my opponent managed to surprise me with this rare move. But after the game I did some work and came to the conclusion that the most promising response for Black is:

3...b5!

Playing in the spirit of the Benko Gambit is logical, since the dark-squared bishop can find a lot of activity on the long diagonal after White has advanced his d-pawn. That said, I believe there is nothing wrong with more classical play, for example: 3...c6 4.Qc3 cxd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 Qg7 7.Qf3 0-0 8.Qe2 Qbd7 9.Qe3 Qc5 10.Qd2 e6 With equal chances.

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6

During the aforementioned game I was concerned about 5.b6N. However, Black is not forced to take this pawn and can try 5...c6 6.Qb3 &b7 with interesting play.

5.e3 Qg7 6.Qc3 0-0 7.Qf3 &b7 8.Qe2 axb5 9.Qxb5

5...c6 6.Qxc6

If 6.Qc3 then Black develops with tempo: 6...Qxd5 7.Qxd5 &a5† 8.Qc3 Qg7 9.Qd2 Peev – Radev, Bulgaria 1975. Here simply 9...Qxa6N 10.Qf3 0-0 11.g3 Qc6 12.Qg2 ²fb8 13.Qb1 Qd5† offers Black tremendous compensation.

6.Qxc6 7.e3

Or 7.Qc3 Qxa6 8.g3 Qg7 9.Qg2 0-0 10.Qh3 Varga – Feher, Hungary 1998, and now the natural 10...c6N 11.0-0 d5 12.Qf4 Qg4† would give Black ample compensation for the pawn.

7...Qg7 8.Qf3

8.Qc3 0-0 9.Qf3 occurred in Alber – Banas, Germany 2000. Black now hurried with 9...Qxa6, but instead the more accurate 9...Qa5N 10.Qd2 Qxa6 would have given him an excellent version of the Benko.

8...0-0 9.Qe2 Qxa6 10.Qxa6?

Better is 10.0-0 but after, for example, 10...Qe4 Black still has great compensation.

9...Qxd5! 10.Qxd5 Qxd5 11.Qxd5 c6 12.Qxc6 Qxc6 13.0-0 Qc7 14.Qd1 Spassov – Ribli, Camaguey 1974. As pointed out by Ribli in Chess Informant 17, 14...²fb8 would have secured excellent compensation for Black.
Early Deviations

C) 3.\textit{g}5

Quite a tricky move, especially taking into account that it’s a rarely seen continuation.

3...\textit{d}e4

The most challenging reply. Certainly Black can continue with 3...\textit{g}7, but then he must be ready to play the King’s Indian, which is not in our plans, even though White’s set-up after 4.\textit{c}3 is generally considered quite harmless.

4.\textit{f}4 \textit{c}5

The text is logically connected with Black’s previous move and resembles Black’s play in a line of the Trompowsky (1.\textit{d}4 \textit{f}6 2.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}4 3.\textit{f}4 \textit{c}5 etc.). Obviously after 4...\textit{g}7 5.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}6 6.e4 we would get a strange version of the Sämisch King’s Indian, with White’s \textit{f}4 being an extra move.

We have reached the main crossroads in this line. At this point the most logical moves are C1) 5.d5 and C2) 5.\textit{c}2, but we shall take a quick look at a couple of other moves that White has tried:

If 5.\textit{d}2 then the response 5...\textit{xd}2 6.\textit{xd}2 \textit{g}7 is too compliant. After 7.d5 White has a reasonable game, with chances for an advantage. Instead Black should play 5...\textit{a}5! 6.\textit{c}2, transposing into line C2 below.

5.\textit{f}3 \textit{a}5+ 6.\textit{d}2 \textit{xd}2

This looks more natural than retreating, as after 6...\textit{f}6 7.d5 d6 8.e4 Black’s queen is somewhat misplaced on a5.

7.\textit{xd}2 \textit{b}6 8.\textit{c}3 \textit{g}7 9.e3

In the event of 9.d5 \textit{xc}3† 10.bxc3 \textit{f}6 (also threatening the c4-pawn, by means of 11...\textit{h}4†) 11.\textit{b}3 d6, Black has an excellent position.

This position arose in Koops – Tesic, e-mail 2005, and now simplest for Black is:

9...\textit{c}6N 10.\textit{e}2 0–0

Obviously there is no advantage for White.

C1) 5.d5

5...\textit{g}7 6.\textit{d}2 \textit{f}6

Also not bad is 6...\textit{a}5 7.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}5.

7.e4 \textit{d}6

Finally the game has transposed to a King’s Indian type of position, but with White’s knight misplaced on d2.

8.\textit{c}2

As a consequence of the knight being on d2, White has to take time to defend the b2-pawn, because the natural 8.\textit{gf}3 would just lose this pawn to 8...\textit{h}5 followed by 9...\textit{xb}2.
8...0-0 9.g5 e6 10.d3
If 10.e2 then Black can obtain good play with 10...h5! 11.g5 f6 12.e3 f5.

10...a6
A useful move to insert before returning attention to the kingside; the threat of ...b4 causes White to lose more time.

11.a3
In Straeter – Gross, Germany 1999, Black should now have played:

11...h5N
An already familiar idea.

12.g5 f6 13.e3
After 13.h4

Black gets a good version of the King's Indian with: 13...e5! (less clear is 13...exd5 14.cxd5

12.f4 15.0–0 g5 16.g3 xd3 17.xd3 f5
18.exf5 xf5 19.b3=) 14.0–0 w e8 Black cannot be prevented from carrying out his main idea, the ...f5-advance, which will give him excellent play. However, 14...f4!? is also worthy of consideration.

13...e5
Again I don’t see how White can stop the ...f5 advance; Black has great play.

C2) 5.c2

White’s best choice, according to theory.

5.a5† 6.d2 f5
The justification for the previous move; White will have to spend some time if he wants to chase Black’s knight away from the centre. After 6...f6 7.d5 d6 8.e4 g7 9.e2 followed by 10.c3, White is fighting for an opening advantage.

7.f3
The most natural reply. Another game saw:

7.gf3
Black should continue:

7...g7
In Speelman – Ehlijvest, Reykjavik 1991, Black immediately went wrong with 7...cxd4?! and after 8.xd4 g7 9.d4b3!
White was better.

8.d5
This position has occurred once in tournament practice, via a different move order, in the game Serafimov – Ignatenko, Russia 1996. I found the following natural improvement:

8...\[a6!N 9.a3
White can hardly allow 9.e3 \[b4 10.b3
(10.c1 is clearly inferior: 10...a4! 11.b3 d6 12.e2 \[xa2! 13.b2 \[b4 14.d1 d7 Black remains with a healthy extra pawn.) 10.e5! 11.dxe6 dxe6 Black has a comfortable game, with excellent chances to take over the initiative.

9...0-0

11.e5!
Black is probably better already, e.g.
12.dxe6 dxe6 13.0-0-0 e5 14.g3 \[d7 The idea of ...\[a4 is unpleasant for White.

7\[f6 8.d5 \[g7 9.e5
A natural idea, White’s dark-squared bishop is transferred to c3, neutralizing the annoying pin along the e1-a5 diagonal. This position occurred in Barsov – Vareille, Val Thorens 1995. I found the following improvement:

9...0-0N 10.h3 e6
Black strikes in the centre, aiming to use his lead in development.

11.c3 \[d8 12.e4
Certainly 12.dxe6 dxe6 would allow Black to comfortably develop his queen’s knight to c6.

12.fxe4 13.fxe4 b5!
Black not only creates unpleasant tension in the centre, but also has the major threat of playing 14...b4, which would force White to give up his dark-squared bishop. In my opinion Black has good chances to take over the initiative.

Conclusion
White may be attracted to these rare third-move options because they make it problematic (or even impossible) for Black to continue in traditional Grünfeld style. However, by adopting a flexible approach, I believe that Black can obtain good chances. Against 3.c2 it is promising for Black to head into a King’s Indian in which White’s d4-pawn can quickly be targeted. I recommend meeting 3.d5 with the aggressive 3...b5!? when Black can expect to obtain compensation typical of the Benko Gambit. Finally 3.g5 can be met by an idea from the Trompowsky, 3...\[e4 followed by 4...c5, which assures Black of good play.
Chapter 2

Early Deviations

3.f3

Variation Index

1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5 4.cxd5 ²xd5 5.e4

5...²b6

A) 6.a4

B) 6.²c3 ²g7 7.²e3 0–0

B1) 8.²c1

B2) 8.f4 ²c6 9.d5 ²a5! 10.²d4 e5! 11.²xe5 ²xe5 12.²xe5 ²h4†!

13.²g3 ²e7 14.²d4 ²d8! 15.b4 ²ac4

B21) 16.²xc4 ²xb4 17.²f3 ²xc4 18.²e3 ²e8!N

B211) 19.²d1

B212) 19.e6

B213) 19.²c1

B22) 16.²f3

B3) 8.²d2 ²c6 9.0–0–0 ²f5

B31) 10.exf5

B32) 10.h4 ²xe4 11.h5 ²xh5!

B321) 12.d5

B322) 12.²xh5

B33) 10.e5 ²b4

B331) 11.²h6

B332) 11.h4 ²e6

B3321) 12.²b1

B3322) 12.h5

B3323) 12.a3

B333) 11.²h3
1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5

The response most in the spirit of the Grünfeld. Obviously 3...g7 4.e4 transposes to the Sämisch King's Indian, while for those looking for an offbeat line, 3...c6 is an interesting alternative.

4.cxd5

4.c3 will be examined via the 3.c3 d5 4.f3 move order.

4...dxc5 5.e4 c6

We shall look at A) 6.a4 and B) 6.c3, noting that 6.e3 g7 7.c3 is simply a transposition into line B.

A) 6.a4

This has occurred in a number of games. The idea is to undermine the position of Black's b6-knight and make it vulnerable in the future struggle. However, White fails to achieve his goals, and meanwhile the weakness of the b4-square is significant.

6...a5 7.e3 g7 8.c3 0-0 9.c1

The alternative is absolutely harmless: 9.d2 c6 10.d5 (10.b5 b4! is also excellent for Black)

10...b4!N This is a natural improvement on the game Dumpor – Sarenac, Obrenovac 2004. The following line is a good illustration of how play may unfold: 11.c1 e6 12.b5 c6! 13.dxe6 wxd2+ 14.xd2 xxe6 15.xb6 cxb5 16.axb5 f5! Black takes over the initiative.

9...c6!N

A strong improvement over 9...c6, after which 10.b3 is pretty unclear.

10.b5

This is evidently the move that Black was concerned about.

10...d7!

The key idea; it transpires that White has to worry about his a4-pawn. In fact, Black obtains good play as a result of his development advantage. Here is my brief analysis:
11.b3
A more aggressive try is: 11.d5 ♕b4 12.♕xc7 (12.♕xc7 is impossible in view of 12...♕xb5 13.♕xb5 ♖f1 14.♖xf1 ♗e6! and White loses) 12...♕xa4 13.♕xa8 ♕xb2 14.♕d2 ♕xa8 Black clearly has the initiative.

11...♕b4
This move still works.

12.♕f4
After 12.♕xc7 ♖c8 13.♕b5 ♖xc1 14.♖xc1 ♕xb5 15.♕xb5 ♕xd4 Black certainly has nothing to worry about. Play may continue 16.♕xd4 ♕xd4 17.♕e2 ♕d6 18.0-0 ♖c8, when Black has some initiative.

12...e5! 13.dxe5
Clearly inferior is 13.♕xe5 ♕xb5 14.♕xb5 ♕xe5 15.dxe5 ♖g5! and Black is better.

13...c6 14.♕d6 ♕e6
Despite being a pawn down, Black's lead in development gives him great play. For instance:

15.♕g3
Or 15.♕xb7 ♕xd1+ 16.♕xd1 ♕xb3 17.♕d2 ♕xa4 and the black a-pawn is very dangerous.

15...♕c7 16.f4 ♕ad8 17.♕f3 ♕c8
Black regains the pawn with dividends.

B) 6.♕c3 ♗g7 7.♕e3 0-0

White has three main options here: B1) 8.♕c1, B2) 8.f4 and B3) 8.♖d2. A fourth option, 8.a4 a5, just transposes to line A above.

B1) 8.♕c1 ♗c6 9.d5 ♕e5

10.♕d4
Black need not fear 10.♕b5 c6 11.dxc6 ♕xc6 12.♕xh8 ♕xh8 13.♕xa7, as was played in Decsey – R. Horvath, Tapolca 1998, because he has a convincing answer in: 13...♕a4!N 14.♕xc6 (14.b3 ♕b2 15.♕xc8 ♕xc8 16.a4 ♕d4 also leads to an initiative for Black) 14...bxc6 15.b3 ♕c3†! 16.♕f2 ♕b2† White is in trouble, as Black is
threatening not only 17...\texttt{exa}2, but also 17...\texttt{exd}1.\texttt{+}.

10...c6 11.f4 $g_4$ 12.$xg_7$ $xg_7$ 13.e2

13...e5!
The best reply, since after 13...$f_6$ White can hope for a slight edge with 14.dxc6 bxc6 15.$f_3$, thanks to his superior queenside pawn structure.

14.$xg_4$ $h_4$ 15.$g_3$ $xg_4$ 16.$xg_4$

16.fxe5 would be an error, in view of 16...$xd1$+ 17.$xd1$ $c4$! and Black is already better.

16...$xg_4$ 17.dxc6 bxc6 18.h3 $e6$

19.$f_3$ $exf_4$ 20.$xf_4$ $fd_8$
The position was level in Goglidze – Spielmann, Moscow 1935; Black’s damaged pawn structure on the queenside is balanced by the vulnerability of White’s central pawns.

B2) 8.f4

A very sharp line. Black needs to know exactly how to respond, in order to avoid landing in an inferior position – as once happened to yours truly.

8...c6 9.d5
The most challenging continuation. Black’s task is much easier after:

9.$f_3$ $g_4$ 10.$d_5$ $a_5$ 11.$d_4$

Black has replied to 11.e2 in three different ways, but not played what I consider the most natural continuation: 11...$ac4$N 12.$c1$ e6 13.dxe6 $xe6$ Only Black can be better.

11...$xf_3$ 12.$gx_3$
12...e6!
Very simple and at the same time strong; the threat of ...\texttt{h4} is most unpleasant for White.

13.hxg7
I tried to improve White's play with 13.h4, but he still stands worse: 13...\texttt{xd4} 14.\texttt{xd4 c6}! 15.g1 (or 15.d2 exd5 16.exd5 \texttt{c7}† 17.f2 \texttt{ad8} and Black is clearly better) 15...exd5 16.0-0-0 \texttt{f6} 17.g5 \texttt{xg5} 18.hxg5 dxe4 19.\texttt{xe4 g7}† Black is a pawn up and ready to meet 20.\texttt{f6} with 20...h5!.

13...\texttt{h4}†!
With this intermediate move, Black takes over the initiative.

14.e2 \texttt{xg7} 15.d4† \texttt{g8} 16.e3?
Not the best place for the king, but it is difficult to offer White any good advice - he probably has to just give up the f4-pawn.

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

We have been following Y. Popov – Elizarov, Tula 2007, and now Black should have played:
16...\texttt{ad8}N
It's hard to believe White can hold out for long.

9...\texttt{a5}!
The critical move. Retreating with 9...\texttt{b8} gives White reasonable chances to fight for an opening advantage after 10.a4!. For example: 10.c6 11.a5 \texttt{6d7} 12.e5 \texttt{cx}d5 13.\texttt{xd5 c6}

14.f3 \texttt{db8} 15.b5† Rabar – Cruz, Rio de Janeiro 1952.

10.d4
Clearly worse is 10.f3 \texttt{g4}, transposing to the note to White's 9th move above.

10...e5!
I am really inspired by this move, and believe that it is Black's clearest route to equality, although 10...\texttt{g4} is a decent alternative.

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

11.fxe5
White has a couple of other possibilities:

The attempt to win a piece by 11.\texttt{xb6? axb6} 12.b4 obviously fails to 12...\texttt{f4} 13.\texttt{c2 h4}† and Black wins.

11.fxe5 c6!
Black has only played this once, but I have come to the conclusion that it is his best continuation.

12.d6
An unfortunate decision. I examined White's stronger options:

a) 12.f3 \texttt{cx}d5 13.c5 allows a very nice idea: 13...\texttt{c6}! (13...\texttt{e8} 14.b5 \texttt{d7} 15.xb6 axb6 16.xd7 \texttt{xd7} is sufficient for equality) 14.xf8 \texttt{xf8} 15.exd5 (15.xd5 \texttt{xe}5 16.e2 \texttt{xf3}† 17.gxf3 \texttt{xb2} 18.\texttt{b1 g7} is also promising for Black) 15...\texttt{xe}5
b) 12.e6 fxe6 13.exg7 hxg7 14.d4+ g6 15.xf6+ xf6 16.dxc6 xc6 With equality.

12...ac4 13.ig4 13

Very simple and strong; Black is going to regain the e5-pawn, after which the d6-pawn becomes weak. In the following encounter Black easily achieved an advantage:
14.xc4 xc4 15.b3 xf3 16.gxf3 xe5 17.0-0-0 xd6

11...xe5 12.fxe5

12...h4†!

A very important intermediate check that forces White to advance his g-pawn, weakening his position and depriving him of the possibility of recapturing with the g-pawn in the event of an exchange on the f3-square.

12...e7 13.d3 g4 14.d4 xf3 15.gxf3

13.g3 14.d4

White is lacking worthy alternatives, for example:
14.f3 g4 15.b3 f5† Black seizes the initiative.

14.b3 xe5 15.c1 occurred in Dokhoian – Krasenkow, USSR 1986, and now Black should play: 15...f5N 16.c3 e7 17.e5 ed8! White's centre is vulnerable, with Black threatening 18...e6 or 18...c6. White's best is 18.c2 xd5 19.xd5 exd5 20.xc7 xd7 21.c4 xc4 22.xc4 c6 23.0-0 ad8, but Black is clearly in control.

11...xe5 12.fxe5

14...d8!

Unless you are familiar with the theory, this is not an easy move to find. When I met this position for the first time I reacted with the more natural-looking 14...c5? but my opponent demonstrated that this is a serious error: 15.d6! xd4 16.dxe7 e8 17.d5! xd5 18.exd5 e7 19.f4+ 20.d2 e4 21.d1 f2 22.dxe5 ed8 23.d3 de2 24.e3 g4 25.h5 de7 26.e2 d5 27.e5 dxe5 28.dxe5 dxe5 29.ed5 dxe5 30.d6 White had a decisive advantage in Sakalauskas – Avrukh, Bled (ol) 2002.
15.b4
White's only way of fighting for the advantage, as otherwise Black would continue with 15...\(\text{c}6\), regaining the e5-pawn.

15...\(\text{c}6\)
Black has an interesting alternative:
15...\(\text{c}6\)? 16.\(\text{c}5\)
The point behind White's 15th move.
16...\(\text{g}5\)
This trick allows Black to avoid losing material, as Black's knight is untouchable in view of the mate on d2.
17.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{h}5\) 18.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{xe}5\) 19.0-0
Obviously 19.\(\text{xc}7\)? is impossible because of 19...\(\text{xf}3\)+ 20.\(\text{x}f3\)\(\text{xf}3\) 21.\(\text{xd}8\)+ \(\text{g}7\) and White loses.

19...\(\text{h}3\)? \(\text{N}\)
In my opinion this is stronger than 19...\(\text{xf}3\)+ 20.\(\text{xf}3\) \(\text{e}5\) 21.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{h}3\)
Naslund – A. Horvath, Budapest 2008, as now 22.\(\text{c}1\)!N \(\text{d}7\) 23.a4 would give White definite pressure.
20.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{bd}7\)? 21.\(\text{e}3\)
Another line is 21.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 22.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{f}6\) with reasonable play for Black.
Note that the c7-pawn is not really hanging, since after 21.\(\text{xc}7\) \(\text{d}8\) 22.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xc}7\) 23.\(\text{xh}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 24.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{xc}4\)+ Black regains the pawn and remains with the better position.
21...\(\text{g}4\)

A very complicated position has arisen, which I would evaluate as balanced.
18...\(\text{Ke8}!N\)

In my opinion this is a very important novelty. Previously Black has suffered after:
18...c6 19.e5! (19.e6 fxe6 20.e5 looks scary. Although 20...\(\text{Bb4}\) 21.0-0 \(\text{c4}\) eventually led to a draw in Kaidanov - Peng Xiaomin, Seattle 2001, I wouldn't be surprised if White could improve his play.) 19...\(\text{Bg4}\) 20.d2 \(\text{Bb4}\) 21.0-0 This position is very dangerous position for Black, as shown by 21...cxd5 22.exd5 \(\text{Bxd5}\) 23.\(\text{exd5}\) \(\text{Bxd5}\) 24.e4± Mamedyarov - Shirov, Baku (rapid) 2009.

The position after 18...\(\text{Ke8}!\) is extremely complicated. I investigated B211) 19.d1, the critical B212) 19.e6 and also the natural B213) 19.c1.

B211) 19.d1 \(\text{Gg4}\) 20.e6 \(\text{xf3}\)

It is essential to eliminate this knight.

21.exf7\# \(\text{Bxf7}\) 22.\(\text{Bxf3}\) \(\text{Gg7}\) 23.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{d7}\)

Black is slightly better, thanks to his control over the key e5-square.

B212) 19.e6

A thematic idea in this line, but here it does not really work:

19...f6 20.d5 \(\text{Bb4}\) 21.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{Bf8}\) 22.\(\text{Bb1}\) \(\text{e7}\) 23.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{e5}\!\!\)

A practical approach, although the more complicated 23...\(\text{g5}\)! is also strong.

24.\(\text{xe5}\)

Even worse for White is 24.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{g7}\)\#.

24...\(\text{xe5}\) 25.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{h3}\)

Black clearly has the better chances, in view of the vulnerable situation of the white king.

B213) 19.c1 \(\text{d7}\)

20.\(\text{Bb1}\)

The alternatives are:

20.\(\text{Bf4}\) is strongly met by: 20...\(\text{c5}\)! 21.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{cxe4}\) 22.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{f5}\)! 23.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{d3}\) 24.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{d7}\) 25.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{c5}\)! 26.e6 \(\text{xe6}\)! (26...\(\text{fxe6}\) 27.\(\text{e5}\) probably leads to perpetual check) 27.dxe6 \(\text{exe6}\) 28.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{e4}\) 29.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 30.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{d8}\)\# Despite the material being balanced, Black's chances are much higher, due to the poor coordination of the white pieces.

20.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{xe5}\)! This is the key idea. In the event of 21.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) the white king comes under attack and Black takes over the initiative.

20...\(\text{a6}\)!
It is important to keep the white king in the centre, and this is clearly much stronger than 20...
\begin{itemize}
\item 21.\textit{bd2} \textit{xe5}
\item 22.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5}
\item 23.\textit{xc7}
\end{itemize}
with a double-edged position.

21.\textit{c3}

Other moves are not dangerous for Black either:

21.\textit{d4} \textit{c6!} 22.\textit{d6} (after 22.\textit{c3} Black has 22...\textit{c5=} and the \textit{e5}-pawn falls) 22...\textit{xe5}
23.\textit{xe5} \textit{a5=} Black ends up with an extra pawn.

21.\textit{xc7} \textit{xe5} and Black takes over the initiative, for instance: 22.\textit{c3} \textit{d6} 23.\textit{b5}
\textit{b4} 24.\textit{c3} \textit{xf3} 25.\textit{xf3} \textit{f5=}

21...\textit{b6}

A very strong idea; Black prepares to activate his knight by ...
\textit{c5}.

22.\textit{c6}

This looks threatening, but Black is ready with a nice retort.

22...\textit{d3} 23.\textit{f2}

\begin{itemize}
\item 23...\textit{xf3} 24.\textit{xf3} \textit{xe5} 25.\textit{xe5} \textit{d6}
\item 26.\textit{xc6} \textit{b7} 27.\textit{xc7} \textit{xd5=}
\end{itemize}
Black is a healthy pawn up.

B22) 16.\textit{f3} \textit{g4}

The following sequence of moves is more or less forced.

17.\textit{xc4} \textit{xf3} 18.0-0 \textit{xb4}

19.e6

This is the most challenging move. White has also tried:

19.\textit{xf3}?! \textit{xc4} 20.\textit{e3} \textit{d7}!

White's initiative has been slowed down, and Black has the better chances.

21.\textit{f4} \textit{f8}

White has no good answer to Black's primitive idea of ...
\textit{ae8} followed by the capture of the \textit{e5}-pawn.

22.\textit{b1=;} \textit{ae8} 23.\textit{b5}

Probably White realized only now that 23.\textit{xb7} was not really a threat, as after
23...\textit{xe5} 24.\textit{xe3} \textit{f5} 25.\textit{exf5} \textit{a6} followed by 26...\textit{xf5}, Black will win material.

23...\textit{a6} 24.\textit{xc3} \textit{xa2} 25.\textit{a3} \textit{xe5}

Black had achieved a decisive advantage in Moskalenko – Konguvel, Barcelona 2004.

19...\textit{xe6} 20.\textit{xf3}

White tried 20.\textit{f6=} in Fodor – Katsuhara, Budapest 2005, but it is just bad. The easiest solution for Black is 20...
\begin{itemize}
\item 21.\textit{f2} \textit{f8}
\item 22.\textit{xe6} \textit{g7} and White loses one of his minor pieces.
According to my database, seven games have reached this position. White has to force a draw by perpetual check:

22.\texttt{e6t}

Or 22.\texttt{f7t} \texttt{h8} 23.\texttt{f6t}=.

22...\texttt{h8} 23.\texttt{f6t}=

\textbf{B3) 8.\texttt{d2}}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.49\textwidth]{chessboard1.png}
\end{center}

White’s main continuation, according to theory.

8...\texttt{c6} 9.0–0–0

This is clearly White’s first choice. We shall just take a brief look at the alternatives:

9.d5?! This advance is premature, and only helps Black to seize the initiative: 9...\texttt{e5} 10.\texttt{g5} (10.b3 \texttt{e6} is also good for Black) 10...\texttt{c6} 11.\texttt{d1 cxd5} 12.exd5 \texttt{f5} Black’s lead in development gave him a clear advantage in Alekhine – Bogoljubow, Bled 1931.

9.\texttt{d1 e5}

Another possibility is 9...\texttt{f5}, but the text easily solves Black’s problems and is more thematic.

10.d5 \texttt{d4} 11.\texttt{b5}

This gets rid of the central black knight, but Black’s development advantage gives him good play.

Another option is: 11.\texttt{d3 f5N} (more ambitious than 11...\texttt{c6}, which was good enough for equality in Simon – Temi, Cannes 1996) 12.\texttt{g2 fxe4} 13.\texttt{xe4 c4} 14.\texttt{c1 xe3} 15.\texttt{xe3 d6} 16.0–0 \texttt{d7} Black’s chances are slightly better, thanks to his strong knight on d4.

11...\texttt{xb5} 12.\texttt{xb5}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.49\textwidth]{chessboard2.png}
\end{center}

12...\texttt{f5!} 13.\texttt{d3 fxe4} 14.\texttt{xe4}

14.fxe4 runs into the unpleasant 14...\texttt{g4}!

14...\texttt{f5} 15.\texttt{xh6 gxf5} 16.b3

We have been following Scekic – Bercys, New York (rapid) 2004. Black should now have opted for:

16...\texttt{h4}!N 17.\texttt{f2 f6} 18.\texttt{e2 fd8}=

9...\texttt{f5}
The current fashion in this position. More common is 9...e5, which leads to a very complicated battle after 10.d5 \( \text{ xd4} \) 11.f4.

We shall take a look at B31) 10.exf5, before turning to the main alternatives, B32) 10.h4 and B33) 10.e5.

B31) 10.exf5 \( \text{ xf5} \) 11.h4

This has been played only once, but my main reason for sharing this line with the readers is to show some of Black's ideas in this kind of position.

11...\( \text{ b4} \)N

The game Perez Lopez – Navarro Cia, Barcelona 2000, saw 11...e5 12.d5 \( \text{ xd4} \) 13.g4 with unclear play.

12.g4

The key point of Black's novelty can be seen in the following line: 12.h5 \( \text{ xd5} \) 13.g4 \( \text{ xa2} \) 14.gxf5 \( \text{ a1} \) 15.b1 c5 Black has a devastating attack.

12...\( \text{ e6} \) 13.\( \text{ b1} \) \( \text{ c4} \) 14.\( \text{ xc4} \)

No better is 14.e1 \( \text{ xc3} \) 15.\( \text{ xc3} \) \( \text{ d7=} \) and Black is already threatening 16...\( \text{ xa2} \).

14...\( \text{ xc4} \) 15.a3

This is necessary, as after 15.h5 \( \text{ d3} \) 16.\( \text{ c1} \) c5 Black's attack is decisive.

15...\( \text{ a5} \)

Since the game Motylev – Svidler, Wijk aan Zee 2007 (see the note to Black's 13th move in B333), this idea has become quite thematic in this line. Instead 15...\( \text{ d5} \) 16.\( \text{ xd5} \) \( \text{ xd5} \) 17.h5 would lead to double-edged play.

16.h5 \( \text{ d7} \)

Black is doing well.

B32) 10.h4

A very aggressive approach, leading to highly interesting play, although it seems to me that Black manages to keep everything under control.

10...\( \text{ fxe4} \) 11.h5
This pawn sacrifice is the idea behind White's 10th move.

11...gxh5!

It is essential to keep the h-file half closed. After 11...e5 12.d5 Qd4 13.hxg6 hxg6 14.fxe4 White has an almost perfect score.

White generally chooses between B321) 12.d5 and B322) 12.EXh5, although there are a couple of less serious options:

12...h6?! has been played twice, but I think it is a blunder, since Black can simply grab the central pawn: 12...Wxd4!N 13.g5 (Black's point is that 13...Wxd4 runs into 13...Eh6↑+) 13...e5 14.EXg7+ EXg7 15.EXg7 Ehxg7 16.Qxe4 Efx5 17.EXh5 Qxe4 18.fxe4 Exd8+ White has absolutely no compensation for being a pawn down.

12.g4 This surprising continuation was first employed by Dutch Grandmaster Stellwagen in 2008, but we shall follow a later correspondence game, in which White was convincingly punished: 12...exf3 13.EXh5 (after 13.gxh5 Eg4 14.Ef2 Eh8 Black is also better) 13...Qxg4 14.Eg5 Wd7 15.d5 f2! This nice tactical trick clarifies the situation. 16.Ee2 Qxe2 17.EXe2 Ee5 18.EXb6 f1=Q 19.Exf1 EXf1+ 20.EXf1 axb6 21.Qge2 Qh8 Black had a big advantage, which was easily converted in Wojtyra - Stań, e-mail 2009.

**B321) 12.d5**

This leads to very concrete play.

12...Qe5 13.Ed6 Qec4!

This is much stronger than 13...Ehf7? 14.EXg7 EXg7 15.EXh5, which gave White a serious initiative in Sakaev - Timofeev, Istanbul 2003.

14.Qg5 Ef7

A remarkable position. At first sight it looks as if White has a serious initiative, due to the exposed black king. However, Black's position is like a coiled spring, and in a very short time he manages to develop his pieces and even create significant threats against the white king.

15.EXc4

Another line is: 15.Eh4 Ed6! (but not 15...Qxb2? 16.Ef4! and Black ends up losing the knight on b2, Rodshtein - Sanikidze, Chalkidiki 2003) 16.EXg7 EXg7 17.EXh5 Ed7! 18.EXe4 Eb4! 19.Ed2 Ec5 20.EXc4 (or 20.Ed1 Ec6 21.Ed4 Ed5 22.Ed4 Ec3+) 20...Qc4 21.Ed4 Ee6 22.Ef4 Ed5 Black is winning material and he went on to win the game in Aleškerov - Sanikidze, Istanbul 2005. I have to say that Black's play in this game was most impressive; all his moves from 15...Ed6 onwards were simply the best.

15...Qxc4 16.Ed4

White tried 16.Qxe4? in Meessen - Peschlow, Germany 2006, but Black could just grab an important pawn: 16...Qxb2!N 17.Ed2 (or 17.Ed4 c5) 17...Ec4 18.Ed4 Ed6 Black has a winning position.

White's best option is 16.EXg7, which has not been played, but is recommended by Ftacnik.
A logical continuation is then: 16...\texttt{\textdollar}xg7 17.\texttt{\textdollar}xh5 exf3 18.gxf3 (after 18.\texttt{\textdollar}xf3 \texttt{\textdollar}g4 Black is clearly better) 18...\texttt{\textdollar}f8 Fracnik evaluates this position as unclear. It is true that White has a certain amount of compensation following 19.\texttt{\textdollar}ge2 \texttt{\textdollar}f5 20.\texttt{\textdollar}d4 \texttt{\textdollar}g6 21.\texttt{\textdollar}h2, but after 21...\texttt{\textdollar}f6 I prefer Black's position, due to his strong bishop. It should be noted that White cannot take the pawn back, as after 22.\texttt{\textdollar}xc7? \texttt{\textdollar}d6 Black has too many threats (such as ...e5, ...\texttt{\textdollar}c8 and ...\texttt{\textdollar}f4†).

16...\texttt{\textdollar}d6

With this natural 'human' move, Black's queen enters the play with great effect. However, the computer indicates an even better move for Black: 16...\texttt{\textdollar}xb2†! 17.\texttt{\textdollar}xb2 (or 17.\texttt{\textdollar}xe4 \texttt{\textdollar}d3† 18.\texttt{\textdollar}d2 \texttt{\textdollar}f5! 19.\texttt{\textdollar}xd3 e6 and Black is clearly better) 17...c5! The nice point of the sacrifice. 18.\texttt{\textdollar}xe4 \texttt{\textdollar}b6† 19.\texttt{\textdollar}a1 \texttt{\textdollar}xh6 Black has a considerable advantage.

17.\texttt{\textdollar}xg7

After 17.\texttt{\textdollar}xh5 Black quickly develops a decisive attack: 17...\texttt{\textdollar}b4! 18.\texttt{\textdollar}d1 \texttt{\textdollar}c5 19.\texttt{\textdollar}e2 exf3 20.gxf3 \texttt{\textdollar}e5† 21.\texttt{\textdollar}dc3 \texttt{\textdollar}xf3 Black won easily in Gubajdullin – Belov, Moscow 2009.

17...\texttt{\textdollar}xg7 18.\texttt{\textdollar}xh5 \texttt{\textdollar}f4† 19.\texttt{\textdollar}b1? \texttt{\textdollar}f5

Black's last piece comes into play with decisive effect.

20.\texttt{\textdollar}xe4 \texttt{\textdollar}g4 21.\texttt{\textdollar}ge2

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

21...\texttt{\textdollar}d2! 0–1

Mamedyarov – Kurnosov, Moscow 2009.

B322) 12.\texttt{\textdollar}h5

The most natural continuation.

12...\texttt{\textdollar}f5 13.\texttt{\textdollar}g5

White's first choice according to theory, but I would like to mention a couple of other options:

13.\texttt{\textdollar}h6 Essentially the situation is the same as we saw with 12. \texttt{\textdollar}h6?! above, and here too Black can capture the central pawn with great effect:
Early Deviations

13...\textit{W}xd4!\textit{N} This novelty was pointed out by Krasenkow in \textit{ChessBase Magazine} 120.

14.\textit{W}xd4 (or 14.\textit{W}g5 \textit{W}f6+) 14...\textit{W}xd4 15.\textit{W}xf8 \textit{B}xf8 Black is clearly better.

13.d5
This looks quite interesting, but Black can keep everything under control.

13...\textit{B}g6!
Much stronger than 13...\textit{B}e5 14.\textit{W}d4, when White is fighting for an advantage.

14.\textit{W}h6
An understandable attempt, as after 14.\textit{B}h3 you don't have to be a grandmaster to find the following series of moves: 14...\textit{B}e5 15.fxe4 \textit{B}xc4 16.\textit{B}xc4 \textit{B}xe4 17.\textit{B}e2 \textit{B}xe3 18.\textit{W}xe3 \textit{B}d6\textit{N} Black has a pleasant game, thanks to his bishop pair.

14...\textit{B}xh5
Now we have a more or less forced line.

15.\textit{B}xg7 \textit{B}xg7 16.\textit{W}g5\textit{N} \textit{B}g6 17.dxc6 \textit{B}c8 18.\textit{W}xe7\textit{N}

18...\textit{B}g8\textit{N} This improves on 18...\textit{B}f7 19.\textit{W}e5\textit{N} \textit{B}g8 20.\textit{B}xe4, which was rather unclear in Hillarp Persson -- Howell, Jersey 2005.

19.\textit{B}xe4
I don't see any ideas for White after 19.\textit{B}xb7 \textit{W}xb7 20.\textit{W}e6\textit{N} \textit{B}f7 21.\textit{B}xe4 \textit{B}b8 22.b3 c5 followed by 23...\textit{B}c7.

19...\textit{B}xc6
Black comfortably parries all of White's tries, and remains the exchange up.

20.\textit{B}h3
White does not get anywhere with: 20.\textit{B}f6\textit{N} \textit{B}h8 21.g4 (or 21.\textit{B}d7 \textit{B}f5 22.g4 \textit{B}d5 23.\textit{B}xd5 \textit{B}xd5 24.\textit{W}e5\textit{N} \textit{B}g8\textit{N} 21...\textit{B}f7 22.\textit{B}e5 \textit{B}f8 The discovered checks are not dangerous, and so Black has the advantage.

20...\textit{B}xe4!
The simplest way; eliminating the knight leaves White short of active ideas.

21.\textit{W}xe4 \textit{B}f5 22.\textit{W}xc6 \textit{B}ad8
Black clearly has the better chances.

13...\textit{B}g6

14.\textit{B}e2
This is nearly always played, but White has also tried the fairly natural:
14.\( \text{dxe4} \) \( e5 \) 15.\( \text{d5} \)

Definitely more challenging than 15.\( \text{dxe5} \) \( \text{Wxd2t} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{xe}d2} \) \( \text{dxe5} \), when Black has no problems.

15.\( \text{\texttt{d}d4} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{c}c3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 17.\( \text{dxc6} \)

17.\( \text{Wc7!} \)

A great concept! Black needs the open c-file much more than he needs the pawn.

If 17...\( \text{bxc6?} \) then White would be very happy to continue 18.\( \text{\texttt{d}d3} \) with an advantage.

18.\( \text{cxb7} \)

Now 18.\( \text{\texttt{d}d3} \) is well met by: 18...\( \text{\texttt{xc}c6} \) 19.\( \text{\texttt{x}g6} \) \( \text{hxg6} \) 20.\( \text{\texttt{d}d3} \) \( \text{f7=} \) Black's pieces feel quite comfortable behind his strong central knight.

18...\( \text{\texttt{s}ab8!} \)

Another fine move; it's important for Black to keep his queen on the c-file.

19.\( \text{f4?!} \)

After 19.\( \text{\texttt{d}d3} \) \( \text{\texttt{xb7}b7} \) 20.\( \text{\texttt{ge}g2} \) \( \text{\texttt{a}a4} \) Black develops a serious initiative on the queenside.

19...\( \text{\texttt{fd8!}} \) 20.\( \text{\texttt{f}xe5} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}e6} \)

Now Black wins the exchange.

21.\( \text{\texttt{e}e2} \) \( \text{\texttt{xd1t}} \) 22.\( \text{\texttt{xd1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \) 23.\( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \)

Right now White has three pawns for the exchange, but not for long.

23.\( \text{\texttt{x}xe5} \) 24.\( \text{\texttt{a}a6} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc}c3} \) 25.\( \text{\texttt{b}b3t} \)

We have been following Vallejo Pons – Navara, Wijk aan Zee 2009. Here Black could have decided the game on the spot with the simple:

25...\( \text{\texttt{f7N}} \) 26.\( \text{\texttt{xc}c3} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}d5} \) 27.\( \text{\texttt{xc}c7} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc}c7} \) 28.\( \text{\texttt{d}d3} \) \( \text{\texttt{xa}xa2=} \)

14...\( \text{e5} \)

Nobody has tried 14...\( \text{\texttt{ex}f3} \) here; after 15.\( \text{\texttt{xf}f3} \) \( \text{e5} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{dxe5} \text{Wxd2t} \text{\texttt{xe}d2} \text{\texttt{h}h8! \text{\texttt{b}d4}}} \) White's position seems promising, for instance 17...\( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 18.\( \text{\texttt{xc}xc6} \) \( \text{hxc6} \)

15.\( \text{\texttt{d}d5} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}d4} \)

The alternative 15...\( \text{\texttt{ex}f3} \) keeps an extra pawn, but helps White’s development: 16.\( \text{\texttt{xf}f3} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}d4} \) I think White can improve here with 17.\( \text{\texttt{h}h4!N} \), which was suggested by Golod in ChessBase Magazine 81.

16.\( \text{\texttt{f}xe4} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}c6} \)

Black must attack White’s centre; this move also helps to open some lines on the queenside.

17.\( \text{\texttt{d}xc6} \)

White has also played:

17.\( \text{\texttt{\texttt{f}f3} \text{\texttt{cd}d5} \text{\texttt{\texttt{ed}d5}}} \)

It looks risky for White to open the diagonal for Black’s light-squared bishop.

There is a reasonable alternative in: 18.\( \text{\texttt{xe}e5} \)
White decides to keep the queens on, in an attempt to justify his rook being on g5. Indeed, after 18...\texttt{xf3} 19...\texttt{xd2} \texttt{xd4}! Black is fine, while the white rook looks a bit misplaced.

18...\texttt{f6}

This improvement was suggested by Krasenkow in ChessBase Magazine 118. Laznicka has twice played:

19...\texttt{g3N}

A natural improvement over 19...\texttt{e8}, which led to an unclear position in Laznicka – Krasenkow, Ostrava 2007: 20...\texttt{b3} \texttt{d4} 21...\texttt{d3} \texttt{xf3} 22...\texttt{xf3} 23...\texttt{f1} \texttt{xf3} 24...\texttt{f1} !

20...\texttt{f5} \texttt{xf5} 21...\texttt{xf5} \texttt{e8}

Black takes over the initiative.

22...\texttt{b1}?

This allows an elegant combination. White’s best try was: 22...\texttt{h6} \texttt{g6} 23...\texttt{g6} \texttt{hxg6} 24...\texttt{xg7} \texttt{gxh5} 25...\texttt{xf8} \texttt{xf8} Black is slightly better, but White has good chances of saving the game.

22...\texttt{xc3} 23...\texttt{xc3} \texttt{a4}!

The point of the sacrifice; Black now develops a decisive attack.

24...\texttt{xd4} \texttt{exd4}

White was already defenceless against Black’s
attack in Laznicka – Ponomariov, Carlsbad 2007. I believe that as a result of this game 19.\texttt{g3?!} will not find any followers in the future.

19...\texttt{ac8}

I prefer this to 19...\texttt{d4} 20.\texttt{b3} \texttt{exe2}\texttt{+} 21.\texttt{exe2} with an unclear game, as pointed out by Krasenkow.

20.\texttt{g4}

Other possibilities:

20.\texttt{b3}? is a serious inaccuracy that allows Black to seize the initiative on the queenside: 20...\texttt{b4} 21.\texttt{b1} \texttt{xc3} Black has a clear advantage.

20.\texttt{b1} is a more important alternative: 20...\texttt{d4} 21.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c4} (after 21...\texttt{xc3}?! 22.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{xe4}\texttt{+} 23.\texttt{d3}! I don’t see any good way for Black to continue) 22.\texttt{xd4} exd4 23.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{wb6} Black has fine long-term compensation for the pawn, thanks to his dark-squared bishop.

20...\texttt{cd8}

20...\texttt{c7}?! is also worth considering.

21.\texttt{b3} \texttt{we7} 22.\texttt{xf8} 23.\texttt{d4} 24.\texttt{b1} \texttt{wb4}

Black is by no means worse, due to his strong knight on d4.

B33) 10.\texttt{e5}

In my opinion this is the critical continuation. Black’s dark-squared bishop is cut off from play for a long time, but on the other hand, Black is able to seize control over the light squares in the centre.

10...\texttt{b4}

We have arrived at an important crossroads for White; his options are B331) 11.\texttt{h6}, B332) 11.\texttt{h4} and B333) 11.\texttt{h3}.

B331) 11.\texttt{h6}
This leads to very concrete play, as White intends to launch a direct offensive on the black king after swapping dark-squared bishops.

11...\textit{c6} 12...\textit{b1}

White has also tried:

\begin{itemize}
    \item 12...\textit{xg7} \textit{gxg7} 13...\textit{b1}
\end{itemize}

13...\textit{f4}\textit{?N}

I like this very natural idea. In practice Black has played: 13...c5 14.dxc5 \textit{a4}\textit{!} 15...\textit{ge2} (15...\textit{xa4}? loses to 15...\textit{xa2}\textit{+} 16...\textit{c1} \textit{wa5}) 15...\textit{xd2} 16...\textit{xd2} \textit{ad8} 17...\textit{d4} \textit{xc5}


14.g4!

White would be in trouble if he did not have this resource.

14...a5 15...\textit{h3} \textit{6d5}

Black has very comfortable play.

12...\textit{xf6} 13...\textit{xf6}

13...\textit{d7}\textit{?N}

I believe that this is a serious improvement over 13...\textit{d6}\textit{d5}, as played in Drazic – Kokol, Nova Gorica 2008. White could have responded with the natural 14...\textit{h3N}, when the threat of \textit{g5} would force Black onto the defensive.

14...\textit{xa2}!

This move sets off some fireworks on the board.

15...\textit{g5} \textit{xc3}\textit{+} 16...\textit{xc3} \textit{xf7}

The only defence against White's threat, but entirely adequate.

17...\textit{xf7} \textit{wa4} 18...\textit{d2} \textit{xf7}

Black is the exchange for a pawn down, but it is obvious that he has more than enough compensation.

B332) 11...\textit{h4}

This aggressive thrust looks very natural. Black has to react quickly, because the further advance of the h-pawn might cause serious damage.
11...\$e6
Black attacks the a-pawn. White can defend it by B3321) 12.\$b1, ignore the threat with B3322) 12.h5 or move it with B3323) 12.a3.

**B3321) 12.\$b1**

```
12...f4!N
Sacrificing this pawn to clear the f5-square for the bishop is often a tempting idea in this variation, but this particular position is one of the few occasions that it actually works. In Kowzan – Jurek, Wysowa 2003, Black played very passively: 12...\$d4d5 13.\$h3 \$xe3 14.\$xe3 \$d5 15.\$xd5 \$xd5 16.h5±
```

```
13.\$xf4 c5!
All Black's pieces are brought into play, even the dark-squared bishop.
```

```
14.dxc5
It is dangerous for White to play: 14.\$e2 \$f5† 15.\$e4 \$d5 16.\$c3 \$f7 17.dxc5 (after 17.\$e3 \$a8 18.\$e1 \$a4 19.b3 \$xc3† 20.\$xc3 \$d5† Black retains an initiative) 17...\$a4 18.\$b5 \$xc5 Black has good compensation for the pawn.
```

```
14...\$d5
```

**B3322) 12.h5**

```
15.\$xd5
This leads to a forced draw, but neither 15.\$g3 \$xf4 16.\$xf4 \$xd2 17.\$xd2 \$xf4† nor 15.\$c4 \$xc3† 16.\$xc3 \$xc4 17.\$xd8 \$xa2† 18.\$b2 \$fxd8 19.\$xd8† \$xd8 20.\$xb4 \$f7 21.\$e2 \$xe5† would give White anything to play for.
```

```
15...\$f5† 16.\$a1 \$c2† 17.\$b1 \$b4†=
```

```
B3322) 12.h5
This is of course very tempting. Play continues:
```
```
12...\$xa2† 13.\$xa2 \$xa2 14.hxg6 hxg6 15.\$h6
```

```
14...\$d6d5
```

```
```
```
15...\texttt{d7}N

An important improvement, as otherwise the whole line is somewhat dangerous for Black. The e8-square should be kept free for the king, so I don't like 15...\texttt{e8} 16.\texttt{c2} \texttt{f4}, as in Av. Bykhovsky – Dub, Tel Aviv 2002. White could then play: 17.\texttt{c3N} \texttt{b3} 18.\texttt{e1} \texttt{d8} 19.\texttt{g4}! White has a serious initiative, while Black is lacking in activity.

16.\texttt{e2}

White needs this move in order to shelter his king. Obviously 16.\texttt{xg7}? runs into 16...\texttt{c6}+, and Black remains with a healthy extra pawn after the exchange of queens.

16...\texttt{b3} 17.\texttt{xg7}

17.\texttt{e1} is too slow, although Black has to find the strong response: 17...\texttt{d5}! 18.\texttt{xg7} \texttt{g7} 19.\texttt{h6}+ \texttt{f7} 20.\texttt{h7}+ \texttt{e8} 21.\texttt{g6}+ \texttt{d8} White's king is much more vulnerable than his black counterpart.

17...\texttt{xg7} 18.\texttt{h6}+ \texttt{f7}

19.\texttt{d5}!

White's best continuation. After 19.\texttt{h7}+?! \texttt{c8} 20.\texttt{g6}+ \texttt{d8} 21.\texttt{h6} \texttt{e8} Black is better, due to the vulnerable white king.

19...\texttt{a4} 20.\texttt{h7}+ \texttt{e8} 21.\texttt{c3} \texttt{a1}+

Clearly worse is 21...\texttt{f4}+ 22.\texttt{d2} \texttt{x5}, as after 23.\texttt{e6}! Black is under serious pressure.

22.\texttt{b1} \texttt{a2}!

Black must certainly avoid 22...\texttt{xd1}? 23.\texttt{b5}+ \texttt{d8} 24.\texttt{g7}+, and White wins.

23.\texttt{c2} \texttt{a4}

The following variation now seems forced.

24.\texttt{b5}+ \texttt{d8} 25.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{xb1}+ 26.\texttt{xb1} \texttt{xa4}+ 27.\texttt{b3} \texttt{b5}

The struggle should end in a draw, for example:

28.\texttt{b1} \texttt{c5}+ 29.\texttt{b2} \texttt{d2}+ 30.\texttt{b1} \texttt{b6} 31.\texttt{b2}=

B3323) 12.a3
This move is the latest fashion, having been played twice by Israeli Grandmaster Evgeny Postny.

12...\textit{a}2\textdagger

This looks like Black's best option. After 12...\textit{a}5 White can even accept the piece sacrifice by: 13.axb4 (13.h5?! is also possible. I am not sure what Black should do.) 13...\textit{a}xb4 14.\textit{b}1. In Postny – Howell, Kallithea 2009, Black failed to obtain enough compensation: 14...\textit{e}1 15.\textit{xb}4 \textit{c}5 16.\textit{xc}5 \textit{d}5 17.\textit{xd}2 \textit{f}a1 18.\textit{c}1±

13.\textit{xa}2 \textit{xa}2 14.h5

This natural move is my attempt to improve on the game Postny – Gopal, Calcutta 2009, which went 14...\textit{c}5 15.dxc5 \textit{b}3. I believe that White now missed a good opportunity to sacrifice the exchange with 16.f4! \textit{xd}1 17.\textit{xd}1. I really don't like Black's position. In particular I am worried that h5-h6 will leave Black's dark-squared bishop out of play for a long time to come.

15.hxg6 hxg6 16.\textit{e}1

I also examined an exchange sacrifice here, but it doesn't look dangerous for Black: 16.\textit{h}3 \textit{xd}1 17.\textit{xd}1 (or 17.\textit{xd}1 \textit{e}8! 18.\textit{f}4 e6 followed by ...\textit{d}8, ...\textit{c}5 or ...\textit{d}5) 17.e6 18.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}7! Black is ready to meet 19.g4 with 19...\textit{h}8! 20.\textit{g}1 \textit{h}6, with advantage.

16...\textit{c}5 17.\textit{e}2

The white knight is heading for the c3-square. Instead 17.dxc5?! favours Black: 17...\textit{xd}2\textdagger 18.\textit{xd}2 \textit{f}c8=

17...\textit{c}8 18.\textit{b}1

18.\textit{h}6? fails to 18...\textit{xd}4 19.\textit{xb}1 \textit{c}4! 20.\textit{g}5 \textit{b}6 and Black has a winning attack.

18...\textit{f}7 19.\textit{d}3

After 19.\textit{f}4 \textit{xd}4 20.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}4 21.\textit{f}2 (21.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4∥ 21...\textit{g}5! Black takes over the initiative.

19...\textit{xd}4 20.\textit{xd}4

20...\textit{d}7!

Not only preparing ...\textit{fd}8, but in the right circumstances the queen may transfer to e6 in order to create threats against the white king.

21.\textit{h}4 \textit{c}4

I prefer this to 21...\textit{e}6 22.\textit{xb}6! \textit{xb}6 23.\textit{b}5 \textit{c}7 24.\textit{f}4, when Black has a problem with his dark-squared bishop.

22.\textit{xc}4
This is probably necessary, as after 22.\( \text{\textit{W}}g5 \) it’s Black who strikes first: 22...\( \text{\textit{B}}xa3 \oplus \) 23.bxa3 \( \text{\textit{W}}e6 \) White is in trouble.

22...\( \text{\textit{B}}xc4 \)

Finally we have reached a balanced position, where Black’s activity compensates for his temporarily passive dark-squared bishop. Here is an illustrative line:

23.\( \text{\textit{W}}h1 \) \( \text{\textit{d}}d8 \)

23...\( \text{\textit{B}}e6? \)

24.\( \text{\textit{W}}h7 \)

The main move according to theory. White has also tried:

12.a3 \( \text{\textit{B}}xa2 \oplus \)

I had found this idea and intended to offer it as a novelty, but before I could do so, it appeared in a game.

13.\( \text{\textit{B}}xa2 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}xa2 \)

24...\( \text{\textit{f}}4! \)

The only move, but good enough to maintain the balance.

25.\( \text{\textit{W}}xf4 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}f5 \oplus \)

26.\( \text{\textit{W}}xf5 \) \( \text{\textit{gxf5}} \)

27.\( \text{\textit{B}}xa7 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}xe5 \)

28.\( \text{\textit{B}}c2 \) \( \text{\textit{f}}4 \)

Threatening 29...\( \text{\textit{B}}g6 \oplus \).

29.\( \text{\textit{B}}h4 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}g6 \oplus \)

30.\( \text{\textit{B}}b3 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}c6 \)

31.\( \text{\textit{B}}e1 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}f7 \oplus \)

32.\( \text{\textit{B}}c2 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}g6 \oplus = \)

B333) 11.\( \text{\textit{B}}h3 \)

In my opinion this is the most serious continuation.

11...\( \text{\textit{B}}e6 \) 12.\( \text{\textit{B}}b1 \)

12.a3 \( \text{\textit{B}}a2 \oplus \)

I had found this idea and intended to offer it as a novelty, but before I could do so, it appeared in a game.

13.\( \text{\textit{B}}xa2 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}xa2 \)

14.\( \text{\textit{B}}h6 \)

I also analysed other moves here:

14.\( \text{\textit{B}}f4 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}d5 \) Black has a good game.

14.\( \text{\textit{B}}c2 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}d5 \) 15.\( \text{\textit{B}}f4 \) (or 15.\( \text{\textit{B}}d3 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}c4 \) 16.\( \text{\textit{B}}c3 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}xf1 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{B}}xf1 \) \( \text{\textit{c}}6 \) with equal play) 15...\( \text{\textit{B}}b3 \) 16.\( \text{\textit{B}}d3 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}fd8 \) Black shouldn’t experience any problems once the queens come off.

14...\( \text{\textit{B}}d7 \) 15.\( \text{\textit{B}}xg7 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}xg7 \) 16.\( \text{\textit{B}}c2 \) \( \text{\textit{B}}g8 \)

White was threatening to trap the bishop with 17.b3.
17.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{d}5\) 18.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5\) \(\text{c}x\text{d}5\) 19.\(\text{w}c5\) \(\text{w}x\text{c}5\)† 20.dxc5 \(\text{f}d8\)

Black had the better endgame in the game Vitiugov – Wang Yue, Ningbo (rapid) 2010.

12.\(\text{d}d7\)

12...\(\text{c}4\) was played in Av. Bykhovsky – Golod, Tel Aviv 2001, but it is inaccurate: 13.\(\text{e}xc4\)!N \(\text{e}xc4\) 14.b3 \(\text{f}7\) 15.\(h\text{h}6\) White clearly holds the initiative.

13.\(\text{f}4\)

This tricky move is stronger than 15.\(d\text{d}5\) \(\text{x}e5\) 16.axb4?! \(\text{c}x\text{b}4\) 17.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{a}5\) 18.\(\text{x}b6\) \(\text{c}x\text{b}6\) 19.\(\text{w}x\text{b}4\) \(\text{a}8\), which was good for Black in Motylev – Svidler, Wijk aan Zee 2007.

15...\(c\text{c}6\)

After 15...\(\text{c}8\)? White can accept the piece sacrifice: 16.axb4 \(\text{a}x\text{b}4\) 17.\(\text{c}e2\) Black doesn’t have the same coordination as in Motylev – Svidler, and White is clearly better here.

16.d5! \(\text{x}e5\)

16...\(\text{c}x\text{b}5\) 17.\(\text{x}b6\) \(\text{x}e5\) is just a transposition.

17.\(\text{c}6\) \(\text{c}x\text{b}5\) 18.\(\text{h}e1\) \(\text{f}6\)

19.\(\text{d}4\)!

Black’s extra pawn is absolutely irrelevant, and meanwhile his pieces are badly coordinated.

19.axb4? would be a serious mistake: 19...\(\text{a}b4\) 20.\(\text{c}e2\) \(\text{d}6\)! White is facing a dangerous attack.

19...\(\text{d}4\) 20.\(\text{c}x\text{d}4\) \(\text{c}a6\) 21.d6! \(\text{x}d6\)?

Black had to try: 21...\(\text{c}x\text{d}6\) 22.\(\text{f}d5\) \(\text{x}d5\) 23.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5\)† \(\text{f}7\) 24.\(\text{x}b5\) \(\text{c}7\) 25.\(\text{c}c7\) \(\text{c}x\text{c}7\) 26.h4! White is not even obliged to regain the pawn. Black’s position remains unpleasant.

22.\(\text{c}d5\) \(\text{c}x\text{d}5\) 23.\(\text{x}d5\)

White had a winning attack in Bitan – Vokarev, Bhubaneswar 2010.

14.h4
I also examined: 14.\(\text{O}xe6 \text{W}xe6\) 15.a3
(not 15.h4? \(\text{a}xh5\)) 15...a5 16.f4 c5 17.\(\text{w}c1\) \(\text{c}4d5\) 18.\(\text{O}xd5 \text{W}xd5\) 19.\(\text{dxc5 W}e4\) 20.\(\text{w}e2\) \(\text{dxd1}\) 21.\(\text{xd1 W}xe3\) 22.\(\text{cxb6 W}xf4\) 23.\(\text{wd5}\) \(\text{h}h8\) 24.\(\text{wb7 W}d8\) 25.\(\text{c7 W}d4\) 26.b7 \(\text{xe5}\) 27.\(\text{c3 W}e4\) 28.\(\text{c8 W}d4=\) Of course this line is not all forced, but it is a good illustration of the possibilities in the position.

14...f7
Black has no time for 14...\(\text{c}4\) 15.\(\text{xe}4 \text{xc}4\), since after 16.b3 \(\text{f}7\) 17.\(\text{a}4=\) he is facing concrete problems.
We shall now follow the game Salem – So, Olongapo City 2010, which reached this position via a different move order.

15.\(\text{b}5?!\)
White should also avoid 15.h5?! \(g5=\) but he has two better options:

15.\(\text{e}e1 \text{a}4\) 16.\(\text{b}3 \text{xc}3=\) 17.\(\text{xc}3 \text{a}5\) 18.\(\text{c}4\) \(e6\) 19.\(\text{c}1 \text{f}8\) The position is roughly level.

15.\(\text{c}2 \text{a}5\) We have a double-edged position, which I reckon is balanced. For example: 16.g4 \(\text{fxg}4\) 17.\(\text{fxg}4 \text{c}6\) 18.a3 \(\text{xe}5\) 19.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{f}3\) 20.\(\text{e}2 \text{h}1\) \(\text{hxg}4\) 21.\(\text{e}2 \text{c}8\) leaves White two pawns down for nothing) 20.\(\text{c}6\) 21.\(\text{b}5=\) White does not have anything better than repeating moves.

15...\(\text{c}6\) 16.\(\text{e}2 \text{c}5\) 17.e6 \(\text{xe}6\) 18.\(\text{dxc}5 \text{xc}3\) 19.\(\text{b}3\)

19...\(\text{a}4!\)
The key move; Black seizes the initiative.

20.\(\text{w}x\text{d}8\) 21.\(\text{xd}8\) 22.\(\text{c}8\) 22.\(\text{g}8\)
No better is: 22.\(\text{cxb}4 \text{a}2=\) 23.\(\text{c}1 \text{d}5=\) Despite his material advantage, White is in a difficult situation.

22...\(\text{xf}8\) 23.\(\text{xe}6\) \(\text{g}8\) 24.\(\text{cxb}4 \text{xb}4=\) 25.\(\text{c}2 \text{d}5\)
Black has a powerful attack.

Conclusion
I heartily recommend 3...d5 as a suitably combative response to 3.f3. Black must expect to be subjected to a rather scary-looking kingside attack in several lines in this chapter, but provided he is well-prepared, I believe he can face such attacks with confidence and obtain ample counter-chances on the queenside.

In the main line of 4.\(\text{cxd}5 \text{cxd}5\) 5.e4 \(\text{b}6\) 6.a3 \(\text{xe}5\) 7.a5 \(=\) 0-0 8.\(\text{f}2 \text{e}6\) 9.0-0-0
I have decided to advocate the fashionable 9...\(\text{f}5\) thrust. This has scored well up to now, and I see no reason why it should not continue to do so.
Chapter 3

Fianchetto Systems

Rare Lines

Variation Index

1. d4 &f6 2. c4 g6 3. g3

3...c6

A) 4. d5
B) 4. &g2 d5
   B1) 5. b3
   B2) 5. Ǹb3
   B3) 5. Ǹa4

A) after 7. &g2
B1) after 6. bxc4
B2) after 9. Ǹxd5

A) 7... Ǹa5!
B1) 6...e5!
B2) 9... Ǹc6!
1.d4 ¾f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3

This continuation really caused me a headache, especially taking into account that I recommended this system for White in my earlier book, Grandmaster Repertoire – 1.d4 Volume Two. Finally I came to the decision to offer readers the very solid system featuring the moves ...c6 and ...d5. Some of my friends advised me to give another system, where Black plays ...d5 without ...c6, and recaptures on d5 with his knight. There were many interesting ideas played in this line at the latest Olympiad, but I still adhere to the view that White has good chances of a slight advantage.

3...c6

It is essential to play this move straight away, because if Black delays it for a single move, White will get the chance to play 5.e4.

White's fundamental decision when facing ...c6 and ...d5 is whether to exchange pawns on d5. The lines with an early exchange will be covered in Chapter 7, after we first deal with various other options. In this chapter we examine A) 4.d5 and B) 4.¾g2, before turning to 4.¾f3 in Chapters 4 to 6.

A) 4.d5

White unequivocally prevents Black playing ...d5. However the text has obvious drawbacks; it uses an important tempo and it opens up the long diagonal, allowing Black to become very active.

4...cxd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.¾c3 ¾g7 7.¾g2 ¾a5!

A key move, which disrupts White's normal development. After 7...0-0 8.¾f3 White completes his development and can even fight for the advantage in a complex game.

8.¾d2

This looks a bit awkward, but White faces some difficulties after the natural: 8.e4 ¾g4!

9.¾ge2N

White cannot play 9.f3? in view of the tactical blow 9...¾xe4 and the white position collapses: 10.fxg4 (or 10.¾a4† ¾xa4 11.¾xa4 ¾d7!→) 10...¾xc3 11.¾d2
Black had a decisive advantage in Graf – Yandemirov, Omsk 1996.

9.\texttt{\textregistered}b3 runs into \texttt{\textregistered}a6! and Black intends \texttt{\textregistered}c5 next, while the b7-pawn is untouchable: 10.\texttt{\textregistered}xb7? \texttt{\textregistered}b8 11.\texttt{\textregistered}c6+ \texttt{\textregistered}d7 12.\texttt{\textregistered}c4 \texttt{\textregistered}b5 13.\texttt{\textregistered}d4 \texttt{\textregistered}b4--

9...\texttt{\textregistered}xe2 10.\texttt{\textregistered}xe2

White's problem is that 10.\texttt{\textregistered}xe2 can be met by: 10...\texttt{\textregistered}xd5! 11.\texttt{\textregistered}b5+ \texttt{\textregistered}xb5 12.\texttt{\textregistered}xb5 \texttt{\textregistered}b4! 13.0–0 \texttt{\textregistered}a8 a6 Black remains with an extra pawn.

10...\texttt{\textregistered}bd7

With the white king on e2, there is no doubt that Black has a very good position.

8...0–0 9.e3

White has problems completing his development, as the vulnerability of his d-pawn renders moves like 9.\texttt{\textregistered}f3 and 9.\texttt{\textregistered}h3 impossible. He has also tried:

9.e4 \texttt{\textregistered}bd7 10.\texttt{\textregistered}ge2 \texttt{\textregistered}e5 11.0–0 \texttt{\textregistered}g4 12.\texttt{\textregistered}e3 (or 12.f3 \texttt{\textregistered}d7 13.\texttt{\textregistered}xe1 \texttt{\textregistered}a6 and Black has the initiative) 12...\texttt{\textregistered}c4 13.\texttt{\textregistered}c1 \texttt{\textregistered}fc8 White was in trouble in Psakhis – Veingold, Tallinn 1983.

9.\texttt{\textregistered}b3 as usual allows Black to get his knight to c5 with tempo: 9...\texttt{\textregistered}a6 10.\texttt{\textregistered}f3 \texttt{\textregistered}d7 11.0–0 \texttt{\textregistered}c5 12.\texttt{\textregistered}c2 \texttt{\textregistered}fc8 Black was better in Kornev – Yandemirov, Saratov 2006.

9...\texttt{\textregistered}bd7 10.\texttt{\textregistered}ge2 \texttt{\textregistered}e5 11.0–0 \texttt{\textregistered}c4

Black's play is logical and simple.

12.\texttt{\textregistered}c1 \texttt{\textregistered}g4 13.\texttt{\textregistered}b3 \texttt{\textregistered}fc8 14.\texttt{\textregistered}d4 \texttt{\textregistered}d7 15.\texttt{\textregistered}d1 \texttt{\textregistered}ab8 16.h3

We have been following Korchnoi – Geller, Moscow 1971, and now Black should have played:

16...\texttt{\textregistered}c5N

With ...b5 coming next, Black has a fine game.

B) 4.\texttt{\textregistered}g2 d5

White now has many options, and we shall look at B1) 5.b3, B2) 5.\texttt{\textregistered}b3 and B3) 5.\texttt{\textregistered}a4.

The most common moves, 5.\texttt{\textregistered}f3 and 5.cxd5, are covered in the following chapters, while 5.\texttt{\textregistered}d2 \texttt{\textregistered}g7 6.\texttt{\textregistered}gf3 0–0 7.0–0 transposes to Chapter 5.

B1) 5.b3

Not the most popular move here, but it has nevertheless been employed in almost fifty games.

5...\texttt{\textregistered}xc4!

Black seizes the chance to take advantage of White's slightly unusual move order. After 5...\texttt{\textregistered}g7 White can play either 6.\texttt{\textregistered}f3 or
6...b2 0–0 7.f3, both of which transpose to Chapter 4.

6.bxc4 e5!

A fantastic idea! It is not often in the Grünfeld that Black creates the option of developing his dark-squared bishop on the a3-f8 diagonal.

Initially my intention was to suggest: 6...c5 7.f3 (after 7.d5 exd5! White cannot capture the knight, as he would then lose material to 8...g7) 7...g7 8.b2 b6 9.b3 e4 10.e3 0–0 11.0–0 c6 Play has transposed into line B2 in Chapter 4.

7.f3?! I think White would be better off playing 7.d5 cxd5 8.cxd5 b4† and now sacrificing a pawn with: 9.b2 cxd5 10.b3 cxd2† 11.cxd2 White has reasonable compensation, but he is not really fighting for an advantage.

7...exd4 8.xd4 xxd4 9.xd4 g7 10.d2

White should have preferred to play 10.b2, although 10...fd7 is still excellent for Black.

10...fd7 11.e3

This was played in Schiller – Siefring, e-mail 2003. There was no reason for Black refraining from the following:

11...c5N 12.b5 xa1 13.c7† d8 14.xa8 a6

With his knight stuck on a8, White is in a very dangerous situation.

B2) 5.b3 g7 6.c3

This looks very tempting, since it would appear that Black has to decide what to do about the attack on his d5-pawn. Instead 6.f3 0–0 7.0–0 would transpose to Chapter 6.
It transpires that Black is not obliged to make an immediate decision about the d5-pawn, but can temporarily sacrifice it.

7.\textit{cx:d5}

Obviously 7.\textit{f3} \textit{b6} 8.0-0 is another transposition to Chapter 6.

7...\textit{cx:d5} 8.\textit{dx:d5} \textit{dx:d5} 9.\textit{xd5}

9...\textit{c6}!

This is an important moment; Black must make use of his lead in development by playing actively. Hurrying to regain the pawn is not so good: 9...\textit{dx:d4} 10.\textit{f6}! \textit{a5}† 11.\textit{f1} \textit{g7} 12.\textit{dxg7} \textit{hxg7} 13.\textit{xb7} White ends up winning a pawn, and Black's compensation is questionable, Carnevali - A. Fernandez, Piriapolis 1987.

10.\textit{xc6}

White cannot play 10.\textit{f3}? in view of 10...\textit{a5} 11.\textit{b5} a6 and he loses a piece.

10...\textit{bxc6} 11.\textit{f3}

I also examined 11.\textit{e3}. Black has the strong response: 11...\textit{c5}! 12.\textit{dx5} \textit{a5}† 13.\textit{d2} \textit{xc5} 14.\textit{c1} \textit{f5} White faces a hard time, with so much open space for the black bishops.

11...\textit{h3} 12.\textit{g5}

In Almeida Saenz - Ruiz Gonzalez, Mexico 1996, White tried the ugly 12.\textit{g1}; Black should simply have replied 12...\textit{g4}† with the better chances.

12...\textit{g2} 13.\textit{g1} \textit{d5} 14.\textit{d3} \textit{b6}

Black's develops his initiative with natural moves.

15.\textit{f3} \textit{f6} 16.\textit{f1} \textit{c5}†

White was in trouble in Kalinin - Gobet, Thessaloniki (ol) 1988.

B3) 5.\textit{a4}

This unexpected queen sortie is not as strange as it looks at first sight, and it has been employed by such opening experts as Grischuk and Tkachiev. The idea of the move is obvious; White wants to force Black to clarify the situation with the d5-pawn, and after the obvious 5...\textit{dx:d4} White will obtain a spatial superiority in the centre.

5...\textit{fd7}?!?

This seems to be an easy way to equalize; Black's idea is simply to maintain the d5-pawn.

6.\textit{cx:d5} \textit{b6} 7.\textit{d1}

The alternative is:
7.\text{b3} \text{cxd5} 8.\text{c3} \text{c6}

This symmetrical position is pretty harmless, as shown in the following encounter:

9.e3

I also briefly examined other continuations:

9.\text{\text{e}f3} \text{\text{g}7} 10.0-0 \text{\text{g}4} 11.\text{\text{c}3} \text{\text{xf3}!}

9.\text{\text{xd}5?!} \text{\text{xd}4} 10.\text{\text{d}3} \text{\text{g}7} White's pieces lack coordination.

9...\text{\text{g}7} 10.\text{\text{ge}2} \text{\text{e}6} 11.0-0 0-0 12.\text{\text{d}1} \text{\text{d}7}

The position is level, Bocharov - Sturua, Abu Dhabi 2009.

7...\text{cxd5} 8.\text{\text{f}3} \text{\text{g}7} 9.0-0 0-0 10.b3 \text{\text{c}6}

11.\text{\text{b}2} \text{\text{f}5}

Black develops simply and logically.

12.h3?!

This is already a slight inaccuracy; 12.e3 would keep the position balanced.

12...\text{\text{d}7} 13.\text{\text{h}2} \text{\text{e}4!}

Black starts to take over the initiative.

14.\text{\text{bd}2} \text{\text{fd}8} 15.\text{\text{e}5} \text{\text{xe}5} 16.\text{\text{xe}4} \text{\text{xd}4}

17.\text{\text{xd}4} \text{\text{xe}4} 18.\text{\text{xb}6} \text{\text{xb}6} 19.\text{\text{xd}7} \text{\text{xd}7}

20.\text{\text{xe}4} \text{\text{d}2?}

Black clearly had the better endgame in Grachev – Khismatullin, Dagomy 2010.
Chapter 4

Fianchetto Systems

5.b3

Variation Index

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.Bf3 d5 5.b3 g7 6.g2

6...0–0

A) 7.Bb2
B) 7.0–0 dxc4 8.bxc4 c5
   B1) 9.e3
      B21) 13.d2
      B22) 13.xc6

A) after 12.Bxg7

B1) after 11.Bc2

B22) after 19.Bb3

12...e3!

11...cxd4 N

19...b4 N
1.d4 ¤f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.¤f3 d5 5.b3
This is the line that I recommended for White in Grandmaster Repertoire – 1.d4 Volume Two. Since then, theory has developed considerably, and Black has found some interesting new ideas.

5...¤g7 6.g2
White can also play 6.¤b2 0-0 7.¤g2, which is examined in line A.

6...0–0
Another possible move order is: 6...dxc4 7.bxc4 c5 8.¤b2 ¤b6 9.¤b3 ¤c4 10.e3 0–0 11.0–0 Play has transposed to line B2.

White now chooses between A) 7.¤b2 and B) 7.0–0.

A) 7.¤b2
White's aim is to avoid problems on the long diagonal, but I have nevertheless found an interesting counter for Black.

7...dxc4 8.bxc4 c5!? 9.d5
This is White's only independent try, made possible by the early development of his queen's bishop. Otherwise 9.0–0 is just a transposition to B2.

9...e6
Black's only sensible idea is to undermine the white centre as quickly as possible.

10.¤c3
I also analysed:
10.¤h4
This attempt to hold the centre allows Black serious counterplay.

10...exd5 11.cxd5
11...g5! 12.¤f3 ¤xd5
Black may also go for a queen swap: 12...¤xd5 13.¤xd5 ¤xd5 14.xg7 xg7 15.xg5 b4 16.¢a3 8c6 With his healthy queenside majority, Black cannot be worse.

13.xg7 xg7 14.0–0
White has a certain amount of compensation for the pawn, due to the slightly exposed black king, but I prefer Black's position.

14...h6 15.h4
15.xg5 is worse: 15...b4! 16.a3 hxg5 17.axb4 xd1 18.xd1 cxb4 19.¢a4 a5 20.¢xb4 d8! White is in trouble.

15...¢c6 16.hxg5 hxg5 17.¢d2
Regaining the pawn does not solve White's problems: 17.xg5 xg5 18.¢xd5 (after 18.¢xd5? h8! it is slightly surprising that Black's attack is already winning) 18...¢xd5 19.¢xd5 b4 20.¢c3 xd5 21.¢xd5 e6 White will have to fight to draw this endgame.
17...g4 18...h4 dxe7 19...c1 d4 20...c3 e5

White does not have full compensation for the pawn.

10...exd5 11...xd5

Of course 11.cxd5? ...xd5 just leaves Black with an extra pawn.

11...xd5 12.xg7

12...e3!

The key move.

13.fxe3 xg7 14.0-0 e7

Black's superior pawn structure gives him the better chances.

B) 7.0-0 dxc4 8.bxc4 e5

This constitutes one of the most challenging ideas against the white set-up. There are now a couple of ways for White to support his d-pawn: B1) 9.e3 and B2) 9.b2.

B1) 9.e3 c6 10.b2 b6!

11.e2

Other options are:

11.c1 cxd4

This is an improvement on: 11...f5 12.bd2 d7 13.bd3 b4?! 14.dxc5 xb2 15.xb2 xc5 16.xc5 xc5 17.d4± White had the better chances in Badea - Manolache, Baile Tusnad 2005.

12.xd4

Black has no problems after 12.exd4 f5 13.bd2 a8.

12...d7! 13.d2

13.c3 a8 looks great for Black, since the c4-pawn becomes a serious target.

13...a8

White might obtain a slight pull after immediate simplifications: 13...xd4 14.xd4 c7 15.a3 c6 16.xc6 bxc6 17.a1±

14.b1 a6

14...c7!? 15.c3 xd4 16.exd4 b6 also looks reasonable for Black.

15.c3 xd4 16.exd4
Black has a comfortable game after 16.\( \text{Nx}d4 \text{Nc}6 \), as he manages to neutralize the pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal.

16...b5!

16...cxd4N

An important improvement. Black found himself under pressure after: 11...\( \text{Qe}4 \) 12.\( \text{Qc}3 \) \( \text{Qxe}3 \) 13.\( \text{Qxc}3 \) cxd4 14.exd4 (14.\( \text{Qxd}4 \) may be more accurate) 14...\( \text{Qxd}4 \) 15.\( \text{Qxd}4 \) \( \text{Qxd}4 \) 16.\( \text{Qab}1 \)\# Kempinski – Dolmatov, Istanbul 2003.

12.exd4

12.\( \text{Qxd}4 \) is well met by: 12...\( \text{Qg}4! \) 13.\( \text{Qd}7 \) Provoking f2-f3 significantly reduces the pressure on the h1-a8 diagonal. 14.\( \text{Qa}3 \) \( \text{Qac}8 \) 15.\( \text{Qab}1 \) \( \text{wa}6 \) 16.\( \text{Qfd}1 \) \( \text{Qfd}8 \) Black has the more comfortable position.

11.\( \text{Qb}3 \)

This has occurred only once, in Maslov – Zaper, Kastela 2005. I have found a convincing continuation for Black:

11...\( \text{Qa}5 \)N 12.\( \text{Qxb}6 \) axb6 13.\( \text{Qbd}2 \) \( \text{Qd}8! \)

This is a very accurate move; the more natural 13...\( \text{Qf}5 \) allows 14.d5 e6 15.\( \text{Qac}1 \), with a complex game.

14.\( \text{Qfc}1 \)

I also analysed:

14.d5 e6 15.e4 (15.dxe6 \( \text{Qxe}6 \) is clearly better for Black) 15...\( \text{Qxe}4 \) (or 15...exd5 16.exd5 b5! 17.cxb5 \( \text{Qxd}5 \)? and Black is at least equal) 16.\( \text{Qxg}7 \) \( \text{Qxd}2 \) 17.\( \text{Qf}6 \) \( \text{Qxf}3 \)

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

If Black prefers not to simplify, then 13...\( \text{Qa}5 \) 14.\( \text{Qa}3 \) e6?! makes sense.

14.\( \text{Qxf}3 \) \( \text{Qd}4 \) 15.\( \text{Qxd}4 \) \( \text{Qxd}4 \) 16.\( \text{Qd}2 \) \( \text{Qd}7 \)
17...\texttt{a1} e5
The game is fairly level, for instance:

18...d1 a8 19.e4 b82! 20.b1 x\texttt{xe2}
21.xe2 b6=

B2) 9.b2 b6

10...b3
Against 10.c1 Black can equalize with natural moves: 10...xd4 11.xd4 e6
12.xc6 (I also examined 12.d1 d7 13.a3 fd8 14.b1 a6 with equality) 12...xc6
13.d2 e6 (13...f5!? deserves attention) 14.b1 a6 15.a3 fe8 16.b3 d7 17.c2
Goldin – Yandemirov, Elista 1995. Now the simple 17...e5N 18.c1 d8 would be fine for Black.

10...e4
A popular alternative is 10...fd7, but after the strong 11.c3! White has pressure.

11.c3
14...c6 15.xg7 xg7 16xb1 a6 Black is even slightly better in the endgame.

11...c6 12.e5

The only way to fight for an advantage.

12...d6

White has two options here, B21) 13.d2 and B22) 13.xc6.

B21) 13.d2 xd4

Black failed to equalize in a recent game:
13...e6 14.xc6! bxc6 15.xc5 xc5 16.d4 a5 17.xc6 c7 18.xg7 xg7 19.c3†
s8 20.a5 Black did not have enough for the pawn in Giri – P.H. Nielsen, Amsterdam 2010.

14.exd4
14...\textit{\texttt{e}6}  
Here I found the interesting 14...\textit{\texttt{c}5?!N}, after which play may continue: 15.\textit{\texttt{x}c6 \texttt{bxc6} 16.\textit{\texttt{x}b6 axb6} 17.\textit{\texttt{x}c6 \texttt{a}7} Black has sacrificed a pawn, but his pieces are so active that White cannot hold onto the extra pawn. 18.\textit{\texttt{f}3 \texttt{d}6 19.\textit{\texttt{f}c1 \texttt{c}7 20.\textit{\texttt{b}5 \texttt{e}6 21.\textit{\texttt{e}5 \texttt{fc8}=}}}

15.\textit{\texttt{fc1}}  
I checked a couple of other moves:  
15.\textit{\texttt{fc1} \texttt{xe5} (15...\textit{\texttt{xe5} 16.\texttt{dx}5 \textit{\texttt{c}5?! is also worth considering}) 16.\texttt{dx}5 \textit{\texttt{xc}4! The easiest route to equality. 17.\textit{\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xc}4 18.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xb}2 19.\texttt{ab}1 \texttt{d}2 20.\texttt{ed}1 \texttt{ac8=}}}

15.\textit{\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{bxc6} 16.\textit{\texttt{xc}6} (after 16.\textit{\texttt{xb}6 axb6 17.\textit{\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{b}8= Black will regain the pawn with dividends) 16...\textit{\texttt{xc}6 17.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{b}8! 18.\texttt{dx}c6 \texttt{xb}3 19.axb3 \texttt{xb}2 20.\texttt{a}6 \texttt{f}8 Black has the better chances.}

15...\textit{\texttt{fc8} 16.\textit{\texttt{xb}6}}  
White has tried 16.c5, but it’s quite harmless: 16...\textit{\texttt{xb}3 17.cxb6 \texttt{a}4! Black keeps everything under control. 18.bxa7 \texttt{xa7 19.\texttt{dc}4 This was Zhou Weiqi – Ding Liren, Danzhou 2010, now simply 19...\textit{\texttt{xe}5 20.\textit{\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{c}2 gives Black the more pleasant position.}

16...\textit{\texttt{xb}6 17.\textit{\texttt{f}4 \textit{\texttt{xe}5}}}

A draw was now agreed in Jakovenko – Svidler, Dagomys 2010, although Black might have played on for a bit.

18.\textit{\texttt{dx}e5 \texttt{xc}4 19.\textit{\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xc}4 20.a}3}
White clearly has compensation for the pawn, but it may still take some effort to secure the draw.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}[scale=0.5]
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

13...\textit{\texttt{b}c6 14.\textit{\texttt{dx}c5}}
Taking the pawn by 14.\textit{\texttt{xb}6 axb6 15.\texttt{xc}6 is clearly worse for White.

15...\textit{\texttt{xc}4! This exchange sacrifice gives Black a powerful initiative, for example: 16.\textit{\texttt{xa}8 \texttt{xb}2}
Chapter 4 – 5.b3

17.\text{\textbf{c4}} \text{cxd4} 18.\text{\textbf{exd4}} \text{\textbf{xd4}} 19.\text{\textbf{a4}} (worse is 19.\text{\textbf{d2}} \text{\textbf{a6}} 20.\text{\textbf{f6e1 a3}}) 19...\text{\textbf{d8}} 20.\text{\textbf{a3}} \text{\textbf{a6}} 21.\text{\textbf{c1}} \text{f5} Black has strong pressure.

14...\text{\textbf{xc5}} 15.\text{\textbf{xc7}} \text{\textbf{g7}} 16.\text{\textbf{d2}}

In my earlier book I stopped at this position, considering it slightly favourable for White. However, it was tested at the recent Olympiad:

16...\text{\textbf{e6}} 17.\text{\textbf{fc1}}

A serious alternative is 17.\text{\textbf{a4}}, when Black should react with: 17...\text{\textbf{ec8}} (after 17...\text{\textbf{xc4}} 18.\text{\textbf{fc1}} \text{\textbf{b6}} 19.\text{\textbf{xc5}} \text{\textbf{a4}} 20.\text{\textbf{xc6}± White retains some pressure) 18.\text{\textbf{fc1}} \text{\textbf{ab8}} 19.\text{\textbf{b3}} \text{\textbf{c5}} 20.\text{\textbf{xa7 xc4}} 21.\text{\textbf{a3}} \text{\textbf{a8}} (also possible is 21...\text{\textbf{d5}} 22.\text{\textbf{xc6 xc6}} 23.\text{\textbf{xc6 bb2} and Black has enough compensation for the pawn) 22.\text{\textbf{xc6 xa7}} 23.\text{\textbf{xe5 xa2}} The draw is obvious.

17...\text{\textbf{ab8}} 18.\text{\textbf{d3}}

Black has no problems after: 18.\text{\textbf{c3}} \text{f6} 19.\text{\textbf{b3}} (or 19.\text{\textbf{c2}} \text{\textbf{fc8}} 20.\text{\textbf{aac1 bb4=}) 19...\text{\textbf{xc4}} 20.\text{\textbf{a5 bb4}} 21.\text{\textbf{xa7 bb7=}}

18.\text{\textbf{fc8}} 19.\text{\textbf{b3}}

This occurred in Laznicka – Svidler, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010, and now I found the following improvement:

19...\text{\textbf{b4}}

In the game, Black faced real problems after: 19...\text{\textbf{a3}} 20.\text{\textbf{c5}} \text{\textbf{b5}} 21.\text{\textbf{e4}}!

20.\text{\textbf{d4}+ \text{\textbf{g8}} 21.\text{\textbf{xa7 xc4}} 22.\text{\textbf{c5}}

22.\text{\textbf{d4 c5}} 23.\text{\textbf{wh4}} \text{\textbf{f6}} 24.\text{\textbf{h3} is an interesting attempt, but Black can maintain equality: 24...\text{\textbf{xh4}} 25.\text{\textbf{xc4 bb5}} 26.\text{\textbf{ae1 e6}} 27.\text{\textbf{xc5 xc5}} 28.\text{\textbf{xc5 dd3=}}

22...\text{\textbf{f6}} 23.\text{\textbf{c2}}

I have been unable to find any way for White to pose serious problems:

22.\text{\textbf{d6}} 23.\text{\textbf{xc6}} \text{\textbf{xc6}} 24.\text{\textbf{xc5}} \text{\textbf{f7}} 25.\text{\textbf{a6}} \text{\textbf{b2}} 26.\text{\textbf{a4}} \text{\textbf{a8}} 27.\text{\textbf{b3 xa6}} 28.\text{\textbf{xc4 xc4}} 29.\text{\textbf{xc4 xa2=}}

22...\text{\textbf{xc5}} 23.\text{\textbf{xc5}} \text{\textbf{a3}!} 25.\text{\textbf{c3}} \text{\textbf{b1}+} 26.\text{\textbf{xb1 ab1}} 27.\text{\textbf{e2 a3}} 28.\text{\textbf{d2 c4}} 29.\text{\textbf{h4}}

Also completely equal is 29.\text{\textbf{d7 f7=}}.

29...\text{\textbf{f7}=

Conclusion

If White opts for 5.b3, then 7...\text{\textbf{dxc4}} 8.\text{\textbf{bxc4}} c5 is a challenging way for Black to increase his pressure down the a1-h8 diagonal, even when White tries to neutralize this pressure with 7.\text{\textbf{b2}}. Throughout this chapter I have faced the somewhat tricky task of fighting against my own recommendations from Grandmaster Repertoire – 1.d4 Volume Two. A particular case is B22) 13.\text{\textbf{xc6}}, which I had assessed as favourable to White. However, in the light of my analysis of the recent game Laznicka – Svidler, I now feel that this line is entirely satisfactory for Black.
Chapter 5

Fianchetto Systems

Rare Seventh Moves

Variation Index

1.d4 ๑f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.๑g2 d5 5.๑f3 ๑g7 6.0–0

6...0–0

A) 7.๑a4 51
B) 7.๑bd2 51
C) 7.๑c3 dxc4 55
   C1) 8.e4 55
   C2) 8.a4 56
   C3) 8.๑e5 57

A) after 10.๑f4

B) note to 12.๑b3

C3) note to 9.f4

10...b6N

14...a5!N

14...๑d5N
1. d4 \( \text{d6} \)
2. c4 \( g6 \)
3. g3 \( c6 \)
4. \( \text{g2} \)
5. \( \text{f3} \)
\( \text{g7} \)
6. 0-0 0-0
Black has a serious alternative in 6...dxc4, but I have always preferred to castle here.

We shall examine
A) 7. \( \text{a4} \)
B) 7. \( \text{bd2} \)
and C) 7. \( \text{c3} \) in this chapter. Of the other seventh moves, 7.b3 transposes to the previous chapter, while 7.\( \text{b3} \) and 7.cxd5 are covered in the following two chapters.

A) 7. \( \text{a4} \)

When one of my students mentioned this move, I was surprised to discover that it has occurred in almost a hundred games. After checking all the options, the one I like most is:

7...\( \text{fd7} \)!

This somewhat resembles the variation with 5.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{fd7} \) that we covered as line B3 in Chapter 3.

8. \( \text{c2} \)

The most challenging move. Other options are:

8.cxd5 cxd5 9.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{b6} \) 10.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c6} \) 11.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{f5} \) 12.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{c8} \) Black had comfortable equality in Pigusov – Huzman, Sverdlovsk 1987.

8.\( \text{a3} \)!! results in a loss of time: 8.\( \text{b6} \) 9.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{f5} \) 10.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{e4} \)!! With his knight having gone to a3, White is unable to attack this bishop. 11.c5 \( \text{d7} \) 12.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{b6} \) 13.\( \text{xb6} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 14.\( \text{e3} \) c5 The opening had clearly turned out in Black’s favour in Grigorian – Sveshnikov, Moscow 1973.

8...\( \text{b6} \) 9.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{d7} \) 10.\( \text{f4} \)

I believe that Black should now take the opportunity to undermine the white c-pawn.

10...\( \text{b6} \)!!

In Sargissian – Volokitin, Germany 2008, Black carried out the natural ...e5 break, but failed to equalize: 10...\( \text{e8} \) 11.\( \text{bd2} \) e5 12.dxe5 \( \text{xex5} \) 13.\( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{xex5} \) 14.\( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 15.e4 dxe4 16.\( \text{c3} \)!! \( \text{e7} \) 17.\( \text{exe4} \) White has an initiative.

11.\( \text{xb6} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 12.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 13.\( \text{ac1} \) \( \text{f5} \) 14.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{bd7} \)
The position is unclear.

B) 7. \( \text{bd2} \)

This is not a particularly dangerous system, but it is quite playable and Black must know exactly how to react.

7...\( \text{f5} \)
8.b3

White has several alternatives:

8.e3 seems to me in the spirit of this line, but I rather like the black side of this recent example: 8...\(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{e}2\) 9b5 10.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{a}8\) 11.a3 \(\text{a}6\) 12.h3 \(\text{c}5\)! Black had easily solved his opening problems, and soon took over the initiative. 13.g4 \(\text{e}6\) 14.g5?! \(\text{h}5\) 15.cxd5 \(\text{d}2\) 16.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}5\) + Kurajica – Efimenko, Sarajevo 2010.

8.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{e}6\) The bishop is quite well placed on e6, whereas the white knight is a bit misplaced: 9.b3 a5 10.\(\text{b}2\) a4 11.e3 This was Hough – Khachiyan, Pasadena 2008, and now I like 11...\(\text{a}5\)N 12.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{e}8\) 13.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{f}3\) \(\text{bd}7\), and Black may even play ...b5 next.

8...\(\text{e}4\) 9.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{a}5\)?
Chapter 5 - Rare Seventh Moves

13.\text{\textit{h}}3

Other moves:
The typical 13.\textit{h}3 can be met by: 13...\textit{xf}\textit{3} 14.\textit{xf}\textit{3} \textit{dxc4} 15.\textit{bxc4} \textit{e5} Black has a very comfortable game.
13.\textit{xd5} \textit{\textit{xd5}}? (there is also nothing wrong with 13...\textit{xd5} =) 14.\textit{fd1} \textit{\textit{h}5} 15.\textit{d2} \textit{\textit{fe}8} 16.\textit{ad1} Bolbochan – Darga, Moscow 1956. Now the simple 16...\textit{b6N} 17.h3 \textit{e6} would give Black a very sound position.

13...\textit{fe}8 14.\textit{c3} \textit{a6}

This is a nice square for the black queen.

15.\textit{f1} \textit{dxc4} 16.\textit{bxc4}

P. Nikolic – Dorfman, Germany 2003, was agreed drawn here, but play could have continued with the simple and strong:
16...\textit{e5}!
Black has good play.

10.\textit{c1} \textit{xd2} 11.\textit{xd2}

Or 11.\textit{xd2} \textit{d7} 12.e4 \textit{dxe4} 13.\textit{xe4} \textit{\textit{xe}1} 14.\textit{fxe1} \textit{\textit{xe}4} (14...\textit{a5}?) 15.\textit{xe4} \textit{e6} 16.\textit{e2} \textit{f6} with equality, Byrne – Gligoric, Lugano 1970.

11...\textit{xd2} 12.\textit{d2} \textit{d8}

It is hard to believe that White can fight for the advantage without queens.

13.e3 \textit{a6} 14.\textit{xd5} \textit{e5} 15.\textit{a3}

Forintos – Soos, Polanica Zdroj 1968, and now just:
15...\textit{e6}N 16.\textit{fc1} \textit{ac8} 17.h3
Or 17.\textit{c4} \textit{\textit{f}8}.

17...\textit{\textit{f}8}=

10.\textit{c1} \textit{d7} 11.\textit{\textit{d}1}

White has also tried 11.\textit{xe4} \textit{xe4} 12.\textit{h3}, but after 12...\textit{xf3}! 13.exf3 \textit{e6} Black has no problems. Indeed, White must be careful to avoid being worse, for example: 14.\textit{c2} \textit{dxc4} 15.\textit{bxc4} \textit{\textit{b6}} 16.\textit{a4} \textit{c5} Black was already better in Gyorkos – Groszpeter, Zalakaros 2005.

11...\textit{h6} 12.e3 \textit{ac8}

13.\textit{xe4}

13.\textit{h4} does not cause Black any problems, as he can just reply 13...\textit{g4}.

13...\textit{xe4} 14.\textit{d2}

14.\textit{c3} \textit{a6} 15.\textit{e5} is more ambitious, but Black is still doing fine: 15...\textit{fd8} 16.\textit{xe4} \textit{dxe4} 17.\textit{xd7} \textit{\textit{xd7}} 18.\textit{c2} \textit{f5} The game is balanced.

14...\textit{xd2} 15.\textit{d2} \textit{\textit{g}2} 16.\textit{\textit{g}2} \textit{g7}

Without queens, the position is equal, Averkin – Gufeld, Moscow 1969.

10...\textit{d7} 11.\textit{b4}

After 11.\textit{\textit{c}1} I like 11...\textit{fc8}?! 12.\textit{b4} \textit{d8} 13.\textit{b3} Todorcevic – Rodriguez Cespedes, Malaga 1987, and now Black should continue with: 13...\textit{d6} 14.\textit{fd1} \textit{a5} (or 14...\textit{xd2} 15.\textit{d2} \textit{a5}) Black gets exactly what he was wanting, counterplay on the queenside.

11...\textit{d8}

I prefer this calm retreat to 11...\textit{a6}, where the black queen can be a bit vulnerable. Play may continue: 12.\textit{c1} \textit{h6} (12...\textit{b6} 13.c5 \textit{a4} 14.\textit{a1} looks dubious for Black) 13.e3 \textit{d2} 14.\textit{xd2} \textit{d3} 15.\textit{b3!} \textit{xf1} 16.\textit{xf1} \textit{b6} 17.\textit{xd5} \textit{d5} 18.\textit{xd5} \textit{f6} Kir. Georgiev – Fracnik, Varna 1987, and after 19.\textit{g2N} \textit{ac8} 20.\textit{c4} White has good compensation for the exchange.

12.\textit{b3}

Other possibilities are:
12...a5!N

In this way, Black can even fight for the advantage; after 14...bxa4 15...xa4 a6 16...d7 Black had equalized in Tseshkovsky – Dvoretsky, Leningrad 1974.

15.axb5

Black obtains real pressure after 15.bxa5 ...xa5 16.axb5 ...xb5.

15...axb4 16...b3 a5! 17...d5 a6

White is even slightly better after: 17...a2?! 18...b3 ...xb3 19...xb3 a2 20...a1 ...d6 21...d2 ...xb5 22...c4!

18...b3 ...xb5

White will have to show some accuracy in order to hold the balance.

12.a4 ...b6??N

Black starts concrete play on the queenside. There is a solid alternative in: 12...d6 13...b3 ...d7 14...f1 ...h3 15...cxd5 ...xd5 16...xd5 17...xd5 cxd5 With equality, Saidy – Gligoric, Los Angeles 1974.

13...b3

White cannot go for: 13.a5 ...xb4 14...a3 ...c5?

13...c5! 14...xc5 ...xc5 15...a3 ...xb2 16...xb2 a5 17.b5 ...d8=

Black has a very sound position.

12...d7

12.c5 It is hard to believe that this is a good idea. As White has released the tension in the centre, Black should start play on the queenside: 12...b6!N (only 12...xd2 has been played here) 13.c1 bx5 14...c5 (14.bxc5 ...b8 is excellent for Black) 14...c5 15...h4 ...xd2 16...g4 ...h3 ...e6 (or 17...h5?) 18.f4 exf4 19...xg7 ...xg7 20...xf4 ...f6 The position is unclear.

13...b6

13...d5

This is forced, since 13.a4? runs into 13...dxc4 14...xc4 ...c6! and White loses material.

13...d7 14.a4
Chapter 5 – Rare Seventh Moves

White has also tried: 14...\text{\texttt{f}}d1 d2 15.d2 c7 16.e3 e5 (this is very natural, but first playing 16...\text{\texttt{ad}}8 is also worth considering) 17.dxe5 5 18.e4 dxe4 19.e4 e4 20.e4 8e8 Black had reached comfortable equality in Ruck – Gonzalez Zamora, Koszeg 1996.

14...e8 15.d1 c5

Taking the c-pawn makes a lot of sense once White has developed his queen's knight to c3; regaining the pawn will not be straightforward, and moreover ...b5-b4 can be a useful resource for Black. White now chooses from C1) 8.e4, C2) 8.a4 and C3) 8.e5.

C1) 8.e4 b5

This ensures that White will not get the pawn back in the immediate future. In my opinion, Black has good chances of fighting for the advantage from this position.

9.e1

Other options are:

9.e2

White is aiming to place his rook on d1, but before he can do so, Black creates concrete play on the queenside:
9...b4 10.a4

C) 7.c3 dxc4

10...\text{\texttt{a}}5!!N

10...\text{\texttt{a}}6 11.c5 \text{\texttt{b}}5 has been played in a couple of games, but I believe that White could now obtain decent play for the pawn with: 12.a4N bxa3 13.a3 c3 14.e3 xxb2 15.xb2

11.e5 12.e4

12.e7 d7 leaves White without much compensation.

12...d5 13.xc5 xc5 14.dxc5 d7
It is clear that it is Black who is fighting for the advantage.

9.e5 \( \text{\text{d}5} \) 10.a4 (10.e4 Van Gool – Rendboe, Maastricht 2010, is best met with 10...\( \text{\text{e}6} \) followed by ...\( \text{\text{b}6} \)) 10...b4 11.e4 a5 12.e1 \( \text{\text{a}6} \) 13.\( \text{\text{e}2} \) \( \text{\text{b}6} \) 14.\( \text{\text{d}2} \) \( \text{\text{c}6} \) 15.\( \text{\text{c}1} \) Aleksic – Dinic, Nis 1995. Black should now play 15...\( \text{\text{d}5} \) with a clear edge; he need not fear 16.\( \text{\text{h}6} \) because 16...f5 is a strong reply.

9...\( \text{\text{a}6} \) 10.e5 \( \text{\text{b}7} \) 11.a4 b4 12.\( \text{\text{b}1} \)N

An obvious improvement on the game Bagaturov – Jojua, Izmir 2003: 12.\( \text{\text{a}2} \)? b3 13.\( \text{\text{c}3} \) \( \text{\text{b}4} \) 14.\( \text{\text{c}4} \) White cannot do much against the knight coming to c2, so he tries an exchange sacrifice. 14...\( \text{\text{c}2} \) 15.\( \text{\text{e}3} \) \( \text{\text{xa}1} \) 16.\( \text{\text{c}a1} \) \( \text{\text{g}4} \) 17.e5 \( \text{\text{xe}3} \) 18.fxe3 Here Black missed the strong: 18...\( \text{\text{a}6} \)N 19.\( \text{\text{a}3} \) (or 19.\( \text{\text{d}2} \) \( \text{\text{xe}5} \)) 19...c5?

12...\( \text{\text{e}8} \) 13.\( \text{\text{c}4} \) \( \text{\text{xd}4} \) 14.\( \text{\text{h}6} \)

Here I found an interesting exchange sacrifice.

14.\( \text{\text{c}5} \)

After 14...\( \text{\text{g}7} \) 15.\( \text{\text{b}d}2 \) \( \text{\text{c}5} \) 16.\( \text{\text{c}2} \) White has some compensation for the pawn.

15.\( \text{\text{xf}8} \) \( \text{\text{xf}8} \)

I think that Black is doing very well, for example:

16.\( \text{\text{c}2} \) \( \text{\text{f}6} \)

Threatening ...\( \text{\text{g}4} \).

17.\( \text{\text{f}3} \) \( \text{\text{a}6} \) 18.\( \text{\text{b}d}2 \) \( \text{\text{b}8} \)

Black has excellent compensation.

C2) 8.a4 \( \text{\text{a}6} \!)
Chapter 5 – Rare Seventh Moves

9...\texttt{b4} 10.\texttt{e5} \texttt{e6}

10...\texttt{e8?!} is also worth considering.

11.\texttt{e3} \texttt{d7} 12.\texttt{f4} \texttt{xe5} 13.dxe5 \texttt{a5}!


C3) 8.\texttt{e5} \texttt{g4}

An idea that we have already seen after 9.\texttt{e5} in C2 above.

9.\texttt{f4}

The main alternative is:

9.\texttt{xg4} \texttt{xb4} 10.h3

10.d5 \texttt{cxd5} 11.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 12.\texttt{xg4} \texttt{c6} 13.\texttt{xe4} 13...\texttt{ac8} 14.\texttt{g2} Deutsch – Kwatschewsky, Austria 1994. White has managed to regain the pawn, but the price has been high, and the black pieces are now much better coordinated. I believe that Black could now increase his pressure with: 14.\texttt{xd8N} 15.f3 \texttt{f5} 16.b3 \texttt{c6}+

10.\texttt{xe6} 11.e3

White has some compensation, but it’s hardly enough, and I definitely prefer Black. Here is one example of how play may go:

11...\texttt{d7} 12.\texttt{h2} \texttt{a6} 13.a3

Preventing ...\texttt{b4-d3}.

13...\texttt{c7} 14.\texttt{e4}

Vierroth – Mueller, Bad Wildbad 1998. Now I like the simple:

14.\texttt{d5N}

This allows White to exchange his knight for this bishop, but only at the cost of weakening the d4-pawn.

15.\texttt{c5} \texttt{c8} 16.\texttt{e4} \texttt{e6} 17.\texttt{e3} \texttt{d8}

Black has the advantage.

9...\texttt{a6}!

Although 9...\texttt{xe5} is more popular, I see no reason for rushing to exchange, as White is short of useful moves.

10.\texttt{e3} \texttt{xe5} 11.\texttt{fxe5} \texttt{b4N}

This is an improvement on: 11...\texttt{c5}?! This move increases the power of White’s lightsquared bishop and is rarely a good idea in this line. 12.b3 \texttt{xb3} 13.axb3 \texttt{b4} 14.\texttt{a3} White had decent compensation for the pawn in I. Schneider – Karpatchev, Bad Woerishofen 2009.

12.b3 \texttt{e6} 13.\texttt{e4} \texttt{d3}

Black retains the better chances.

Conclusion

Both 7.\texttt{a4} and 7.\texttt{bd2} can be categorized as solid, but not too dangerous, and Black can expect to equalize quite comfortably. By contrast, the more aggressive 7.\texttt{c3} offers a pawn sacrifice, which I recommend Black to accept. Although White gets a certain amount of compensation in various lines, in none of them is it really enough.
Chapter 6

Fianchetto Systems

7.♗b3

Variation Index

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 g6 3. g3 c6 4. ♗g2 d5 5. ♘f3 ♘g7 6. 0-0 0-0 7. ♗b3

7...♗b6

A) 8. c5 59
B) 8. ♗xb6 59
C) 8. ♘c3 ♘d8 60
   C1) 9. cxd5 61
   C2) 9. ♘f4 61
   C3) 9. ♘a3 62
   C4) 9. ♘d1 63
   C5) 9. h3 64
   C6) 9. c5 64

A) after 14. ♗e1?

C3) after 11. ♘a3

C6) after 17. ♘a4

14...b6N

11...♗a6N

17...♗b8N
Chapter 6 - 7.\texttt{b}3

1.d4 $\texttt{f}6$ 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.$\texttt{g}2$ d5 5.$\texttt{f}3$ $\texttt{g}7$ 6.0-0 0-0 7.$\texttt{b}3$

Quite a popular line at GM-level.

7...$\texttt{b}6$

This is a thematic response to White's queen sortie in positions with a Slav pawn structure, and it works well for Black here. White's options are: the premature A) 8.c5, B) 8.$\texttt{x}b6$ and C) 8.$\texttt{e}3$.

A) 8.c5 $\texttt{x}b3$ 9.axb3

I have developed a useful 'rule' for this pawn structure: if Black manages to stop White's dangerous idea of b4-b5, then he will have absolutely no problems.

9...$\texttt{a}6$

Stopping White's only idea. Black will now prepare to advance his e-pawn, which should give him chances to fight for the initiative.

10.$\texttt{c}3$ $\texttt{d}7$ 11.$\texttt{a}4$

After 11.e4 dxe4 12.$\texttt{x}e4$ Teske - Balinov, Graz 1996, simplest is the calm 12...$\texttt{f}6$N 13.$\texttt{c}3$ $\texttt{b}4$ and only Black can be better.

11...e5 12.e3 $\texttt{c}7$ 13.$\texttt{d}2$ e4

14.$\texttt{e}1$?

The closed pawn structure makes the position fairly drawish, and 14.$\texttt{g}5$ should allow White to maintain the balance, although he would still have to play accurately.

14...b6N

This is an improvement on Ernst – L'Ami, Groningen 2003, and takes advantage of White's last move; the threat of ...$\texttt{a}6$ poses serious problems for White, due to the awkward placement of his minor pieces.

15.$\texttt{f}3$ exf3 16.$\texttt{x}f3$ $\texttt{b}c5$

Black is just a pawn up.

B) 8.$\texttt{x}b6$ axb6

14...b6N

This is an improvement on Ernst – L'Ami, Groningen 2003, and takes advantage of White's last move; the threat of ...$\texttt{a}6$ poses serious problems for White, due to the awkward placement of his minor pieces.
This is also a premature decision, since Black can use the semi-open a-file to generate play on the queenside.

9.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{\&xd5!}\)

Black is already aspiring to an advantage; he is not satisfied with the more symmetrical position after 9...cxd5.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
8 \\
7 \\
6 \\
5 \\
4 \\
3 \\
2 \\
1 \\
a \\
b \\
c \\
d \\
e \\
f \\
g \\
h
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{\begin{array}{c}
8 \\
7 \\
6 \\
5 \\
4 \\
3 \\
2 \\
1 \\
a \\
b \\
c \\
d \\
e \\
f \\
g \\
h
\end{array}}\]

10.e4

10.\(\text{\&c3}\)? allows Black good play: 10...\(\text{\&xc3}\)
11.bxc3 \(\text{\&e6}\) 12.a3 \(\text{\&d7}\) 13.\(\text{\&d2}\) b5 14.\(\text{\&e4}\)
\(\text{\&f5}\) 15.\(\text{\&g5}\) \(\text{\&c4}\) Black was clearly better in Palme – Kraus, Kirchheim 1947.

10.\(\text{\&d2}\) \(\text{c5}\) (10...b5 11.\(\text{\&c3}\) \(\text{\&b6}\) also looks fine for Black, Lundvik – Eriksson, Sweden 2003) 11.e4 \(\text{\&c7}\) 12.\(\text{\&c3}\) \(\text{\&b5}\) 13.dxc5 \(\text{\&xc3}\)
14.\(\text{\&xc3}\) Ree – Moisieev, Amsterdam 1967.

After the natural 14...bxc5 Black would be clearly better.

10...\(\text{\&b4}\) 11.\(\text{\&a3}\) \(\text{\&d3}\) 12.\(\text{\&c4}\)

We have been following Levitina – Kasoshvili, Naleczow 1988, and now Black could improve her play:

12...\(\text{\&d7}\)! 13.\(\text{\&d1}\) \(\text{\&xc1}\) 14.\(\text{\&xc1}\) b5
15.\(\text{\&e3}\) \(\text{\&b6}\)

Black enjoys a comfortable edge with the bishop pair.

C) 8.\(\text{\&c3}\)

This natural move is the only way for White to fight for an advantage.

8...\(\text{\&d8}\)

I have always considered 8...\(\text{\&f5}\) to be an equally playable continuation, but recently White has found some new ideas against it. At the same time White has been struggling to demonstrate any advantage after the rook move, hence my choice of it for this book.

White now chooses from a wide range of approaches: C1) 9.\(\text{cxd5}\), C2) 9.\(\text{\&f4}\), C3)
9.\(\text{\&a3}\), C4) 9.\(\text{\&d1}\), C5) 9.h3 and C6) 9.c5.

White has also tried:
9.\(\text{\&xb6}\)?! \(\text{axb6}\) 10.cxd5

This is quite harmless, since Black can recapture on d5 with his pieces.
10...\(\text{\&xd5}\) 11.\(\text{\&xd5}\) \(\text{\&xd5}\)!

One of the ideas behind 8...\(\text{\&d8}\). The rook can be very useful on the fifth rank, and I think that Black already has the better chances. For example:

12.\(\text{\&d1}\)

12.e3 \(\text{\&d8}\) 13.\(\text{\&d2}\) c5 14.\(\text{\&c3}\) \(\text{\&c6}\) 15.\(\text{\&e5}\)?

This is a serious error, although White's position was already unpleasant. 15...\(\text{\&xd4}\)!
16.exd4 \(\text{\&xd4}\) 17.\(\text{\&b4}\) \(\text{\&xe5}\) 18.\(\text{\&xe7}\) Kavalek – Ogaard, Manila 1975. Now the simple
18.\(\text{\&d7}\)! 19.\(\text{\&b4}\) d3 would leave Black with a clear advantage.
12...\textit{\textbf{xb5}}! 13.e4 \textit{\textbf{xe6}} 14.a3
This was Rogozenko - Donchev, Debrecen 1992, and here Black should play the natural:
14...\textit{\textbf{d7}}!?N
Black's queenside pressure gives him the better chances.

\textbf{C1} 9.cxd5 \textit{\textbf{xb3}}! 10.axb3 \textit{\textbf{xd5}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (a) at (0,0) {a};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (b) at (1,0) {b};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (c) at (2,0) {c};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (d) at (3,0) {d};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (e) at (4,0) {e};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (f) at (5,0) {f};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (g) at (6,0) {g};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (h) at (7,0) {h};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

It is a clever idea to change the pawn structure in this way, as White may have problems in the future with his b3-pawn.

11.\textit{\textbf{g5}} \textit{\textbf{f8}}
This is more flexible than 11...f6, which blocks the long diagonal and makes the dark-squared bishop passive.

12.\textit{\textbf{fc1}}
White tried 12.\textit{\textbf{fd1}} in Greenfeld - Nataf, Albufera 1999, and here I would recommend: 12...h6N 13.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{e6}} 14.e3 (after 14.e4?! \textit{\textbf{b4}} White pawns become serious targets) 14...\textit{\textbf{a6}}
The position is balanced.

12...\textit{\textbf{e6}} 13.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{h6}}
Defending against White's idea of \textit{\textbf{g5}}.

14.e3 \textit{\textbf{d7}} 15.\textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{xc3}}
A well-timed exchange.

16.\textit{\textbf{xc3}}
Unfortunately for White, he cannot recapture with the pawn: 16.bxc3? \textit{\textbf{c5}}! White is in trouble.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (a) at (0,0) {a};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (b) at (1,0) {b};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (c) at (2,0) {c};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (d) at (3,0) {d};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (e) at (4,0) {e};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (f) at (5,0) {f};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (g) at (6,0) {g};
\t\node[draw, shape=rectangle,minimum width=2cm, minimum height=2cm] (h) at (7,0) {h};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

16...\textit{\textbf{g5}}!
A multi-purpose move, which really appeals to me. First of all Black takes control over the f4-square, preventing White's idea of \textit{\textbf{d3}}-f4; secondly Black is planning ...\textit{\textbf{f5}}, and so he vacates the g6-square as a retreat for this bishop in the event of e3-e4.

17.\textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{f5}}
Black's idea is to play ...e5, so White must react quickly.

18.\textit{\textbf{c5}} \textit{\textbf{xc5}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xc5}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 20.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{e6}} 21.b4 \textit{\textbf{a6}} 22.\textit{\textbf{c5}}
Neither side can make any progress in this position, so it is no surprise that a draw was agreed in P.H. Nielsen - Radjabov, Tripoli (2.2) 2004.

\textbf{C2} 9.\textit{\textbf{f4}} dxc4 10.\textit{\textbf{xc4}} \textit{\textbf{e6}}
Grabbing the b-pawn obviously looks risky, although I don't see any refutation: 10...\textit{\textbf{xb2}}
11.\textit{\textbf{g5}} (or 11.\textit{\textbf{ab1}} \textit{\textbf{a3}} 12.\textit{\textbf{g5}} e6 13.e4 \textit{\textbf{b5}}
14.\textit{\textbf{d3}} b4 15.\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textbf{a6}} 16.\textit{\textbf{f3}} bxc3 17.\textit{\textbf{xb8}}
\textit{\textbf{c2}} and Black seems to be doing well in this

11.Wd3 a6

Black continues to activate his minor pieces, using the slightly misplaced position of the white queen to help generate counterplay in the centre.

12.Wc2

Nor do other moves pose Black any serious problems:


12...Ab4


13.Wa4 Ad5

Black has no problems after 14.Ac1 Ad5.

14.Aa3

Black can also consider 15...a5!? with the typical idea of ...Ab4.

14...Af4 15.gxf4 Ad5

Black has an extremely solid position, Sargissian – Guseinov, Dubai 2005.

C3) 9.Wc3

At first I thought that this move might be worth playing as White, but after delving deeper into the position I now feel that Black is doing fine here.

9...dx4!

Obviously the most principled continuation.
10.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textcolor{black}{\textbf{x}}}}}}}c7 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e8 11.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a3}

I don't see much point in: 11.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}d6 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f5} (11...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a6?! also comes into consideration) 12.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f4 Switching to the kingside, but the queen is not well-placed here. 12...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}bd7?!) 13.h3 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}bd4 14.g4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}bd5 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}xd2 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e4! 16.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xd5 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xd5 17.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e6} Black had a clear positional advantage in Burmakin - Midoux, Porto San Giorgio 2006.

11...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}a6N

I like this natural developing move, with the idea of jumping to b4. Illersko - Sanchez Rodenas, e-mail 2008, continued 11...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f5 12.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}wb6 and now retreating with 13.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}d1!} is strong; White intends to play in the centre, while the black queen is slightly misplaced on a6.

12.b3 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xb3

Initially I was tempted by the immediate 12...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}b4, but then I discovered the following idea: 13.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}wb5 14.bxc4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xc4 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}b6! axb6 16.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}xa8 I don't think that Black has full compensation for the exchange.

13.axb3

13.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}xb3 is possible, but after 13...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb3 14.axb3 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}b4 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}d2 a5! Black is doing very well.

13...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}b4 14.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}b2

White can force a draw with 14.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}b5 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}c3 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}b6, and that may well be his best option.

14.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f5 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f4 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e4

We have reached a very complicated position in which Black is at least equal.

C4) 9.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{d}}}}}d1 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f5

Introducing the possibility of ...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb3 followed by ...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}c2. The alternatives are weaker:

9...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a6?! runs into 10.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb6 axb6 11.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{a}}}}}a4! with a clear advantage for White, Inarkiev - Svidler, Moscow 2006.

9...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb3 10.axb3 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{f}}}}}f5 11.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e1 is slightly better for White.

10.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e1

The main attempt to fight for an advantage. Absolutely harmless is: 10.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb6 axb6 11.cxd5 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xd5 12.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}xd5 cxd5 (this is safe, but I prefer the combative 12...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb6 13.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}xb6 14.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{b}}}}}c8 15.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{e}}}}}e5 e6= Jankovic - Music, Pula 2001.

10...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{c}}}}}c6!
Forcing White to release the tension in the centre. I am not so convinced by: 10...dxc4 11...wxc4 da6 12.e4 It is not clear that Black has enough counterplay against the white centre, Inarkiev – Svidler, Astrakhan 2010.

11.c5 xb3 12.axb3 bd7
The more typical 12...da6 was also mentioned by Nataf in Chess Informant 79 as a decent alternative.

13.b4 a6=
Black had absolutely no problems in Anic – Nataf, Vichy 2000.

(C5) 9.h3
This is surely too modest to trouble Black.

9...e6!
I like this move, which forces White to clarify the situation in the centre.

10.c5
Aronian has tried: 10.g5 f5 11.wxb6 axb6 12.cxd5 dx5! 13.e4 (more advisable is 13...dx5 cxd5 14.g4 c2 15...c3 c6 16.fc1 a4 17...f3 when White is very slightly worse, but he should be able to hold) 13...xc3 14.bxc3 d7 The weakness of the a-pawn gave Black the advantage in Aronian – Ivanchuk, Wijk aan Zee 2006.

10...xb3
Black can even consider 10...wa6!N with the idea of undermining the white pawn chain with ...b6. After 11...g5 c8 12...f4 h6 13...f3 e6 the position is very complicated, but Black seems to have reasonable chances.

11.axb3 a6
This is the thematic response to White’s c4-c5, but there is nothing wrong with: 11...bd7 12.b4 a6 13...f4 e4 ½–½ J. Horvath – Neuman, Aschach 2007.

12...f4 d7
Black begins to prepare ...e5.

13.g4 f6 14.g5 fxg5 15...xg5 f7!

The position is roughly balanced, but in Ippolito – Antal, Lubbock 2009, White was tempted into some incorrect complications:

16...xf7 xf7 17...xd5? cxd5 18.c6 b4!
19...d7 xd4
Black is clearly better.

(C6) 9.c5
This is the main continuation according to theory.

9...xb3 10.axb3 a6
As we have already seen, this is a standard reaction to the advance of the white c-pawn.

11.\textit{f4}

This is very logical, preventing ...\textit{c7} followed by ...\textit{a6}. White has also tried:

11.\textit{h3} \textit{d7} 12.\textit{f4} \textit{e8N}

Black is planning ...\textit{e5}. This is an improvement on the rather passive: 12...\textit{f8} 13.\textit{a4} \textit{f5} 14.\textit{e1} \textit{e6} Tregubov – Vorobiov, Moscow 2004. Here simply 15.\textit{c3N} \textit{c2} 16.\textit{a3} would ensure the better chances for White, due to the somewhat problematic position of Black's light-squared bishop.

13.\textit{a5}

13.e4 dxe4 14.\textit{xe4} \textit{b4} would give Black good play.

13...\textit{e5} 14.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 15.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 16.\textit{dxe5} \textit{xe5} 17.e3 \textit{c7} 18.b4 \textit{a6}

Black has equalized comfortably.

12.\textit{a3} \textit{e8} 13.\textit{h3} \textit{f5}! 14.\textit{c1} e5 15.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 16.dxe5 This was played in A. Petrosian – Lamprecht, Germany 1994, and now there is no good reason for Black to refrain from the obvious 16...\textit{xe5N}, giving him the better chances.

12.\textit{a4} \textit{e8} 13.\textit{fd1} e5 Once he carries out ...\textit{e5}, Black can expect to be at least equal. 14.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 15.\textit{dxe5} \textit{xe5} 16.\textit{xe5} \textit{e5} 17.e3 \textit{f5} 18.\textit{d2} \textit{c7} 19.b4 \textit{e8} 20.\textit{c3} \textit{a6} Black eventually won in Gagunashvili – Elness, Novi Sad 2009.

12...\textit{e8}!

This is an important move. It is not so good to rush with the e-pawn: 12...\textit{e5}?! 13.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 14.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 15.dxe5 \textit{f5} 16.\textit{e5}! \textit{c2} 17.\textit{d4} \textit{xb3} 18.f4 White had the better chances in Aronian – Svidler, Beersheba 2005.

13.\textit{e4}

White fails to prevent ...\textit{e5} with 13.\textit{h3}, in view of: 13...\textit{f5} 14.g4 \textit{e5}!

13...\textit{dxe4} 14.\textit{xe4} \textit{b4}

12.\textit{e4} is quite risky from a positional point of view, because White gives up the d5-square and his d4-pawn becomes a target; after 12...\textit{dxe4} 13.\textit{xe4} \textit{f8} followed by ...\textit{f5}, Black has the much easier game.

15.\textit{g5}
White has also tried two other moves:

15.\textit{c3} \textit{\textit{f6}} 16.\textit{e5} \textit{e6} 17.\textit{d2} \textit{ed8} 18.\textit{c4} \textit{bd5} 19.\textit{a3} \textit{h5} 20.\textit{da1} \textit{a6}= Black is fine, and in fact went on to win in Bocharov – Kamsky, Khanty-Mansiysk 2005.

15.\textit{d2} \textit{d5} 16.\textit{e3} \textit{f7f6} 17.\textit{e5} \textit{e6} 18.\textit{c4} \textit{ed8} 19.\textit{e2} \textit{e8} 20.\textit{a5} \textit{ed7} The position is about equal, Sakaev – Svidler, Russia 2007.

15...\textit{h6}

15...\textit{f6}?! is worth considering.

16.\textit{d2} \textit{c2}?! There is nothing wrong with the natural 16...\textit{d5}.

17.\textit{a4}

We have been following the game Tregubov – Vachier Lagrave, Paris 2007. Here the computer points out that Black can play the calm:

17...\textit{f8}N 18.\textit{c3}

It transpires that Black need not be afraid of 18.\textit{c1}, as 18...\textit{f5}! 19.\textit{c3} \textit{e6} 20.g4 \textit{d3} 21.\textit{e3} \textit{f5} gives him a strong initiative.

18...\textit{f5}

Black has an excellent game, thanks to the following line:

19.\textit{h4} \textit{e6} 20.\textit{d2} \textit{ed8} 21.\textit{hf3} \textit{f5}

Black has the better chances.

\textbf{Conclusion}

We have looked at a wide variety of options for White on his 8th and 9th moves, but have found little to trouble Black. I would just like to draw the reader's attention to an important theme that features in several of the lines in this chapter. When White advances c4-c5, Black almost invariably reacts by exchanging queens, playing ...\textit{a6} to restrain the white b-pawn, and then preparing ...\textit{e5}; this should secure him at least equal chances, even after losing a tempo with ...\textit{ed8-e8}. 
Fianchetto Systems

White exchanges on d5

Variation Index

1. d4 \( \mathcal{Q} \)f6 2. c4 g6 3. g3

3... c6

A) 4. \( \mathcal{Q} \)f3
B) 4. \( \mathcal{Q} \)g2 d5
   B1) 5. \( \mathcal{Q} \)f3
   B2) 5. cxd5 cxd5
      B21) 6. \( \mathcal{Q} \)c3 \( \mathcal{Q} \)g7
          B211) 7. \( \mathcal{Q} \)h3
          B212) 7. e3
      B22) 6. \( \mathcal{Q} \)f3 \( \mathcal{Q} \)g7
          B221) 7. \( \mathcal{Q} \)c3
          B222) 7. \( \mathcal{Q} \)e5 \( \mathcal{Q} \)e4
             B2221) 8.0-0
             B2222) 8. \( \mathcal{Q} \)d2
          B223) 7.0-0 0-0
             B2231) 8. \( \mathcal{Q} \)c3
             B2232) 8. \( \mathcal{Q} \)e5

B1) note to 8. \( \mathcal{Q} \)b3
B2221) note to 15. e5
B2232) after 12. \( \mathcal{Q} \)e3

13... \( \mathcal{Q} \)a6!N
20... h5!N
12... f6N
In this chapter we shall be concentrating on the lines in which White exchanges pawns on d5. White has a wide range of move orders at his disposal, and Black must often react precisely in order to avoid finding himself in an undesirable variation. Here White chooses between A) 4.\( \mathcal{B}f3 \) and B) 4.\( \mathcal{B}g2 \).

A) 4.\( \mathcal{B}f3 \)

This will often transpose into B, but we shall look at some lines where White delays the development of his king's bishop.

4...d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.\( \mathcal{B}c3 \mathcal{B}g7 \) 7.\( \mathcal{D}e5 \)
7...\( \mathcal{D}fd7 \!\)!

I find it surprising that this move has been played only five times, as I think that it is a good way to avoid the variations arising after 7...0-0 8.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \) e6 9.0-0 \( \mathcal{D}fd7 \) 10.f4 etc. Although Black is solidly placed in this well-known line, I am personally not too keen on his prospects, and so I have designed the repertoire to avoid this possibility.

8.\( \mathcal{D}xd7 \mathcal{D}xd7 \) 9.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \) e6 10.0-0 0-0 Despite the rarity of Black's 7th move, this position has occurred nearly a hundred times in practice, via many other move orders. I cannot see any idea that offers White chances of an advantage. I like the following illustrative example: 11.b3 \( \mathcal{D}c6 \) 12.e3 \( \mathcal{B}a5 \) 13.\( \mathcal{D}d2 \mathcal{B}a6 \) 14.\( \mathcal{D}e1 \mathcal{F}c8 \) 15.\( \mathcal{D}f1 \mathcal{B}a3 \) The position was pretty level in Izoria – Ivanchuk, Yerevan 2004.

8.\( \mathcal{D}xd5 \mathcal{B}a5† \! \) 9.\( \mathcal{D}c3 \mathcal{D}xe5 \) 10.dxe5 \( \mathcal{D}xe5 \) 11.\( \mathcal{D}d2 \)

Black has no problems after 11.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \) 0-0 12.0-0 \( \mathcal{D}c6 \) 11...\( \mathcal{D}d7 \!\)!

An interesting idea; the bishop is heading for c6, which will force the exchange of the light-squared bishops. There is also nothing wrong with 11...\( \mathcal{D}c6 \) 12.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \) 0-0. Here I examined a nice variation: 13.\( \mathcal{D}d5 \) (13.0-0 \( \mathcal{D}d8 \) even looks better for Black) 13...\( \mathcal{W}d8 \) 14.\( \mathcal{D}h6 \mathcal{B}e8 \) 15.\( \mathcal{W}d2 \mathcal{D}d4 \) 16.0-0 \( \mathcal{D}h3 \!\)!

Black equalizes comfortably. 12.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \mathcal{D}c6 \) 13.\( \mathcal{D}d5 \mathcal{W}d8 \) 14.\( \mathcal{D}f4 \mathcal{B}xh4 \) 15.\( \mathcal{B}xh4 \mathcal{B}a5† \) 16.\( \mathcal{W}d2 \mathcal{F}xd2† \) 17.\( \mathcal{W}xd2 \mathcal{D}xg2 \) 18.\( \mathcal{D}xg2 \mathcal{D}c6 \)

The position is absolutely equal. A draw was agreed in Bocharov – Roiz, Dagomys 2008.

8...\( \mathcal{D}xe5 \!\)!

This was played in Sebenik – Baciocic, Austria 2010. Previously Black had tried: 8...e6 9.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \mathcal{D}c6 \) 10.0-0 \( \mathcal{W}b6 \) 11.e3 0-0 Play has transposed into the theoretical line that we are trying to avoid, Drasko – Kozul, Zadar 2005.

9.fxe5

After 9.dxe5 d4 10.\( \mathcal{D}e4 \) 0-0 11.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \mathcal{D}c6 \) 12.0-0 \( \mathcal{W}b6 \) (or 12...\( \mathcal{F}f5 \!\)!?) Black is certainly well in the game, and may even be better.

9...e6 10.\( \mathcal{D}g2 \) 0-0

10...\( \mathcal{D}c6 \) is premature, in view of 11.e4!
With this move White is generally planning to exchange pawns in the near future, having somewhat limited Black's options. The immediate 6.cxd5 cxd5 is line B22.

6...\textit{c}e4!

We have to pay attention to White's move order. For example, the natural 6...0–0 would allow 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.\textit{c}c3 – the variation we are aiming to avoid.

7.0–0 0–0 8.\textit{b}b3

Usual here is 8.cxd5 cxd5, leading into B22. We shall look at a few other options:

8.\textit{c}c3

Quite a risky approach.

8...\textit{d}xc3 9.bxc3 \textit{e}e5! 10.dxe5 \textit{d}xc4

White's bishop pair is not very active, and Black's position remains quite solid.

11.\textit{d}c2

Black is happy to go into an endgame:

11...\textit{c}c7 12.\textit{h}h6 \textit{f}xd1 13.\textit{f}fxd1 \textit{e}e8+

11...\textit{c}c7 12.\textit{h}h6 \textit{d}d8 13.f4

This was Fier – Achutti, Florianopolis 1999. Black should have continued:

13...\textit{d}a6!N

White's play does not look fast enough.

14.h3

Or 14.\textit{d}ad1 \textit{g}xd1 15.\textit{h}xd1 \textit{d}c5 16.h3 \textit{f}f5! 17.e4 \textit{d}d7+ and the d3-square is significant.
14...b6† 15.h2 e3!

It is not clear how White will create play, and meanwhile he is a pawn down.

8.b3 d7 9.b2 (after 9.xd7 xd7 10.b2 e6 Black has comfortable play) 9...xe5!
10.dxe5 e6 11.d3 f5 12.exf6 (12.cxd5 xd5 13.xd5 xd5 leads to a balanced position) 12...xf6 13.cxd5 Black's activity compensates for his slightly damaged pawn structure. 14.exd5† xd5 15.xd5† xd5 16.xg7 xg7 17.d2 c3 18.g2 f6 Black had no problems in Znamenacek – Dolezal, Czech Republic 2008.

8...dxc4!

A well-timed operation.

9.xc4

9.xc4 allows Black to equalize comfortably: 9...d6 10.e2 f5 11.e3 d7 12.d3 e5=

9...d6 10.e5

A critical try is: 10.xd6 exd6 11.d5 Otherwise Black will play ...d5 with equality. 11...c5 12.c3 d7 Black has a good Benoni, as he has managed to exchange a pair of knights.

10.e6 11.e2 d7 12.f4

Safer is 12.xd7, but Black has a pleasant game after 12...xd7 13.d1 b6.
I like this decision; with his light-squared bishop exchanged, Black can develop his other pieces very naturally. Black can also play: 7...c6 8.d4 e6 9.0-0 0-0 10.e3 b6
11.c3 (or 11.d4 b7 12.a4 e7 13.b5 c6 14.c1 a6 with an equal game, Jirovsky - Neuman, Klatovy 2001) 11...a6 12.b3 c6 13.a3 a8 14.b1= Stahlberg - Flohr, Kemeri 1937.

I remember that during the game I felt this position was very easy for Black to play.

11.g2 d7 12.b3 a6 13.a3 e8 14.b1 c6 15.d2 a5 16.b6 a7!!
16...e8 is good enough as well.

17.b1
The tempting 17.b4 is a bit dubious, since after 17...d8 Black can easily get his knight to the c4-square.


We shall follow a famous Fischer game.

11.a3 e8 12.d2
More accurate is: 12.c1 c8 13.e1 e6 The play is much the same as we saw after 10.d4, and the position is clearly balanced.

12.e5?!
This leads to a more interesting game, although of course there was nothing wrong with 12...e6.

13.dxe5 xex5 14.d1?
This is the wrong rook, as it leaves the f2-pawn inadequately defended. White should play: 14.ad1 d7! (also interesting is 14.c8? as recommended in the annotations in ChessBase) 15.c2 a8 16.b1 f5 (this is simpler than 16...g4 17.h3 f3+ 18.h1 h5 19.d4 h6 20.cxd5 xfx1 21.xf6+}
\( \text{\&xf6 22.\textit{xf1}, when White has definite compensation for the exchange) 17.\textit{xf5 gxf5 18.\textit{d2 e4 19.\textit{xe4 dxe4 20.\textit{fd1 xe2 21.xe2 ed8= Black has no problems.}})\)

\[ 14...\textit{d3! 15.\textit{c2 \textit{xf2! 16.\textit{xf2 g4\textsuperscript{\dagger} 17.g1 xe3 18.\textit{d2 xg2! 19.xg2 d4! Black's attack is decisive.}})}\]

\[ 20.\textit{xd4 b7 21.f1 d7 White decided it was time to call it a day in R. Byrne – Fischer, New York 1963.} \]

\[ \text{B22) 6.f3 g7} \]

\[ 8.b3 The main continuation is 8.0–0 0–0, which will be examined in B2231. \]

A rarer alternative is 8.xe4 dxe4 9.e5 and here, since the players haven't castled, Black can go for 9...\textit{xe5 10.dxe5 \textit{xd1\textsuperscript{\dagger} 11.xd1 \textit{f5. With his king on d1, White seems unable to pose Black any problems. For example: 12.g4 xg4 13.xc4 after 13...\textit{c6 14.xc6 bxc6 15.f3 0–0–0\textsuperscript{\dagger} 16.e1 \textit{e6 17.e3 b7 18.f2 \textit{d5 19.hc1 \textit{d8 The game is absolutely equal, Maherramzade – Sideif Sade, Baku 1997.}})}\]

\[ 8...\textit{xc3 9.bxc3 0–0!} \]

This is most accurate, since 9...\textit{c6 runs into 10.d2 e6 11.a3, as was seen in the well-known game Karpov – Gelfand, Sanghi Nagar (2) 1995. \]

\[ 10.0–0 \]

Another option is: 10.d2 e6 11.e4 c6 12.exd5 (12.0–0 transposes to the main line) 12...a5 13.b4 exd5 14.0–0 b6
Black has absolutely no problems, for instance:
15...\textit{e}6 (or 15...\textit{a}b2 \textit{a}6 16.\textit{f}e1 \textit{e}c8= Sergejev – Glek, Internet 2000) 15...\textit{e}6 16.\textit{f}3 \textit{e}c8 17.\textit{g}5 \textit{f}c7 18.\textit{f}a1 \textit{f}e8
The position was balanced in Galego – Movsziszian, Can Picafort 2008.

10...\textit{d}c6 11.\textit{d}d2
This is the main move. The alternatives are harmless, for example:
11.\textit{f}4 \textit{a}5 12.\textit{f}b4 b6 13.\textit{d}d2 \textit{b}7 14.c4 dxe4 15.\textit{x}e4 \textit{e}c8 16.\textit{f}e1 \textit{e}e8 I already prefer Black, with the white c- and d-pawns providing permanent targets, Samsonkin – Zilberstein, Edmonton 2009.

11...\textit{e}6

With 13.e3?! White is probably hoping to carry out the c3-c4 advance, but Black is in time to prevent it: 13...\textit{a}a5 14.\textit{b}b1 b6 15.\textit{f}e1 \textit{a}6 16.e4 dxe4 17.\textit{x}e4 \textit{c}4 18.\textit{c}c1 \textit{c}e8 Black has the better chances, Graf – Krasenkow, Sanxenxo 2004.

13...\textit{a}a5 14.\textit{f}c2
Other queen moves are possible, but they don’t change the character of the game.

14...b6 15.\textit{f}e1
15.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}6 16.\textit{a}3 \textit{b}7 (Black can of course repeat moves with 16...\textit{a}5) 17.\textit{b}3?! dxe4 18.\textit{x}e4 \textit{c}7 Black was slightly better in Timofeeva – Duer, Wattens 1995.

15...\textit{b}7 16.e5 \textit{e}c8 17.\textit{f}d3
This was Nambar – Rey, San Francisco 2002, and now I like:

17...\textit{f}d7
Black will play ...\textit{a}4 next, with a nice position.

12...\textit{a}a5 13.\textit{b}b4
After 13.\textit{c}2 Black as always continues:
13...b6 14.\textit{f}e1 (14.\textit{a}3 \textit{e}8 transposes to the previous note) 14...\textit{b}7 (14...\textit{a}6? is careless; after 15.exd5 exd5 16.\textit{a}3 \textit{e}8 17.\textit{x}e8+ \textit{f}xe8 18.\textit{a}d5 White is just a pawn up, Aramil – Langreck, Kokomo 2000) 15.e5 \textit{c}8 Black has a good game.

13...b6 14.exd5 exd5
We have reached an equal position that we saw in the note to White’s 10th move above.

B222) 7.\(\text{\textit{Q}}e5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}e4!\)

Once again we avoid the variation arising after 7...0–0 8.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3\) e6.

White now chooses between B2221) \(8.0–0\) and B2222) \(8.\text{\textit{Q}}d2\).

B2221) 8.0–0 0–0 9.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3\)

Black is also doing okay against the alternatives:

9.f3 is hardly a serious try for an advantage:
9...\(\text{\textit{Q}}d6\) 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3\) e6 11.f4 f6 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\)
13.e3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}f7\) 14.a4 b6 Black had comfortable equality in Johannessen – Schandorff, Roskilde 1998.

9.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}f5\)

Black does not achieve equality with:
9...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xd2\) 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xd2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d7\) (or 10...\(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\))
11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xc6\) bxc6 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b4=\) Kasparov – Howell, London [simul] 1998) 11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3!=\)
10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\)
10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}df3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}b6!\) is good for Black, Kr. Georgiev – Donchev, Prague 1995.
10...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\)

11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\)

Other moves:
a) 11.f3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}f5\) 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}e3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d7\) 13.f4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}f6\) (there is also nothing wrong with 13...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe5\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe5\) e6) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}b6\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c1\) Gross – Unger, Plzen 2000. Now the natural 15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}f8\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}xb3\) 17.axb3 a6 would lead to an equal game.
b) 11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\) dx\(\text{\textit{Q}}e4\) 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\) 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xc6\) bxc6 transposes to the line with 11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\).

11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\)

Black could try: 11...\(\text{\textit{Q}}xg2\) 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xg2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}xe5\) 13.dxe5 (not 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xb7\)? \(\text{\textit{Q}}g7\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xa8\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d7\)! and White is defenceless against the threat of ...\(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\)) 13...\(\text{\textit{Q}}d7\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d1\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d8\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}f4\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\)
The position is double-edged. However, if he wishes White can avoid this possibility by using the move order 11...\(\text{\textit{Q}}e4\) dx\(\text{\textit{Q}}e4\) 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\).
12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xc6\) bxc6 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}xe4\) dx\(\text{\textit{Q}}e4\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d1\)
Weaker is 14.e3?! \(\text{\textit{Q}}b8\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d5\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}d1\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}fc8\)! and the coming ...\(\text{\textit{Q}}c5\) will give Black the advantage, Sunye Neto – Illescas Cordoba, Linares 1994.
14...\(\text{\textit{Q}}b8\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c4?!\)
Better is 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}d5\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}fc8\) 17.b3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}c6\)
18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}ac1\) a5 with balanced play.
15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}d7\)
15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}d5\) is also good.
16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}b3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}b5\) 17.e3?
17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}c3\) was necessary, although after 17...\(\text{\textit{Q}}d5\) Black is doing quite well.
17...\(\text{\textit{Q}}h5!\)
Suddenly ...\(\text{\textit{Q}}h3\) is a serious threat.
Chapter 7 – White exchanges on d5

18.\textit{\texttt{Wf1}} \textit{\texttt{Ed8}} 19.\textit{\texttt{Aa3}} \textit{\texttt{Ed5}} 20.\textit{\texttt{Ac1}} e5
Black was better in Zhidkov – Vorobiov, Moscow 1999.

9...\textit{\texttt{Dxc3}}
This is the easiest route to equality. More complicated, but also good enough is: 9...\textit{\texttt{Ab5}}
10.\textit{\texttt{Bb3}} \textit{\texttt{Cc6}} 11.\textit{\texttt{Ed1}} (11.\textit{\texttt{Wxd5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxc3}} 12.\textit{\texttt{Bxc3}}
\textit{\texttt{Wxd5}} 13.\textit{\texttt{Axd5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxe5}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Dxe5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxe5}}= Benko –
Fischer, New York 1962)

This recently occurred in the high-level game
Mamedyarov – Ivanchuk, Nalchik 2009, and Black missed the well-known blow: 11...\textit{\texttt{Dxd4!}}
12.\textit{\texttt{Dxd4}} \textit{\texttt{Dxc3}} 13.\textit{\texttt{Bxc3}} \textit{\texttt{Dxe5}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Dxd5}}
\textit{\texttt{Cc7}} White must play carefully to hold the balance. 15.\textit{\texttt{Ac6}} \textit{\texttt{Cc6}} 16.\textit{\texttt{Bxf8}} \textit{\texttt{Bxf8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{Ec1}}
\textit{\texttt{Dxd5}} 18.\textit{\texttt{Axd5}} b6 19.\textit{\texttt{Cc4}} ½–½ Kholmov – Liberzon, Sukhumi 1991; the final position is
still slightly more pleasant for Black.

10.\textit{\texttt{Bxc3}} \textit{\texttt{Cc6}}

11.\textit{\texttt{Dxc6}}
This leads to a symmetrical and level position, but other moves do not offer White any advantage either:

11.\textit{\texttt{Dd3}} \textit{\texttt{Ca5}} 12.\textit{\texttt{h4}} b6 13.\textit{\texttt{h5}} \textit{\texttt{Aa6}} 14.\textit{\texttt{hxg6}}
\textit{hxg6} 15.\textit{\texttt{Ag5}} Gutman – Hort, Germany 1984. After the natural improvement 15...\textit{\texttt{Ee8}}
16.\textit{\texttt{Ec1}} \textit{\texttt{Dd7}} Black enjoys the better chances, thanks to his superior pawn structure.

11.f4 \textit{\texttt{a5}} (also worth considering is 11...\textit{\texttt{Ee6}}?!) 12.\textit{\texttt{Ea4}} (after 12.\textit{\texttt{Aa4}} Mascaro March – Gaya
Llodra, Palma de Mallorca 2008, the typical 12...\textit{\texttt{b6N}} followed by ...\textit{\texttt{Cc7}} and ...\textit{\texttt{Cc8}},
would give Black the more pleasant game) 12...\textit{\texttt{dxe4}} 13.\textit{\texttt{Dxe4}} Nemeth – Juhasz, Hungary
1998. Now Black should play: 13...\textit{\texttt{Cc6N}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Aa3}} (Black needn’t worry about 14.\textit{\texttt{Efx5}}
15.\textit{\texttt{Efx5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxe5!+}}) 14...\textit{\texttt{Cc8!}} I do not see any
compensation for White’s weakened pawn structure.

11...\textit{\texttt{Bxc6}}

12.\textit{\texttt{Aa3}}
Also possible was:
12.\textit{\texttt{Bb6!}}
Black wants to play ...\textit{\texttt{Aa6}}, as the queen swap will kill White’s chances of obtaining
any queenside pressure.
13.\textit{\textbf{xa3}}

13.e4 \textit{\textbf{xa6}} 14.\textit{\textbf{e1}} e6 15.\textit{\textbf{f4}} \textit{\textbf{d3}}! This is an important resource. 16.\textit{\textbf{d6}} (16.\textit{\textbf{ad1}} dxe4 17.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{xe4}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{fd8}} also leads to equality) A draw was agreed here in Schmidt – Averbakh, Polanica Zdroj 1975, and indeed after 16...\textit{\textbf{fd8}} 17.e5 \textit{\textbf{f8}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xf8}} \textit{\textbf{xf8}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xf1}} \textit{\textbf{xf1}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xf1}} \textit{\textbf{fb8}} Black has absolutely no problems.

13...\textit{\textbf{xa6}}!

14.\textit{\textbf{xa6}} \textit{\textbf{xa6}}

The position is very drawish.

15.\textit{\textbf{fb1}}

Or 15.\textit{\textbf{f6}} e6 16.\textit{\textbf{c5}} e6 17.\textit{\textbf{ab1}} \textit{\textbf{f8}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xf8}} ½–½ Marin – Fressinet, Eforie Nord 2009.

15...\textit{\textbf{xe2}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xe7}} \textit{\textbf{fb8}}! 16...\textit{\textbf{f6}} 17.\textit{\textbf{b7}} leads to some pressure for White.

17.\textit{\textbf{d6}} \textit{\textbf{xb1}}† 18.\textit{\textbf{xb1}} \textit{\textbf{b5}} 19.\textit{\textbf{f1}} a6 20.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{f8}} 21.\textit{\textbf{xf8}} \textit{\textbf{xf8}} ½–½ Vaisser – Nataf, Pau 2008.

12.e4 \textit{\textbf{a6}} (12...\textit{\textbf{e6}} is also reasonable) 13.\textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 14.\textit{\textbf{d2}} e6 15.\textit{\textbf{c4}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 16.\textit{\textbf{c5}} (I think White should have been satisfied with equality after 16.exd5 \textit{\textbf{xd4}} 17.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{xe3}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe3}} cxd5 19.cxd5 \textit{\textbf{ad8}}) 16...\textit{\textbf{b2}} 17.\textit{\textbf{e3}} Issing – Voigt, Germany 1999. After 17...\textit{\textbf{f8}} 18.\textit{\textbf{exd5}} exd5 Black has slightly the better chances.

12...\textit{\textbf{a6}} 13.\textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{e8}} 14.\textit{\textbf{e4}} e6 15.\textit{\textbf{e5}}

White has also tried:

15.h4 \textit{\textbf{c4}} 16.\textit{\textbf{e5}}

White decides to block the centre anyway. He is probably right to avoid 16.h5 e5!? with good play for Black.

16...\textit{\textbf{b8}} 17.\textit{\textbf{d2}}

Or: 17.h5 \textit{\textbf{g5}}!? A good square for the queen. 18.\textit{\textbf{f3}} (after 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.\textit{\textbf{f1}} \textit{\textbf{xf1}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xf1}} \textit{\textbf{f8}}! Black may even have an edge, as he can play for ...\textit{\textbf{c5}}) 18...\textit{\textbf{f8}} 19.\textit{\textbf{c1}} \textit{\textbf{d8}} ½–½ Csom – Tompa, Hungary 1974. I think that in the final position Black stands better; he will meet 20.hxg6 with 20...\textit{\textbf{fxg6}}!.

17...\textit{\textbf{f8}}

This is a key positional idea; after trading dark-squared bishops Black will have chances to penetrate on the queenside.

18.\textit{\textbf{xf8}} \textit{\textbf{xf8}} 19.\textit{\textbf{f1}}

After the natural 19.h5 Black can respond in an interesting manner: 19...\textit{\textbf{gxh5}}! 20.\textit{\textbf{wh6}} \textit{\textbf{d3}} 21.\textit{\textbf{hxh5}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} Having managed to stabilize his kingside, Black can play on the queenside with ...\textit{\textbf{a5}}, ...\textit{\textbf{c5}} etc.

19...\textit{\textbf{xf1}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xf1}}
20...h5!N
This gives Black a good game. It is a logical improvement on 20...c5 21.h5, which allowed White attacking chances in Tregubov – Yandemirov, Maikop 1998.

15... fx8 16...fx8 17.h4 g7?!
18...b1
Black is not afraid of 18.h5 in view of 18...g5!.

18...e7 19...f1 19.f1 20...xf1 e8
21.d2 e6 22.b3 b8 23.f1 h5=
Ragger – Miroshnichenko, Austria 2010.

B2222) 8.d2

8...d7!
In my opinion this is the most accurate move. I am not satisfied with Black’s other options:

8...xd2 9...d2 d7 Here nobody has tried 10...c3, which seems to me to promise White some pressure.

8...f5 runs into 9...xe4 xe4 10...xe4 dxe4 11.b3 and the double attack on b7 and f7 is most unpleasant.

9...xd7
I also examined 9...xe4 dxe4 10.f4, but here Black has 10...a5† 11.d2 xd2† 12...d2 and now there is an unexpected idea:
12...g5! 13.xg5 b6! The threat of ...f6 is very strong.

9...xd7 10...xe4 dxe4

11...e3
I also checked:
11...e4 xd4
This is stronger than: 11...xd4 12.0-0 0-0
13.g5 d8 14.c2 White preserved some pressure in Pearce – Zuev, e-mail 2008
12.d4 d4 13.0-0

13...h3!N
This is an important improvement. After 13...0-0 14.d1 f6 Schandorff – Sulypa, Esbjerg 2004, the correct 15...f4 would be unpleasant for Black. For example:
15...xb2 16.a1 f6 17.xb7 x7
18...\( \text{bxa7} \) Black is doomed to a passive defence.

14...\( \text{cxd7} \)

14...\( \text{b6} \) 0–0–0! 15...\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{c5} \) is level.

14...\( \text{cxe2} \) 15...\( \text{dxe2} \) 16...\( \text{c6} \) \( \text{d8} \) 17...\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{e5} \)

Black doesn't have any problems.

11...\( \text{cxd5} \) 12...\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 13...\( \text{a3} \) \( \text{c6} \)

14.0–0

14...\( \text{c6} \) N

This is simplest. Keene – Eichhorn, Ybbs 1968, saw: 14...0–0 15...\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16...\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 17...\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 18...\( \text{xd4} \) Black eventually managed to achieve a draw, but he suffered for the rest of the game.

15...\( \text{ac1} \) 0–0

Black has a comfortable game.

B223) 7.0–0 0–0

We have arrived at a final crossroads: B2231) 8...\( \text{c3} \) or B2232) 8...\( \text{e5} \).

B2231) 8...\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{e4}! \)

As should be clear by now, we wish to avoid the lines 8...\( \text{c6} \) 9...\( \text{e5} \) and 8...\( \text{e6} \) 9...\( \text{e5} \).

9...\( \text{xe4} \)

The most challenging continuation. Other options are:

9...\( \text{c5} \) transposes to line B2221.

9...\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{xc3} \) 10...\( \text{bxc3} \) \( \text{c6} \) was examined in B2221.

9...\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{xd2} \)

This is simplest. After 9...\( \text{xc3} \) 10...\( \text{bxc3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 11...\( \text{e4} \) White can fight for an advantage.

10...\( \text{xd2} \)

White can also recapture with the bishop: 10...\( \text{xd2} \) \( \text{e6} \) 11...\( \text{e3} \) (or 11...\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{dxe4} \) 12...\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{c6} = \)) 11...\( \text{xe3} \) The position is symmetrical and absolutely equal.

10...\( \text{c6} \) 11...\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 12...\( \text{e3} \)

12...\( \text{a5} \) N
This seems easier than: 12...b6 13...a3 e8
14.f3 c1 b7 15...b5 f8 16...b2 d7
17...e8 fxe8 18...f1 a6 19...c3 d6=
13.a4
13...a4 xxd2 14...xd2 b6=
13...d7 14...e3 c8
Black has full equality.

9...f4 xc3 10.bxc3 c6 11.e5
Or: 11.xb1 a5 12...d2 b6 13.e4 (after
13.c4 b7 14.e3 c8 15.c1 d7 16.xd5
c3 17...xd5 wxd5 Black has some
advantage in a typical Grünfeld position,
De Groot – Glek, Utrecht 1999) 13...b7
14...c1 dxe4 15...xe4 d7 16.c1
ac8 Black had good play in Juswanto –
H. Olafsson Yerevan (ol) 1996.
11...a5
I prefer this to 11...xe5, although that is
obviously good enough for equality.
12.c4 e6 13...f3 dxe4 14...xe4 c8
Black has a comfortable game, Muhring –

9.e3
This is quite harmless. For example:
9...xc3 10.bxc3 c6 11...d2
After 11.a3 I like the following example:
11...e8 12...d2 c6 13...b1 d7 14...e2
b6 15...f3 c8 16.c4

10.c5
Less popular is:
10.g5 xd4 11...xd4
White does not benefit from delaying
the queen exchange: 11...xe4 c6 12...b3
(Inaccurate is 12...xd4 cxd4 13...c3 c4
14.e3 Ilincic – Vaganian, Yerevan 2000. Here
Black missed the strong 14...c2N 15...b1
d8 with the point that after 16...e4 b4
17...xb7 ab8 18...g2 d6+ White is in
trouble.) 12...b8

Marin – Margvelashvili, Plovdiv 2008. Now
13...e3?! (White probably should have preferred 13.f4 c6 14.e3 xb2 15.xb2 x8 17.a7 g7 18.b6 and a draw seems likely) 13...xb2 14.xb2 x8 15.ab1 d4 16.c5 xe3 17.fxe3 Allahverdiev – Radjabov, Baku 2005. Now best for Black is 17...d5!N 18.a6 f5 19.xf5 xf5 20.xb8 xb8 21.b5 b6 22.xf5 xc8 and White will suffer in this endgame.

11...xd4

12.xe4

An alternative is: 12.d1 c6 13.xe4 (after 13.xe4 g4 14.cf1 xd8 only Black can be better, Voelzke – Christ, Kappeln 1990) 13...g7 14.g2 (not so good is 14.b1 h6 15.f3 e6 and White unexpectedly experiences some problems, for example 16.b3 b4! 17.d4 xd8 18.e3 d5 19.xd5 xd5+ Godes – Ma. Tseitlin, Belgorod 1989) 14...a5?! 15.b1 a4 16.b4 axb3 17.axb3 a2 18.d2 xd2 19.xd2= Smajekal – Kadlec, Hlinske 1993.

12.c6 13.c3

13.h6 d8 14.c3 c6 15.fd1 Berkell – Schussler, Stockholm 1978. After 15...f6 it is White who has to play carefully to keep the balance.

13...e6

13...d8 is also good enough.

14.d2 ac8 15.fd1

Olszewski – Zugic, North Bay 1998. Simplest now is:

15...fd8N 16.ac1

The game is just equal.

10.d5

I also consider 10...d7 sufficient for equality. I shall give just one example of typical play: 11.f4 f6 12.a4 f5 13.fd1 d5= Adianto – Peng Xiaomin, New Delhi/Teheran 2000. After 14.d2 Black can maintain equality with 14...b6 15.b4 c8 16.ac1 a5 17.xa5 xb4 18.e3 xc1 19.xc1 xb2.

11.e3

White has several other options:

11.b3 f5?! (11...c6 is also very reasonable, but I prefer the text, since it equalizes without needing to know much theory) 12.b2
1...c6! 12...xc6 bxc6 13...e3...f5 14.g4 exf3
Black can now play: 15...e6N 16...xd5 (or 16...d2 b5! 17...xc6...xb2+) 16...xd5 17...d2...g2 18...g2 e5 Black has the better chances, due to White's weakened pawn structure.

11...a4 d7 12...f4
Black has no problems after: 12...d1...b6 13...c2? Strangely enough, this weak move occurred in both games that reached this position. (Better is 13...b3...e6=.) 13...f5 14.g4...c8 15...b3...e6 16...xd5...xd5 Benko – Niephaus, Moscow (ol) 1956. Black stands better, as it's not easy for White to deal with the threat of...f6.

12...b6
This is clearly better than the unnecessary: 12...g5?! 13...e3...b6 14...c2...f5 15.g4! White had a big advantage in Barbero – Kaposztas, Hungary 1989.

13...b4...f5N
This novelty is connected with a new plan. Blechar – S. Jones, corr. 1996, saw 13...e6 14...f1 g5 15...e5...d8 16...g5...f6 17...xe4 fxe5 18...xb7 with a messy position.

14...f1...e6=
Black's idea is to bring his knight to d5. The position remains very complicated, with chances for both sides.

11...d7 12...c2
This is White's first choice according to theory. Other options:

12...b3...xb3 13.axb3 occurred in Nogueiras – Krasenkow, Merida 2005. I recommend the simple: 13...xe5N (13...f5 was played in the game, but I am concerned about 14...c4 followed by f3) 14...xe5...f5 15...f4...c8=

12...d3...f6

13...a4
I also examined:

13.h3...d8N (This looks simpler than 13...b5 14.a4...b6 15...b5 16...c5...xb2 Illincic – Simic, Novi Sad 1995. Here White can play 17...h2!N regaining the pawn and obtaining some pressure.) 14...d2 15...c6 b6 16...xe4...xe4 17...xe4...h3 The position is roughly equal.

13...f4?!...b5! 14...c2...g5 15.a4...b4 16...h3 h6 White was in trouble in Dobrzynski – Ptyle, Lublin 1969.

13...g4!
A very concrete approach, although there is nothing wrong with 13...f5N 14...ac1 (or 14...e5...e6) 14...f8.

14...f4...d6 15...d2
After 15...xe4...xe3 16...xe3...e5 17.dxe5...xe5 Black has excellent compensation for the pawn.

15...xd4 16...xd4...xd4 17...xe4
This was Granda Zuniga – Krasenkow, Madrid 1998, and now I suggest:

17...f6N 18...g2...f5
Black has nothing to worry about.
12...\( \Bx e5 \)
Black may also choose: 12...\( \B f6 \) 13.\( \B f5 \) 14.\( \B b3 \) \( \Bf8= \) Vlasov – Yandemirov, Kaluga 2007.

13.\( \B x e4 \) \( \B c4 \) 14.\( \D x e5 \) \( \B x c2 \) 15.\( \B x c2 \) \( \B x e5 \)
16.\( \B x e4 \) \( \B x e6! \)

The game has simplified to a very drawish position.

17.\( \B f d1 \) \( \B a d8 \) 18.\( \B x a7 \)
\( \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2} \) Kosyrev – Yandemirov, St Petersburg 2001.

For a final time I shall point out that 8...\( e6 \) 9.\( \B c3 \) goes into a line that we wish to avoid.

8...\( \B e4 \) is a valid alternative though, and was covered in B2221. However, even if you want to choose that option, much of the following analysis is relevant to our repertoire, as our main line can also be reached via the move order 6.\( \B c3 \) \( \B g7 \) 7.\( \B e5 \) \( \B f d7 \) 8.\( f4 \) \( \B x e5 \) 9.\( f x e5 \) etc.

9.\( f4 \)
This looks the most challenging. The alternatives are:

9.\( \B f 4 \) \( \B x e 5 \) 10.\( \B x e 5 \) (not good is 10.dxe5?! \( e6 \) and the \( e5 \)-pawn is weak) 10...\( f 6! \)N This new idea seems to me the most natural move.
11.\( \B f 4 \) (also leading to an equal position is 11.\( \B x b 8 \) \( \B x b 8 \) 12.\( \B c 3 \) \( e 6 \) 13.\( \B b 3 \) [White has no time for 13.e4? \( d x e 4 \) 14.\( \B x e 4 \) \( f 5 \) and he loses the d4-pawn] 13...\( f 5 = \) 11...\( \B c 6 \) 12.\( \B c 3 \) \( e 6 \) 13.\( \B d 2 \) \( f 5 = \)

9.\( \B x g 4 \) \( \B x g 4 \) 10.\( \B c 3 \) \( \B c 6 \)

11.\( h 3 \)
I believe that White should settle for this calm move, since entering complications can easily lead to him being worse, for instance:

a) 11.\( \B e 3 ? \) \( e 5 ! \) 12.\( \B x d 5 \) (Even worse is 12.dxe5? \( d 4 \) 13.\( \B x c 6 \) \( d x c 3 \) 14.\( \B x b 7 \) \( \B b 8 \)

B2232) 8.\( \B e 5 \) \( \B g 4 ! \)
Chapter 7 – White exchanges on d5

15.\texttt{e4} cxb2 16.\texttt{e1} Wang Yue – Vachier Lagrave, Lausanne 2006. Now Black could have secured his advantage by 16...\texttt{xe5N} 17.\texttt{xa7} \texttt{c8} and the b2-pawn should decide the game.) 12...exd4 13.\texttt{c1} \texttt{e8} 14.\texttt{ec1} \texttt{c8} Black has the better chances and he soon seized the initiative in Malakhov – Mamedyarov, Sant Lluis 2005: 15.h3 \texttt{f5} 16.a3 \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{h2} \texttt{c4+}

b) 11.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd4} 12.\texttt{xb7} 13.\texttt{g2} \texttt{b8} (13.\texttt{a6} \texttt{a5} 14.\texttt{d3} \texttt{fd8} gave Black great compensation for the pawn in J. Akesson – Poley, Sweden 2008) 13...\texttt{xc2}↑ (here too, Black can play for long-term compensation with 13...\texttt{a5}↑) 14.\texttt{xe2} \texttt{xd1} 15.\texttt{xd1} \texttt{e2} 16.\texttt{d7} \texttt{f8} 17.\texttt{xd8}↑ \texttt{xd8} White will have to fight for the draw.

11...\texttt{d7}! 12.\texttt{e3}

This leads to a symmetrical and equal position. But playing more actively does not promise White any advantage: 12.\texttt{d5} \texttt{xd4} 13.\texttt{g5} \texttt{e8} 14.\texttt{h2} (14.\texttt{d2}↑ loses a pawn to 14...\texttt{xh3}) 14...\texttt{c6} 15.\texttt{e4} \texttt{d6} 16.\texttt{d2} Sargissian – Smirin, Bursa 2010. Black should now play 16...\texttt{f5N} 17.\texttt{c3} \texttt{ad8} with good chances.

12...\texttt{e6} 13.\texttt{b3} \texttt{a5} 14.\texttt{d2}

After 14.\texttt{b2} \texttt{c7} 15.\texttt{c1} \texttt{f5} 16.\texttt{c1} \texttt{fc8} 17.\texttt{g4} \texttt{d5} 18.f3 \texttt{e6} 19.\texttt{f2} \texttt{ac8} Black was even slightly better in Arencibia Rodriguez – V. Mikhailovsky, Montreal 2004.

14...\texttt{c7}

14...\texttt{a3}↑ could be tried.

15.\texttt{c1} \texttt{ac8} 16.\texttt{e2}

½-½ Polugaevsky – Kasparov, Moscow 1981.

9...\texttt{xe5} 10.\texttt{xe5}

Recapturing with the other pawn is harmless: 10.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{b6}↑ 11.\texttt{h1} \texttt{d8} Black has no problems at all. 12.\texttt{c3} \texttt{e6} 13.\texttt{b3} \texttt{c6} 14.\texttt{h2} d4 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{b5}↑ Damaso – Markos, Dresden (ol) 2008.

10...\texttt{c6} 11.\texttt{c3}

11...\texttt{e6}!

It is important to play this, because after the more natural 11...\texttt{e6} White has an interesting pawn sacrifice at his disposal: 12.\texttt{e4} \texttt{xe4} 13.\texttt{c3} \texttt{f5} 14.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 15.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xf1}↑ 16.\texttt{xf1} \texttt{xd4} (after 16...\texttt{xd4}↑ 17.\texttt{d1} \texttt{e5} 18.\texttt{g5} White wins on the spot, as in the well-known game Kasparov – Nunn, Brussels 1986) 17.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{d4} Theory considers this to be a balanced position, but it looks a bit suspicious to me and I prefer something more solid.

12.\texttt{e3}

In my opinion this is the main continuation, but White has other options:

First of all, it is important that 12.\texttt{e4} doesn’t work: 12...\texttt{xe4} 13.\texttt{d5} (13.\texttt{c3} \texttt{b6} also favours Black) 13...\texttt{b6}↑ 14.\texttt{h1} \texttt{ad8}↑ Black wins material.

12.\texttt{f4} \texttt{f6}↑ I do not see any reason for refraining from this thematic idea, although Black can also carry it out a move later. (12...\texttt{e8} 13.\texttt{d3} \texttt{f6} 14.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 15.\texttt{ad1} Larsen – Weber, e-mail 2009, and now I like 15...\texttt{f5N}, when Black is certainly not worse.) 13.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 14.\texttt{e4} This is White’s only aggressive try, but it’s not dangerous. 14...\texttt{xe4} 15.\texttt{d5} \texttt{b6}↑ 16.\texttt{h1} \texttt{ad8} 17.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xd5} 18.\texttt{xf6}↑ \texttt{xf6} 19.\texttt{xd5}↑ \texttt{h8} It is White who must fight for equality.
12...h1
The main alternative according to theory.
12...d7
Now 12...f6? fails to 13.e4, since Black doesn’t have a check on b6.
13.e4
This does not promise an advantage, but nor do other continuations:
13.a4 h3?! (the calm 13...a6 is worth considering) 14.xh3 xh3 15.f4 ad8
13.e3 f6 14.exf6 exf6 15.d2 f5! In my opinion, this pawn structure secures Black’s position and White must be careful to avoid being worse. For example: 16.ac1 fe8
17.a4 b6 18.b3 h5 19.e3 ac8 Papin – Vitik, Belorechensk 2009.
13...g4

14.e6!
Were it not for this cute tactical trick, White would just be worse.
14...xd1 15.exd7 g4 16.g5 f6 17.e3 Schulze – Ostojic, Germany 1988. Now Black could have achieved easy equality with:
17...e5! 18.dxe5 d4 19.exf6 ef6 20.exf6
gxf6 21.d5 g7 22.f4 xd7=

12...f6N
All three games which reached this position continued 12...d7, but again I do not see any reason for Black to avoid the main idea.

13.exf6 exf6
Black intends to follow up with ...f5.

14.b3 a5
Black has a comfortable position.

Conclusion

When White exchanges on d5 the symmetrical structure does of course limit Black’s chances for active play. On the other hand, Black faces fewer problems equalizing than against some other lines. My aim in constructing this repertoire was to ensure that Black does not face the unpleasant task of defending a passive, slightly worse position. I believe that by responding accurately to the various possible white move orders, Black can confidently expect to achieve full equality.
Chapter 8

Various 4th Moves

Rare Options

Variation Index

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♕c3

3...d5

A) 4.g4 86
B) 4.h4 87
C) 4.f3 c5!
   C1) 5.cxd5 90
   C2) 5.dxc5 90
D) 4.♕d2 91

A) note to 7.e3

C2) after 10.♕d3

D) after 15.♕e1

7...♕c6!N

10...♕d7!N

15...♕e8N
1.d4 \( \text{d}6 \) 2.c4 g6 3.\( \text{c}3 \) d5

In this chapter we shall examine four of White's rarer fourth moves: A) 4.g4, B) 4.h4, C) 4.f3 and D) 4.\( \text{d}2 \).

Another possibility is 4.g3. This is an uncommon move order for playing the Fianchetto System, probably because it allows Black some extra options connected with \( \text{d}xc4 \). However, I recommend the straightforward 4...\( \text{g}7 \) 5.\( \text{g}2 \) (5.cxd5 \( \text{c}xd5 \) is covered in Volume Two) 5...c6. There is no way for White to benefit from this move order, so he should just enter one of the lines that were covered in the previous chapters.

A) 4.g4

This aggressive approach does not pose Black any real problems.

4...dxc4!

It is hardly wise to enter the complications after 4...\( \text{xg}4 \) 5.\( \text{b}3 \).

5.h3

White generally settles for this calm move, since he doesn't achieve much with:

5.g5 \( \text{d}5 \) 6.\( \text{g}2 \) c6 7.e4
7.\( \text{a}4 \) b6 8.\( \text{a}5 \) \( \text{g}7 \) 9.\( \text{f}4 \) 0–0 was clearly better for Black in De Nucci – Mekhitarian, Campinas 2010.

The point; Black's knight penetrates to d3 with check.

8.\( \text{ge}2 \) \( \text{d}3 \)+ 9.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{g}7 \)
9...e5 is also strong, with the idea: 10.dxe5 \( \text{d}7 \)+
10.h4

Damnjanovic – Hemmer, e-mail 2009. There is no reason for Black to refrain from capturing the white centre pawn.
10...\( \text{xd}4 \)N 11.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{xd}4 \)
Black has a large advantage.

5...\( \text{g}7 \) 6.e4

White may choose not to bother regaining the c4-pawn, but he does not obtain much compensation:

6.\( \text{g}2 \) 0–0 7.e4 c5 8.d5 c6 9.f4
This is an understandable decision, since the natural 9.\( \text{ge}2 \) exd5 10.exd5 runs into a strong response: 10...h5 11.g5 \( \text{e}8 \) Black transfers his knight to d6. His extra pawn and the exposed white kingside make Black's advantage obvious.

9...exd5 10.e5

This was Amelchenko – Leonov, Ufa 1996. It is not difficult to improve Black's play:
10...d4N 11.\( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 12.\( \text{e}4 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 13.\( \text{f}2 \) \( \text{c}6 \)
Black is clearly better, with three pawns
for the piece, a lead in development and an exposed white king.

6...0-0 7.\(\text{\texttt{dxc4}}\) c5
A well-timed counter in the centre.

8.d5?! 
This leads to an advantage for Black. Objectively White's best is:
8.dxc5 \(\text{\texttt{bxd7!}}\) 
8...\(\text{\texttt{d1}}\) 9.\(\text{\texttt{xd1}}\) is not so clear.

9.\(\text{\texttt{f3}}\) 
After 9.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a5}}\) White experiences problems defending his e-pawn.
9.\(\text{\texttt{xc5}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{e2}}\) b5!
This nuance assures Black of an excellent game.
11.\(\text{\texttt{xb5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{b7}}\)
Black will regain the pawn, and meanwhile White will hardly be able to find any compensation for the weakening of his kingside.

8...b5!
This thematic idea works perfectly.

9.\(\text{\texttt{xb5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a5!}}\) 11.\(\text{\texttt{c3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xc3}}\) 12.\(\text{\texttt{bxc3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xb5}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a6}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{e2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a4}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{d2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d7}}\)
Black's advantage was already decisive in Wehmeier – Sygulski, Germany 1995.
Various 4th Moves

7. \( \text{e3} \) cxd4 8. exd4 \( \text{c6} \) 9. hxg6 (9. \( \text{b5} \) can be met by 9...0-0 and Black has the better chances) 9...hxg6 10. \( \text{exh8}^+ \) \( \text{xh8} \) 11. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{a5} \) (the simple 11...e6 is good too) 12. \( \text{b3} \) Delis - Koukos, Ano Liosia 2007. Now 12...\( \text{xc3} \)N is the best solution: 13. \( \text{xc3} \) (13. \( \text{bxc3} \) just loses a pawn to 13...\( \text{dxc4} \)) 13...\( \text{b6} \) 14. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e6} \) Black has good play against the isolated d-pawn.

7...\( \text{c6} \) 8. h6 \( \text{f6} \) 9. e3

This was Lichman - Neerforth, Bad Woerishofen 2008, and now simplest is:

9...cxd4N 10. exd4 0-0+

Black has a comfortable position.

5...\( \text{d4} \) 6. \( \text{b5} \) e5!

This is an important move. After 6...\( \text{c6} \) 7.e3 e5 8. exd4 \( \text{dxd4} \) 9. \( \text{b4} \) we reach a very complex position, in which White is fighting for an advantage.

8. \( \text{g5} \)

White does not have time to slowly defend the b4-pawn: 8.a3 a6 9. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{e6} \) 10. \( \text{d6} \) \( \text{xd6} \) 11. \( \text{cxd6} \) \( \text{xc4} \) Black has a clear advantage.

8...\( \text{xb4} \)!

A very strong idea; Black sacrifices material, but in return gets powerful play against the white king, which is stuck in the centre.

9. \( \text{xf6} \)

9. \( \text{a4} \) is met with 9...\( \text{xc5} \)! (strongest, though 9...\( \text{c6} \) 10. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 11. \( \text{c7}^+ \) \( \text{d8} \) 12. \( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xc5} \) also gives Black great compensation) 10. \( \text{c7}^+ \) \( \text{f8} \) 11. \( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{d3} \) White is facing a huge attack, for example 12.0-0-0 \( \text{xd4} \)! wins for Black.

9...\( \text{xf6} \) 10. \( \text{c7}^+ \) \( \text{d8} \) 11. \( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{f5} \) 12. \( \text{c1} \)

After 12. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{c2}^+ \) 13. \( \text{d1} \) Black has the great resource: 13...\( \text{e4} \)! 14. \( \text{c6} \) (White has no time for 14. \( \text{c1} \) \( \text{xf2} \) and he is losing) 14...\( \text{xf2} \) 15. \( \text{f3} \) b6 Black is clearly better.

12...\( \text{xc5} \)

7. \( \text{e3} \)

Other options:

7. \( \text{b4} \)

I believe that Black has a very strong reply:

7...\( \text{c6}! \)N

My improvement on 7...a6, when the following idea gives White reasonable play: 8. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 9. \( \text{g5} \) Dobos - Fodor, Hungary 2005.
A critical position for the evaluation of my idea. Despite being a rook down, I strongly prefer Black. Firstly, the white knight is unlikely to escape from the corner, which means that White's material advantage will not be so great. And most importantly, Black is clearly ahead in development and it’s not easy for White to develop his kingside. Here is an illustrative line that clearly shows the dangers of White's position:

13.\( \text{\texttt{w}} \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{3}} \text{\texttt{c}} \text{\texttt{8}} \)

Not only intending to capture the knight in the corner, but also vacating the d8-square for the rook.

14.\( \text{\texttt{a}} \text{\texttt{3}} \)

After 14.\( \text{\texttt{g}} \text{\texttt{3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}} \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{8}} \) 15.\( \text{\texttt{g}} \text{\texttt{2}} \) \( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{3}} \) Black seizes a decisive initiative.

14...\( \text{\texttt{c}} \text{\texttt{6}} \) 15.\( \text{\texttt{g}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}} \text{\texttt{4}} \! \) !

This is stronger than 15...\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{g}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{6}} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{h}} \text{\texttt{3}} \), when White is still in the game.

16.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \)

16.f3 runs into 16...\( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{3}} \)! with a powerful attack.

16...\( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{3}} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{h}} \text{\texttt{3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{8}} \! \) !

White is in trouble.

7.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \)

A key idea is that Black is not forced to defend his e-pawn, but can make use of his development advantage:

7...\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{c5}} \! \) !

Improving on 7...\( \text{\texttt{c}} \text{\texttt{6}} \), which has been played in a couple of games.

8.\( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{xe5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{a6}} \)

The point of Black's play.

9.\( \text{\texttt{a4}} \)

9.\( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{a3}} \) runs into the strong: 9...\( \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{4}} \! \) ! (but not 9...\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{a3}} \! \) intending to follow up with ...\( \text{\texttt{a}} \text{\texttt{5}} \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{e5}} \), as White can insert the intermediate move 10.\( \text{\texttt{a}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) ! 10.\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{2}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xd2}} \! \) ! 11.\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{d2}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) 12.\( \text{\texttt{b}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) (otherwise 12...\( \text{\texttt{a}} \text{\texttt{5}} \! \) would be a killer) 12...\( \text{\texttt{c}} \text{\texttt{7}} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c6}} \) 14.\( \text{\texttt{a}} \text{\texttt{4}} \) 0–0 Black's development advantage looks scary from White's point of view.

9...\( \text{\texttt{c6}} \) 10.\( \text{\texttt{d}} \text{\texttt{d3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}} \text{\texttt{7}} \) 11.\( \text{\texttt{a3}} \) 0–0 12.\( \text{\texttt{g5}} \)

White is again experiencing serious problems with his development.

7...\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{\texttt{c5}} \) 8.\( \text{\texttt{exd4}} \) \( \text{\texttt{exd4}} \)

It is already clear that White's opening concept has been a failure; his knight is totally misplaced on b5, while the advance of the h-pawn has only created weaknesses in his own camp. It is not surprising that Black achieved a convincing victory in the following encounter:

9.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \) 0–0

There is also nothing wrong with the natural 9...\( \text{\texttt{c6}} \).

10.\( \text{\texttt{e2}} \)
Accepting the pawn sacrifice wouldn't help White: 10.\textit{b}xd4 \textit{e}e8\textdagger 11.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}6! 12.\textit{xc}6 (or 12.\textit{ec}3 \textit{wb}6 13.\textit{c}2 \textit{xf}5\textdagger) 12...\textit{xd}1\textdagger 13.\textit{xd}1 \textit{g}4! Black is doing very well.

\textdagger 10...\textit{c}6 11.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}5! 12.\textit{d}3

White had no time to castle, since Black was threatening 12...d3.

12...\textit{xd}3 13.\textit{xd}3 \textit{a}6 14.\textit{c}7 \textit{c}8 15.\textit{a}3 \\
\textit{xc}7 16.\textit{xc}7 \textit{wc}7

Black had a decisive material advantage in Cebalo – Riazantsev, Biel 2009.

C) 4.\textit{f}3

In my opinion this is not a dangerous variation, but it still has to be covered, as it has occurred more than two hundred times in practice!

4...c5!

This aggressive response is best. Black immediately tries to profit from the slight vulnerability of White's centre caused by the previous move. White now chooses between C1) 5.\textit{xd}5 and C2) 5.\textit{dx}c5.

C1) 5.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 6.\textit{a}4

I find this much more interesting than the more popular:

6.\textit{e}4 \textit{xc}3 7.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{g}7

I don't think that it makes sense for White to play like this. Comparing the position with the Exchange Variation, it is hard to imagine that anyone would choose 7.\textit{f}3 instead of the normal 7.\textit{c}4, 7.\textit{e}3 or 7.\textit{g}3.

8.\textit{b}5\textdagger

Black is not troubled by: 8.\textit{ec}3 \textit{c}6 9.\textit{b}5 cxd4! 10.\textit{xd}4 0–0 11.\textit{xc}6 bxc6 12.\textit{xg}7 \textit{g}7 13.\textit{d}4\textdagger Lecluse – Bosch, Herlies 1999. Now the simple 13...\textit{xd}4\textdagger 14.cxd4 \textit{b}8 would leave Black with a clear advantage.

8...\textit{d}7

This natural continuation is of course quite sufficient, but I like the more challenging 8...\textit{c}6, inviting the complications: 9.d5 \textit{xc}3\textdagger 10.\textit{d}2 \textit{a}5! Black is doing well.

9.\textit{xd}7\textdagger \textit{xd}7 10.\textit{e}2 cxd4 11.cxd4 \textit{c}6 12.\textit{e}3 0–0 13.\textit{b}1

This was Alsina Leal – Garcia Andrinal, Lisbon 2001, and now I suggest: 13...\textit{a}5\textdagger 14.d5 \textit{c}4 15.\textit{d}4 e5!

Black has a comfortable position.

6...\textit{g}7!

Black accepts the challenge and sacrifices the c5-pawn, hoping to make use of his lead in development. Of course White would be happy to see: 6...cxd4 7.\textit{xd}4 \textit{f}6 8.e4 \textit{c}7 9.\textit{xd}8\textdagger \textit{x}d8 10.\textit{e}3 White has the better endgame, Blasko – Varadi, Hungary 2003.
Chapter 8 – Rare Options

7.\( \text{cxd5} \)

After 7.dxc5 0-0 8.e4 \( \text{d}4 \) Black has a serious initiative for the pawn, thanks to the tactical point: 9.a3 \( \text{Wxd1} \# 10.\text{cxd1} \text{e}d8 \# 11.\text{d}2 \text{h}6\#

7...\( \text{c}6 \) 8.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 9.e3

9.e5

I. Botvinnik – Greenfeld, Israel 2002, continued: 9...0-0 10.f4! White prevents Black's key idea of ...\( \text{e}5 \). Although Black still has definite compensation, I prefer to attack the white centre immediately, which I consider more in the spirit of the Grünfeld.

10.dxe5

After 10.\( \text{c}2 \) Black has a pleasant choice between 10...\( \text{e}6 \)? and 10...0-0.

10.\( \text{Wxd1} \# 11.\text{cxd1} \text{xe}5 \)

I prefer this to 11...\( \text{xe}5 \) 12.\( \text{b}5 \#.

12.\( \text{b}5 \) 0-0

Black has full compensation for the pawn.

C2) 5.\( \text{dxc5} \) d4

We now have a more or less forced sequence of moves.

6.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 7.e3 \( \text{e}5 \) 8.exd4 \( \text{c}xd4 \)

9.\( \text{xd4} \)

White has other options here:

9.\( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 10.\( \text{xd4} \) (It is not a good idea to grab material with 10.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 11.\( \text{d}7 \# \) Coenen – Gertosio, Calvi 2009. After 11...\( \text{f}8 \# 12.\text{xa8} \text{b}4 \# 13.\text{d}2 \text{e}4! 14.\text{e}2 \text{f}5 \) White should not survive for long.) 10...\( \text{xd4} \) 11.\( \text{d}3 \) Nestorovic – Misailovic, Budva 2003. Here I like 11...0-0N 12.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{a}5 \# 13.\text{d}2 \text{b}6 14.\text{b}1 \text{a}5 15.0-0 \text{e}8 \# and the strong d4-pawn means that only Black can be better.

9.b4 a5!

It seems to me that White is in trouble: 10.\( \text{g}5 \) (another line is 10.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{xb}5 \) 11.\( \text{xd}8 \# \text{xd}8 12.\text{xb}5 \text{axb}4 13.\text{b}2 \text{xc}5 14.\text{xe}5 \text{e}7 15.\text{g}3 \text{e}8 16.\text{e}2 \text{Crouch} –
Various 4th Moves

Konopka, Decin 1996, and now the simple
16...b6!N 17.exf6+ gxf6 18.e4+ g7 leads
to a definite advantage for Black) 10.e7
11.e2 d5 12.exd5 exd5 13.cxb5 axb4
After 14...e8N 15.c1 e6 Black has a clear
superiority.

9...exd4 10.d3

10...d7!N
In my opinion this is a nice improvement
over 10...xc5, which occurred in all four
games that reached this position; after 11.e2
0–0 12.0–0 the play is balanced.

11.b4
White attempts to prevent Black achieving
an optimal arrangement of his pieces. Black
gets exactly what he wants after 11.e2 xc5
12.0–0 g7, when the d4-pawn secures him a
long-term edge.

11...a5 12.e4
Or 12.e2+ e7 13.b2 e5! and Black
is better.

12.g7 13.b2
After 13.c6 bxc6 14.xc6 b8 15.b5
0–0 White is in trouble, as Black’s lead in
development will soon start to tell.

13...axb4 14.xd4 0–0 15.e2 h4+ 16.g3
e7

Black will regain the c5-pawn, leaving him
with the better pawn structure and a generally
favourable position.

D) 4.d2

This is a relatively rare continuation, but since
Ivanchuk played it in 2007, a few other strong
grandmasters have also tried it.

4...xc4?!
This is a critical reaction, temporarily going
a pawn up. Black will gain time for developing
his pieces while White is regaining the pawn.
The natural 4...g7 is of course possible, and
after 5.cxd5 xd5 we have transposed into
Volume Two (4.cxd5 xd5 5.d2).

5.e3
It is hard to believe that White can afford
to calmly continue 5.f3, as Black can hold
onto the extra pawn: 5...a6 (5...c6 followed by
...b5 also comes into consideration) 6.e4 b5
7.e5 d5 8.a4 xc3 9.xc3 d5! White does
not have enough compensation for the pawn.
10.axb5 axb5 11.xa8 xa8 12.d5 g7 13.b3
xa3+ Burnier – Lagarde, France 2009.

5.e6 6.f3 c6 7.g5
White is obliged to play this if he wants to regain the pawn.

7...\texttt{d}5 8.e4 h6 9.exd5 hxg5 10.dxc6
After 10.\texttt{x}c4 cxd5 11.\texttt{b}5+ \texttt{c}6 12.\texttt{x}g5 \texttt{g}7 Black has the better pawn structure, and has nothing to worry about.

10...\texttt{xc}6 11.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{g}7
Black has several other possibilities here, but it is natural to complete the development of his kingside.

12.\texttt{xc}4
Ivanchuk correctly indicated that the alternative 12.d5 wouldn't pose Black any problems: 12...\texttt{e}5 13.\texttt{xc}4 (13.f4?! is too weakening, and after 13...\texttt{eg}4 14.\texttt{xc}4 14...\texttt{ec}8 15.\texttt{b}5+ \texttt{f}8 White's position looks vulnerable) 13...\texttt{xc}4 14.\texttt{a}4+ \texttt{d}7 15.\texttt{xc}4 White has won a pawn, but Black has ample counterplay. 15...\texttt{ec}8 16.\texttt{ec}2 \texttt{h}5! 17.h4 \texttt{h}7 18.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{xc}3 (Black can also invite a repetition by 18...\texttt{f}6) 19.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{xd}5 20.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{f}8 Black's position even looks slightly preferable to me.

12...\texttt{xd}4 13.\texttt{c}3
13.0-0? is a serious mistake, due to the double attack 13...\texttt{d}7; after 14.\texttt{a}4+ \texttt{f}8 15.h3 \texttt{g}4! Black obtains a decisive attack.

13.\texttt{a}4+ \texttt{d}7 14.\texttt{xd}7+ \texttt{xd}7 leads to a comfortable endgame for Black.

13...e5 14.0-0 0-0 15.\texttt{c}1
15.f4? is premature in view of: 15...\texttt{f}5 16.\texttt{c}5?! \texttt{xd}7 17.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{e}8?! 

We have been following the game Ivanchuk – Sutovsky, Montreal 2007, and now I suggest the natural improvement:

15...\texttt{c}8N 16.\texttt{d}3
Other options are 16.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{d}5! and 16.b3 a6 17.a4 \texttt{d}7. In both cases Black's position is perfectly playable.

16...a6 17.a4 \texttt{d}7 18.\texttt{f}d1 \texttt{fd}8
The position is balanced, Black's centralized knight fully compensating for White's bishop pair.

Conclusion

White's early lunges, 4.g4 and 4.h4, are too loosening. Black should follow the classical advice to counter in the centre, and White will often end up regretting the self-inflicted weakening of his kingside. The other two moves we looked at, 4.f3 and 4.\texttt{d}2, are more solid options, but neither of them is particularly dangerous.
Various 4th Moves

4. \( \text{a4}^+ \)

Variation Index

1. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 2. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 3. \( \text{c3} \) \( \text{d5} \) 4. \( \text{a4}^+ \) \( \text{d7} \) 5. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{dxc4} \) 6. \( \text{xc4} \)

6. \( \text{...} \) \( \text{g7} \)

A) 7. \( \text{f4} \) \( \text{a6} \) 8. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{0–0} \) 9. \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{c5} \)
   A1) 10. \( \text{e5} \)
   A2) 10. \( \text{dxc5} \)

B) 7. \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{0–0} \)
   B1) 8. \( \text{f3} \)
   B2) 8. \( \text{e5} \)

A) note to 8. \( \text{f3} \)

A1) after 19. \( \text{c3} \)

B2) note to 9. \( \text{b5} \)

9. \( \text{...} \) \( \text{0–0}! \)

19. \( \text{...} \) \( \text{b4}! \)

16. \( \text{...} \) \( \text{f6}! \)
This cheeky check aims to disrupt Black's natural development. Having said this, Black does gain a tempo as well.

4...\( \text{a4} \) The b-pawn is obviously untouchable: 6.\( \text{bxb7?} \) \( \text{c6} \) White is in trouble due to the threat of...\( \text{b8} \) followed by...\( \text{b4} \).

6...\( \text{g7} \)

Now 7.\( \text{f3} \) is covered as line A in Chapter 24; we shall look at A) 7.\( \text{f4} \) and B) 7.e4 here.

A) 7.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{a6} \) 8.\( \text{f3} \)

The alternatives are:

8.e4 0–0 9.\( \text{d1} \)N I checked this new idea for White. (9.\( \text{f3} \) transposes to the main line.) 9...c5 10.dxc5 \( \text{a5} \) 11.e5 \( \text{e6} \)! This is a convincing route to equality. 12.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{xb5} \) 13.\( \text{xh5} \) 14.\( \text{e3} \) (after 14.\( \text{g5} \) \( \text{xc5} \) 15.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{f6} \) Black has compensation for the pawn) 14...\( \text{xe5} \)=

8.\( \text{d1} \) c5 9.e3 (This is hardly the way to try for an advantage, but after 9.dxc5 \( \text{a5} \) Black has nothing to worry about.)

9...0–0!N This enables Black to fight for the initiative. Other moves:

9...\( \text{a5} \) 10.\( \text{b3} \) led to unnecessary complications in Julve - Lucas, France 2003.

9...\( \text{cxd4} \)N is the simplest way to equalize:

10.\( \text{xd4} \) 0–0 11.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{bxa6} \) 12.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{b6} \)=

10.\( \text{b3} \) 10.\( \text{dxc5} \) \( \text{a5} \) 11.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{ac8} \) and 10.d5 \( \text{h5} \) are hardly satisfactory for White either.

10...\( \text{cxd4} \) 11.\( \text{exd4} \) \( \text{a5} \) 12.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{ac8} \)±

8...0–0 9.e4 White does not hesitate to seize the centre. The modest 9.e3 should not pose Black any problems. For example: 9...\( \text{c5} \) 10.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{cxd4} \) 11.\( \text{exd4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 12.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{c7} \) 13.0–0 \( \text{cd5} \) 14.\( \text{e5} \) \( \text{b6} \)= M. Gurevich – Akesson, Antalya 2004.

9.\( \text{d1} \) This is a thematic move in this variation, and it can lead to an interesting battle.

9...\( \text{c5} \) 10.\( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{a5} \) 11.e4 Giorgadze – Sion, Castro Mondariz 1995, was agreed drawn after 11.\( \text{d4} \); if we continue with 11...\( \text{xc5} \) 12.\( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{xc5} \) then Black is very slightly better.

11.\( \text{ac8} \) The endgame arising after 11...\( \text{e6} \) 12.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{xb5} \) 13.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{xc5} \) is fine for Black.

12.e5
White must continue to play sharply. He has no time to simply complete his development, for example: 12.\textit{e}2 \textit{xc}5 13.\textit{d}3 \textit{a}4! 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{xc}3 15.bxc3 \textit{c}5 Black will play ...\textit{fe}4 next, with a big advantage.

12...\textit{xc}5

13.\textit{b}3N

It is clear that this is the critical continuation. Otherwise:
13.\textit{d}4? fails to 13...\textit{b}4!.
13...\textit{e}6 14.\textit{xb}7

White cannot play 14.exf6? in view of 14.\textit{xb}3 15.fxg7 \textit{d}8 16.\textit{xd}8 + \textit{xd}8 17.axb3 \textit{b}4! and the white king will be stuck in the centre.
14...\textit{b}4?! 15.exf6 \textit{xf}6 16.\textit{e}2

Settling for the draw. Other moves cannot be recommended:
16.\textit{d}2? \textit{xc}3 17.bxc3 \textit{xc}3 18.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}1† 19.\textit{d}1 \textit{d}3† —
16.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}8! 17.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5 18.\textit{e}2 \textit{xd}3† 19.\textit{xd}3 \textit{xd}3 20.\textit{xd}3 \textit{d}8 21.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}4 Black is much better.
16...\textit{c}8 17.\textit{e}4

17.\textit{a}8 \textit{f}5 also repeats moves, but 17.\textit{b}8? loses to 17...\textit{a}6 18.\textit{xa}7 \textit{c}2†.
17...\textit{f}5 18.\textit{b}7=

9...\textit{c}5

White has to decide what to do with his centre pawns, the main options being A1) 10.\textit{e}5 and A2) 10.\textit{dxc}5.

Closing the centre with 10.d5 is strongly met by: 10...b5! 11.\textit{xb}5 (11.\textit{e}2 c4 12.e5 \textit{h}5 13.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}4† was not much fun for White in R. Popov – Pavlov, Novosibirsk 2002) 11...\textit{xe}4 12.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xb}5 Black is already clearly better. 13.0—0—0 \textit{xf}1 14.\textit{h}xf1 \textit{a}5 15.\textit{e}4 \textit{ab}8! 16.\textit{xb}8 \textit{xb}8 17.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}4 Black had a decisive attack in Demchenko – Gabrielian, Armavir 2010.

A1) 10.\textit{e}5 \textit{h}5 11.\textit{e}3 \textit{cxd}4 12.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}6

Krasenkow sums up the position rather well: “Both black knights are on the edge of the
board but his bishops are active and he is ahead in development."

13. £e2 $a5
The alternative is:
13...£c7
I was intending to recommend this move and had already sent material to my editor when White posed serious problems to this continuation in a game in the latest European Championship.

14.0-0!
14.£h4 was played in a previous game: 14...£xe5! 15.£xe5 £xe5 16.0-0 (16.0-0 is stronger, but Black is absolutely fine after 16...£g7 17.£f4 17...£f5 [even 17...£d4?! 18.£ad1 £b4 could be considered] 18.£xh7+ £xh7 19.£xe5 £f6 20.£f4 £e5=) 16...£g7!N (an improvement over 16...£c7 Grigoriants – Esen, Warsaw 2005) 17.£f4 £e6 (17...£f5 18.£xh7+ £xh7 19.£xe5 £f6=) 18.£g4 £f5+
14...£xf3 15.£xf3 £xe5 16.£e4 £c5 17.£b4! £d3
Black’s play looks very logical, but he still finds himself in difficulties. The power of the two bishops is not easily contained.
18.£b3 £xc3 19.£xc3 £xc3 20.bxc3
The endgame is very unpleasant for Black and White won effortlessly by clearing the queenside and advance his a-pawn; Feller – Jansa, Aix-les-Bains 2011.

14.0-0 £xf3
14...£b4 did not work well for Black in Jakovenko – Topalov, China 2009. Now 15.£c5N is strong.

15.£xf3 £xe5 16.£d5 £xd5 17.£xd5 £fe8
18.£ac1
This looks harmless. The most challenging option is probably 18.g4N £g7 19.£ad1. Here I developed the following defensive strategy for Black: 19...£h5! 20.h3 (20.gxh5 £xh5 solves the problem of his misplaced knight and is fine for Black) 20...£xg4 21.£xg4 £e6 22.b4 £g7 23.£fe1 f6 White obviously has compensation for the pawn, but Black is in decent shape and I would evaluate the position as balanced.

18...£e6 19.£c3

19.£b4N
I prefer this to the slightly passive 19...£e7 as in 1. Sokolov – Van Wely, Belgium 2003.

20.£fd1 £ad8
Black obtains good activity.

A2) 10.dxc5 £e6 11.£b5 £d7 12.£xb7
12.£c4 would lead to a repetition.

12...£xc5 13.£b4 £e6
14.\textit{c}e5

Another option is:
14.\textit{g}3 a5

Black chases the white queen away from the b4-square in order to undermine the defence of the e4-pawn.
15.\textit{a}3
15.\textit{g}3 a4 16.\textit{a}3 \textit{c}6 17.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}4 18.0-0 Smithers – De Waard, e-mail 2001. Black should now play the straightforward: 18...\textit{h}6N 19.\textit{b}1 (19.f4 \textit{c}7\texttt{=}!) 19...\textit{xd}2 20.\textit{xd}2 \textit{xe}4 21.\textit{d}1 \textit{b}6 Black is clearly better.
15...\textit{c}6 16.\textit{d}1 \textit{b}6

Black's lead in development provides full compensation for the pawn.
17.\textit{d}3
17.e5 \textit{h}5 18.\textit{d}5?! is too risky: 18...\textit{xd}5 19.\textit{xd}5 \textit{fc}8 20.\textit{d}1 Sitnik – Balenovic, Sisak 2000. Now the simple 20...\textit{x}g3N 21.\textit{x}g3 \textit{c}2 22.\textit{e}2 \textit{xb}2 would leave Black with a considerable advantage.
17...\textit{c}5 18.e5 \textit{h}5 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{x}g3 20.\textit{x}g3 e6 21.0-0 \textit{d}7 21...\textit{xf}3 22.\textit{gx}f3 \textit{xe}5 23.\textit{b}5 would have led to an equal game, but Black tries to squeeze a bit more out of the position.
22.\textit{d}6 \textit{ad}8 23.\textit{d}4

This was Fracnik – Ilincic, Prague 1989, and now Black could have put the finishing touch to his strategy with:
23...\textit{b}8N

Black will win back the e5-pawn and then be able to press with his bishop pair.

14...a5 15.\textit{a}3 \textit{b}6 16.\textit{c}4

The alternatives do not promise White any advantage either:
16.\textit{d}5
This leads to a forced line.
16...\textit{xd}5 17.\textit{ex}d5 \textit{d}4! 18.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 19.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4

Black is in no danger, and it is actually White who must be careful to avoid getting a worse position.
17.\textit{e}2
20.\textit{d}1 \textit{e}5\texttt{=} 21.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}5 22.\textit{e}3 \textit{xb}2 23.\textit{d}2 Mujica – Laczay, e-mail 2009. Here Black could maintain some pressure with:
23...\textit{e}5N 24.\textit{e}3 \textit{xe}3 25.\textit{xe}3 \textit{ab}8\texttt{=}
20...\textbf{B}b8 21.0-0 \textbf{B}xb2 22.\textbf{B}d1
22.\textbf{B}xe7 \textbf{B}a4! 23.\textbf{B}a6 (23.\textbf{B}f3? \textbf{B}e8 24.\textbf{B}c7 \textbf{B}b5 25.\textbf{B}f1 \textbf{B}xf2+ 26.\textbf{B}h1 \textbf{B}xa2\#) 23...\textbf{B}xd5 White has not fully equalized, due to the poor coordination of his pieces.
22...\textbf{B}b4\textbf{N}
This is more testing than 22...\textbf{B}b6, as I played in Pelletier – Avrukh, Biel 1999.
23.\textbf{B}xb4 \textbf{B}xb4! 24.\textbf{B}f3 \textbf{B}c8 25.\textbf{B}e1 \textbf{B}f8 26.d6!
White should manage to hold the balance.

16.\textbf{B}xf6 exf6 17.\textbf{B}d1
White has also tried 17.\textbf{B}d5, but 17...\textbf{B}c5 is a strong reply: 18.\textbf{B}xc5 \textbf{B}xc5 19.0-0-0 \textbf{B}e6 20.\textbf{B}d2 f5! Black had a dangerous initiative in Novoa – Jelen, e-mail 2002.
17...\textbf{B}c6 18.\textbf{B}c4 f5!

18.\textbf{B}xb4 axb4 19.\textbf{B}d5
White is far from equalizing after 19.\textbf{B}d1 \textbf{B}fc8! 20.\textbf{B}d5 \textbf{B}a7! as pointed out by Sutovsky in \textit{Chess Informant} 76.

19...\textbf{B}xb2
Once again we are in a situation where it is Black who is trying for an advantage. However I believe that White can maintain equality with accurate play.

20.\textbf{B}d1
After 20.\textbf{B}b1 \textbf{B}c3\textbf{\#} Black takes over the initiative: 21.\textbf{B}xc3 (21.\textbf{B}e2 \textbf{B}c5! 22.\textbf{B}b6 \textbf{B}e6! 23.\textbf{B}xe6 fxe6 24.\textbf{B}xa8 \textbf{B}xa8\# Rustemov – Sutovsky, Polanica Zdroj 1999) 21...bxc3 22.0-0 \textbf{B}ac8 – Sutovsky, Albert (6) 2001. Now Sutovsky gives 22...\textbf{B}fc8\textbf{N} 23.\textbf{B}d5 c2 24.\textbf{B}bc1 \textbf{B}a3 with a clear advantage for Black.

20...\textbf{B}a4
This was Johansson – Pasko, e-mail 2001, and now White should sacrifice the exchange:
Various 4th Moves

8. $\text{d}2!$ $\text{c}3$ 22. $\text{xe}7+$ $\text{g}7$ 23.0–0 $\text{xd}2$

The position is balanced.

B) 7.e4 0–0

White now chooses between B1) $8.\text{f}3$ and B2) $8.e5$.

B1) $8.\text{f}3$ b5!

The clearest way for Black to equalize:

9. $\text{x}b5$

White may refrain from this capture:

9. $\text{b}3$ c5 10.e5

White has also tried: 10.dxc5 $\text{a}6$ 11.e5 (11.$\text{e}3$ runs into 11...$\text{g}4$ 12.$\text{d}2$ $\text{xc}5$

13.$\text{d}5$ $\text{b}6$ and Black was already winning in Witte – Lonoff, Chicago 1990) 11...$\text{g}4$

Play has transposed to 10.e5.

10...$\text{g}4$

11.dxc5

Worse is: 11.$\text{xb}5$?! cxd4 12.$\text{xd}4$ $\text{xb}5$ (Kasparov pointed out that 12...$\text{xe}5$?! also leads to an advantage for Black) 13.$\text{db}5$ a6 14.$\text{a}3$ $\text{d}4!$ 15.$\text{e}2$ (15.0–0 $\text{xe}5$ 16.$\text{g}3$ $\text{h}5$ 17.$\text{h}4$ $\text{c}6$+$\text{f}$) 15...$\text{c}6$ 16.$\text{e}2$ $\text{xe}5$! Black was clearly better in Hübner – Kasparov, Brussels 1986.

11...$\text{a}6$ 12.$\text{xb}5$

White should hurry to complete his development, or he may find himself in trouble. For example: 12.e6? $\text{xc}5$ 13.$\text{xf}7+$ $\text{h}8$ (13...$\text{xf}7$?! is also possible) 14.$\text{a}3$

Osieka – Pein, Lugano 1986. Black could have decided the game on the spot with 14...$\text{b}6$!N 15.$\text{d}5$ $\text{d}6$–+. 12...$\text{xc}5$ 13.$\text{c}4$ $\text{c}8$ 14.0–0 $\text{xe}5$ 15.$\text{xe}5$ $\text{xe}5$ 16.$\text{h}6$

Valtera – Vagenknecht, corr. 1999. Black should now play:

16...$\text{e}8$N 17.$\text{fd}1$ $\text{b}6$

Black is slightly better, thanks to his pressure down the long diagonal.

For the record I also checked 9.$\text{c}5$N, but it does not pose Black any problems: 9...$\text{a}6$
10.$\text{a}3$ b4 11.$\text{xa}6$ $\text{bxc}3$ 12.$\text{d}3$ $\text{xb}2$
13.$\text{xb}2$ Black can think about taking the initiative. 13...$\text{b}8$ 14.$\text{c}3$ $\text{b}6$ 15.$\text{a}3$
Chapter 9 - 4.\( \text{w}a4 \)†

9...\( \text{Qxe4} \) 10.\( \text{Wxc7} \)

Theory considers 10.\( \text{Qxc7} \) very dangerous for White, and rightly so.

10...\( \text{Qc6!} \) 11.\( \text{Qxa8} \) \( \text{wa5} \)† 12.\( \text{Qd2} \) (or 12.\( \text{Qd2 Qxd4} \) 13.\( \text{Qxc7 Wf5} \) and White was in trouble in Kiselev – Kozlov, Moscow 1986) 12...\( \text{Qxd2} \) 13.\( \text{Qxd2 Qxd4} \) 14.\( \text{Qc7 Qc6!} \) White will find that he is unable to castle without suffering material losses. 15.\( \text{e2 Qxc7} \) 16.\( \text{Qb3} \) (16.0–0 loses to 16...\( \text{Wf4} \) with the deadly threat of ...\( \text{b5} \)) 16...\( \text{Qxe2} \) 17.\( \text{Qxe2 Qxg2} \) 18.\( \text{g1 Qxh2} \) 19.0–0–0 \( \text{Wf4} \)† 20.\( \text{e3 Wf5} \)†!

The white king is also unsafe on the queenside. 21.\( \text{c5 Qc8} \) 22.\( \text{b4 Wf6} \) 0–1 Almeida Quintana – Herrera, Santa Clara 2002.

10.\( \text{d3} \) is harmless: 10...\( \text{d6} \) 11.\( \text{Qxd6 cxd6} \) 12.\( \text{Qe4 Qe6} \) 13.\( \text{wa4 d5} \) (in Zhou Jianchao – Ganguly, Subic Bay 2009, Black settled for the draw with 13...\( \text{Qd7} \) 14.\( \text{Qc4 Qe6} \) 15.\( \text{wa4 Qd7} \) ½–½) 14.\( \text{Qd3 Wb6} \) 15.0–0 \( \text{Qc6} \)

10...\( \text{Qc6} \) 11.\( \text{d3} \)

11.\( \text{Qxd8 Wxf8} \) 12.\( \text{d3} \) has been played in two game. Black should continue: 12...\( \text{Qf5} \)!N 13.0–0 (after 13.\( \text{e3 Qab8} \) the white knight is vulnerable on b5) 13...\( \text{a6} \) 14.\( \text{Qc7 Qa7} \) 15.\( \text{Qxa6 Qg3} \) 16.\( \text{Qxf5 Wxf5} \) 17.\( \text{Qc5 Qxd4} \) Black's initiative is enough to give him the advantage.
16...e5!N
This was mentioned by Giorgadze in Chess Informant 71. In Giorgadze – Khalifman, Germany 1997, Black prematurely captured the d-pawn: 16...\text{exd4}?! 17.\text{d1} e5 18.\text{d2} White was slightly better.

I found another interesting idea in 16...\text{c6}N, when play may continue: 17.\text{c3} \text{xf3} 18.\text{gxf3} \text{xf3} 19.\text{e2} \text{df8} 20.\text{a1} \text{f4}=

17.a4
Other moves are:

17.\text{dxe5} \text{xe5} 18.\text{d1} \text{e8}! 19.\text{xe5} \text{exe5} 20.\text{d2} \text{xf2} 21.\text{c1} \text{xg2}=

17.\text{0-0-0}? \text{e4} 18.\text{d2} \text{h6}! Even though he is two pawns down, Black has seized the initiative.

17.\text{c1} \text{e8}! (Giorgadze gives only 17...\text{exd4} 18.\text{d1} d3 19.\text{b3}?) 18.\text{dxe5} \text{xe5} 19.\text{c5} \text{exe5} 20.\text{d1} \text{f5}=

17...\text{c6} 18.\text{dxe5} \text{xf3} 19.\text{gxf3} \text{xe5}

Black is not worse, despite being two pawns down.

20.\text{0-0} \text{d4} 21.\text{c3} \text{hxh2} 22.\text{xh2} \text{h5} 23.\text{g2} \text{g5} 24.\text{h3}=

\text{B2) 8.e5}

8...\text{e6}!
8...\text{e8} 9.\text{h4} looked very promising for White in Aleksandrov – Olszewski, Warsaw 2009.

9.\text{b5}
White can get a position with three pieces versus queen and two pawns by:

9.exf6 \text{xc4} 10.\text{f7} \text{xf7} 11.\text{xc4} \text{xd4}

I think that the poor coordination of the white forces makes Black's chances preferable.

12.\text{e2} \text{c6} 13.\text{f3} \text{b6} 14.\text{0-0} \text{ad8} 15.\text{b1}

I also examined: 15.\text{b5} \text{d4} 16.\text{xd4} \text{xd4} 17.\text{e1} \text{c6} 18.\text{a4} \text{d7} 15...\text{e5} 16.\text{e1}
Chapter 9

16.\[\text{\textic{e3}}\] is strongly met by 16...\[\text{\textic{d4}}\] and the e5-pawn is untouchable: 17.\[\text{\textic{xex5?}}\] \[\text{\textic{xe2}}\] 18.\[\text{\textic{xe2}}\] \[\text{\textic{b5}}\]–+

16...\[\text{\textic{f6}}\]!N

This is more accurate than: 16...a6 17.b4 \[\text{\textic{e8}}\] 18.\[\text{\textic{f1}}\] f6 19.\[\text{\textic{a4}}\] a7 20.\[\text{\textic{c5}}\] White had a reasonable game in Lev - Huzman, Israel 1999.
17.b4 \[\text{\textic{d4}}\] 18.\[\text{\textic{d1}}\] \[\text{\textic{a6}}\]

Black has the better chances.

9...\[\text{\textic{d5}}\] 10.\[\text{\textic{xxb7}}\]

If White does not take the pawn then he is just positionally worse.

10...\[\text{\textic{b6!}}\] 11.\[\text{\textic{e4}}\]

White's problem is that he cannot play the natural 11.\[\text{\textic{f3}}\] because 11...c6! would trap his queen and threaten ...\[\text{\textic{c8}}\].

11...\[\text{\textic{f5}}\] 12.\[\text{\textic{h4}}\] \[\text{\textic{c6}}\]

Black has an enormous lead in development, which provides more than enough compensation for the pawn.

13.\[\text{\textic{g5}}\]

White gives up his d-pawn without a fight. He was no doubt concerned about the threat of ...\[\text{\textic{b4}}\], but he would have been better off giving up the exchange, for example: 13.\[\text{\textic{e3}}\] \[\text{\textic{b4}}\] 14.\[\text{\textic{c1}}\] (14.0-0-0 \[\text{\textic{d7}}\] would give Black a very powerful attack) 14...\[\text{\textic{c2}}\] 15.\[\text{\textic{xc2}}\] \[\text{\textic{xc2}}\] 16.\[\text{\textic{f3}}\] White is in the game, although Black's chances are clearly better.

13.\[\text{\textic{xd4}}\] 14.\[\text{\textic{xd4}}\] \[\text{\textic{xd4}}\] 15.0-0-0 \[\text{\textic{e6}}\] 16.\[\text{\textic{e3}}\] \[\text{\textic{xe5}}\]–+

White's position has collapsed, Chekhov - W. Schmidt, Polanica Zdroj 1981.

Conclusion

A key position arises in line A after 7.\[\text{\textic{f4}}\] \[\text{\textic{a6}}\] 8.\[\text{\textic{f3}}\] 0-0 9.e4 c5. When White chooses A1) 10.e5 Black must react accurately, but if he does so then he can expect to equalize. With A2) 10.dxc5 White goes a pawn up, but Black can count on obtaining full compensation. Line B is less critical and should not worry Black overmuch.
Various 4th Moves

4. \( \text{Nb3} \)

Variation Index

1. d4 \( \text{d6} \) 2. c4 g6 3. \( \text{c3} \) d5 4. \( \text{Nb3} \) dxc4 5. \( \text{cx4} \) \( \text{g7} \) 6. e4

6...0–0

A) 7. \( \text{f4} \) \( \text{a6} \) 8. \( \text{f3} \) c5
   A1) 9. \( \text{d1} \)
   A2) 9. e5
   A3) 9. d5 e6
      A31) 10. \( \text{e2} \)
      A32) 10. d6 c5! 11. \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{b4} \)
         A321) 12. \( \text{c1} \)
         A322) 12. \( \text{d1} \)

B) 7. \( \text{e2} \)

A) note to 8. \( \text{f3} \)

A31) after 12. \( \text{d1} \)

B) after 9. dxe5

10...b5!N

12...\( \text{c2} \)†N

9...\( \text{g4} \)†N
Chapter 10 – 4.\textsuperscript{b3}

This line has been quite popular recently. By employing this tricky move order, White may intend to transpose into the Russian System (4.\textsuperscript{f3} \textsuperscript{g7} 5.\textsuperscript{b3}), or may hope to profit from delaying the development of his king’s knight.

4...dxc4 5.\textsuperscript{xc4} \textsuperscript{g7} 6.e4

6.\textsuperscript{f3} would transpose to the starting position of the Russian System – see Chapters 27 and 28.

The only other reasonable alternative is:

6.\textsuperscript{f4} \textsuperscript{a6} 7.e3

7.e4 0–0 will be examined in line A below.

Black has comfortable play.

9.\textsuperscript{d1}

After 9.dxc5 \textsuperscript{a5} 10.\textsuperscript{b5} \textsuperscript{xb5} 11.\textsuperscript{xb5} \textsuperscript{xc5} 12.0–0 a6 13.\textsuperscript{e}2 \textsuperscript{b5} 14.a3 \textsuperscript{b7} Black was even slightly better, Avanzi – G. David, corr. 1991.

9...\textsuperscript{xc4} 10.\textsuperscript{xd4}

After 10.\textsuperscript{xd4} Black can avoid an immediate queen swap by 10...\textsuperscript{a5}! and the white queen cannot feel comfortable in the centre.

10...\textsuperscript{b6}!

The white pieces are rather awkwardly placed.

11.\textsuperscript{a4} \textsuperscript{a5} 12.\textsuperscript{c3}

White offers to swap queens in order to try and complete his development, Khan – Hallope, France 2005. Black should now play:

12...\textsuperscript{c6}!

The threat of ...\textsuperscript{b1}\textsuperscript{+} followed by ...\textsuperscript{xa2} poses White definite problems.

6...0–0

Other than going into the Russian System, the main options for White are A) 7.\textsuperscript{f4} and B) 7.\textsuperscript{e}2.

On both occasions that 7.f3 was played, Black’s response was rather unconvincing. I will spare you the details and focus on the logical improvement 7...\textsuperscript{c6}!N.
Various 4th Moves

Black’s idea is to play ...e5 next, which White can hardly stop. Here is a nice illustrative line:
8.\(\text{\&}e3\) e5 9.d5 (after 9.dxe5 \(\text{\&}xe5\) 10.\(\text{\&}d4\) \(\text{\&}e7\) Black’s chances are also preferable) 9...\(\text{\&}d4\) 10.\(\text{\&}b5?!\) c6! 11.dxc6 \(\text{bxc6}\) 12.\(\text{\&}xd4\) exd4 13.\(\text{\&}d1\) (it transpires that 13.\(\text{\&}xd4?\) loses on the spot to 13...\(\text{\&}xe4!)\) 13...c5 Black is clearly better.

A) 7.\(\text{\&}f4\) \(\text{\&}a6\)

This looks to me the most challenging response to the development of the bishop to f4. It is quite possible to play 7...\(\text{\&}c6\) 8.\(\text{\&}d1\) \(\text{\&}d7\), though if White chooses the move order with 6.\(\text{\&}f4\) then Black has to play ...\(\text{\&}a6\) anyway.

8.\(\text{\&}f3\)

There is also:
8.\(\text{\&}d1\) c6

I have come to the conclusion that this is Black’s best idea, since 8...c5 9.d5 \(\text{\&}b6\) 10.\(\text{\&}d2!\) offers White serious chances for an advantage.

9.\(\text{\&}e2\)

The alternative is: 9.\(\text{\&}f3\) \(\text{\&}a5!\) (9...\(\text{\&}b6\) is again met by 10.\(\text{\&}d2!)\) 10.\(\text{\&}d3\) \(\text{\&}d8\) 11.\(\text{\&}b1\) Black has gained a couple of tempos as a result of the slightly misplaced white queen. 11...\(\text{\&}g4\) 12.\(\text{\&}e2\) Legky – Mrdja, Larange 2000. I believe Black should now play:
12...\(\text{\&}e8\)N 13.c5 (After 13.\(\text{\&}e3\) c5 [13...c5 14.d5 \(\text{\&}b5?!\) also looks interesting] 14.\(\text{\&}xg5\) \(\text{\&}xg5\) 15.\(\text{\&}xg5\) \(\text{\&}xg5\) 16.\(\text{\&}xg5\) \(\text{\&}xe5\) 17.0-0 Black has a decent game. Play may continue 17...\(\text{\&}d8\) 18.\(\text{\&}b3\) \(\text{\&}c5\) [18...\(\text{\&}b6?!\)] 19.\(\text{\&}xc5\) \(\text{\&}xc5\) 20.\(\text{\&}xb7\) \(\text{\&}f6\) and Black has good compensation for the pawn.) 13...\(\text{\&}e7\) 14.0-0 \(\text{\&}f5\) 15.\(\text{\&}c1\) \(\text{\&}b4\) We have a complex game in which Black’s chances are not worse, due to his control over the d5-square.

9...\(\text{\&}a5\) 10.\(\text{\&}d3\)

This occurred in Peters – Mach, Hamburg 1989. This is a good moment for:
10...\(\text{\&}b5!\)N 11.a3

After 11.\(\text{\&}f3\) b4 12.\(\text{\&}b1\) b3\(\text{c}!\) 13.\(\text{\&}c3\) \(\text{\&}xc3\) 14.\(\text{\&}xc3\) bxa2 15.\(\text{\&}c4\) \(\text{\&}b4\) Black is better.

11...b4 12.axb4 \(\text{\&}xb4\) 13.\(\text{\&}b1\) \(\text{\&}e6\) 14.\(\text{\&}h3!\)

The natural 14.\(\text{\&}f3\) is met by the very unpleasant: 14...\(\text{\&}a2!\) 15.\(\text{\&}c1\) (or 15.\(\text{\&}xa2\) \(\text{\&}d3\) 16.\(\text{\&}xf1\) \(\text{\&}xf4\)\!\! 15...\(\text{\&}xe4\)\!\!\!}
14...\texttt{b}3 15.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{d}7 16.0-0 \texttt{e}5
16...\texttt{b}6 also makes sense.

17.dxe5 \texttt{x}e5
Black is fine.

\textbf{8...c5}

White has many ways to react to the blow against his centre. As well as \textbf{A1) 9.\texttt{d}1, A2) 9.e5 and A3) 9.d5}, we also have:

9.dxc5 \texttt{e}6 transposes to line A2 of Chapter 9.

9.0-0-0?! can hardly be recommended. Black easily gets good play: 9...\texttt{c}xd4 10.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{d}7
11.f3 \texttt{c}8 12.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{c}5 13.\texttt{a}3

\textbf{9...cxd4}

This is the most principled continuation, although Black has a decent alternative in: 9...\texttt{a}5 10.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{b}5 11.\texttt{x}b5 cxd4 12.\texttt{x}d4 \texttt{d}8N (this is more accurate than 12...\texttt{c}5 13.\texttt{e}5, when White has chances for an advantage)
13.\texttt{xa}6 (13.\texttt{e}5 is now strongly met by 13...\texttt{h}5†) 13...\texttt{b}a6 14.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{e}xd1† 15.\texttt{x}d1 \texttt{f}8† 16.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{d}7 The position is balanced.

\textbf{10.\texttt{x}d4}

Capturing with the knight is weaker: 10.\texttt{x}d4 \texttt{b}6 11.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{e}4! 12.\texttt{xb}6 \texttt{axb}6 13.\texttt{x}e4 \texttt{e}5 14.\texttt{x}e5 \texttt{xe}5 Black was clearly better in Kozakov – Musicki, Backa Palanka 2002.

\textbf{10...\texttt{b}6 11.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{e}6 12.\texttt{b}5}

13...\texttt{f}xe4! Not a difficult tactical blow. 14.fxe4 \texttt{e}5 Black was clearly better in Korchnoi – Tukmakov, Moscow 1971.
This is quite old theory, which to tell the truth was rather unfamiliar to me before I started work on this book. It is important for Black to react actively.

**12...\texttt{Qd7}! 13.\texttt{Qd5}**

Another line is:

13.\texttt{Qxd7 Qxd7 14.\texttt{Qxd7 Qxb2}}

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

15.\texttt{Qd2}

15.\texttt{Qd2} \texttt{Qxa2} 16.\texttt{Qxb7 Qc5} 17.\texttt{Qb5} (or 17.\texttt{Qb2 Qxb2} 18.\texttt{Qxb2 Qab8} 19.\texttt{Qd1 Qb1}

17.\texttt{Qe2 Qd8} 21.0–0 Szegedi – Miniboek, Balatonbereny 1986, and after the simple 21...a5N White would have to fight for a draw) 17...\texttt{Qf8} 18.\texttt{Qc4 Qab8}! An important tactical trick. 19.\texttt{Qxc5} (19.\texttt{Qxb8} fails to 19...\texttt{Qd3}!+ –) 19...\texttt{Qxc4} 20.\texttt{Qxc4 Qxc4} 21.\texttt{Qe3 a5} Again it is White who is trying to draw, Kobayashi – Graeser, corr. 1989.

15...\texttt{Qa1}+ 16.\texttt{Qc1 Qxc1}+ 17.\texttt{Qxc1 Qac8}

18.\texttt{Qd2}

Maybe 18.\texttt{Qb2} is an improvement, although after 18...\texttt{Qe5} 19.\texttt{Qxa6 Qxa6} 20.0–0 \texttt{Qb8} Black is in no danger.

18...\texttt{Qb4} 19.\texttt{Qb5 Qc6} 20.e6 f5 21.\texttt{Qe2}

This was Strand – Vukcevic, corr. 1984, and now Black should improve upon that game with:

21...\texttt{Qfd8N} 22.\texttt{Qd1 Qd5}!

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

13...\texttt{Qxd5} 14.\texttt{Qxd5}

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

14...\texttt{Qc7}! 15.\texttt{Qxd7 Qxd5} 16.\texttt{Qxd5 Qxb2}

17.\texttt{Qe2 Qb1}+ 18.\texttt{Qd1 Qad8} 19.\texttt{Qb3 Qe4}+ 20.\texttt{Qe3}

After 20.\texttt{Qe3 Qb4}+ 21.\texttt{Qd2 Qd7} 22.a3 \texttt{Qb2} Black is not worse.

20...\texttt{Qd3} 21.\texttt{Qc2}!!

Correct is: 21.\texttt{Qa4! Qxe3}+ 22.\texttt{Qxe3 Qxe3}+ 23.\texttt{Qf1 Qd8} Black has sufficient compensation for the knight.

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

21...\texttt{Qh6}! 22.0–0 \texttt{Qxe3} 23.\texttt{Qc2 Qxf2}+ 24.\texttt{Qxf2 Qe3}

Black was better in Van Dijk – Kruger, e-mail 2000.

A2) 9.e5 \texttt{Qh5}!
This is the most straightforward way to meet White's rather risky advance.

10.\textit{\textbf{c3}} cxd4 11.0-0-0

Another line is also quite illustrative: 11.\textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{e6}}! 12.\textit{\textbf{b5}}?! (stronger is 12.\textit{\textbf{xd4}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 13.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{fd8}} 14.\textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{xd1+}} 15.\textit{\textbf{xd1}} \textit{\textbf{b4}}! although Black has no problems) 12...\textit{\textbf{d7}}! Black takes over the initiative. 13.\textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{c5}} 14.\textit{\textbf{d5}} Ider – Bernard, Issy Les Moulineaux 2009. Black could now stabilize his advantage by: 14...\textit{\textbf{dxc3}!N} 15.\textit{\textbf{xc3}} (or 15.\textit{\textbf{xc5}} \textit{\textbf{xb2}±}) 15...\textit{\textbf{a4}! Black remains with a material plus.

11...\textit{\textbf{e6}} 12.\textit{\textbf{xd4}} \textit{\textbf{a5}}!

The white king is not safe on the queenside.

13.\textit{\textbf{c4}}

I also examined: 13.\textit{\textbf{xa6}} bxa6 14.\textit{\textbf{g4}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} 15.\textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{c8}}! Black develops a dangerous attack.

13...\textit{\textbf{fd8}} 14.\textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{xc4}} 15.\textit{\textbf{xc4}} \textit{\textbf{xe5}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xd8+}} \textit{\textbf{xd8}} 17.\textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{xe5}}

White did not have enough compensation for the pawn in Molo – Marcos Nozar, e-mail 2008.

A3) 9.\textit{\textbf{d5}} e6

White generally chooses between A31) 10.\textit{\textbf{e2}} and A32) 10.d6, although he has also tried:

10.0-0-0 exd5 11.exd5 White usually castles short with this pawn structure, and it's clear that the white monarch cannot feel safe on the queenside. 11...\textit{\textbf{f5}} (11...\textit{\textbf{e8}}!? also looks good) 12.\textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{xd3}} 13.\textit{\textbf{xd3}}

This was Wagner – Neubauer, Ketsch 1978. Black could now seize the initiative on the queenside with: 13...\textit{\textbf{d7}!N} 14.d6 \textit{\textbf{b4}} 15.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 16.\textit{\textbf{b1}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 17.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{xb5}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xb5}} \textit{\textbf{c4}} 19.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{xb2}! Black has an advantage.

10.\textit{\textbf{d1}} This is a thematic move for this pawn structure, but White's problem is that he is behind in development, which allows Black
an easy game: 10...exd5 11.exd5 \( \text{Wb6!} \) White has no convenient way to defend his b-pawn, for example: 12.\( \text{Ed2} \) \( \text{Ee8}+ \) 13.\( \text{Ee2} \) \( \text{Ee5} \) 14.0-0 \( \text{Ee4}+ \) White cannot avoid losing material.

\[
\text{A31) 10.\text{Ee2 exd5 11.exd5}}
\]

\[
\text{A32) 10.d6 e5!}
\]

This was played by Garry Kasparov, which is indeed a strong endorsement for the move. Black sacrifices a pawn for the initiative.

11.\( \text{Exe5} \)

Much weaker is 11.\( \text{Exe5?} \) \( \text{Eh5!} \) and Black is better.

11...\( \text{Eb4} \)

We shall look at A321) 12.\( \text{Ec1} \) and A322) 12.\( \text{Ed1} \).

Other moves are:

12.\( \text{Wb3} \)

This occurred in Khurtsilava – Chigladze, Tbilisi 2009. Black should now play:

12...\( \text{Ec6}! \) 13.\( \text{Ec4} \)

After 13.\( \text{Ef4} \) \( \text{Eh5} \) Black regains the pawn.

13...\( \text{Fg4} \) 14.\( \text{Wxb7} \) \( \text{Exf3} \) 15.\( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Exg2} \)

11...\( \text{Eb4}! \) 12.\( \text{Ed1} \)

White has also played: 12.0-0 \( \text{Exf5} \) (in my opinion this is stronger than 12...\( \text{Exb5} \) 13.\( \text{Ed1} \) \( \text{Ee6} \) 14.\( \text{Eg5} \) \( \text{Wxg5}! \) 15.\( \text{Wxg5} \) \( \text{Exc3} \) 16.\( \text{Wxc3} \) (after 16.\( \text{Wxc5} \) \( \text{Exe2}+ \) 17.\( \text{Wf1} \) \( \text{Ee6}+ \) Black's three pieces are stronger than the white queen) 16...\( \text{Wxc4} \) 17.\( \text{Wxc4} \) \( \text{Ec6} \) White does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

12...\( \text{Ec2}+ \)

In three games Black has played 12...\( \text{b6} \) here, but it makes sense to force the white king to move.

13.\( \text{Ff1} \) \( \text{b6} \)

I do not believe that White can really hope for an advantage with his king on f1.
16.\textit{g1}

An important point of Black's play is that the tempting 16.0–0–0 runs into the incredible 16...\textit{xe4}!! and White cannot play 17.\textit{xg7} in view of 17...\textit{g5+} followed by ...\textit{xc3.}

16...\textit{xe4} 17.\textit{c7} \textit{f5}+

12.0–0–0 is mentioned in the comments to the above game, but the white king is hardly safe on the queenside: 12...\textit{e6} 13.\textit{b5} (not 13.\textit{xc5?} \textit{xa2+}) 13...a6 14.\textit{xb7} \textit{h6+}!
An important tactical nuance. 15.\textit{b1} \textit{xe4}!
Black suddenly has a serious initiative.

A321) 12.\textit{c1}

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

This was played in Taitt – N. Arias, Guanare 2000. Black should respond with:

12...\textit{b6}!

A very flexible decision. Black defends the c5-pawn and keeps all his options open; he may develop his light-squared bishop to a6, b7, or e6.

13.\textit{a3}

An alternative is:
13.\textit{b3} \textit{b7} 14.\textit{e2}

Another exciting line I found is: 14.\textit{a3} \textit{c6} 15.\textit{c4} \textit{a5} 16.\textit{a4} \textit{xe4}?! Not the only option for Black. 17.\textit{xe4} \textit{e8}! 18.d7 \textit{xe5}

19.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 20.0–0 \textit{xe4} 21.\textit{xe4} \textit{h4+} 22.\textit{g1} \textit{xe4} 23.f3 \textit{e3+} 24.\textit{h1} \textit{h6= It finishes in perpetual check.

14.\textit{c6}!
Black has enough activity for the sacrificed pawn, for instance:
15.\textit{g3} \textit{d4} 16.\textit{xd4} \textit{exd4} 17.\textit{d5} \textit{xd5} 18.exd5 \textit{e8} 19.\textit{c2}

After 19.\textit{d1} \textit{xe2}! 20.\textit{xe2} \textit{g5} Black has excellent compensation for the exchange.

12.\textit{a6} 20.\textit{d1} \textit{xe2+} 21.\textit{xe2} \textit{xe2} 22.\textit{xc2} \textit{e8+} 23.\textit{d1} \textit{e4} 24.\textit{e1} \textit{b1+} 25.\textit{d2} \textit{h6+} 26.f4 \textit{f5}
The game is balanced.

13...\textit{e6} 14.\textit{xe2} \textit{c6} 15.\textit{f4}

After 15.\textit{g3} Black would have the additional possibility of 15...\textit{h6}.

15...\textit{e8}!

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

It is clear that Black's lead in development should count, for example:

16.\textit{e3}
Black has an initiative after both 16.h3 \textit{d4} 17.\textit{d3} \textit{d5}! and 16.\textit{d3} \textit{d4}.

16...\textit{d4} 17.\textit{e2} \textit{f5} 18.\textit{d2} \textit{xe2}
19.\textit{xe2} \textit{h5} 20.\textit{e3} \textit{xc3} 21.\textit{xc3} \textit{xe4}
Only Black can be better.
A322) 12.±d1 ±e6

12...±c2† 13.±d2 ±e6 will come to the same thing.

13.±xc5

It is very dangerous for White to play 13.±c2 ±e8, when Black has good compensation for the pawn, and a lot of ideas based on the white king still being in the centre.

13...±c2† 14.±d2

14...±d7

The key move.

15.±c7 ±xe5 16.±xd8

White has also tried: 16.±xc2 ±g4! 17.±d2 ±h6 18.±c2 It is dangerous to allow Black to keep the queens on. (18.±d8 ±xd8 transposes to our main line.) 18...±h6 19.±c5 ±fd8 20.±d4 ±f4! 21.±d2 ±ac8 Black had a strong initiative in Boecker – Kappes, e-mail 2008.

16...±xd8 17.±xc2

As mentioned by Kasparov, 17.±xe5? would be a serious mistake: 17...±b4 18.±c4 ±h6† 19.f4 ±xf4† 20.±e1 f5! Black is clearly better.

17...±g4

Also playable is the less ambitious: 17...±xf3 18.±xf3 ±e5 19.±d5 ±xd6 20.±c4 ±fd8 21.a4 ±f8 22.b3 ±xd5 23.±xd5 ±xd5 24.±xd5 ±c8† 25.±d2 b6 Black made a draw without any problems in Latronico – Neven, e-mail 2003.

18.±d2 ±h6

An important resource, which forces White to return one of his extra pawns.

19.±e2 ±xd6 20.h3 ±f6 21.g4!

Otherwise White could easily find himself being worse.

21...±d7


B) 7.±e2 ±c6

8.±e3

8.±f3 is covered in Chapter 28.

8.d5 does not pose Black any problems: 8...±e5 (or 8...±a5N 9.±a4 c6 10.dxc6 ±xc6 11.±f3 ±e6 12.0–0 a6=) 9.±b3 S. Pedersen – Mogranzini, Beijing 2008. Now I like 9...e6N 10.f4 ±eg4 11.h3 ±h6 and the opening up of the position should be in Black’s favour.
8...e5
Black takes advantage of the lack of a knight on f3 to obtain counterplay with this punch in the centre.

9.dxe5
Other moves:

9.d5 Qd4 10.Qd3
10.Qxd4 exd4 11.Qd3 (11...c6 12.d6 Qd5!? is also interesting) 12.Qd3 (or 12.e5 Qg4 13.f4 f6! with a strong initiative for Black) 12...d7 13.f3 f5! Black has ample compensation.
10...c6 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.Qf3 Qxe2
I think that 12...Qg4!N is even stronger, for example: 13.0-0 Qxf3† 14.gxf3 Qxe3 15.Qxd8 Qxd8 16.fx e3 Qd2 Black has a clear advantage.
13.Qxe2 Qa5
Thanks to the possibility of ...Qa6, Black has the better game, Potpara – Csiba, Batumi 2010.

9.Qf3 exd4 10.Qxd4

This position occurred in Vanderhallen – Swinkels, Vlissingen 2005, and here Black missed the strong idea: 10...Qg4!N 11.Qxg4 (after 11.Qxc6 Qxe3 12.Qxd8 Qxc4 13.Qx e4 Qxd8 Black has a pleasant edge in the endgame) 11...Qxe5! Black will play 12...Qxg4 with advantage.

9...Qg4!N
This idea should be familiar by now. Instead Shabalov – V. Mikhalevski, Philadelphia 2009, saw 9...Qxe5 10.Qa4 Qg4 11.Qd1 with unclear play.

10.Qc5
10.Qxg4 is met by: 10...Qxe5! 11.Qb3 Qd5† 12.Qf1 Qxg4 Black has a clear advantage.

10...Qgxe5 11.Qa4
After 11.Qb3 Qe6 Black has a clear initiative.

11...Qd3†
11...Qg5!? is also worth considering.

12.Qxd3
12...\textit{hxg}3! 

The key move. White would even be better after: 12...\textit{hxg}3?! 13.\textit{f}2f8e8 14.g1d1±

13.bxc3 \textit{hxg}3 14.e2 e8 15.f3 d7

Black has the initiative, thanks to his better pieces.

16.d1

This is stronger than: 16.d1 e5! 17.b3 a6 White is in trouble, due to the threat of \textit{...a}4.

16...c4 17.d4

After 17.f2 e5 18.0-0 b5 19.a4 a6 20.g3 h5! Black has a clear plus.

17.f5

Black keeps a strong initiative.

Conclusion

After A) 7.f4 a6 8.f3 c5 White has several options, but none of them promise him an advantage. In particular line A32 with 9.d5 e6 10.d6 e5! offers Black good compensation for his pawn sacrifice. In line B with 7.e2 c6 I do not believe that White can gain anything by avoiding the transposition to the Russian System, as Black obtains fine counterplay after 8.e3 e5.
Closed Variation

Various Fifth Moves

Variation Index

1. d4 \( \rightarrow \) f6 2. c4 g6 3. \( \widehat{\rightarrow} \) c3 d5 4. e3

4...\( \rightarrow \) g7

A) 5. b4 0–0 6. \( \widehat{\rightarrow} \) f3 c6
   A1) 7. \( \rightarrow \) e2
   A2) 7. \( \rightarrow \) b2
B) 5. \( \widehat{\rightarrow} \) b3 e6
   B1) 6. \( \widehat{\rightarrow} \) f3 0–0
      B11) 7. \( \rightarrow \) e2
      B12) 7. \( \rightarrow \) d2
   B2) 6. \( \rightarrow \) a3
C) 5. \( \rightarrow \) d2
D) 5. cxd5

B12) 17. d5

C) after 15. \( \rightarrow \) e2

D) after 12. cxd5

17...\( \rightarrow \) xd5! N

15...\( \rightarrow \) h6! N

12...\( \rightarrow \) b6! N
White's quiet fourth move can be played with various follow-ups in mind. In this chapter we shall examine A) 5.b4, B) 5...b3, C) 5...d2 and D) 5.cxd5, while 5...f3 is covered in the following chapter.

A) 5.b4

By playing on the queenside in this manner, White intends to steer the game into a positional battle.

5...0-0 6...f3

White's other options do not have much independent significance:

6...b2 c6 7...f3 is line A2.

6...b3 c6 7.a4?

This is somewhat suspicious strategy; White gains space on the queenside, but completely neglects his kingside development. The natural 7...f3 is clearly better and transposes to the line with 7...b3 in the following note.

7...e5!!

This strike in the centre seems to me a very natural response to White's provocative play.

8.xe5 dxe4

The point; Black's bishop starts to work on the long diagonal.

9...f3

I also examined a couple of other moves:

9...xe4 dxe4 10...b2 d7 11.e6 c5 Black has an initiative.

9.cxd5 cxd5 10...b2 c6! 11...d1 c6 12...f3 a5! 13.b5 b4 Black has excellent play for the pawn.

9...xc3 10...xc3 d7 11.cxd5 e8! 12...b2 xxe5 13...xe5 xxe5 14...d2 xb2 15...xb2 xd5 16...d1 e4 17...d4 e5 18...d3 a5

Black has a very pleasant position, and the only question is whether White can hold on.

6...c6

As well as our main lines of A1) 7...e2 and A2) 7...b2, White has a couple of other options:
Chapter 11 – Various Fifth Moves

7.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{dxc}4 8.\texttt{x}c4 b5 9.\texttt{e}2 a5 10.0-0 (a nice line is 10.\texttt{a}3? \texttt{e}6 11.\texttt{b}2 c5! and the white position collapses) 10...\texttt{e}6 We have transposed to the note to White's eighth move in line A1 with 8.\texttt{b}3 etc.

7.a4 \texttt{g}4 8.\texttt{b}3

8.h3?! is too slow and deserves to be punished: 8...\texttt{x}f3N (the illogical 8...\texttt{f}5 was played in Baudot – Philippy, Luxembourg 1994) 9.gxf3 (after 9.\texttt{x}f3 Black breaks up the centre by 9...e5 10.dxe5 \texttt{fd}7 and White is in danger) 9...\texttt{bd}7 10.f4 White has managed to stop the ...e5-break, but Black now strikes on the queenside. 10...a5 11.b5 c5 Black has a strong initiative.

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

Black's play from this position has been rather unconvincing in practice, so I was obliged to find a new idea:

8...\texttt{bd}7?N 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.\texttt{xd}5

White cannot really hope for an advantage after: 10.\texttt{e}2 e6 11.h3 \texttt{xf}3 12.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{db}6

The black knight will land on the c4-square.

10...\texttt{xf}3 11.gxf3 e5

Black's activity fully compensates for the sacrificed pawn.

A1) 7.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{g}4 8.\texttt{b}2

Releasing the tension in the centre does not have much point: 8.cxd5 \texttt{xd}5 9.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xd}5 10.0-0 \texttt{d}7 11.a4 (after 11.\texttt{b}2 Black strikes from other side with 11...a5!) 11...e5 This solves all possible problems. 12.dxe5 \texttt{xd}1 13.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{xe}5 Black had a comfortable endgame in Tunik – Belov, Internet 2004.

8.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{dxc}4 9.\texttt{xc}4

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

This was Duong The Anh – Le Quang, Ho Chi Minh City 2005. Black should now play:

9...b5N

Although this is a new move in this particular position, play soon transposes into an old game.

10.\texttt{e}2

10.\texttt{xf}7+ \texttt{xf}7 11.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{e}8 is not dangerous for Black.

10...a5 11.0-0 \texttt{e}6 12.\texttt{b}2 axb4 13.\texttt{xb}4 \texttt{a}6 14.\texttt{b}2 b4! 15.\texttt{a}4 \texttt{a}5 16.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{f}5 17.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{e}4

Black clearly had the better chances in Troianescu – Botvinnik, Budapest 1952.
8...dxc4 9.axc4 Qbd7
Black’s main idea is to carry out the ...e5 advance.

10.e2
Black is not troubled by: 10.0-0 e5 11.dxe5 Qxf3 12.gxf3 (Black has no problems after 12.Qxf3 Qxe5 13.Qe2 Qe7) 12...Qxe5 13.e2 Qc8! Black immediately uses the slightly vulnerable position of the white king by heading towards h3. 14.f4 Qd8 15.Qc2 Qh3 (15...Qd3 also leads to a draw) 16.Qxe5 Qg4 17.Qxg4 Qxg4† 18.Qh1 Qf3† 19.Qg1 Qg4† 20.Qh1 Qf3† ½–½ Karjakin – Van Wely, Foros 2008.

10...Qd5 11.Qb3 Qxc3 12.Qxc3 e5!
Black makes use of his lead in development.

13.Qxe5
After 13.dxe5 Qxf3 14.Qxf3 Qxe5 the exchange of dark-squared bishops secures equality for Black.

13...Qxe5 14.dxe5 Qxe2 15.Qxe2

15...Qg5!
A key move; Black obtains full compensation for the small material deficit, due to the vulnerable position of the white king.

16.h4
White could have settled for a draw by: 16.Qf1 Qxe5 17.f4 Qxf4! 18.exf4 Qxf4† 19.Qg1 Qe3† Black has perpetual check.

16...Qg4†!
The correct decision. After 16...Qxg2?! 17.Qag1 Qe4 18.f3 Qf5 19.h5= White consolidates and has the better chances, as Ftacnik pointed out in ChessBase Magazine 84.

17.Qf1 Qad8 18.f3 Qf5 19.Qb2 Qfe8 20.f4?
This allows Black to seize the initiative. Instead White could have maintained equality with: 20.Qf2 Qxe5 21.Qxe5 Qxe5 22.Qad1=

20...Qd3 21.Qf2 Qed8
Black was clearly better in Kempinski – Ara. Minasian, Ohrid 2001.

A2) 7.Qb2 Qe6?

8.Qg5
There are several other moves:

8.Qb3 Qbd7 9.Qg5?!
Not the best moment for this aggressive move, but White was probably scared of the black knight penetrating to the d4-square.
Chapter 11 – Various Fifth Moves

For example: 9.\textsuperscript{a}c2 \textsuperscript{b}b6 10.c5 \textsuperscript{c}c4 Black has a good game.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\foreach \i in {0,...,7} {\foreach \j in {0,...,7} {\filldraw[black] (\i,\j) circle (0.05) node[anchor=south] {\textcolor{white}{\texttt{a\textsubscript{\i}\texttt{b\textsubscript{\j}}}}};}}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

9...dxc4N

An obvious improvement over 9...\textsuperscript{d}f5, played in Lushenkov – Prianikov, Saratov 2007.

10.\textsuperscript{d}xc4

No better is: 10.\textsuperscript{d}xe6 cxb3 11.\textsuperscript{d}xd8 \textsuperscript{e}fxd8 12.axb3 a6 White’s position is unpleasant, due to his weak b4-pawn.

10...\textsuperscript{d}xc4 11.\textsuperscript{d}xc4 \textsuperscript{e}5=

Black has a great game, while the white knight is clearly misplaced on g5.

8.\textsuperscript{d}d2 \textsuperscript{d}bd7 9.\textsuperscript{e}e2

9.\textsuperscript{b}b3 a5N (This nice idea improves on 9...\textsuperscript{b}b6 10.c5 \textsuperscript{b}bd7 11.\textsuperscript{d}d3 Birnboim – Lein, Beersheba 1982, which is quite promising for White, although Black is very solid of course.) 10.b5 dxc4 11.\textsuperscript{e}xc4 a4!

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\foreach \i in {0,...,7} {\foreach \j in {0,...,7} {\filldraw[black] (\i,\j) circle (0.05) node[anchor=south] {\textcolor{white}{\texttt{a\textsubscript{\i}\texttt{b\textsubscript{\j}}}}};}}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Black instigates various tactical ideas on the queenside. 12.\textsuperscript{b}b4 (The main point of Black’s idea is seen in the remarkable line: 12.\textsuperscript{d}xa4 cxb5 13.\textsuperscript{b}xb5 \textsuperscript{b}a5 14.\textsuperscript{b}b4 b5! 15.\textsuperscript{b}xe6 [White is clearly worse after 15.\textsuperscript{b}xb5 \textsuperscript{d}d5 16.\textsuperscript{b}b3 \textsuperscript{d}xc3 17.\textsuperscript{b}xe3 \textsuperscript{b}xb5 18.0–0 \textsuperscript{b}a8] 15...\textsuperscript{a}xa4 16.\textsuperscript{b}xb5 \textsuperscript{b}a5 17.\textsuperscript{e}xd7 \textsuperscript{b}xb5 18.\textsuperscript{b}xb5 \textsuperscript{d}d5 19.a4 \textsuperscript{b}xe2 Black is better, although White has some counter-chances.) 12.c5! 13.dxc5 \textsuperscript{c}e5 14.\textsuperscript{e}e2 a3! 15.\textsuperscript{a}xa3 \textsuperscript{d}d3+ 16.\textsuperscript{d}xd3 \textsuperscript{b}xd3 Black has a strong initiative.

9...dxc4 10.\textsuperscript{e}xc4

This is more natural than: 10.\textsuperscript{d}xc4 \textsuperscript{d}d5 11.0–0 a5 Black has a comfortable game.

10.\textsuperscript{e}xc4!

The simplest way for Black to free his game.

11.\textsuperscript{e}xc4 e5 12.dxe5 \textsuperscript{e}xe5 13.\textsuperscript{e}e2 \textsuperscript{e}e7 14.\textsuperscript{b}b3 \textsuperscript{b}fd8=

Black will play ...\textsuperscript{d}d3 next; he has successfully solved his opening problems.

8.c5

This is not unreasonable, but on the other hand it presents Black with a straightforward plan of preparing the ...e5 advance.

8...\textsuperscript{b}bd7 9.h3

Necessary prophylaxis, as otherwise it’s too easy for Black: 9.\textsuperscript{e}e2 \textsuperscript{g}g4 10.0–0 \textsuperscript{e}e8 And ...e5 is coming.

9...a5 10.b5 \textsuperscript{e}e4

The idea behind Black’s ninth move was that he is now threatening ...\textsuperscript{d}dxc5.

11.\textsuperscript{b}c2
This occurred in Strating - I. Sokolov, Amsterdam 2001. Here I like:
11...\textit{f}5 12.\textit{h}4
Another line is: 12.\textit{d}3 \textit{xc}3 13.\textit{xc}3 \textit{xd}3 14.\textit{xd}3 \textit{c}7 15.0-0 \textit{e}5 Black is fine.
12...\textit{e}5 13.\textit{xf}5 \textit{gx}f5
The position is complex and unbalanced.

8...\textit{f}5 9.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}6 10.\textit{f}3 \textit{bd}7 11.\textit{c}5
A dubious looking decision, which allows Black an easy game.

11...\textit{a}5 12.\textit{b}5 \textit{c}e4 13.\textit{c}1 \textit{a}4 14.\textit{xe}4 \textit{dx}e4 15.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}5 16.\textit{xc}6 \textit{bxc}6 17.\textit{c}4 \textit{a}6
Black was slightly better in Kveinys - Bartel, Germany 2008.

B) 5.\textit{b}3 \textit{e}6
This is considered to be Black's most reliable reply, although other moves are also playable.

White now chooses between B1) 6.\textit{b}3 and B2) 6.\textit{a}3.

B1) 6.\textit{f}3 0-0

Here I would like to examine B11) 7.\textit{e}2 and B12) 7.\textit{d}2.

B11) 7.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}6

Black shouldn't hurry with 7...\textit{dx}c4 8.\textit{xc}4 since after 8...\textit{b}6 White has 9.\textit{b}4!, countering both ...\textit{a}6 and ...\textit{c}5, and securing an edge, Tarasov - Piankov, USSR 1966.

8.0-0
White can release the tension in the centre by:
Chapter 11 – Various Fifth Moves

8...dxe4!
The correct solution, since each recapture has its own drawback.

Black failed to equalize after: 8...c5 9.dxc5 bxc5 10.f3 dxe4 11.cxd5 exd5 12.c4
White regains the pawn with a comfortable position.

B12) 7.d2 b6 8.cxd5
Other options:

8...e7 12.d2 c5= Black has solved his opening problems, Hassan – Bernasek, Oropesa del Mar 1998.

9...b6 N
Previously Black tried 9...b7, but failed to equalize: 10.b4 d7 11.b2 Viner – Hill, Toowoomba 1986.

10.a4 dxe2 11.dxe2 d7
11...c5 would be premature: 12.dxe5 bxc5 13.d1 b6 14.d2 c6 15.c3 White’s better pawn structure gives him an edge.

12.c2 e8
White cannot do anything against the coming ...c5. For instance:

13.b4 c5 14.bxc5 bxc5 15.dxc5 b5
Black regains the pawn with a comfortable position.

8...dxc4
9.xc4 b7 10.e2 (after 10.d1 I recommend the simple 10.e7 N 11.e2 b7 followed by ...c5) 10...b7 11.d1
2010. Now simplest is 11...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)8 and Black can comfortably meet 12.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}}\)a3 with 12...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)8.

8...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)xd5 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)xe2 c5

As we have already seen, Black is not forced to continue with the natural 9...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}\)7, but can play more aggressively. Meanwhile the light-squared bishop can be very useful on the h3-c8 diagonal.

10.0–0

I also checked:

10.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)e5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}\)7?!\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{N}}}}\)

An interesting pawn sacrifice. The alternatives 10...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{a}}}}\)6 and 10...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)6 are playable too.

11.dxc5

11.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}\)6 12.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc6 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc6 leads to a comfortable game for Black.

11...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)7 12.c6

I believe that White should return the pawn, since 12.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)d3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}\)6 followed by ...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)4, looks very promising for Black.

12...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc6 13.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc6 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc6 14.0–0 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)d8

Black will play ...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)4 at a suitable moment, with comfortable equality.

10...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}\)6 11.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)fd1 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)6

This is quite a nice square for the bishop, but the more flexible 11...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)8?!\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{N}}}}\) is worth considering, since Black would then be able to meet \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}}\)a3 with ...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)8.

12.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{a}}}}\)3 cxd4 13.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)xd4

Black has no problems after 13.exd4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)4 14.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)f4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc3 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}}\)xc3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)8.

13...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}\)xd4 14.exd4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)4 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xc4 dxc4 16.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}\)b4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)8 17.d5

This happened in Lalev – Dorfman, Lvov 1988. Black can now favourably sacrifice his queen by:

17...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xd5!\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{N}}}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}\)4

After 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}\)5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}\)5 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}\)3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}\)5 Black is just a healthy pawn up.

18...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)c4 19.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xd8 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}}\)xd8\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{N}}}}\)

Black has sufficient material for the queen, and objectively the position is level.

B2) 6.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{a}}}}\)3
An unusual idea that temporarily prevents Black castling.

6...a5
This seems to me the most challenging option, preparing ...\(a\)_6-b4 to block the a3-f8 diagonal.

7.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)3 c6
This is necessary to defend the a5-pawn.

8.b3
The immediate 8.cxd5 does not pose Black any problems: 8...exd5 9.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)3 \(\text{\textit{a}}\)_6 10.0-0 \(\text{\textit{b}}\)_4 11.\(\text{\textit{b}}\)_1 b6 12.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_a4 0-0 13.a3 \(\text{\textit{b}}\)_7 14.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_b3 \(\text{\textit{a}}\)_6 15.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)_d2 Gukloe – Cu. Hansen, Rome 1988. Now simply 15...\(\text{\textit{e}}\)_8N would give Black a fine game, for instance:

15...\(\text{\textit{c}}\)_5 16.\(\text{\textit{b}}\)_4 17.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_c3 \(\text{\textit{e}}\)_8 18.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_b4 \(\text{\textit{c}}\)_7 19.a4 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)_d7 Black has the much better coordination.

8...\(\text{\textit{a}}\)_6

9.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)_2
White has a couple of other possibilities:

9.c5
This seems too ambitious.
9...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)_7 10.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_x_a6 \(\text{\textit{a}}\)_xa6 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)_a4 0-0
The extravagant 11...g5 turned out okay for Black in Korchnoi – Van Wely, Istanbul 2000, but the text is more logical.

9...\(\text{\textit{e}}\)_4
With the white bishop on d2, this idea is now even stronger.

10.\(\text{\textit{w}}\)_b2
White defends his bishop again, since after 10.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)_2 \(\text{\textit{c}}\)_xd2 11.\(\text{\textit{c}}\)_xd2 e5 Black takes over the initiative.

10...0-0 11.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)_2
This was U. Baumgartner – Siger, e-mail 2008. Black now has various attractive options – the one I like most is:

11...c5N 12.0-0 cxd4 13.exd4 \(\text{d}x\text{d}2\) 14.\(\text{f}\text{x}\text{d}2\) dxc4 13.exd4 \(\text{c}5\) Black is doing well.

This is White’s main idea. Black has an excellent game after 8.cxd5 \(\text{c}x\text{c}5\) 9.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{f}5\), for instance: 10.\(\text{ge}2\) \(\text{d}3!\) 11.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{a}6\) 12.0-0 \(\text{c}8\) 13.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{d}6\) 14.a3 \(\text{g}4\) Black had a dangerous initiative in Cusi – Yermolinsky, Chicago 2003.

8...\(\text{d}e4!\)
A very strong idea. After the exchange of White’s dark-squared bishop, Black will have fine compensation for the pawn.

9.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}x\text{d}2\) 10.\(\text{f}\text{x}\text{d}2\) e6 11.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{a}5\)
Black has no intention of easing White’s task by swapping queens.

12.a3 \(\text{d}8\) 13.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{b}7!\)
Black is waiting for a better moment to capture the c5-pawn, since 13...\(\text{c}x\text{c}5\) could be met by 14.\(\text{f}2\).

14.\(\text{f}2\)
After both 14.\(\text{ge}2\) \(\text{c}x\text{c}5\) and 14.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{c}x\text{c}5\), Black is clearly better.

14...\(\text{a}8\) 15.\(\text{e}2\)

This relatively rare continuation has been tested several times by Belarusian GM Aleksandrov. It may look as if White is well-prepared to meet ...c5, but Black can still play it.

6...c5 7.dxc5 \(\text{a}6\) 8.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5\)

This is an improvement on 15...\(\text{c}x\text{c}5\), which allowed White to stabilize the position with 16.b4 in Aleksandrov – Ivanchuk, Chalkidiki.
2002. Black’s idea is that when he plays ...\( \text{wx}c5 \) he will be attacking the e3-pawn.

16.f4 \( \text{e}5! \)

The position opens up in Black’s favour.

D) 5...\text{xd}5 6...\text{xd}5

This line has recently been very fashionable. I would also like to mention: 6.c4 \( \text{b}6 \) 7.b3 0–0 8.\text{ge}2 This can hardly pose Black any difficulties. (The natural 8.\text{f}3 transposes to line D2 in the following chapter.) 8...\text{c}5 9.\text{xc}5 \( \text{d}6 \) 7.\text{c}6 11.\text{w}c2 \( \text{b}4 \) 12.\text{a}5 13.0–0 \text{xc}5 14.\text{xc}5 \( \text{wx}c5 \) 15.a3 \( \text{c}6 \) Black clearly has the better chances, Sinprayoon – Ogaard, Haifa (ol) 1976.

6...\text{xd}5 7.\text{e}2

The point of White’s play; the second knight will come to c3 with tempo.

7...0–0 8.\text{c}3 \text{d}8

Some strong players have opted for 8...\text{d}6 in recent games, but I prefer the d8-square for the queen.

9.\text{e}2 \text{c}5

This is of course more active than 9...c6, which is also quite popular.

10.d5

The only way to fight for an advantage. 10.\text{xc}5 \( \text{a}5 \) can only be better for Black, for example: 11.\text{d}2 (after 11.0–0 \( \text{d}8 \) 12.\text{d}2 \( \text{xc}5 \) Black has the more pleasant position) 11...\text{xc}5 12.\text{a}4 \( \text{g}5 \) (12...\text{c}7 is fine too) 13.0–0 \( \text{d}8 \) 14.\text{c}1 This occurred in Gregor – Sulko, Slovakia 2002, and now the simple 14...\text{h}3\text{N} 15.\text{f}3 \( \text{c}6 \) 16.\text{c}3 \text{ac}8 would have led to a better position for Black.

10...\text{e}6 11.e4 \text{ex}d5 12.\text{ex}d5

Here I have a new idea to suggest:

12...\text{w}b6!?\text{N}

I like the idea of preventing the white bishop from easily jumping to f4 or g5. Now White will need to spend time solving the problem of the b2-pawn. In practice Black’s most popular continuation has been 12...\text{b}6.

13.0–0 \text{a}6

13...\text{f}5 is also worth considering.

The position is very complex, but my feeling is that Black is doing fine. Here is my brief analysis:

14.d6

This looks the most challenging continuation, but of course there are reasonable alternatives:
14...\texttt{e}e1 \texttt{d}d7 (14...\texttt{f}f5 would allow White to free his pieces by 15...\texttt{a}a4 \texttt{d}d6 16...\texttt{e}e3) 15...\texttt{a}a3 \texttt{f}f6 It is not clear how White can develop his queenside.

14...\texttt{c}c4 \texttt{b}b5 looks good for Black.

14...\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{f}f5 (14...\texttt{x}xb3 15.axb3 \texttt{b}b4 looks tempting, but after 16...\texttt{g}g5 White might have some initiative) 15...\texttt{e}e3 \texttt{f}f8 16...\texttt{b}b5 (16...\texttt{x}xb6 axb6 17...\texttt{b}b5 \texttt{f}f8 18.d6 \texttt{b}b4 is not dangerous for Black, and it seems to me that White's passed pawn is rather weak) 16...\texttt{e}ec8 17...\texttt{a}a4 \texttt{a}a5 18...\texttt{x}xa6 bxa6 19...\texttt{a}ac1 \texttt{f}f8 Black will play ...\texttt{ab}8 next, with fine play.

\textbf{Conclusion}

We have covered a range of different approaches from White, but in all of these lines I believe that Black can count on obtaining good play. The most important variation is probably D) 5...\texttt{c}xd5 \texttt{d}d5 6...\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{xd}5 7...\texttt{e}e2, which has been all the rage in the last year or so. In that line I think that my new idea of 12...\texttt{b}6!!\texttt{N} offers Black promising counterplay.

14...\texttt{e}e6 15...\texttt{a}a4 \texttt{w}e6 16...\texttt{f}f3 \texttt{w}d7 17...\texttt{e}e3 \texttt{c}4

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

Black has good Grünfeld counterplay.
Chapter 12

Closed Variation

5.\( \text{\#f3} \)

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \text{\#f6} \) 2.c4 \( g6 \) 3.\( \text{\#c3} \) d5 4.e3 \( g7 \) 5.\( \text{\#f3} \)

5...0-0

A) 6.\( \text{\#e2} \) c5
   A1) 7.dxc5
   A2) 7.cxd5
   A3) 7.0-0 cxd4 8.exd4 \( \text{\#c6} \)
      A31) 9.c5 \( \text{\#e4} \)
         A311) 10.\( \text{\#f4} \)
         A312) 10.\( \text{\#e3} \)
      A32) 9.cxd5
      A33) 9.\( \text{\#e1} \) \( \text{\#g4} \)
         A331) 10.c5
         A332) 10.cxd5
      A34) 9.h3

B) 6.\( \text{\#d2} \)

C) 6.\( \text{\#d3} \)

D) 6.cxd5 \( \text{\#xd5} \) 7.\( \text{\#c4} \) \( \text{\#b6} \)
   D1) 8.\( \text{\#e2} \)
   D2) 8.\( \text{\#b3} \)

128
128
130
131
133
134
135
136
136
137
138
139
141
143
143
144
1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3.c3 d5 4.e3 g7 5.f3 0–0
6.b4 (via the 5.b4 move order) and 6...b3 e6 were covered in the previous chapter, but there are still four other serious continuations to be examined: A) 6.e2, B) 6.d2, C) 6.d3 and D) 6.cxd5.

A) 6.e2 c5

8.cxd5
There is also:
8.d2 dxc4 9.e4
Or 9.xc4 xc5 and:
a) 10.b3 c6 11.0–0 d8. The position resembles those that can arise from the 4.e24 Variation (see line C of Chapter 17), but the passivity of White's dark-squared bishop makes a difference and Black is very comfortable here. 12.h3 Dvoranova – Purgar, Herceg Novi 2008. Black can now go after the light-squared bishop by: 12...a5N 13.e2 c4xb3 14.axb3 b6 15.e4 b7 Black's chances are preferable.

b) 10...b3 c6 11.c4 h5 12.e2 (White probably only now realized that the natural 12.c3 runs into the extremely unpleasant 12...h3!) 12...e4 Black captures the white dark-squared bishop and has the better game, Serrano Pertinez – 'Chessbolo', Internet 2004.

9...c7 10.xc4 e4 11.e1

White has managed to temporarily retain the extra pawn, but his pieces are lacking in coordination, while Black has active pieces and full compensation.

11...g4 12.e2
An important variation is 12.h3 xf3 13.gxf3 xd2 14.xd2 Cvitan – Donchev, Polanica Zdroj 1985, and now best is 14...c6N, for example: 15.e2 (15.0–0 is dangerous in view of 15...e5 16.e2 c6!) 15...a5†
16.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f1 b5 17.\textit{\textbf{C}}xb6 axb6 18.\textit{\textbf{R}}c3 e6 Black has excellent positional compensation for the pawn.

12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}x\textit{\textbf{f}}3
12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}c6?! is also interesting.

13.\textit{\textbf{C}}x\textit{\textbf{f}}3  \textit{\textbf{Q}}xd2 14.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd2 \textit{\textbf{Q}}d8 15.\textit{\textbf{R}}c2 \textit{\textbf{Q}}a5† 16.\textit{\textbf{Q}}e2

This was Adamski – Dueball, Raach 1969.

The following seems to me the best way for Black to play:

16...\textit{\textbf{Q}}c6N 17.\textit{\textbf{Q}}hd1 \textit{\textbf{Q}}e5 18.\textit{\textbf{Q}}b3 e6 19.f4 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xc4 20.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xc4

20.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xc4 b5! 21.\textit{\textbf{C}}xb6 axb6

20...b5 21.\textit{\textbf{C}}xb6 axb6

Black is doing well; he is threatening not only ...b5, but also ...\textit{\textbf{Q}}h5† followed by ...\textit{\textbf{Q}}xh2.

\textbf{8...\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd5 9.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd5 10.\textit{\textbf{Q}}d2}

Other options:

10.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f1?! looks unnatural, and indeed after 10...\textit{\textbf{Q}}d8 11.\textit{\textbf{Q}}c4 \textit{\textbf{Q}}f6 Black has more than enough compensation. For example: 12.\textit{\textbf{Q}}c2 \textit{\textbf{Q}}a6 13.\textit{\textbf{Q}}d2 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xe5 Black had an obvious advantage in Zlotnik – Sion Castro, Palma de Mallorca 1991.

10.bxc3

This exchange sacrifice deserves attention; it brought an important victory for Milov in his game against the young Indian GM Negi in the 2009 World Cup.

10...\textit{\textbf{Q}}xc3† 11.\textit{\textbf{Q}}d2 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xa1 12.0–0

12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}c6!

I prefer this natural move to 12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}c6, as played in the above-mentioned game.

13.\textit{\textbf{Q}}b2

After 13.\textit{\textbf{Q}}c4 Korpas – Matyas, Nyiregyhaza 1999, Black should play: 13...\textit{\textbf{Q}}f6N 14.\textit{\textbf{Q}}b5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}d8

13...\textit{\textbf{Q}}xa2 14.\textit{\textbf{Q}}c3 e5 15.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xc5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xe5 16.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xe5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}c3

17.\textit{\textbf{Q}}d8 fails to 17...\textit{\textbf{Q}}f5–+. We have been following Thoma – Postl, Austria 1998, and here Black should play the simple:

17...\textit{\textbf{Q}}c6N

White will have to work hard in order to demonstrate his compensation.

10...\textit{\textbf{Q}}d8!

A very important move, which comfortably solves all Black's opening problems.
11.\texttt{\S}xc3

Sacrificing the queen is possible, but tends to leave White fighting for equality rather than for the advantage:

11.\texttt{\S}xd8† \texttt{\S}xd8 12.\texttt{\S}xc3 \texttt{\D}d7 13.\texttt{b}4 a5!

14.0–0

White cannot maintain his pawn structure by means of the natural 14.\texttt{a}3 in view of:

14...\texttt{axb}4 15.\texttt{axb}4 \texttt{\A}xa1† 16.\texttt{\A}xa1 \texttt{\S}xc5!
17.0–0 \texttt{\D}e4 Black had the better chances in Murach – Packroff, corr. 1977.

On 14.\texttt{bxa}5 Klinghammer – Hallier, corr. 1986, Black should of course recapture:

14...\texttt{\A}xa5!N 15.0–0 (after 15.\texttt{\A}xa5 \texttt{\W}xa5† 16.\texttt{\D}f1 \texttt{\S}xc5 Black has a serious edge, due to the misplaced white king) 15...\texttt{\S}xc5
16.\texttt{\S}b4 \texttt{\D}c7 17.\texttt{\A}fd1 \texttt{\A}f8 Black has the advantage, although White has reasonable drawing chances.

14...\texttt{axb}4 15.\texttt{\S}xb4 \texttt{\W}c7 16.\texttt{\S}fc1 \texttt{\D}b8

The knight is heading for the c6-square.

17.\texttt{\S}d4 \texttt{\D}d7 18.\texttt{\S}b5 \texttt{\W}e5

Again Black is better, but White has chances of surviving, Moehring – Tukmakov, Leipzig 1975.

11...\texttt{\W}xc3† 12.\texttt{b}xc3

12.\texttt{\S}d2 \texttt{\texttt{\W}xd}2 13.\texttt{bxc}3 \texttt{\D}d5 transposes to the main line.

12...\texttt{\W}xd5

13.\texttt{c}4

White has tried 13.\texttt{\D}d1 more often, but Black can respond: 13...\texttt{\W}xc5 14.\texttt{\W}d8† \texttt{\G}g7 15.\texttt{\D}d4 e5! 16.\texttt{\S}b5 Suvrajit – Ganguly, Visakhapatnam 2004. Here the simple 16...\texttt{\S}c6N 17.\texttt{\S}e8 \texttt{\W}b8 would solve the problem of the back-rank pin and leave Black with much the better chances.

13...\texttt{\W}xc5 14.\texttt{\D}d4 \texttt{\D}d7 15.0–0 \texttt{\D}f6 16.\texttt{\A}ab1 \texttt{e}5

16...\texttt{\W}b8!? is worth considering.

17.\texttt{\W}b5

We have been following Struzka – Hlavac, e-mail 2005. Black should now play:

17...\texttt{\D}e4N 18.\texttt{\W}xc5 \texttt{\A}xc5 19.\texttt{\S}b3 \texttt{\A}d4
20.\texttt{\A}c1 \texttt{\G}e6

Black has slightly better chances.

A2) 7.\texttt{c}xd5 \texttt{\S}xd5 8.\texttt{\W}b3

A common alternative is:

8.0–0 \texttt{\G}c6 9.\texttt{d}c5

White has a wide choice:

9.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{cxd}4 10.\texttt{exd}4 is examined in the note to White’s tenth move in A32.

9.\texttt{\S}b3 \texttt{\A}e6 10.\texttt{\W}xb7 \texttt{cxd}4 11.\texttt{exd}4 transposes to the main line of A32.

9.\texttt{\S}xd5 \texttt{\W}xd5 10.\texttt{dxc}5 \texttt{\W}xc4† Black has a thematic advantage, due to the contrast between the dark-squared bishops.
Chapter 12 − 5...d3

9...exd3 10.bxc3 Wa5! 11..d2 Wxc5 12..b1 b6 13..c2
Holtorp − Schoene, Bensheim 2002. Here there is the simple:
13...e5!N
Black has a pleasant edge.

8...exd3 9.bxc3 c6

Quite a common pawn structure in this opening. Here Black has a good version, since the white queen is obviously misplaced on b3; Black can at some point win a tempo with the thematic ...a5.

10.0−0 b6
Black has a comfortable game, as we can see from the following examples:

11..d1
I also examined: 11..a3 a5 12..c2 Wc7 13..ac1 d8 14.dxc5 This exchange is slightly premature. 14...bxc5 15.e4 Trojan − Lazanek, Czech Republic 1998. Now Black can maintain better chances with: 15...f5N 16..a4 (after 16.e4 g4 the nice d4-square will be available to the black minor pieces) 16...b7 Black will continue with ...d6. White's main problem is his clearly misplaced dark-squared bishop.

11...c7 12.e4 a5 13..b1

A3) 7.0−0 cxd4 8.exd4

There have also been a large number of games in which White recaptured with the knight:
8..xd4 dxc4 9..xc4 a6
There are more than a hundred games from this position; however I believe that a short review is quite sufficient to show how Black should play here.

10.a4

Other options are:

10.ae2 wc7 11.ad2 e5 The key idea – Black grabs a lot of space. 12.ab3 ec6 13.ac1 bd8 14.wc1 Hoang Thanh Son – Erhembayar, Shenyang 1999. Now the natural 14...cb5N 15.ca4 b6 would secure Black's slight edge.

10.wc2 b5 11.ab3 eb7 12.ad1 eb7 Black has comfortable development. 13.e4 wc7 14.ag5 cd5 15.ac1 e6 16.e5 df6 17.f4 This occurred in Bisguier – Daskalov, Tallinn 1971, and here 17...ac8N would give Black a sound position in a very complex game.

10...wc7 11.wc2 e5 12.ca2 e4

I like this move, grabbing more space and creating possibilities such as ...cg4 or ...ag4.

13.ca5

13.ca4 is strongly met by: 13...cg4! 14.f3 exf3 15.gxf3 ce6 Black has the better chances, due to the exposed white king.

13...xd5 14.ad5 be8 15.cd4 cd7 16.wc4 wc4 17.xc4 cb6 18.ca2

After 18.ab3 axd4 19.exd4 xe6 Black retains a pleasant edge.

18...ad7 19.a5 cd5 20.cd2 bac8

Black has a slight advantage, although White remains solid, Golombek – Smyslov, Bucharest 1953.

8...dc6

We have arrived at a real crossroads, as White has a huge choice here. Our main lines will be A31) 9.ec5, A32) 9.exd5, A33) 9.cc1 and A34) 9.h3, but first we shall take a look at three other options:

9.cc5

Provided he replies correctly, this doesn't pose Black any problems.

9...dxc4! 10.xcxc6 bxc6 11.ac4 db8 12.h3

12.ab3 cb4 13.cc2 (I also examined 13.ac3 cg4 14.h3 cxc3 15.fxc3 dc5) 13...a6 14.cc1 cd5 15.cc3 e5 Black took over the initiative in Vehkalahti – Jolkkonen, Finland 2005.
This was Gierth – Summermatter, Switzerland 1996, and now simplest is:

12...\(\text{\textit{d}5}N\) 13.\(\text{\textit{b}3}\) e6

Black enjoys a comfortable game.

9.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{e}6\) 10.\(\text{cxd}5\)

A different pawn structure arises after: 10.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{\textit{e}4}\) Black has an improved version of line A31 below. 11.\(\text{\textit{c}3}\) \(\text{\textit{x}c}5\)! This works very well here. 12.\(\text{dxc}5\) d4 13.\(\text{\textit{x}d}4\) \(\text{\textit{x}d}4\)

14.\(\text{\textit{d}3}\) \(\text{w}a5\) Black was clearly better in Drzemicki – Hass, Mikolajki 1991.

10...\(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) 11.\(\text{\textit{d}2}\) \(\text{w}b6\) 12.\(\text{\textit{f}d}1\)

After 12.\(\text{\textit{h}6}\) \(\text{\textit{f}d}8\) 13.\(\text{xg}7\) \(\text{\textit{x}g}7\) 14.\(\text{\textit{a}d}1\) \(\text{\textit{f}6}\) Black's position is preferable, as White doesn't have enough activity to compensate for the isolated d-pawn, Sbarra – J. Horvath, Verona 2005.

12...\(\text{\textit{f}d}8\) 13.\(\text{\textit{a}c}1\)!

This inaccuracy was committed in Vekshenkov – Yandemirov, Tomsk 1998, although Black was fine anyway.

13...\(\text{\textit{d}b}4\)!N

Black wins a pawn.

9.\(\text{\textit{e}3}\) dxc4 10.\(\text{\textit{x}c}4\)

White occasionally tries a pawn sacrifice: 10.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{a}5\) 11.\(\text{\textit{d}2}\) (11.b4 cxb3 12.axb3 looks tempting, but there is a clear refutation: 12...\(\text{\textit{d}x}d5\)! 13.\(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) \(\text{\textit{x}a}1\) 14.b4 \(\text{c}6\) 15.b5 Kapetanovic – Gardner, Toronto 1998. Now Black should play 15...\(\text{g}7\) 16.bxc6 e6

17.\(\text{\textit{b}4}\) \(\text{\textit{x}d}1\) 18.\(\text{\textit{e}d}1\) a5 19.\(\text{\textit{d}3}\) bxc6 with an obvious advantage.) 11.b6 12.\(\text{\textit{a}d}1\) \(\text{\textit{b}7}\) Budde – Peelen, Dieren 1983. White does not have sufficient compensation for the pawn after, for example, 13.\(\text{\textit{d}4}\) \(\text{w}c8\).

10...\(\text{\textit{a}5}\)

11.\(\text{\textit{e}2}\)

The main choice according to theory. After 11.\(\text{\textit{d}3}\) Black has a comfortable game: 11...\(\text{\textit{e}6}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{e}2}\) \(\text{\textit{c}8}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{e}5}\) \(\text{\textit{d}5}\)!

14.\(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) \(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) 15.b3 \(\text{\textit{c}6}\) 16.\(\text{\textit{a}c}1\) \(\text{w}d6\)

Black was slightly better in Singher – Legky, Montreal 2003; again White does not have enough activity to compensate for the isolated d-pawn.

11...\(\text{\textit{e}6}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{w}a}4\) \(\text{\textit{c}5}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) \(\text{\textit{x}d}5\) 14.\(\text{\textit{a}c}1\)

Bregadze – Pavlidis, Kemer 2007. Black should have continued:

14...\(\text{\textit{c}6}\)N 15.\(\text{\textit{f}d}1\) e6

Again Black has good play against the isolated pawn.

A31) 9.\(\text{\textit{c}5}\)

By releasing the tension in this way, White signals that he wants to make use of his queenside majority, but Black's counterplay in the centre will be too strong.

9...\(\text{\textit{e}4}\)
White generally chooses between A311) 10.\textit{f}4 and A312) 10.e3.

I would also like to mention 10.h3, after which I recommend: 10...b6 11.b5 b7N 12.a4 e8 Black has slightly the better chances.

\textbf{A311) 10.f4}

This doesn't look best, since White may subsequently need to defend the d4-pawn with e3 anyway.

10...g4

11.e3

Other moves:

11.e4? xe5!N This just leads to the win of a pawn. (In all six games to reach this position Black has played 11...xe2, after which 12.xc6 leaves White only slightly worse.) 12.xe5 (also after 12.xg4 xg4 13.xg4 xd4 Black is a pawn up) 12...xe2 13.xe2 xc5 14.dxe5 xc5 Black has a healthy extra pawn.

11.c1 e6 12.h3 xf3 13.xf3 Chachere – Stone, Chicago 1990. Black should now play 13...g5!N when there is no good way for White to defend the d4-pawn.

11...e6

I think that Black can already aspire to an advantage, and therefore should not be satisfied with: 11...xc5, 12.dxc5 xf3 13.xf3 d4 14.xg5 dxc3 15.bxc3 The game was more or less equal in Dumitrache – Nisipeanu, Romania 1992.

12.h3

There is also: 12.e1 xe2 13.xe2

13...e5N (I consider this more challenging than 13...b6, which is nevertheless okay for Black) 14.f3 exd4 15.xd4 g5! 16.ec2 e6 17.xe6 fxe6 18.d4 f6 19.xc6 bxc6 Black has promising position.

12.xf3 13.xf3 f5

Black has a fine game. I like the following example:
Chapter 12 – 5.©f3

14.©xe4 dxe4 15.d5 exd5 16.©xd5 ©f7!
17.©d2? ©d7 18.©ad1 ©d4! 19.©g5 ©f8
Black had a decisive advantage in Mirkovic – Tringov, Vrnjacka Banja 1996.

A312) 10.©e3 b6!

When the white bishop goes directly to e3, I think this is the strongest idea.

11.cxb6

Other moves are no better:

11.©a4 ©d7 12.©b5 ©xc3 13.bxc3 ©c7
14.©f4?! ©xf4 15.©xc6 ©xe6 16.©xc6 ©x5
17.©x5 ©e6 Black had a clear positional advantage in Haritakis – Alterman, Katerini 1992.

11.©b5 ©xc3 12.bxc3 ©a5 13.cxb6 axb6
14.©e2 ©c7 15.©g5 ©a7 16.©fe1 ©e6 Black's superior pawn structure gave her the better chances in Mamedjarova – C. Foisor, Plovdiv 2008.

11...©xc3! 12.bxc3 axb6
Black has achieved exactly what he was aiming for: the better pawn structure.

13.©d2 ©g4 14.©fb1 ©a5 15.©e5 ©xe2
16.©xe2 f6 17.©f3 ©d6

Black had the slightly better position in Brumen – Smirin, Rabac 2004.

A32) 9.cxd5 ©xd5

10.©b3

Let us take a brief look at the alternatives:

10.©g5 h6 11.©e3 ©e6 12.©d2 ©h7 Black has quite a comfortable set-up. 13.©e4 ©a5! Swapping queens is a standard idea for the side playing against an isolated pawn. 14.©fd1 Ozbibcev – Novik, Sochi 2005. Now the simple 14...©xd2N 15.©xd2 b6 would give Black the better chances.

10.h3 b6 The plan of fianchettoing the lightsquared bishop offers Black a healthy game, for instance: 11.©c4 ©xc3 12.bxc3 ©a5 13.©d3 ©c7 14.©a3 ©d8 15.©c1 ©e6 16.©e2 ©b7 Black had a pleasant position in Pierna Manzano – Hoffman, Aviles 1992.

10...©e6!

10...©e6!
This move effectively refutes White's queen manoeuvre.

11...\texttt{N}xb7 \texttt{N}xd4 12.\texttt{N}xd4 \texttt{N}xd4

Black has carried out a favourable exchange of his b7-pawn for the white d-pawn, and enjoys a pleasant edge.

13.\texttt{B}d1

13.\texttt{B}h6 is strongly met by: 13...\texttt{N}b8 14.\texttt{B}a6 \texttt{N}xb2! 15.\texttt{B}xd5 \texttt{N}xd5 16.\texttt{B}xf8 \texttt{B}xf8 With great play for the exchange, Black clearly has the better chances. 17.a4? Klyuner – Siebrecht, Duisburg 1999. Black could now have decided the issue with the tactical trick: 17...\texttt{N}b6N 18.\texttt{B}xa7 \texttt{N}b1!++

13...\texttt{N}b8 14.\texttt{B}a6 \texttt{N}b4! 15.\texttt{B}a4 \texttt{B}b6

Black was clearly better in G. Gonzalez – Goldenberg, Mar del Plata 1961.

A33) 9.\texttt{E}e1 \texttt{G}g4

White now decides whether to advance his c-pawn or exchange it: A331) 10.c5 or A332) 10.cxd5.

A331) 10.c5

This type of position is already familiar from previous lines.

10...\texttt{B}e4 11.\texttt{L}e3 \texttt{L}xc3

I prefer this to: 11...f5 12.h3! \texttt{B}xf3 13.\texttt{B}xf3 e6 14.\texttt{L}e2 The position is very complex and it is hard to be sure what Black should do. 14...e5?!

This natural advance seems to be premature. 15.dxe5 \texttt{N}xe5 16.\texttt{B}xe4 \texttt{B}xe4 17.\texttt{L}f4! \texttt{B}xe4 18.\texttt{B}xf4 \texttt{N}d3 19.\texttt{B}d6 \texttt{B}d4 20.\texttt{B}b3 \texttt{B}xf2† 21.\texttt{L}h2 White was much better in Benatar – J. Fernandez, e-mail 1999.

12.bxc3 b6!

We have already seen this plan, aiming (after cxb6 axb6) to get a pawn structure in which the white queenside pawns will turn out to be weak.

13.\texttt{B}a4

I believe that this is the best try, since 13.cxb6 axb6 significantly eases Black's task. Play might continue: 14.h3 \texttt{B}xf3 15.\texttt{B}xf3 \texttt{N}e5 (the prophylactic 15...\texttt{B}d6 is also worth considering) 16.Gg5 \texttt{B}a7 17.\texttt{B}b1 \texttt{B}d6 18.\texttt{B}a4 e6 19.\texttt{B}b5 \texttt{B}c8 Black had obtained a clear positional superiority in Szeles – Galyas, Hungary 1998.

13...\texttt{B}d7!

This is my new idea. Black threatens 14...\texttt{N}xd4, thereby forcing White to either release the tension or move his queen away from the a4-square.
I was not satisfied with Black’s position following: 13...\( \text{a5} \) 14.\( \text{ab1} \) e6 15.\( \text{xf4} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 16.\( \text{xf3} \) \( \text{c4} \) 17.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xf6} \) Ernst – L’Ami, Netherlands 2006. Here 18.g3N would maintain White’s advantage; in the long term his c-pawn could well become a dangerous passed pawn.

14.\( \text{xa3} \)

Black need not fear 14.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 15.\( \text{gxf3} \) \( \text{fc8} \) and the pin is not dangerous.

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

I am not sure about the position which arises after 14...\( \text{bxc5} \) 15.\( \text{dxc5} \) \( \text{e5} \) 16.\( \text{ad1} \), as the d5-pawn is a bit vulnerable.

15.h3 \( \text{xf3} \) 16.\( \text{xf3} \) \( \text{bxc5} \) 17.\( \text{dxc5} \) \( \text{ab8} \)

Black’s chances are not worse.

A332) 10.cxd5 \( \text{xd5} \) 11.h3 \( \text{e6} \)

11...\( \text{f5} \) is also reasonable, but I prefer the e6-square.

12.\( \text{f1} \)

The main alternative is:

12.\( \text{g5} \) h6 13.\( \text{c3} \)

White has also tried 13.\( \text{h4} \), but this allows the black knight to jump to the f4-square:

13...\( \text{f4} \) 14.\( \text{f1} \) g5 15.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16.\( \text{xf4} \) \( \text{gxf4} \) 17.\( \text{e4} \) Tisdall – Ostenstad, Norway 1994. Now I recommend: 17...\( \text{f5} \)N 18.\( \text{xf4} \) \( \text{xd1} \) 19.\( \text{xd1} \) \( \text{xd8} \) Black’s bishop pair gives him the advantage in this endgame.

13...\( \text{a5} \) 14.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{xe3} \)

Now is the right time to capture this bishop, to avoid wasting a tempo defending the h6-pawn.

15.\( \text{xe3} \) \( \text{ad8} \) 16.\( \text{a3} \) \( \text{b3}! \)

Black prevents b2-b4 and at the same time clears the way for ...e5.

17.\( \text{d1} \)

This was Steinbrecht – Hennig, Hamburg 1997. Black should now continue:

17...\( \text{c4} \)N 18.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xe2} \) 19.\( \text{xe2} \)

After 19.b4 \( \text{c7} \) 20.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{e5} \) Black also obtains good play.

19...\( \text{e5} \) 20.d5 \( \text{e4}! \)

Black takes over the initiative.

12...\( \text{c8} \) 13.\( \text{g5} \) h6 14.\( \text{c3} \)

This position has occurred more than a dozen times, and practice shows that Black has an excellent game. Black can choose from various plans, and I like the straightforward:

14...\( \text{xc3} \) 15.\( \text{bxc3} \) \( \text{a5} \)

Black has the c4-square at his disposal, and of course the c3-pawn is a clear target.

16.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{h7} \) 17.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{c4} \) 18.\( \text{e5} \)

Also harmless is: 18.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{xf1} \) 19.\( \text{xf1} \) e6 20.\( \text{e5} \) \( \text{d5} \) 21.\( \text{hxf7} \) \( \text{xf7} \) 22.\( \text{e5} \) \( \text{c4} \)

23.\( \text{g1} \) b6† Eljanov – Strelnikov, Kharkov
2000. White doesn’t have enough compensation for the weakness of his queenside pawns.

18...\(\text{xf}1\)N

I prefer this to: 18...\(\text{e}6\) 19.\(\text{xf}6\) exf6 Novkovic – Kalod, Presov 2000. Black is not worse, but it is hard to believe that he has chances for an advantage.

19.\(\text{xg}7\) \(\text{g}7\) 20.\(\text{xf}1\) e6†

Black retains the better chances, due to his superior pawn structure.

10.\(\text{c}5\)

White has also tried:

10.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{f}5\) 11.\(\text{e}3\) dxc4 12.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{a}5\)
13.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}5\)
13...\(\text{e}8\) is also fine for Black.
14.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 15.\(\text{a}4\)
I also examined 15.\(\text{e}1\) when it’s dangerous to accept the pawn sacrifice, but Black can continue 15...\(\text{ac}8\) 16.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{d}6\) with a comfortable game.
15...\(\text{d}7\) 16.\(\text{a}3\)
This happened in Sahovic – Milanovic, Belgrade 2001. Now Black should play:
16...\(\text{c}6\)N 17.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{b}5\)
The exchange of light-squared bishops is clearly in Black’s favour, and meanwhile grabbing the e-pawn doesn’t help White.

18.\(\text{xc}7\) \(\text{ac}8\) 19.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 20.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{c}4\)
Black has the better game.

10.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{a}5\)!

Black has several more popular options here, but I believe that the text move is simple and good.

A34) 9.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{e}6\)

This renews the threat to the c4-pawn. 11.\(\text{b}3\)? An unfortunate move, after which White is soon in trouble. 11...dxc4 12.\(\text{xb}7\) (12.\(\text{xc}4\) runs into 12...\(\text{xd}4\)! 13.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{xc}4\) 14.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{g}5\) with an extra pawn for Black) 12...\(\text{f}8\) 13.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{xb}5\) 14.\(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{ab}8\)
Hebden – Cavendish, Eastbourne 1990.

10.\(\text{cxd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 11.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{c}8\) This is very comfortable for Black, for instance: 12.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{xc}3\) 13.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{a}5\) 14.\(\text{a}4\)? \(\text{xc}3\)! 15.\(\text{d}2\)
Chapter 12 - 5.\(\text{d}f_3\)

10...\(\text{d}e4\) 11.\(\text{d}e3\)

Other possibilities:

11.\(\text{d}f4\) b6 12.\(\text{d}b5\) \(\text{d}x\text{c}3\) (12...\(\text{a}a5\) is worth considering) 13.\(\text{b}x\text{c}3\) \(\text{a}a5\) 14.\(\text{c}6\)? (White should have played 14.\(\text{c}x\text{b}6\) ax\(\text{b}6\) 15.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{d}d7\) 16.\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{c}8\), maintaining a balanced position) 14...\(\text{e}e8\)! Now White loses his \(\text{c}\)-pawn. 15.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{d}x\text{c}6\) 16.\(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{c}8\) Black was clearly better in Vragoteris – Tukmakov, Kavala 1991.

11.\(\text{b}5\) The plan of exchanging this bishop for the \(\text{c}\)-knight only helps Black strengthen his centre. 11...\(\text{a}a5\) 12.\(\text{xc}6\) bxc6 13.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{f}6\) 14.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{f}7\) 15.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{ab}8\) Black had an excellent game in Rajan – Mahjoob, New Delhi 2008.

7.\(\text{d}x\text{c}5\)

Black is very comfortable after 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.\(\text{e}x\text{d}4\) \(\text{d}x\text{d}4\). Here is one illustration of how play may proceed: 9.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{c}6\) 10.\(\text{xc}6\) bxc6 11.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{b}8\) 12.\(\text{b}3\) Borges Mateos – E. Garcia, Sharjah 1985. Now 12...\(\text{a}4\)N 13.0–0 \(\text{a}e6\) would be promising for Black.

7...\(\text{a}6\) 8.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5\)

The alternative is harmless: 8.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{xc}5\) 9.cxd5 \(\text{e}x\text{d}5\) 10.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 11.\(\text{b}4\) (11.\(\text{c}4\) runs into 11...\(\text{d}3\)†! and only Black can be better) 11...\(\text{d}1\)† 12.\(\text{e}x\text{d}1\) \(\text{b}6\) 13.\(\text{b}3\) a5 14.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{c}3\)† 15.\(\text{d}2\) bxc5 16.\(\text{c}4\) a4 White may have chances to hold, but the bishop pair means that Black is clearly better, Bender – Zelic, Sibenik 2010.

8...\(\text{e}x\text{c}5\) 9.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{a}6\)

Black sometimes chooses 9...\(\text{f}5\) 10.0–0 \(\text{c}8\), which is of similar value and should also be sufficient for equality. But I have a preference for including the moves ...\(\text{a}6\) and \(\text{a}2\)-\(\text{a}4\).

10.\(\text{a}4\)

White can hardly manage without this move, but he sometimes tries:

10.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{e}4\) 11.\(\text{e}c1\) \(\text{f}5\)N (this seems to be more logical than 11...\(\text{b}5\) or 11...\(\text{g}4\), the
moves which have been played here) 12...b3
a6 13...a3 c5 14.0-0 f6 Black has very
active pieces and has full compensation for the
pawn; he intends to attack the c3-knight next
by moving his knight from f6.

10.0-0 b5 11...e2 b7 12...c1 c8 Black
will regain the pawn at a suitable moment,
with the better chances, Taimanov – Kamsky,

10...f5 11.0-0
11...e2 has no independent value. 11...e4
12.0-0 c8 transposes to the main line.

11...c8
Black continues his mobilization, planning...
d3 next.

12...e2
The main alternative is: 12.d4 d3
13.xd3 d3 14.b3 c5 15.a2 d7
Black simply intends to continue with ...f6 and regain the pawn. (I prefer this to the more
popular 15...e4.) 16.f6 f8 17.b3
Kahn – Pioch, corr. 1977. Now 17...d3!N
would give Black a pleasant edge, for example:
18.b1 f5 19.e1 xe1 20.xf5 gxf5
21.xe1 xd5=

12...e4

13.f61
White has some other possibilities:

13.d4 results in a more or less forced line:
13...d2 14.xd2 e4 15.xe4 xe4
16.b4 xd4 17.xd4 xd5 18.xd5 xe5
19.xe7 xe7 20.a3 Clearly only Black can
fight for an advantage here. It seems to me that
his best chance is 20...e2N 21.e1 d2=
and White still has some work to do in order
to reach a peaceful result.

13.xe4 xe4 14.db4 xd5 15.f6 b6
16.xc5 xe4 17.xb6 xe2 18.xd2 (White
has also tried 18.d7 xb2 19.b1 Gulko –
Navarovsky, Moscow 1971, and now
19.a3N 20.xb7 c4 21.a5 c8 would
lead to an unpleasant endgame for White, since
Black’s bishop pair is very powerful.) 18.e4
19.h3 c6 (19...f8?? deserves attention) 20.a5
b5 21.d4 xd4 22.exd4 The opposite-
coloured bishop endgame is of course drawish,

13...xc3 14.xc3 xc3 15.bxc3 e4
16.d4
Otherwise White would be worse: 16.d1
a5 17.d4 xc3 18.xf1 e4= The d-pawn
is falling next, Haygarth – A. Williams,

16.a5 17.e1
Chapter 12 – 5.\d3

An important line is: 17.g4 \wxc3 18.\d1 \d6! 19.\e5 \e4 20.\d3 \xd3 21.\x1xd3 Czubak – Hueser, e-mail2008. Now the simple 21...\xa1\+ 22.\d1 \c1 would give Black the better chances.

17...\d6!?N

I believe that this logical novelty allows Black to fight for an advantage. After 17...\xc3 18.\d3 \xe1\+ 19.\xe1 \c3 Fehmers – Brinkmann, Germany 2001, White should play: 20.\xf5N \xf5 21.d6 exd6 22.\f1 His activity should enable White to obtain a draw without too much difficulty.

18.\d3

Another line I examined is: 18.\f1 \xc3 19.\xc3 \xc3 20.\d2 \c2 21.\e4 \d7 The endgame is slightly better for Black.

18...\xd3 19.\xd3 \c4!

Reminding White that the a4-pawn is also weak.

20.\d2 \xa4

Black has the better chances in a complex middlegame.

C) 6.\d3 c5 7.0–0

It is inaccurate to play:

7.\xc5 \xc4 8.\xc4 \xd1

After 8...\xa5 9.0–0 \xc5 Black has no problems, but with the text he is fighting for an advantage.

9.\xd1

No better is: 9.\xd1 \e4 10.0–0 \c6 Black has much the better game, due to the superiority of his dark-squared bishop.

In Gomes – Santos, Brazil 1993, White lost very quickly: 11.\b1?! \xc5 12.b4 \xf5–+

9...\bd7

Due to the misplaced white king, Black's chances are higher.

10.c6 bxc6 11.\e2 \b6 12.\d3 \d5 13.\xd5

13.\d2 \b4! secures an edge for Black.

14.a3 \xd3 15.\xd3 \a6\+ 16.\e2 \xd8 17.\ad1 \d3\+ 18.\c1 \c4\+ S. Kasparov – Aronian, Minsk 1998.

13...\xd5 14.\d1

This position has occurred in a couple of games. Black should play the natural:

14...\b8N

White is struggling to equalize.

7...\xd4 8.\xd4

8.\xd4 allows Black to grab space in the centre: 8...e5 9.\b3 \e4 10.\e2 \xc4 11.\xc4 \c7 12.\e2 \c6 13.\b5 \b8 14.\d2 \d8 15.\d4 \e5 16.h3 \b6 17.\c1 \b7+ Black had more space and the better chances in T. Fischer – Steinmacher, Baunatal 1996.
8...c6 9.h3
This is necessary prophylaxis. After 9.g5 g4 the pin is highly unpleasant: 10.xf6 xf6 11.xd5 xd4 12.e2 g7 13.e3 e6 Black was much better in Sterliagova – Pogonina, Serpukhov 2002.

9...dxc4
Black has other playable moves, but this seems to be the most logical.

10.xc4 a5

11.d3
White has also tried the more passive:
11.e2 e6 12.e1
12.g5 e8 13.e1 c4 14.xc4 occurred in two games. There is now an important improvement: 14...xc4 N 15.d2 e8 16.ac1 d5= Black has no problems.
The simple 15...b6 N followed by ...fd8 would secure an advantage for Black.
12...c8 13.e5 d5 14.d2 c6!
As is well known, swapping pieces is favourable for the side playing against the isolated pawn.
15.xc6 xc6 16.f3 c4
Black was much better in Zhukova – Beshukov, Berlin 1995.

11...e6 12.e1
If White plays 12.e2 e8 13.g5 Levitt – Beaumont, Birmingham 1999, then Black has the strong: 13...c6 N 14.ad1 b4! White has to give up his light-squared bishop.

12.e8 13.g5
Black must be ready for the thematic positional exchange sacrifice: 13.xe6 fx e6 14.e2 h8 15.g5 (15.xe6 d6=) 15...c6 16.b5 Lputian – Magerramov, Daugavpils 1978. Now strong is: 16...e5 N 17.e6 d5 18.xf8 xf8 19.c3 xd4 20.c3 d6= Black is doing fine, with an extra pawn in the centre, although White has some compensation.
Chapter 12 – 5. \( \text{c}f3 \)

13...\( \text{d}c6!N \)
An unexpected change of direction. Black has previously tried 13...\( \text{c}4 \) or 13...\( \text{c}c4 \), but the text looks more promising.

14.\( \text{c}c2 \) \( \text{w}b6! \)
Everything comes with tempo.

15.\( \text{b}b3 \)
Neither 15.d5? \( \text{c}d5 \) 16.\( \text{c}xd5 \) \( \text{c}xd5 \) 17.\( \text{c}xd5 \) \( \text{b}4\text{f} \) nor 15.\( \text{f}xe6 \) \( \text{f}xe6 \) 16.\( \text{b}b3 \) \( \text{a}5\text{f} \) is any good for White.

15...\( \text{a}xb3 \) 16.\( \text{a}xb3 \) \( \text{a}xb3 \) 17.\( \text{a}xb3 \) \( \text{e}fd8\text{f} \)
The endgame is favourable for Black.

D) 6.\( \text{c}xd5 \) \( \text{c}xd5 \) 7.\( \text{c}c4 \)
By far the most popular continuation. Other possibilities are:

7.\( \text{e}e2 \) c5 8.0–0 \( \text{c}c6 \) 9.\( \text{b}b3 \) \( \text{e}6! \) 10.\( \text{xb}7 \) \( \text{c}xd4 \) 11.\( \text{c}xd4 \) transposes to line A32.

7.\( \text{b}b3 \) \( \text{xc}3 \) 8.\( \text{xc}3 \) c5 9.\( \text{e}a3 \)
9.\( \text{e}e2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) was examined in A2.
9...\( \text{c}xd4 \) 10.\( \text{c}xd4 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 11.\( \text{e}e2 \) \( \text{a}5\text{f} \! \! \! \)
White has problems completing his development.

12.\( \text{d}d2 \)
Clearly bad is: 12.\( \text{c}f1? \) \( \text{c}6 \) 13.\( \text{b}b2 \) Steele – Blomquist, corr. 1991. Now simplest is 13...\( \text{b}5\text{N} \) 14.\( \text{c}c5 \) b4 and Black has a big advantage.

12...\( \text{e}e6 \)
In Szekely – Porreca, corr. 1963, Black tried a remarkable piece sacrifice: 12...\( \text{c}xd4 \) 13.\( \text{c}xd4 \) \( \text{c}xd4 \) 14.\( \text{b}b2 \) \( \text{c}d8\text{f} \! \! \! \! \)
It is very interesting, but a bit risky.

13.\( \text{c}b2 \)
This position occurred in Kreiman – Shipov, Internet 2001. Black can now seize the initiative by:
13...\( \text{e}fd8\text{N} \) 14.\( \text{c}c1 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 15.\( \text{c}c4\text{?!} \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 16.\( \text{xc}4 \) e5

7...\( \text{b}6 \)

White has a choice of retreats for the bishop:

D1) 8.\( \text{e}e2 \) or D2) 8.\( \text{b}b3 \).

D1) 8.\( \text{e}e2 \) c5

9.\( \text{dxc}5 \)
Another option is:

9.0–0 \( \text{c}xd4 \)
The untried 9...\( \text{a}6\text{f} \! \! \! \! \) looks interesting.

10.\( \text{d}xd4 \)
Black has an excellent game after: 10.\( \text{c}xd4 \) \( \text{c}c6 \) 11.\( \text{e}e3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 12.\( \text{c}c1 \) \( \text{c}8\text{f} \) Book – Keres, Turku 1964.

10...\( \text{d}d7 \)
Black prepares ...\( \text{c}c6 \). After the immediate
10...\( \text{c}6 \) 11.\( \text{c}xc6 \) \( \text{bxc}6 \) 12.\( \text{c}2\text{f} \) \( \text{e}6 \)
13...\texttt{ed1} \texttt{wc8} 14...\texttt{e4} White has some pressure, Nikolaev – Zhelesny, Moscow 1999.

11...\texttt{a4} \texttt{a5}
Also reasonable is 11...\texttt{ec6} 12...\texttt{a5} \texttt{ec8} followed by ...\texttt{ed6}.
12...\texttt{db5} \texttt{ec6} 13...\texttt{e4} \texttt{ae6} 14...\texttt{f4} \texttt{xd1} 15...\texttt{fxd1}
Spassky – Gligoric, Niksic 1983.

9...\texttt{xd1} + 10...\texttt{xd1}
10...\texttt{xd1} Mititelu – Stoica, Bucharest 1971, is not accurate as it allows: 10...\texttt{a4}!N 11...\texttt{d2} \texttt{ed8}=

10...\texttt{ed7} 11...\texttt{d5}
Another try is: 11...\texttt{a4} \texttt{a6} 12...\texttt{c6} bxc6 Black's activity fully compensates for the problems with his pawn structure. 13.0–0 (Just bad is 13...\texttt{d2}? \texttt{ac5} 14...\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} 15...\texttt{e2} \texttt{xb2} 16...\texttt{b1} \texttt{b8} and Black has won a pawn for no compensation, Dake – Smyslov, Lone Pine 1976.) This was Burmakin – Khalifman, St Petersburg 1996, and now Black should play 13...\texttt{b8}!N 14...\texttt{d4} \texttt{b7} followed by ...\texttt{c5} at the right moment. I prefer Black's position.

11...\texttt{c6} 12...\texttt{a4}
Black has no problems after: 12...\texttt{d4} \texttt{xd4} 13...\texttt{xe7}+ \texttt{h8} 14...\texttt{xc8} \texttt{ac8} 15...\texttt{xd4} \texttt{xd4} 16.0–0 \texttt{xc5}+ Bobotsov – Hort, Lugano 1968.

12...\texttt{h8}! 13.0–0
White doesn't have 13...\texttt{xc6} bxc6 14...\texttt{xe7}? \texttt{b7}, as the knight would be trapped on e7.

13...\texttt{e6} 14...\texttt{xc6} bxc6 15...\texttt{b4} \texttt{xc5}
15...\texttt{b7}?!N may be even stronger, but the game continuation is also good enough.

16...\texttt{xc6} \texttt{a6} 17...\texttt{d1} \texttt{d3}!
Black has excellent compensation for the pawn, Letelier – Gligoric, Havana 1967.

D2) 8...\texttt{b3}
This retreat is much less challenging, but still a bit tricky.

8...\texttt{c5}

9.0–0
White has also tried:

9...\texttt{xc5}
This is hardly a good decision, as it opens the long diagonal for the black bishop.

10...\texttt{d7} 10...\texttt{e4}
10...\texttt{d5} did not bring White success either:
10...\texttt{a6}! 11...\texttt{c6} bxc6 12...\texttt{xc6} \texttt{b8} 13.0–0 \texttt{a5} Black has an extremely powerful initiative for the pawn. 14...\texttt{d5} \texttt{b7} 15...\texttt{g5} \texttt{xf3} 16...\texttt{gxf3} \texttt{a5} White is defenceless against Black's threats, Fodor – Matlakov, Chotowa 2010.
Chapter 12 – 5.\( \text{f3} \)

10...\( \text{a6} \) 11.\( \text{c6} \)
After 11.\( \text{wc2} \) \( \text{dxc5} \) 12.\( \text{xc5 a5} \) 13.\( \text{d2} \)
\( \text{xc5} \) Black has the better chances, thanks to his pressure down the long diagonal, Gasser – Mikhailchishin, Bled 1996.
11...\( \text{xc6} \) 12.0-0 \( \text{b8} \)
Black's activity is more important than the weakness of his pawn structure.
12...\( \text{dxc5} \) is not bad either.
13.\( \text{b1?!} \)
An unfortunate move, after which Black takes over the initiative.
13...\( \text{ac5} \) 14.\( \text{c2 a6} \) 15.\( \text{e1 xe4} \) 16.\( \text{xe4 c5} \) 17.\( \text{ac2 d3=} \)

9...\( \text{dxc4} \) 10.\( \text{xd4} \)
10.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{d7} \)! This accurate move equalizes comfortably. 11.\( \text{f4} \) (11.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{c6} \) 12.\( \text{xc6} \)
\( \text{dxc6} \) 13.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 14.\( \text{f4} \) has occurred a couple of times, and here I would recommend 14...\( \text{e6} \) 15.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{f8} \) with equal play.) 11...\( \text{c6} \)
12.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{dxc6} \) 13.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{e6} \) This important positional move restricts the white minor pieces.
14.\( \text{g3} \) This was Kuzmin – Jansa, Zinnowitz 1971, and now Black should play: 14...\( \text{d7=} \)
15.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{g5} \) Black has good activity on the queenside and a sound position.

10...\( \text{g4} \)
10...\( \text{c6} \) is more popular, but I think that the text is strong.

11.\( \text{d5} \)
Another natural line is:
11.h3 \( \text{xf3} \) 12.\( \text{xf3 c6} \) 13.\( \text{e3} \)
The most popular alternative is: 13.\( \text{d1 a5} \)
(I prefer this thematic idea to 13...\( \text{xd4} \)
14.\( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{e5} \) 15.\( \text{f3} \), when White retains some pressure) 14.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{a4} \) 15.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{a3} \)
(15...\( \text{e4} \)? is worth considering, although the text is also fine) 16.\( \text{bxax3} \) \( \text{xa3} \) 17.\( \text{b3} \)
\( \text{a5} \) 18.\( \text{xb1} \) \( \text{xb3} \) 19.\( \text{xb3} \) \( \text{xb3} \) 20.\( \text{axb3} \)
Engelbert – Kunstowicz, Hamburg 1993. Now the simple 20...\( \text{d7=} \) would keep everything under control for Black.
13...\( \text{d7} \) 14.\( \text{ad1} \)
14.d5 \( \text{d4} \) 15.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16.\( \text{ad1} \) was played in Busche – Tkachuk, Germany 2008. Here I like the following solution:
16...\( \text{xc3=} \) 17.\( \text{bxax3} \) \( \text{a5} \) 18.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{d6} \) 19.\( \text{a4} \)
\( \text{ac8} \) 20.\( \text{ad4} \) \( \text{d7} \) Black is doing fine.

14...\( \text{xd4} \)
Maintaining the tension by 14...\( \text{a5} \) also comes into consideration.
15.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16.\( \text{e2} \)
16.\( \text{d5} \) leads to an absolutely equal position: 16...\( \text{xd5} \) 17.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{e6} \) 18.\( \text{exd5} \)
exd5 19.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{c6} \)
16...\( \text{e5} \) 17.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 18.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 19.\( \text{fd1} \)
\( \text{e7} \)
White regains the pawn, but meanwhile Black manages to exchange some major pieces and liquidates to an easily tenable endgame.
20.\(\text{fxd4}\) \(\text{fxd4}\) 21.\(\text{fxd4}\) \(\text{We1}\)† 22.\(\text{Gh2}\) \(\text{We5}\)† 23.\(\text{Wf4}\) \(\text{Wxf4}\)† 24.\(\text{Exf4}\) \(\text{Wg7}\)

Black is ready to solve the problem of his f7-pawn by playing ...f5.

25.\(\text{Ed4}\) \(\text{We8}\)

The endgame is equal, Smirin – Grischuk, Rishon LeZion 2006.

11...d8d7 12.h3 \(\text{xf3}\) 13.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{Ec8}\)

Black has given up his light-squared bishop, but in return he has very active pieces and can create counterplay on the queenside. Theory considers 13...\(\text{Cc5}\) 14.\(\text{Ed1}\) \(\text{xb3}\) 15.axb3 \(\text{Cc8}\) as the main line; after bringing his knight to d6 Black has a very solid position. However I prefer the text move, which I have twice played as Black.

14.\(\text{g5}\)

Another popular continuation is:

14.\(\text{Ee1}\) \(\text{e5}\) 15.\(\text{We2}\) \(\text{Ee8}\)

Black needs to defend the e7-pawn in order to prepare ...\(\text{Cc4}\).

16.\(\text{g5}\)

A natural human move, but the computer shows that 16...\(\text{Cc4}\)\(N\) is already possible. After 17.\(\text{Exe7}\) \(\text{d7}\) White has nothing better than 18.d6 \(\text{Cd6}\) 19.Ed1 \(\text{f8}\) 20.Exd6 \(\text{We7}\) 21.We7 \(\text{Exe7}\) going into a drawish endgame.

17.\(\text{ad1}\) was played in Guichard – Collas, Belfort 2010, and now I do not see any reason to refrain from the planned: 17...\(\text{Cc4}\)\(N\) 18.\(\text{Da4}\) (18.\(\text{Ed1}\) \(\text{f5}\) 19.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{Ee5}\) is excellent for Black) 18...\(\text{xa4}\) 19.\(\text{xa4}\) (Black has no problems after 19.\(\text{xc4}\) a6!) 19...\(\text{xa4}\) 20.b3 \(\text{Ca5}\) 21.bxc4 \(\text{Ba8}\) Black intends ...e6 next. The position is roughly level.

17...\(\text{Cc4}\) 18.\(\text{Ed3}\)

18.\(\text{xc4}\)!! \(\text{Cc4}\) 19.\(\text{Ed3}\) b5 20.\(\text{Cc1}\) \(\text{Cb6}\)

21.\(\text{Ed1}\) b4 22.\(\text{Cc4}\) \(\text{Cb5}\) Black had the better chances in Erdos – Sedlak, Hungary 2009.

18...\(\text{xb2}\)!

A nice tactical solution.

19.\(\text{xb2}\) \(\text{f5}\)

The following play is now more or less forced.

20.\(\text{dd2}\) \(\text{Cc3}\) 21.\(\text{Cc3}\) \(\text{Cc2}\) 22.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{Cc5}\) 23.d6 e6

Aleksandrov – Safarli, Moscow 2009. White should now force a draw by:

24.\(\text{Cc7}\)N \(\text{Cc8}\) 25.\(\text{xb7}\) \(\text{Cc1}\) 26.\(\text{b8}\)† \(\text{g7}\)

27.\(\text{xc1}\) \(\text{xc1}\)† 28.\(\text{h2}\) \(\text{f4}\)†=

14...h6!

A very useful move, which I found over the board; it obliges White to choose a diagonal for his dark-squared bishop. Previously I played: 14...\(\text{e5}\) 15.\(\text{Cc2}\) \(\text{Ed8}\) Pelletier – Avrukh, Biel 2007. Here White could try 16.\(\text{a4}\)\(N\) \(\text{Cc4}\)

17.\(\text{xb6}\) \(\text{xb6}\) 18.\(\text{ad1}\) with slight pressure.
15.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{f}}4}

Of course 15.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{h}}4} is also possible: 15.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}5} 16.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}7}! I think it is necessary to take control of the a4-square. (16.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}8} was suggested by Vitaly Golod in \textit{Chess Informant} 104, but I feel uncomfortable after 17.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{a}}4}!) 17.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}fd1} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{f}}e8} 18.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{a}}c1} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}c4} Black has a comfortable game.

15.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{c}}4} 16.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}c4} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}c4} 17.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}6}

Golod gave 17.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{a}}e1} as deserving attention. It is a decent option, but Black has nothing to complain about after 17...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}8} 18.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{c}}8}.

17...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}xd6}

In Golod – Avrukh, Israel (ch) 2008, I played the less convincing 17...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}}6.

18.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d6} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}5}!

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
& & & & & & & & \\
\hline
8 & & & & & & & & \\
7 & & & & & & & & \\
6 & & & & & & & & \\
5 & & & & & & & & \\
4 & & & & & & & & \\
3 & & & & & & & & \\
2 & & & & & & & & \\
1 & & & & & & & & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

19.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}e5}

In my calculations I had missed that White cannot play 19.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}5}? in view of the beautiful: 19...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}4}!! 20.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d4} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}f3}+ 21.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{g}}xf3} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d4} 22.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}xf8} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{g}}xf8} Black has a clear edge.

19...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}e5} 20.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}b7} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{b}}8}

Black regains the pawn with comfortable equality, Castaneda – Belov, Moscow 2009.

\textbf{Conclusion}

When White chooses any of 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}2}, 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}2} or 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{d}}3}, I believe that Black should immediately attack the centre with 6...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}5}, obtaining good activity in each case. The most important position in the chapter occurs in line A3 after 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{c}}5} 7.0–0 \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d4} 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d4} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{c}}6}. White has a huge range of ninth move options here, but none of them promise him the advantage. Black’s thematic advance arrives later in line D) 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d5} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{x}}d5} 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{c}}4} \texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{b}}6}, but there too, after either 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}2} or 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{b}}3}, Black gets good play with 8...\texttt{\textbf{\textcircled{e}}5}.
4...\textit{g7}

\begin{itemize}
\item A) 5.\textit{wb3}
\item B) 5.\textit{wa4}$^+$
\item C) 5.\textit{ec1} \textit{h5!}
  \begin{itemize}
  \item C1) 6.\textit{g5}
  \item C2) 6.\textit{e3}
  \item C3) 6.\textit{d2}
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Variation Index}

1.d4 \textit{f6} 2.c4 \textit{g6} 3.\textit{c3} \textit{d5} 4.\textit{f4}

A) after 13.\textit{xa8}

C3) note to 7.e3

C3) after 18.\textit{c7}

13...\textit{xd5}$^!$

10...\textit{dxe3}$^!$

18...\textit{xa2}$^!$
In this chapter we will consider the somewhat rare moves A) 5.b3, B) 5.a4 and C) 5.c1.

**A) 5.b3**

This move is unusual and looks slightly odd in connection with 4.f4, but still it is essential to know how to respond.

5.c5

I like this thematic Grünfeld strike, especially as White has lost some control over the d4-square.

6.cxd5

6...xd5N is objectively better, but after 6...xd5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.f3 0-0 9.d1 a5! 10.d2 b6 Black has nothing to worry about.

6...cxd4 7.a4†

7.b5 0-0 8.c7 does not work in view of 8...h5 9.g3, De Groot - Hebels, corr. 1990, and now Black could have seized a decisive initiative with: 9...xg3N 10.xg3 a6! 11.xa8 a5† 12.d1 a5 White can hardly expect to survive with his king on such a square.

7...d7

Also not bad is 7...bd7N 8.xd4 h5 9.d2 xf4 10.xf4 0-0 with obvious compensation.

8.b5 a6 9.c1 0-0 10.c7‡

This move is consistent but bad. Objectively White should have tried something else, although Black has the advantage in any case.

10...dc5!

This refutes White’s idea.

11.xc5 xc5 12.a3 a6 13.xa8

Here in the game Flear – Bejaoui, Tunis 2000, Black could have decided the issue by means of:
7.\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{\textit{Exb7?!} is risky: 7...\text{\textit{Exd4}} (7...\text{\textit{Exb8}} is also considered satisfactory according to present theory.)}} 8.0-0-0 \text{\textit{Exe6}} 9.\text{\textit{Exe5}} \text{\textit{Exb8} 10.\text{\textit{Da6}} (10.\text{\textit{Exa7}} d4 11.\text{\textit{Exd4}} \text{\textit{Exa8}} 12.\text{\textit{Exb7}} \text{\textit{Exd4}} 13.\text{\textit{Exd4}} \text{\textit{Exg4} 14.\text{\textit{Exd7}} \text{\textit{Exd7+-} Black has a winning position.})}} 10...d4! 11.\text{\textit{Exb5}}}

This position occurred in Slepoy – G. Goldberg, Leningrad 1956, and now the simple 11...\text{\textit{Exb5N} 12.\text{\textit{Exb5}} 0-0 would have secured Black's advantage, for example: 13.e3 \text{\textit{Exe4} 14.\text{\textit{Exg7} \text{\textit{Exg7} 15.\text{\textit{Exh3} \text{\textit{Exd5+-} White has considerable problems.}}}}}

7...\text{\textit{Exa5} 8.\text{\textit{Exb4} \text{\textit{Exc4}}}

This move is unlikely to pose Black many problems. It has been tested twice by Karpov, albeit in blitz games, and he lost both times.

5...\text{\textit{Exd7} 6.\text{\textit{Exb3} \text{\textit{Exc6!}}}}

The most principled response.

7.e3

Other moves are weaker:

7.cxd5? \text{\textit{Exd4} 8.\text{\textit{Exd1} \text{\textit{Exb5!}}}} Already it is White who must fight for equality. 9.\text{\textit{Exb5} \text{\textit{Exb5} 10.e4 \text{\textit{Exf1} 11.\text{\textit{Exf1} 0-0-0} 12.\text{\textit{Exc2} \text{\textit{Exc8} 13.\text{\textit{Ed1} c6} Black was better in Rothman – Reshevsky, New York 1946.}}}}

9.\text{\textit{Exxc4}}

9.\text{\textit{Exb7 has only been tried once: 9...\text{\textit{Exb8} 10.\text{\textit{Exa7} \text{\textit{Exb2} 11.\text{\textit{Exc7} \text{\textit{Exc8} 12.\text{\textit{Exb1} \text{\textit{Exb1}}}}}}}}}}
looks better, but here too Black can use his development advantage effectively: 15...\textit{b7} 16.\textit{c5} \textit{d7}! 17.\textit{x}xd5 \textit{xd5} 18.\textit{xd5} \textit{exe3} 19.\textit{fxe3} \textit{xc7} Black has a serious initiative.

The present position was reached in Szeberenyi – Blasko, Budapest 2001, and here 15...\textit{b7}! \textit{N} would have been a strong improvement, for example: 16.\textit{a5} \textit{d7} (threatening ...\textit{a8}) 17.\textit{c5} \textit{a8} 18.\textit{xc4} \textit{dxc4} 19.\textit{ge2} \textit{xg2} 20.\textit{g1} \textit{c8} \textit{N} Black has an obvious advantage.

9...\textit{dxc4} 10.\textit{xb7}

The most principled continuation. 10.\textit{xc4} is playable, but in this case Black's bishop pair promises him a good game: 10...c6 11.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 12.\textit{e2} This occurred in Serrano Pertinez – Hernandez Jimenez, Barcelona 2000, and here I would recommend the following idea:

12...\textit{h5}! \textit{N}

Despite a fantastic score of 3½/4 on the database, I was not fully satisfied with Black's position after 12...\textit{b7}. The problem is seen after 13.\textit{f3} \textit{g4}, Spiridonov – Jansa, Polanica Zdroj 1979, and now after 14.\textit{g2} \textit{d7} 15.\textit{e5}! \textit{xe5} 16.\textit{dxe5} Black will have to fight for the draw.

13.\textit{f3} \textit{d5}!

I like the idea of exchanging the c3-knight, which stabilizes White's position on the queenside. The game might continue:

14.\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5} 15.\textit{xc7} \textit{b5} 16.\textit{he1} \textit{e4}

Preventing the e-pawn from advancing.

17.\textit{e5} \textit{g2} 18.\textit{xc4} \textit{d7} 19.\textit{g3} \textit{c8} 20.b3 \textit{d5} 21.\textit{d2} \textit{xc4} 22.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 23.\textit{b1} \textit{c8} 24.\textit{xb4} \textit{xb4} \textit{=} The endgame is drawish.
5...\(\text{h5}!\)
This is considered the most principled answer to White's move order. The three main responses are C1) 6.\(\text{g5}\), C2) 6.\(\text{e3}\) and C3) 6.\(\text{d2}\).

C1) 6.\(\text{g5}\) h6
Forcing the bishop to define its intentions.

7.\(\text{h4}\)
7.\(\text{d2}\) is best met by: 7...dxc4! (7...c5 is possible, although compared with line C3 Black's kingside has been loosened slightly.) 8.e3 \(d6\) By playing in this way, Black uses the free tempo ...h7-h6 to his advantage. 9.\(\text{f3}\) c6 10.\(\text{e4}\) \(d5\) 11.\(\text{e2}\) b5 12.\(\text{c5}\) This was J. Pinter – P. Popovic, Thessaloniki (ol) 1988. Now after Rowson's suggestion of 12...\(x\)f3N 13.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{d7}\) Black should be at least equal.

7...c5
Challenging White's centre makes good sense. Another direction is 7...dxc4 8.e3 \(d6\) 9.e2 \(\text{f6}\) with a reasonable position for Black.

8.e3
This is the main continuation, although other moves have occasionally been seen:

8.dxc5? is a mistake in view of 8...d4 9.\(\text{d5}\) g5 10.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{g3}\) 11.hxg3 0-0 when Black is better.

8.cxd5? is also poor: 8...\(\text{cxd5}\) 9.\(\text{b5}\) \(\text{a6}\) The opening of the centre is clearly favourable for Black: 10.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{a5}\)† 11.\(\text{c3}\)

Stefansson – Borge, Copenhagen 1998. At this point 11...g5!N would have been strong: 12.e3 (12.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{g3}\) 13.hxg3 \(\text{b4}\)↑) 12...\(\text{f6}\) 13.\(\text{b5}\)† \(\text{f8}\) Black is clearly better.

8.\(\text{xd5}\)! \(\text{c6}\) 9.e3 has occurred twice in tournament practice, but for some reason in both games Black refrained from the natural 9...\(\text{cxd4}\)N when 10.\(\text{xd4}\) transposes to the next note with 9.\(\text{xd5}\).

8.\(\text{xd5}\)! \(\text{c6}\) 9.e3 has occurred twice in tournament practice, but for some reason in both games Black refrained from the natural 9...\(\text{cxd4}\)N when 10.\(\text{xd4}\) transposes to the next note with 9.\(\text{xd5}\).
9.\(\textit{\&}xd5\)! \(\textit{\&}c6\) 10.\(\textit{\&}xd4\) runs into the simple and strong 10...\(\textit{\&}e6\)! 11.\(\textit{\&}f3\) 0–0 when Black takes over the initiative: 12.\(\textit{\&}e2\) \(\textit{\&}xd5\) 13.\(\textit{\&}xd5\) \(\textit{\&}xd5\) 14.0–0 g5 15.\(\textit{\&}e1\) \(\textit{\&}ad8\)! (it is senseless to rush with 15...gxh4? 16.\(\textit{\&}c5\) 16.\(\textit{\&}a4\) e6 17.\(\textit{\&}g3\) This was Taboada – Klimakovs, corr. 2008, and now the simple 17...\(\textit{\&}xg3\)N 18.hxg3 \(\textit{\&}xd4\) would have secured an extra pawn and a clear advantage for Black.

9...\(\textit{\&}c6\)
9...dxc4 is also a decent move.

10.\(\textit{\&}xd5\)
10.\(\textit{\&}f3\) \(\textit{\&}g4\) 11.\(\textit{\&}xd5\) \(\textit{\&}xd4\) transposes to the main line.

10...\(\textit{\&}xd4\)
Black has the better position, as demonstrated by the following encounter.

11.\(\textit{\&}f3\) \(\textit{\&}g4\) 12.\(\textit{\&}a4\) \(\textit{\&}d7\) 13.\(\textit{\&}d1\) \(\textit{\&}f5\)!
Black certainly has no intention of repeating the position.

14.g4?! \(\textit{\&}xh4\) 15.gxh5 \(\textit{\&}xf3\)† 16.\(\textit{\&}xf3\) g5
Black was clearly better in Paunovic – Krnic, Brezovica 1988.

C2) 6.\(\textit{\&}e3\)

It is hard to imagine that I would have paid attention to this move, were it not for the fact that it appeared in the game I. Sokolov – Smirin, St Petersburg 2010.

6...dxc4 7.\(\textit{\&}a4\)† \(\textit{\&}c6\) 8.\(\textit{\&}f3\) 0–0
The aforementioned game continued 8...\(\textit{\&}e6\)?! 9.\(\textit{\&}g5\) when White had the better chances.

9.\(\textit{\&}xc4\) \(\textit{\&}e6\)
Black tries to make use of his development advantage.

10.\(\textit{\&}c5\)
Other queen moves are also unimpressive.

10.\(\textit{\&}a4\) a6 11.\(\textit{\&}g3\) \(\textit{\&}f6\) 12.\(\textit{\&}g2\) (White has no time for 12.h3 in view of 12...\(\textit{\&}d5\)! 12...\(\textit{\&}g4\) 13.0–0 \(\textit{\&}xe3\) 14.\(\textit{\&}xe3\) \(\textit{\&}h6\) 15.\(\textit{\&}d1\) \(\textit{\&}d5\) Black has a great position.

10.\(\textit{\&}d3\) \(\textit{\&}d7\) 11.\(\textit{\&}g3\) (After 11.\(\textit{\&}e4\) \(\textit{\&}d5\) 12.\(\textit{\&}c5\) \(\textit{\&}d6\) White's centre comes under attack and the b7-pawn is untouchable in view of the check on b4.) 11...\(\textit{\&}fd8\) White has problems with his d4-pawn. 12.\(\textit{\&}g2\) \(\textit{\&}xd4\) 13.\(\textit{\&}xd4\) \(\textit{\&}xd4\) 14.\(\textit{\&}xd4\) \(\textit{\&}xd4\) 15.\(\textit{\&}xd4\) \(\textit{\&}xe4\) 16.\(\textit{\&}b5\) \(\textit{\&}c4\) 17.\(\textit{\&}xc4\) (17.0–0 \(\textit{\&}c6\) 18.\(\textit{\&}c7\) \(\textit{\&}xc1\) 19.\(\textit{\&}xc1\) \(\textit{\&}d8\) 20.\(\textit{\&}xe6\) \(\textit{\&}xe6\)†) 17...\(\textit{\&}xc4\) 18.\(\textit{\&}xc7\) \(\textit{\&}c8\) 19.\(\textit{\&}d5\) \(\textit{\&}xd5\) 20.\(\textit{\&}xd5\) b6† White has problems as the black rook will penetrate to the second rank.
10...\text{\texttt{d6}}!
The simplest solution.

11.\text{\texttt{xd6}}
11.\texttt{\texttt{e4}} \text{\texttt{d5}}! 12.\text{\texttt{xd5}} \text{\texttt{\texttt{xd5}}} 13.\texttt{\texttt{c5}} \text{\texttt{\texttt{d8}}}!
is dangerous for White.

11...\text{\texttt{cxd6}} 12.\text{\texttt{g3}} \text{\texttt{f6}} 13.\text{\texttt{g2}} \text{\texttt{d5}}
Black has the more comfortable position.

C3) 6.\text{\texttt{d2}}

This is White's top choice according to theory.

6...\text{\texttt{c5}}!
Once again this typical counterattacking move works well.

7.\texttt{e3}
The alternatives are no better:

7.\texttt{dxc5} d4 8.\texttt{\texttt{d5}}
8.\texttt{\texttt{e4}} can be met by 8...0-0 or 8...a5!\texttt{\texttt{e}}.
8.\texttt{\texttt{a4}} Komarov – V. Mikhalevski, Kiev 1995. 8...0-0!N After this natural novelty Black can already fight for the advantage, for example: 9.\texttt{\texttt{d3}} e5 10.e4 \text{\texttt{e}}! 11.\text{\texttt{d3}} (After 11.b4?! f5 12.\texttt{\texttt{d3}} \texttt{f6} White cannot hold the centre.) 11...\texttt{d7} 12.b3 \texttt{\texttt{xa4}} 13.bxa4 \texttt{\texttt{a6}} Black has a positional advantage.

8...e6 9.\text{\texttt{b4}} 0-0 10.\text{\texttt{f3}} a5! 11.\text{\texttt{d3}} \text{\texttt{c6}}
Black is ready to advance his central pawns, so White's next move is understandable.
12.\texttt{e4} \texttt{dxe3} 13.\texttt{\texttt{xe3}} e5 14.\texttt{\texttt{d2}}
This was Balogh – Stohl, Slovakia 1994, and here Black could have improved with:

14...\texttt{f5}! 15.\texttt{f3} \text{\texttt{e}}
White's position is critical, for instance:
16.\texttt{\texttt{e2}} e4 17.\texttt{\texttt{xe4}} fxe4 18.\texttt{f3} \texttt{f4} 19.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{d4}}!
White has no good defence.

7.\texttt{cxd5} \texttt{cxd4} 8.\texttt{\texttt{b5}} \texttt{\texttt{a6}} 9.\texttt{\texttt{b3}}
9.\texttt{\texttt{xd4}} \texttt{\texttt{xd5}} gives Black easy play.
9...0-0 10.e4
Maksimenko – David, Odessa 1990. Now Black should have played:

10...\texttt{\texttt{x}}?N
With a clear advantage in development, Black should take the opportunity to open the position.
11.\textit{\&}xe3 \textit{\&}f6 12.\textit{\&}c3 12.\textit{\&}c4 \textit{\&}g4! is strong.
12...\textit{\&}a5 13.\textit{\&}c4
13.\textit{\&}x\textit{\&}a6 \textit{\&}xa6 14.\textit{\&}ge2 e6! does not change the assessment.
13...\textit{\&}f5 14.\textit{\&}ge2 \textit{\&}c5 15.\textit{\&}b5
Also after 15.\textit{\&}d1 \textit{\&}g4 Black's chances are preferable.
15...\textit{\&}xb5 16.\textit{\&}xb5 \textit{\&}fc8 17.0-0 a6 18.\textit{\&}c4 \textit{\&}g4!
Black is on top.

7...\textit{\&}xd4 8.exd4 dxc4
8...\textit{\&}c6 9.cxd5 \textit{\&}xd5 10.\textit{\&}ge2 gives White a slight plus.

\textbf{9.d5}
The alternative is:
9.\textit{\&}xc4 0-0
9...\textit{\&}xd4 is risky: 10.\textit{\&}d5 \textit{\&}e5+ 11.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}c6 12.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{\&}d6 13.0-0 0-0 14.b4! White has definite compensation.
10.d5
10.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{\&}g4 11.d5 (worse is 11.0-0?! \textit{\&}c6 12.d5 \textit{\&}d4) 11...\textit{\&}d7 Black is fine.
10...\textit{\&}d7 11.\textit{\&}f3 a6!
We have transposed to the main line.

9...0-0 10.\textit{\&}xc4 \textit{\&}d7 11.\textit{\&}f3 a6!
With this key move, Black intends to develop his queenside by means of ...b5 and ...\textit{\&}b7.

Instead after 11...\textit{\&}b6?! 12.\textit{\&}b3 Black's knight is clearly misplaced.

\textbf{12.a4}
12.\textit{\&}e3 occurred in Venturino - Nizynski, corr. 1991, and now Black should have proceeded with his planned move:

12...\textit{\&}b5N Presumably he was concerned about 13.\textit{\&}e2 intending \textit{\&}d4 next, but after the courageous 13...\textit{\&}xc3† Black gets a good position thanks to the direct attack on the d5-pawn: 14.bxc3 (or 14.\textit{\&}xc3 \textit{\&}df6 15.\textit{\&}d3 \textit{\&}a5†!) 14...\textit{\&}df6 15.c4 \textit{\&}xc4 16.\textit{\&}xc4 \textit{\&}b7
The onus will be on White to demonstrate compensation after the d-pawn perishes.

12...b5!
Black takes a concrete approach to the position, which is justified by his lead in development.
13...\texttt{axb5} 14.b3 \texttt{AXB5} 15.\texttt{AXB5}

After 15.\texttt{AXB5} \texttt{AXB5} 16.\texttt{AXB5} \texttt{AXB5} 17.\texttt{C6} \texttt{F6} 18.\texttt{C3} \texttt{F8} only Black can be better.

15.\texttt{AXD5} 16.0-0 \texttt{F7} 17.\texttt{AXD5} \texttt{AXD5} 18.\texttt{C7}

This position was reached in Lauber – Holzke, Germany 2000. Now instead of exchanging on \texttt{f3} Black should have played:

18.\texttt{F2}!N

The most ambitious, although there is nothing wrong with Krasenkow's suggestion of 18.\texttt{F8} 19.\texttt{AXD5} \texttt{AXB5} with equality.

19.\texttt{AXB5} \texttt{AXB5}

The rook is well-placed on the second rank, and the b-pawn is likely to become more of a weakness than a strength.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Most of the lines in the present chapter are used by players looking to avoid theory. None of them should worry the second player, and in most cases a quick ...\texttt{c5} should give Black a promising game when followed up correctly.
Variation Index

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.d3 d5 4.f4 g7 5.f3 0–0 6.c1

6...dxc4

A) 7.e3 d6 8.g5 d5 9.e4 h6 10.exd5 hxg5 11.xg5 xd5 12.xc4 b6 13.b3 c6 160
   A1) 14.d5 161
   A2) 14.e2 163
B) 7.e4 g4 8.xc4 h5 9.e3 xf3
   B1) 10.xf3 165
   B2) 10.gxf3 e5! 11.dxe5 xxe5 12.xd8 xd8 167
      B21) 13.e2 169
      B22) 13.0–0 170

note to 6.c1

B1) after 14.fd1

B22) after 19.e5
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♗f4 ♘g7 5.♗f3 0–0

6.♗c1

This move is the primary subject of the present chapter.

6...♗b3 dxc4 7.♗xc4 ♘a6 would take us to Chapter 10.

6.e3 c5

From this position the most likely outcome is a transposition to one of the main lines considered elsewhere. Let us briefly consider a few independent possibilities.

7.dxc5

7.♗e2 cxd4 8.exd4 ♘c6 leads to a reversed Tarrasch in which White has the extra tempo ♘c1-f4. Black should have no real problems here, considering that f4 would seldom be the bishop’s preferred square in such positions.

7...♗a5 8.♗a4

White’s best and most common continuation is 8.♗c1, after which 8...dxc4 9.♗xc4 ♘xc5 takes us to the starting position of Chapter 17.

The alternatives are worse, for instance:

8.cxd5 ♘xd5! 9.♗e5 ♘xe3 10.♗d2 ♘xe5 11.♗xe5 ♘xe5 12.♗xc3 ♘xc3† 13.bxc3 ♘d7 Black’s superior pawn structure gives him the advantage, as shown in several games.

8...♖d2? dxc4 9.♗xc4 (9.♗xc4 looks inconsistent, and after 9...♘xc5 it is not clear what the knight is doing on d2.) 9...♘xc5 10.♖e2 ♘c6 (10...♗h5?? N may be even stronger) 11.0–0 ♖d8 It is clear that Black has won the opening battle, Lilienthal – Boleslavsky, Moscow 1944.

6...♗xc5 9.♖b5 ♖xb5 10.♗xb5 ♘a6

White’s exchanging manoeuvre has achieved very little. Here is one illustrative example:

11.♗d1 ♘e6 12.♗f4 ♗d7 13.♗e5 ♗fc8 14.cxd5 ♘xd5 15.♗xg7 ♖xg7

Black’s position was already more pleasant in Levenfish – Botvinnik, Leningrad 1937.

The only other noteworthy alternative is:

6.cxd5

This is not a great idea, as White seems to have forgotten about developing his kingside.

6...♗xd5

It is worth considering two options here.

a) It has long been known that White cannot take the c7-pawn, so I just want to show you why:

7.♗xd5?? ♖xd5 8.♗xc7 ♘c6 9.e3 ♘f5

White has tried several moves here, but in all cases the evaluation is clear: Black’s superior development is more valuable than White’s extra pawn.
Chapter 14 - 6.c1

10...\texttt{c}2

10.a3 \texttt{c}ac8 11.g3 runs into a powerful retort: 11...\texttt{c}2! 12.e2 a5 13.d2 e5 14.b5 xb5 15.xb5 exd4 16.exd4 \texttt{x}d4 17.0-0 fd8\texttt{=}. Shestakov - Zilberstein, Soviet Union 1974.

10...\texttt{ac}8 11.g3 \texttt{a}5\texttt{=}+

12.d2

12.f1 has occurred in two games. 12...b4!\texttt{=} is the right way to develop Black's initiative, for instance: 13.b3 c6 14.a3 c2 15.d1 b6 16.a2 e6 17.b1 c8 Black is clearly better.

12...b4 13.0-0 c2 14.e1 xb2

From this position Black has made a 100% score from four games. Here is one example:

15.e5 xe5 16.xe5

This is Anikaev - Giorgadze, Soviet Union 1973, and now the following improvement looks strong:

16...a3!N 17.d5 c2

White is in trouble.

b) 7.e5

This is safer, although it can hardly trouble the second player.

7...\texttt{c}5 8.dxe5 c5

12...\texttt{c}b4

12...b4!\texttt{=} is the right way to develop Black's initiative, for instance: 13.b3 c6 14.a3 c2 15.d1 b6 16.a2 e6 17.b1 c8 Black is clearly better.

12...b4 13.0-0 c2 14.e1 xb2

From this position Black has made a 100% score from four games. Here is one example:

15.e5 xe5 16.xe5

This is Anikaev - Giorgadze, Soviet Union 1973, and now the following improvement looks strong:

9.e3

Dubious is: 9.dxc5?! xc3 10.xd8 xd8 11.bxc3 Tunik - Mikheev, St Petersburg 2009. Here Black missed the strong 11...e6!N 12.b1 c6 13.d3 ab8 intending ...dc8 and ...c5. White is in trouble here.

9...xc3 10.bxc3 d7 11.f3

In the event of 11.d3?! Black has a strong response: 11...exd4 12.exd4 e5! 13.e2 (Also after 13.dxe5 xe5 14.xe5 a5\texttt{=} 15.d2 xe5 16.d1 e6 Black has the better chances.) 13...exd4 14.exd4 f6\texttt{=} White is likely to lose his central pawn, Pomar Salamanca - Jimenez Zerquera, Marianske Lazne 1965.
11...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}\text{5}?! N
It seems to me that Black can play for more than just an equal game with 11...b6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{e}}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{eb}}7 13.0-0 \textcolor{red}{\textit{ec}}7 14.a4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{ef}}6 when a draw was agreed in Akobian – Golod, Las Vegas 2004.

12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{wd}}}2 b6
White's position is a bit uncomfortable, as shown by the following line:

13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{ec}}}2
After 13.d5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{ef}}6 14.c4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{wx}}d2† 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{e}}6 White cannot hold his centre: 16.e4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xe}}8! 17.f3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}5 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{b}}5 19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{e}}6 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{db}}4 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xe}}6 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xe}}6 Black will collect a second pawn for the exchange and he retains clearly better chances.

13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}}6 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{ec}}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{b}}7
14...\textcolor{red}{\textit{e}}4 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}6! leads to a balanced position.

15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{wa}}4 16.0-0 \textcolor{red}{\textit{wa}}8†
Black has the more pleasant game.

12.exf4 This was Lebreton – Spielmann, Port Barcares 2005, and now after the simple 12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}6 N 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{ec}}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{ac}}8 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{ec}}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{dd}}4† Black regains the pawn and his bishop pair gives him clearly better chances.

8...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{d}}}5 9.e4
The alternative is:

9.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{xd}}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}5 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}}4 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{wb}}}3!
White's chosen line is tricky, but Black should be doing well if he responds correctly.

11...e6!
Black should not be tempted to win a pawn, since after 11...\textcolor{red}{\textit{lx}}g2†?! 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{wx}}g2 c6 13.h4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{wa}}5† 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ec}}2 White's attack is dangerous.

12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{wx}}f4 c5!
Black should act quickly, otherwise his opponent will generate a dangerous attack on the kingside.

13.dxc5
13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}}7? does not work in view of the calm reaction 13...\textcolor{red}{\textit{ec}}7! 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h}}6† (14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ec}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}}7) 14...\textcolor{red}{\textit{h}}8 when White loses material.

6...dxc4
Now we reach an important crossroads where White must choose between A) 7.e3 and B) 7.e4.

A) 7.e3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{eb}}6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{gg}}5
It is doubtful that White has any reasonable alternative here, for instance: 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ec}}5?! c5 9.dxc5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{h}}5 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}8 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}}8 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}}4
13...\(\text{a5}\)\text{f1} N.
13...\(\text{d7}\) was played in Borges Mateos –
Staniszewski, Polanica Zdroj 1988, but I am
a bit worried about 14.b4! N when White
tries to hold onto his extra pawn.
14.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{d7}\)
This is the best square for the knight.
The inferior 14...\(\text{a6}\) runs into 15.\(\text{x}a6!\)
\(\text{xa6}\) chores 16.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{c6}\) 17.b3 and after
17...\(\text{yg2}\) 18.\(\text{h4}\) h6 19.\(\text{f3}\) g5 20.\(\text{e4}\)
g4 21.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 22.\(\text{xe4}\) White is clearly
better.
15.\(\text{h4}\) h6 16.\(\text{xe6}\)
This looks nice for White, but it turns out
that Black has everything under control.

16...g5! 17.\(\text{xg5}\)
It is of crucial importance that the following
line is in Black’s favour: 17.\(\text{h3}\)?! fxe6
18.\(\text{xe6}\) h8 19.\(\text{xd7}\) White has won
two pawns, but his exposed king will be his
undoing. 19...\(\text{a6}\) chores 20.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{xa2}\) Black
has a decisive attack.
17...\(\text{h5}\) 18.\(\text{yg5}\) \(\text{e5}\) 19.\(\text{hd1}\) \(\text{ac8}\)
The position is complex and unbalanced,
but it seems to me that Black’s chances are
preferable due to his strong pieces.

9...h6 10.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{hg5}\) 11.\(\text{xi}g5\) \(\text{xd5}\)
11...b5?! is interesting, but I prefer the
straightforward regaining of the pawn.

12.\(\text{xc4}\)

12.\(\text{zh3}\) is not really a serious alternative
due to 12...\(\text{b4}\), for example: 13.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xd4}\)
14.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{e5}\) 15.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{ac6}\) 16.\(\text{f4}\) This was
Govciyan – D’Costa, Chalkidiki 2001, and
now Black could have secured his advantage
by means of:

Now White has two options: A1) 14.\(\text{d5}\) and
A2) 14.\(\text{e2}\).

A1) 14.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{d4}\) 15.0–0

In this position Black can choose between two
routes to an equal game.
According to theory this is the main move.

This is equally playable and is a bit more drawish, which may be a good or a bad thing depending on one's opponent and tournament/match situation.

17...\texttt{bxc3}
17.bxc3 is also possible: 17...\texttt{xd5} 18.\texttt{xe7}

18...\texttt{fe8} (I would prefer to swap queens in order to eliminate the danger of being attacked on the dark squares: 18...\texttt{xb3N} 19.axb3 \texttt{fe8} 20.\texttt{c5} \texttt{d7} 21.\texttt{e3} a5 22.\texttt{f1} \texttt{c5=} Black has no problems.) 19.\texttt{c4} This position occurred in Gershon – J. Horvath, Chalkidiki 2002, and now Black could have equalized as follows: 19...\texttt{c6N} 20.\texttt{fe1} \texttt{c8}! 21.\texttt{a3} \texttt{d6} 22.\texttt{b2} \texttt{exe1} 23.\texttt{exe1} \texttt{e8} 24.\texttt{exe8} \texttt{exe8} 25.\texttt{c3} f6 Black easily holds.

17...\texttt{xd5} 18.\texttt{xe7 fe8} 19.\texttt{c5}
More accurate would have been 19.\texttt{xa3} with an equal game.

19...\texttt{e2}!
Now Black becomes rather active and White should be careful.

The calm 20.\texttt{h3} was preferable.

A disastrous blunder. Instead 21.\texttt{e3} \texttt{f5} 22.\texttt{f1} \texttt{d5} 23.\texttt{d3} was unpleasant but probably still tenable for White.

21...\texttt{xc5}
0–1 Gershon – Avrukh, Tel Aviv 2002.

16.\texttt{e1}
16.\texttt{e3} also fails to pose Black problems:
16...\texttt{xb3} 17.\texttt{xb3} \texttt{xc3} 18.\texttt{xb3} axb6 19.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{f8} 20.\texttt{d1} \texttt{a5=} Vegh – Flumbort, Hungary 2004.

16.h4 is equally harmless: 16...\texttt{d8} 17.a3 \texttt{xb3} 18.\texttt{xb3} \texttt{xd5} 19.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 20.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 21.\texttt{xc7} \texttt{a5} Giorgadze – Shirov, Cala Galdana 2001.

16...\texttt{fe8} 17.h4
17.\texttt{e3}?! \texttt{xb3} 18.\texttt{xb3} \texttt{xc3} 19.bxc3 \texttt{xd5} White has tried this sacrifice several times, but it seems to me that it is dubious due to the following variation: 20.c4 \texttt{c6} 21.\texttt{d4} \texttt{d8} 22.\texttt{a1} f6 23.\texttt{c3} This was Dreev – Sutovsky, Moscow 2002, and here I found a natural improvement:
White's compensation is inadequate.

17...\texttt{a}d8

18.\texttt{a}4

Other possibilities also fail to trouble the second player.

18.h5?! is met strongly by: 18...\texttt{g}xh5 19.\texttt{x}h5 \texttt{xf}5! White's attacking chances are illusory, and in the following game Black soon got the upper hand: 20.\texttt{d}d1 \texttt{xd}5 21.\texttt{h}4 (21.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{f}6! is strong) 21...\texttt{f}6 22.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{c}6 23.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{e}2† 24.\texttt{xe}2 \texttt{xe}4 25.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{g}6 Black slowly converted his extra pawn in Nguyen Ngoc Truong – Li Chao, China 2010.

18.\texttt{c}e4 \texttt{xb}3 19.\texttt{x}b3 \texttt{xd}5 (I also like 19...\texttt{xc}3\texttt{N} 20.bxc3 \texttt{xd}5 21.\texttt{e}c7 \texttt{e}e7 22.\texttt{xe}7 \texttt{e}8 23.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{c}4 when Black has nothing to worry about.) 20.\texttt{xb}7 \texttt{xc}3 21.bxc3 a5 The position is equal, Xu Jun – Ghinda, Timisoara 1987.

18...\texttt{xa}4 19.\texttt{xa}4

This position occurred in Bareev – Van Wely, Germany 2001.

19...\texttt{c}6?!\texttt{N}

In the game Black exchanged queens and a draw was soon agreed, but I prefer the text move slightly.

20.\texttt{xc}6

20.\texttt{e}4?! is a mistake due to 20...b5 21.\texttt{b}4 a5! 22.\texttt{c}5 b4 23.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{xc}6 when Black takes over the initiative.

20...\texttt{xc}6

The position is equal.

A2) 14.\texttt{e}2 a5!

It is thanks to this important move that this whole variation in no longer fashionable at grandmaster level.

15.\texttt{a}4

The main continuation.

Clearly worse is: 15.0–0?! a4 16.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{xc}4 (16...\texttt{xd}4\texttt{N} also leads to an advantage, but
there is nothing wrong with the text move.)
17...dxc4 e5 18...c5 This was Hartoch – Timman, Leeuwarden 1971, and now the forcing 18...dx4!N would have been very strong, since after 19...dx4 exd4 20...xc7 e2 21...xb7 e8! White loses the b2-pawn.

15.a3
This is a more respectable alternative.
15...a4 16.a2

16...dx4
For players who wish to avoid the drawish main line I can recommend the following more enterprising approach: 16...a5?! The possibility of activating the rook in this way constitutes one of the main advantages of advancing the a-pawn. 17...d2 e5! 18...e3 e6 (18...a5?!N looks interesting as well) 19.0–0 e7 The game is complex and approximately equal, Uifelean – Clark, corr. 2007.
17...dx4
Playing for an attack on the kingside is not really an option for White as 17.h4 can be met by 17...a5!.
17...dx4 18...dx4 exd4 19...xc7 eac8! 20...xc8
The alternatives are equally harmless:
20...xb7?! e5 21...xb7 e2 22...f8 23...xc2 e5 White already has to fight for the draw, Bergner – Packroff, e-mail 2008.
20...e7 b2 21...d1 (After the inaccurate

21...e2? fxc8 White is in trouble.) 21...xb2
22...e2 e5! 23...d3 24...xd5 e4 25...d2 f6 In this equal position a draw was agreed in Timar – Marcinkiewicz, corr. 2003.
20...exd8 21...d2 e6 22...e3 ex3† 23...e3 d4† 24...xc4
½–½ Dreev – Khalifman, Wijk aan Zee 2002. The resulting rook endgame is equal.

15...a8!
I found this important move over the board in my game against Giorgadze in 1999, completely unaware that it had been played as early as 1971. It has been played in several subsequent games and practice has shown that Black is fine.

16.0–0
Two other moves of interest are:

16.d5?! is inferior as White’s d-pawn becomes weak: 16...b4 17...c3 Now in the game Tibensky – Banas, Slovakia 2002, Black missed the very strong: 17...c5!N 18.0–0 (The main tactical point is that 18...dx6? is impossible due to 18...d3† when Black wins.) 18...c4 19...c2 d6x5† Black is simply a pawn up.

16...e3 e5 17.dxe5 (17.d5 is not dangerous: 17...d4 18...c3 This was Dreev – Ni Hua,
Shanghai 2001, and now it would have been a good idea to exchange White's central pawn by means of: 18...c6!N 19.dxc6 bxc6 20.0-0 c4 Black is at least equal.) 17...xe5N (There is also nothing wrong with 17...d1 18.e5 bx6 bx6 20.0-0 fd8 with equality, Giorgadze – Atalik, Batumi 1999.) 18.c2 (19.0-0 fd8=) The position is balanced.

16...xd4
In the stem game Grigorian – Savon, Leningrad 1971, the players agreed a draw here.

17.d4 xd4 18.e7
White should take the opportunity to regain the pawn.
18.f3?! looks too risky: 18...e6! 19.c2 d5 (19...d7?!N is also promising) 20.d1 fb4 21.d2 b6 22.d5 exd5 23.ed5 cd8 24.f3 c6 Even after regaining the pawn White is under some pressure, Kerssemakers – Lont, corr. 1990.

18.xd1 19xed1
19.fxd1 does not change much: 19...xb2 20.d8 (20.e2 fe8 21.c5 f6=) 20...xc1 21.c5 g5 In this equal position a draw was agreed in Ebner – Mezera, e-mail 2007.

19.fe8 20.c5
20.a3?! f8! can only help Black.

20...cd8!
This is the last accurate move, which secures equality.

20...xb2? would have been a mistake: 21xb6 cx6 22.d7 f8 23.xb7= Black is under some pressure and the f7-pawn is a clear target.

21.xb6 cx6 22.d5xb2 23.xb7 d4=
The position is absolutely equal, Giorgadze – Avrukh, Bugojno 1999.

B) 7.e4
This has been marginally more popular than 7.e3, and is a bit more ambitious.

7...g4
This is not the only playable move, but it is the main line and the one I consider the most reliable.

8.xc4
This is almost always played.

8.e5?! is premature due to 8.g5! 9.e3 c5 10.dxc5 Borges Mateos – Llobel Cortell, Albacet 2002, and now the simple 10...c6N 11.xc4 xd1 12.xd1 xf3 13.xf3 xe5+
would have given Black the more pleasant

game.

8...e3?! does not seem very logical. 8...c5
(8...h5 9.xc4 transposes to the main line,
but Black should try to take advantage of
his opponent’s questionable move order.)
9.dxc5 a5 10.b2 e6! 11.h3 (11.g5
runs into 11...g4! 12.xe6 xe3 13.fxe3
fxc6 14.xc4 a6 15.xe6† h8 when
Black has a long-term initiative due to White's
unsafe king.) 11.c6 12.a3 d7 The
initiative is with Black, Mudra – Zahour, corr.
2005.

8...h5

9.e3
This is the clear first choice, but in a few
games White has deviated with:
9.g5?! x3!
9...c6 10.e2 x3 11.x3 a4 12.xh5 gxh5 13.xh5 d3! 14.e2 xe2†
15.xe2 d4† 16.f1 e6 was a convincing
route to equality in Dreev – Smirin, Moscow
2002, but Black can strive for more.
10.xf3 xd4 11.d5

The present position was reached in Dreev –
Peng Xiaomin, Shanghai 2001. At this point
White's opening concept could effectively
have been refuted as follows:

9.xf3

In this position White must choose between

B1) 10.xf3
This move is considered harmless by theory, and with good reason.

10...\(\mathcal{A}x\!d\!4\) 11.0-0

I also examined: 11.\(\mathcal{A}d\!1\) c5 12.0-0 \(\mathcal{A}c\!6\) 13.\(\mathcal{W}e\!2\) (13.\(\mathcal{A}h\!6\) looks more challenging, but after 13...\(\mathcal{A}e\!5\) 14.\(\mathcal{W}e\!2\) Black has the elegant: 14...e6! 15.g3 [Obviously the rook is untouchable in view of the threatened 15...\(\mathcal{A}f\!4\).] 15...\(\mathcal{A}g\!7\) Black is better.) 13...\(\mathcal{W}b\!8\) 14.\(\mathcal{A}d\!5\) This position occurred in Nogues – Villanueva, Argentina 2007, and now Black should have played 14...\(\mathcal{A}d\!8\)!N with the point that 15.\(\mathcal{A}x\!c\!6\) bxc6 16.\(\mathcal{A}a\!4\) can be met by 16...\(\mathcal{W}e\!5\)! with a clear advantage.

11...c5 12.e5

After 12.\(\mathcal{A}h\!6\) \(\mathcal{G}g\!7\) Black has no problems.

12.\(\mathcal{A}f\!d\!1\) \(\mathcal{A}c\!6\) 13.\(\mathcal{A}h\!6\) can be met by the attractive 13...\(\mathcal{A}e\!5\) 14.\(\mathcal{W}e\!2\) e6!, just as in the note to move 11 above. The following is a great example of Black's chances: 15.\(\mathcal{B}b\!5\) (15.\(\mathcal{A}x\!f\!8\) \(\mathcal{G}g\!5\)! gives Black a serious initiative)

We have been following the game Kohlweyer – L'Ami, Vlissingen 2006. Here I found an improvement:

12...\(\mathcal{G}f\!6\)!N

The knight returns to the centre and takes control over some important squares. Here is an illustrative line:

14...\(\mathcal{A}f\!6\)\!N

15.\(\mathcal{B}b\!5\) \(\mathcal{C}c\!7\)! 16.\(\mathcal{A}x\!c\!6\) \(\mathcal{A}x\!e\!3\) 17.\(\mathcal{F}x\!e\!3\) bxc6 18.\(\mathcal{A}a\!4\) \(\mathcal{F}d\!8\) 19.\(\mathcal{A}x\!c\!5\) \(\mathcal{A}x\!d\!1\)\!\! 20.\(\mathcal{A}x\!d\!1\) \(\mathcal{W}e\!5\)

Black's chances are clearly higher.

B2) 10.gxf3

10...e5!

Immediately challenging White's centre.
11.dxe5
After 11.d5 c5 White can hardly hope for an advantage with such a weakened kingside, Klee – Saering, Oberwinden 2007.

11...Rx e5
I did a lot of work on this system a number of years ago, when I played it quite often. For some time I considered 11...Wd4?! to be an interesting attempt,

based on the idea of a positional exchange sacrifice after 12.c5 d6 13.Rxf8 Rxf8 with decent compensation.

However, in the following encounter White introduced an extraordinary idea which refutes Black's eleventh move: 12.Rxf7?? Rxf7 13.e6 Wf8 14.Wb3! The key move, after which Black has no good defence against the dual threats of e7† and Wxb7. 14...c6 15.e7† d8 16.exf8= W† Rx f8 White has a winning position although he later went horribly wrong and lost in Bosboom – Finkel, Dieren 1997.

12.Wxd8
This is the main line. Exchanging queens is logical, as White's best chances to make something of his bishop pair will come in the endgame. Nevertheless Black also has certain advantages in the form of a better pawn structure and potential knight outpost on f4. We will see that with correct play the position should be balanced, but first we should pay attention to a couple of lesser moves.

Avoiding the queen exchange with 12.Wb3?! is rather risky, as White's damaged pawn structure will render his king rather vulnerable. 12...d6! 13.Wxb7 d4 As practice has shown, Black's initiative is dangerous:

14.fx d4 (After 14.d5 Wb3† 15.c2 d4† 16.d3?! Wb8 17.Wxa7 Wc6 White's king was in a precarious position to say the least, Barbero – Szeberenyi, Budapest 2000.) 14...Wxd4 15.c2 Wc5! (Black has no interest in allowing a queen exchange after 15...Wb8?! 16.Wd5.) 16.c6 Wb8 17.b1 This position occurred in J. Garcia – Pacheco, Lima 2002, and here Black missed a powerful idea:

17...d6!N With this move Black frees the f6-square for his queen and also sets up a potentially troublesome check on b4. 18.b3
White is under permanent pressure on the dark squares.

12.\text{\textbf{h6?!}} is met by a powerful counterargument: 12...e6! 13.\text{\textbf{xf8 \textbf{xf8}}} After his excellent positional exchange sacrifice, Black's domination over the dark squares gives him more than enough compensation. One example continued: 14.\text{\textbf{e2 f4}} 15.\text{\textbf{xf4 xf4}} 16.c3 Rogers - Timofeev, Amsterdam 2005, and here I found a logical improvement:

16...d8N 17.d5 e5 18.xc7 xf3† 19.xf3 xc7 20.0-0 e7 Material is level, but Black has the advantage as the white king is not very safe. In such situations the opposite-coloured bishops are only likely to make the defender's life more difficult.

12...\text{\textbf{xd8}}

13.b4?! turned out badly in the following encounter: 13...\text{\textbf{f4}} 14.d5?! g2† 15.g1 xe3† 16.fxe3 c6 17.f4 cxd5 18.xd5 c6 19.fxe5 \text{\textbf{xb4†}} Lputian - Ivanchuk, Elista 1998.

Here we have two options: B21) 13.\text{\textbf{e2}} and B22) 13.0-0.

With this move White takes control over some dark squares and prepares to advance his f-pawn. When I worked on this line several years ago I considered the text move to be White's most challenging approach, but nowadays I do not find it in the least bit frightening.

13...\text{\textbf{c6}} 14.0-0

14.f4?! is weaker, but it demands an accurate reaction: 14...\text{\textbf{xb2}} 15.b1 \text{\textbf{a5†}} An important resource! 16.d5 (16.xb2 xc4 17.xb7 xe3 [17...\text{\textbf{f6}}?!N was also worth considering] 18.xe3 \text{\textbf{f6}} 19.e5 \text{\textbf{g4}} 20.g1 xe3 Black was slightly better in Relange - Palac, Bastia 1998.) 16.c6 17.xf7† xf7 18.xb2 Wichmann - Gleichmann, Leipzig 2009, Black should have considered: 18...b5?!N Securing the c4-square for the knight. (18...b6N 19.g3 g7 20.e2 c5 also looks promising) 19.g3 c4 20.e2 g7 21.e2 \text{\textbf{d7}} I prefer Black's position in this endgame.
14...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}4}}}}
I like this more than 14...\texttt{\texttt{a}a5} 15.\texttt{\texttt{d}d5!} c6 16.\texttt{\texttt{xf}7+} \texttt{\texttt{x}f7} 17.\texttt{\texttt{b}b4} \texttt{\texttt{c}c7} 18.\texttt{\texttt{g}g5} \texttt{\texttt{d}d6} 19.bxa5 \texttt{\texttt{x}xa5} 20.\texttt{\texttt{fd}1} \texttt{\texttt{x}d}1\texttt{\texttt{t}} 21.\texttt{\texttt{x}d}1 when Black still had some problems to solve in Wirig – Pinter, Pardubice 2008.

15.\texttt{\texttt{d}d4} \texttt{\texttt{x}d}4

16.\texttt{\texttt{fd}1}
Another game continued 16.\texttt{\texttt{d}d5} \texttt{\texttt{xe}3} 17.\texttt{\texttt{fxe}3} c6 18.\texttt{\texttt{b}b3} \texttt{\texttt{d}d}2 19.\texttt{\texttt{f}f2} \texttt{\texttt{ad}8} when Black was not worse, Beliavsky – Leko, Dortmund 1998.

16...\texttt{\texttt{xe}3} 17.\texttt{\texttt{fxe}3} \texttt{\texttt{f}f}8 18.\texttt{\texttt{f}f2} \texttt{\texttt{e}7} 19.e5
Now in Grischchenko – Belov, Sochi 2008, Black should have played:

19...\texttt{\texttt{f}6!N} 20.\texttt{\texttt{ex}f6}+ \texttt{\texttt{xf}6}
With a balanced endgame.

B22) 13.0–0

13...\texttt{\texttt{d}d7}
This is more flexible than 13...\texttt{\texttt{c}c6} 14.\texttt{\texttt{d}d5} \texttt{\texttt{a}a5} 15.\texttt{\texttt{g}g5} \texttt{\texttt{d}d7} 16.\texttt{\texttt{b}b5} c6 17.\texttt{\texttt{b}b4} \texttt{\texttt{c}xb5} 18.bxa5 when White was slightly better in Drozdoskij – Eljanov, Poltava 2006.

14.\texttt{\texttt{c}c2}
White has tried a few other moves.

14.\texttt{\texttt{fd}1} \texttt{\texttt{b}b6} 15.\texttt{\texttt{b}b3} (Or 15.\texttt{\texttt{f}f1} c6 16.b3 \texttt{\texttt{xd}1} 17.\texttt{\texttt{xd}1} Bykhovsky – Vydeslaver, Beer-Sheva 1996, and here Black should have played 17...\texttt{\texttt{d}d8N} with a comfortable position.) 15...\texttt{\texttt{f}f4} 16.\texttt{\texttt{f}f1} c6 17.\texttt{\texttt{xd}8??}! (This exchange is premature. Instead the correct 17.\texttt{\texttt{b}b1} would have maintained the balance.) 17...\texttt{\texttt{xd}8} 18.a4 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}3 19.\texttt{\texttt{d}d1} \texttt{\texttt{d}d6} White had to defend carefully to reach a draw, Portisch – Ruck, Hungary 1999.

14.\texttt{\texttt{c}c2}
White defends the b2-pawn in advance.
Here I recommend:
14...\texttt{\texttt{b}b6} 15.\texttt{\texttt{b}b3} \texttt{\texttt{f}f4}
Also interesting is 15...\texttt{\texttt{f}f4??N}. 
16.\textit{d}e2
The best way to meet 16.a4, Huang Qian – Gara, Khanty-Mansiysk (ol) 2010, is simply to block the a-pawn with 16...\textit{a}5N. Black need not fear 17.\textit{b}b5, as 17...\textit{d}d7 keeps everything under control.

16...\textit{\&}xe2\dagger 17.\textit{\&}xe2
The position is equal, and in the following game both sides played accurately.

17...\textit{g}g7 18.\textit{g}g2 \textit{d}d7 19.\textit{b}c1 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{c}c2 \textit{ad}8 21.\textit{f}f4 \textit{d}d4 22.\textit{d}d2 \textit{\&}a8!? 23.\textit{b}b4 \textit{c}c7 24.\textit{ed}2 \textit{de}6 25.\textit{f}f3 \textit{\&}b6=

Aalderink – M. Rubinstein, e-mail 2007.

14...\textit{\&}xb2 15.\textit{\&}b1

15...\textit{\&}e5!
This accurate move enables Black to equalize comfortably.
4. \( \text{f4} \)

5.e3 c5 – Introduction and Sidelines

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \text{f6} \) 2.c4 \( \text{g6} \) 3.\( \text{c3} \) d5 4.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{g7} \) 5.e3

5...c5

A) 6.\( \text{xb8?!} \) 173
B) 6.\( \text{f3} \) cxd4
   B1) 7.exd4 174
   B2) 7.\( \text{xd4} \) 175
C) 6.dxc5 \( \text{a5} \)
   C1) 7.cxd5 \( \text{xd5} \) 178
   C2) 7.\( \text{b3} \) 179
   C3) 7.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{xa4} \) 8.\( \text{xa4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 9.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{e4} \) 10.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{a6} \)
       11.f3 \( \text{exc5} \)
       C31) 12.\( \text{g5} \) 182
       C32) 12.\( \text{b1} \) 183
       C33) 12.0–0–0 184

A) after 15.0–0

B2) note to 8.\( \text{db5} \)

C33) note to 13.\( \text{c7} \)

15...\( \text{g4} \) N

9...\( \text{xd4} \) N

16...\( \text{e8} \) N
Chapter 15 - 5.e3 c5 - Introduction and Sidelines

From here we will consider the rare

A) 6...\textit{xb8}?! followed by the more respectable

B) 6...\textit{f3} and finally the main line of C)

6.dxc5.

6...\textit{xd5}!

This is not a serious option.

6...\textit{xd5}

White's last move is usually connected with the following idea:

7.\textit{xb8}

Intending to simplify to an endgame.

7...\textit{b5}+ \textit{c6} is good for Black.

7...\textit{xb8} 8.\textit{a4}+

8...\textit{d7 9.a5}

9...\textit{xa7} \textit{b4} 10.\textit{c1} \textit{xd4} 11.\textit{exd4} \textit{c6} was terrible for White in Palme – Dorn, Bad Gastein 1948, and 11...\textit{h6}!N would have been even stronger.

9...\textit{xc3} 10.bxc3 \textit{a6} 11.\textit{xd7}+ \textit{xd7}

12.\textit{xd7}+ \textit{xd7}

Black has the slightly better endgame, for instance:

13.\textit{f3} \textit{hc8} 14.\textit{d2} \textit{b5}=


A) 6...\textit{xb8}?! \textit{xb8
14...\textit{d}e4!!N 15...\textit{xe}4 \textit{w}xd2+ 16...\textit{xd}2 \textit{fd}8+ 17...\textit{d}3 (17...\textit{c}c2 \textit{a}4\textit{f}; 17...\textit{d}3 \textit{f}5; 17...\textit{e}1 \textit{xb}2 Black wins easily in all these lines.) 17...\textit{xb}2 18...\textit{b}1 \textit{xc}1\textit{f} Black regains his piece while keeping an overwhelming initiative.

10...\textit{a}5
Black's initiative practically plays itself. The following is a good example.

11...\textit{d}2 \textit{b}5 12...\textit{d}3 \textit{b}4 13...\textit{ce}2 \textit{w}xd5 14...\textit{f}3 \textit{fd}8 15.0-0
This position was reached in Donner - Gheorghiu, Amsterdam 1969. At this point Black missed a powerful continuation:

6...\textit{xd}4
There is also nothing wrong with 6...0-0, transposing to the line 5...\textit{f}3 0-0 6.e3 \textit{c}5 as given on page 158.

After the main move White occasionally tries B1) 7...\textit{xd}4 but the more important line is unquestionably B2) 7...\textit{xd}4.
Black has a good version of the e3 line seen in line A3 of Chapter 12, as White’s dark-squared bishop does not really belong on f4, especially at such an early stage in the game. Black’s position is easy to handle, and I will just show one interesting line to illustrate how the game might develop.

9.0-0  $g_8$ 10.$h_3$

With this move White initiates complications which are not unfavourable to Black, but the second player was doing fine in any case.

10...$\text{xf3}$ 11.$\text{xf3}$ dxc4 12.d5 $\text{b4}$! 13.d6

This is the simplest reaction, but it is not the only good move. Equally playable is:

13...$\text{d3}$ 14.$\text{xb7}$

A remarkable situation has been reached in which Black has no less than four opportunities to sacrifice the exchange. Three of them are promising, but amazingly in practice Black has always opted for the worst option.

14...$\text{xf4}$?

The following alternatives deserve attention:

14...$\text{h5}$N 15.$\text{g5}$ $\text{xd6}$ 16.$\text{xa8}$ $\text{xa8}$; 14...$\text{b8}$N 15.$\text{xc7}$ $\text{xc7}$ 16.$\text{xb8}$ $\text{xb7}$ 17.$\text{d6}$ $\text{d8}$ 18.$\text{a3}$ $\text{h5}$; 14...exd6N

15.$\text{xa8}$ d5$=$ In all three cases Black has promising compensation for his small material deficit.

15.$\text{xc7}$ $\text{xc7}$ 16.$\text{xa8}$ $\text{xa8}$† 17.$\text{gxh3}$ $\text{xa8}$ 18.$\text{f3}$

White was clearly better in Zharkov – Etchegaray, France 2005.

10.d5

White was clearly better in Zharkov – Etchegaray, France 2005.

14...$\text{d3}$ 15.$\text{d6}$ $\text{xd7}$ 16.$\text{xf8}$ $\text{xf8}$ 17.$\text{c2}$ $\text{d8}$

With two pawns for the exchange and a monstrous knight on d3 Black is clearly better, Materniak – Slawinski, corr. 1999.

B2) 7.$\text{xd4}$
This makes a lot more sense, although it is hardly likely to trouble the second player.

7...0-0 8...db5
This is the only really challenging continuation. I doubt that White can fight for the advantage with anything else.

8...b3 can be met forcefully with: 8...h5! 9...xb8 This position has occurred in three games but so far nobody has played the best move:

8...a5!
This is the key move to remember. Now Black has no problems and can even fight for the initiative.

9.a3
9...c7? e4! is no good for White.

Another key line is 9.cxd5 a6! 10...c7 e4 11...d3 xc3 12.bxc3 xc3† 13...f1 a7 and Black is better.

9...c1 dxc4 10.xc4 c6 11.0-0 was seen in Schmitzer – Schoenbach, e-mail 2005.

and here Black should have played 11...a6! with the following justification:
12...c7 e5 13...xa8 exf4 14...d5 xd5 15...xd5 b4 16...c7 c7 17...xa6 fx3 18.fxe3 xb2 19.c2 a3 White is in trouble with his knight being stranded on the edge of the board.

Perhaps White should consider 9...a4 at which point the game Turov – Vocaturo, Eforie Nord 2010, was immediately agreed drawn. The continuation might be 9...xa4 10...xa4 and now both 10...a6 and 10...d7† look fine for Black.

9...dxc4N
With this logical novelty Black safeguards his queen and gets a pleasant position.
9...d7
10.\textit{c7}! gave Black some problems in A. Mikhalevski – Greenfeld, Israel 1999.

10.\textit{xc4} \textit{e4} 11.0–0

11.b4?! only leads to problems for White:
11...\textit{xc3} 12.bxa5 \textit{xd1} 13.\textit{xd1} \textit{c6} 14.\textit{c7} \textit{b8} White suffers from a weak pawn on a5 and knight jumps can always be met by ...e5.

11...\textit{a6} 12.b4

12.\textit{xe4} axb5 13.\textit{d5} e6! is fine for Black.

This is by far the most important option.

\textit{6...\textit{a5}}

In this position 7.\textit{c1} is the main line and the subject of Chapters 16 & 17. In the remainder of the present chapter we will deal with the alternatives C1) 7.\textit{xd5}, C2) 7.\textit{b3} and C3) 7.\textit{a4}†.

7.\textit{d2}?! is toothless and generally results in an improved version of the main line for Black:
7...\textit{xc4} 8.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc5} 9.\textit{c1} 0–0 10.\textit{b3} \textit{a5} 11.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 12.0–0 This position has occurred in four games, but so far nobody has played the following strong idea:

\textit{12...\textit{h5}†}N 13.\textit{g5} h6 14.\textit{h4} g5 15.\textit{g3} \textit{xg3} 16.hxg3 \textit{g4} Black has an excellent game thanks to his two bishops.

\textbf{C) 6.dxc5}
7. \( \textit{\&f3} \)

This is a slightly unusual move order, and indeed it seems to leave the c3-knight looking vulnerable. Nevertheless the database contains approximately fifty games from this position, with even a few strong grandmasters playing the white side.

7... \( \textit{\&e4} \)

This is the most principled reply. There is nothing wrong with 7...0-0, when the most likely outcome is a transposition to Chapter 17 after 8.\( \textit{\&c1} \) dxc4 9.\( \textit{\&xc4} \) \( \textit{\&xc5} \).

8.\( \textit{\&e5} \) \( \textit{\&xe5} \) 9.\( \textit{\&xe5} \) \( \textit{\&xc3} \) 10.\( \textit{\&d2} \)

White was relying on this move followed by the delayed recapturing on c3.

10...f6

10...\( \textit{\&e6} \)? is an interesting alternative.

11.\( \textit{\&f3} \) dxc4

11...\( \textit{\&c6} \) has been more popular, but according to my analysis the text move is the cleanest route to equality.

12.\( \textit{\&xc4} \)

12...\( \textit{\&b4} \)?

This is my new idea. Previously Black has tried only 12...\( \textit{\&d7} \), Farago – Conquest, Dordrecht 1988, but I became slightly concerned about 13.c6N (After the game continuation of 13.\( \textit{\&c1} \) \( \textit{\&c5} \) Black equalized comfortably.) 13...bxc6 14.\( \textit{\&c1} \), when Black's queenside structure is a problem.

13.\( \textit{\&xc3} \) \( \textit{\&xc3} \)† 14.bxc3 \( \textit{\&d7} \) 15.\( \textit{\&b5} \)

This looks like the only challenging option, as after 15.c6 bxc6 16.0-0 \( \textit{\&b6} \) 17.\( \textit{\&b3} \) e5 Black has comfortable equality.

15...a6 16.\( \textit{\&a4} \)

16.\( \textit{\&xd7} \)† \( \textit{\&xd7} \) 17.\( \textit{\&b1} \) can be met by the calm 17...\( \textit{\&b8} \)! followed by ...\( \textit{\&f7} \) and ...\( \textit{\&hc8} \) when Black has no problems.

16...\( \textit{\&f7} \) 17.c6 \( \textit{\&c5} \) 18.cxb7 \( \textit{\&xb7} \)

Black has promising compensation, for instance:

19.\( \textit{\&b3} \)† \( \textit{\&g7} \) 20.0-0 \( \textit{\&hc8} \)

Black will regain his pawn in the near future.
Chapter 15 – 5.e3 c5 – Introduction and Sidelines

8.\( \text{fxd5} \)

Simply bad for White is 8.e3? cxd3 9.d2 xf3 10.bxc3 xxd2+ 11.bxd2 d7. Black already has a much better position, which quickly became a winning one in the following game: 12.b5 0–0 13.c6 c5 14.e1 a6 15.cxb7 xxb7–+ Khanukov – Van Muenster, Cologne 2004.

8...\( \text{xc3t} \) 9.bxc3 \( \text{xc3t} \) 10.e2 \( \text{xa1} \) 11.e5

15.g7

15.e3?! f7! trapped the bishop in Farago – Ftacnik, Passau 1994.

15...\( \text{d7} \) 16.g3 c8 17.hh6 xc5 18.f3 \( \text{xb5} \) 19.f4 c5 20.d4 c2!

White was in trouble in Lorscheid – Flumbort, Germany 2006.

C2) 7.f3

15...\( \text{f6} \)

This move is rarely seen nowadays, but it enjoyed a brief spurt of popularity in the early nineties thanks to the efforts of Vladimir Akopian.

7...\( \text{xc4} \)

I consider this to be Black’s best continuation.
8.\texttt{x}c4 0–0 9.\texttt{w}b5

9.\texttt{d}f3 causes Black no real problems as long as he plays accurately. The following is a good example: 9...\texttt{e}e4 10.0–0 \texttt{x}xc5 11.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{e}e6 12.\texttt{a}ac1 \texttt{f}5 13.\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{d}d8 14.\texttt{g}g4 15.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{e}e6 16.\texttt{x}x d  
This was Beliavsky – Timoschenko, Ashkhabad 1978, and now Black could have obtained a better position by means of 16...\texttt{c}c5!N 17.b4 \texttt{d}d6 when the d4-square makes the difference.

9...\texttt{x}xb5 10.\texttt{x}xb5

10.\texttt{b}b5 \texttt{a}a6 gives no problems at all.

10...\texttt{d}d7

Black’s lead in development should enable him to regain the pawn with minimal fuss.

11.\texttt{e}e2

Other moves are absolutely harmless, for example: 11.\texttt{x}xd7 \texttt{f}fxd7N (I prefer not to allow the black pawn structure to be damaged, as occurs after 11...\texttt{b}xd7 12.\texttt{c}c6 \texttt{b}xc6 13.0–0–0, even though Black was not really worse in Ruzele – Sakalauskas, Vilnius 1994.) 12.\texttt{d}ge2 \texttt{xe}5 13.0–0–0 \texttt{c}c6 Black has a comfortable game.

11...\texttt{c}c6

From here Black should obtain comfortable equality with a few moves, for instance:

12.\texttt{f}f3

12.\texttt{f}f3 was played in Stahlberg – Lehmann, Zevenaar 1961, and here

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard1.png}
\caption{Diagram 1}
\end{figure}

12...\texttt{f}fd7!?N looks promising for Black.

12...\texttt{d}d7 13.0–0 \texttt{c}c5

13...\texttt{e}e4?!N deserves consideration.

14.\texttt{e}e5 \texttt{d}d5 15.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{b}xc6 16.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{c}xd5 17.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{e}6

The position is balanced, Pachman – Yanofsky, Amsterdam 1954.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard2.png}
\caption{Diagram 2}
\end{figure}

\textbf{C3) 7.\texttt{a}a4†}

This is the most critical of the options examined in the present chapter.

7...\texttt{xa}4 8.\texttt{xa}4

We have reached an important tabiya.
Several other moves have been tried, but the text is currently the last word of theory.

9.\( \text{Nc3 Ne4!} \)

This is the point behind Black's previous move. The idea is to sacrifice a second pawn temporarily, in order to maximize the activity of the minor pieces.

10.\( \text{Nxd5} \)

Nothing else can trouble the second player.

10.\( \text{Nxc3} \) 11.\( \text{bxc3 dxc4} \) 12.\( \text{Nxc4 Bc6!!} \)

13.\( \text{f3 Nxd7} \) 14.\( \text{e4 Nxc5} \) Black's superior pawn structure promises him a long-term edge, Purnama - Sasikiran, Kolkata 2009.

10.\( \text{Nxe4!!} \) dxe4 Black will soon obtain an easy game after regaining the c5-pawn. 11.\( \text{Nxc3} \) (So far this is the only move to have been tested. 11.0-0-0 looks better although 11...\( \text{Nc6} \) is still comfortable for Black.) 11...\( \text{Nc6} \) 12.\( \text{Nxe2 Nxc5} \) 13.\( \text{Nc3 Nxc3} \) 14.\( \text{xxc3} \) This was Panush - Danin, Serpukhov 2003, and now after 14...\( \text{f6N} \) Black would have obtained a strategically winning position.

10.\( \text{Nge2 Nxc5} \) After this move the weakness of the d3-square could become a factor. 11.\( \text{Nxd5 Bb6} \) (A serious alternative is 11...\( \text{Nc6} \))

12.\( \text{Nd2 Bxf2} \) 13.\( \text{Qc7+ Kh8} \) 14.\( \text{Nxa8 e5} \) with a wild position.) 12.\( \text{Nc3 e6} \) 13.\( \text{Qc7+ Qxc7} \) 14.\( \text{Nxc7} \)

14...\( \text{Nxc3} \) 15.\( \text{bxc3 f6} \) Black's superior structure gives him enough compensation for the missing pawn. 16.\( \text{f3 Ne8} \) 17.\( \text{Qd6 e5} \) 18.0-0-0 \( \text{Nc6} \) 19.\( \text{Nc2 b6} \) 20.\( \text{Nxe2 Nf7} \) 21.\( \text{h4 h5} \) Black was not experiencing any problems in Jensen - Woelfl, e-mail 2008.

10...\( \text{Ba6} \)

Preventing the knight invasion on c7. Later Black might take on c5 with either knight depending on circumstances.

11.\( \text{f3} \)

This has been almost universally played.

11.\( \text{f3?} \) is senseless, and after 11...\( \text{e6} \) 12.\( \text{Qc7} \) \( \text{Qxc3} \) 13.\( \text{Qxe2} \) 14.\( \text{Qb1 Nc3} \) 15.\( \text{Qe2} \)
Black was much better in Houriez – Touboulic, Besançon 2006.

11...b1
This move was played in Faldt – Hermansson, Sweden 2003. At this point I found the following interesting idea:

11...g5! N 12.c7+ ecx7 13.xc7 e8

This has only been seen in a single game thus far, but it should be taken seriously as it was by Alexey Dreev, a specialist in this line.

12...xb2 13.b1 f6!
Despite being surprised over the board, Black was able to find the strongest response.

14.xb2 fxg5 15.g4
The attempt to activate the king's rook with 15.h4 should be met by 15...g4 16.h5 g5! when Black is doing well.

15...h5! 16.h3 hxg4 17.xg5 c6
Black continues to play the best moves.

18.fxg4?!
Having failed to obtain any advantage, White gambles with a risky piece sacrifice.

Objectively he should have preferred 18.e2N gxf3 19.xf3 e6 20.f4 when the position remains dynamically equal.

18...e6 19.e4 exd5 20.cxd5 d7 21.xa6 bx a6 22.0–0–0
We have been following the game Dreev – Gopal, Zurich 2009. At this point Black should have continued:
Chapter 15 – 5.e3 c5 – Introduction and Sidelines

22...\textit{Nxc4} 23.e6 \textit{c8!} 24.e6 \textit{d3}
25.hb1 \textit{e7} 26.d6
26.b8\# can be met by 26...\textit{c8!} when
Black has a clear advantage.

26.e5!
Black is fighting for a win.

C32) 12.eb1

12.e6 13.c7†
As we have already seen, the structure arising
after 13.e3 \textit{xc3} 14.e6† (13.a4? also deserves
attention) 14.bxc3 f6 promises Black good
long-term compensation.

13.b4?! has only been played once. I doubt
that it is really dangerous, but it is certainly
not stupid either. 13...\textit{exd5} (13...\textit{a4?N looks
interesting as well.) 14.bxc5 dx4 15.d6
(After 15.e4 \textit{xc5} 16.e2 e8 Black has
a comfortable game.) 15...e8 16.e4 \textit{xc5}
17.e2 e6! This is the easiest way to solve
the problem of Black's king. 18...\textit{g3} 0–0
19.0–0 This position occurred in Faldt – Von
Bahr, Hallstahamm 2002, and here I would
suggest 19...\textit{e8N} 20.d4 e8 when Black
has a comfortable position.

13...\textit{xc7} 14.e7 \textit{a4} 15.d6 \textit{xb2}
Black must of course avoid 15...\textit{xb2?}
16.e2 \textit{xb2} 17.e5 when White wins
material.

16.a3
White must restore his material advantage,
otherwise he will simply have a worse
position.

16.a4 17.exb7

17...\textit{f8!}
This is an excellent positional move. By
exchanging the dark-squared bishops Black
frees his king and obtains the c5-square for his
knight. These achievements in turn enable him
to fight for the b-file.

18.xf8
18...Exf8 19.De2 De7 20.Dd4
Attempting to improve the king only leads to trouble: 20.Dd2?! Df8 21.Exb8 Exb8 22.Dc1 e5! White can hardly move.

20...Dc5 21.Db4
The inferior 21.Db1? was played in Rat – Okhotnik, Zalakaros 2000, and now the natural 21...Efb8N would have given White some difficult problems to solve.

21...Efb8 22.a3

22...Ebb6!
After this strong move it is White who will have to play accurately to draw.

There is nothing much wrong with 22...a5, and after 23.Exb8 Exb8 24.Db5 Da4! 25.Dd2 Exb5 26.cxb5 Dd8† 27.Dc2 Dc8† 28.Db3 Dc5† the players agreed a draw in Novikov – Sutovsky, Koszalin 1998.

23.Dd2?
This is a clear mistake. After the correct: 23.De2 Dab8 (Delchev and Agrest recommend 23...Da6 which is also fine, although White should not be worse here either, as long as he plays accurately.) 24.Dd2 Ab4 25.axb4 Exb4 26.Aa1 White should hold the position without much trouble.

23...Da6!
Perhaps White overlooked this move and was expecting a doubling of rooks on the b-file.

24.Db3 Dd6†!
The rook continues to show off its mobility, and in the process Black gets a decisive advantage.

25.De1 a5 26.Dxc5 axb4 27.axb4 Da2
Black was winning and he soon converted his advantage in Gerhards – Lohmann, e-mail 2003.

C33) 12.0–0–0

This natural move is the main theoretical continuation.

12...e6
12...Ec8 has so far yielded a perfect score, but I consider it less reliable. In a recent high-level game Black opted for this move but failed to equalize: 13.De5 f6 14.Dh4 Df7 15.Dc2 e6 16.Ddc3 Dh6 17.Df2 e5 18.Db1± Wang Yue – Topalov, Nanjing 2010.

13.De7†
13.Dc3
This has been played in a few games, but it should not worry the second player.
13...\(\texttt{\texttt{x}}\texttt{c3}\)
As usual, this thematic reaction works well.
14.bxc3 f6 15.e4
In the following example White gradually slipped into a difficult position: 15.d6
\(\texttt{\texttt{e}}\texttt{c8}\) 16.h3 a4 17.c2 b6 18.b1
\(\texttt{\texttt{f7}}\) 19.d2 h8 20.a3 f5! 21.e2 a4†
22.c1 \(\texttt{\texttt{d}}\texttt{7}\) Hertneck – Ftcnik, Austria
2005. The c4-pawn is about to fall, which would leave Black in a strategically winning position. Perhaps out of desperation White sacrificed the exchange on b6 but soon lost.
15...e5 16.e3
This position occurred in Lohse – Rawlings, e-mail 2007. At this point I suggest a modest improvement:

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c}
\hline a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
\hline 1 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 2 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 3 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 4 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 5 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 6 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 7 & & & & & & & \\
\hline 8 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

16...\(\texttt{\texttt{e}}\texttt{c8}\)N
With this calm move Black prepares to target the c4-pawn.
17.h4 e6
In my estimation it is White who will have to play more carefully to avoid getting a worse position.

13...\(\texttt{x}\texttt{c7}\) 14.\(\texttt{x}\texttt{c7}\) \(\texttt{e}\texttt{c8}\) 15.d6 b5!
This move is the key to Black’s counterplay.

16.b3
Obviously the b-pawn is untouchable: 16.cxb5 \(\texttt{\texttt{e}}\texttt{e}4†\) 17.b1 \(\texttt{\texttt{f}}\texttt{2}†\)
16.e4? is not much better: 16.bxc4 17.e5
\(\texttt{a4}!\) 18.d4 \(\texttt{d}3†\) 19.xd3 exd3† 20.d2
\(\texttt{b5}\) Black obtained a decisive advantage in Camus – Gladyszew, France 2008.
16.c2?! This strange move was played in Ballon – Kohlweyer, Triesen 2004. Even more strange to me was the fact that Black refrained from capturing the c4-pawn, since after
16.bxc4N 17.c3 a4 18.d2 a5! only Black can be better.

The attempt to block the queenside with 16.xc5 xc5 17.b4 c7 18.c5 is doomed to fail, as shown by the following analysis of Delchev and Agrest: 18...c3 19.a3 a5 20.c2
(20.xd7 xd7 21.b5† c7†) 20.axb4 21.b3 xc5 22.axb4 c7†

16...bxc4 17.\(\texttt{x}\texttt{c4}\)

17...\(\texttt{a}4\)!
This important tactical nuance maintains Black’s initiative and should enable him to count on a balanced game.

18.d2
So far this is the only move to have been tested in practice.

I also examined 18.d2N when the simplest solution for Black is 18...d3† 19.c2 b2
20.b1 xc4 21.bxc4 xc4 with equality.
18...\textit{h}b5 19.\textit{c}c2 \textit{xc}4 20.\textit{bxc}4 \textit{d}d7 21.\textit{c}5
21.\textit{a}a3 \textit{c}c3 regains the pawn immediately, and after 22.\textit{e}e2 \textit{xe}2\textbf{t} 23.\textit{xe}2 \textit{xc}4\textbf{t} 24.\textit{c}c2 \textit{hc}8 25.\textit{d}d1\textbf{t} \textit{e}e8 the position is equal.

21...\textit{g}g6
21...\textit{f}f8N is another way to regain the pawn and reach an equal position.

22.\textit{e}e2 \textit{xc}5\textbf{t}
This small finesse leads to easy equality.

23.\textit{d}d1 \textit{hc}8
Equally effective is 23...\textit{xd}6 24.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xd}1\textbf{t} 25.\textit{xd}1 \textit{db}8 26.\textit{a}a5 ½–½ Kiss – Ruck, Hungary 1998.

24.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5\textbf{t} 25.\textit{xc}5\textbf{t} \textit{e}e8 26.\textit{d}d2 \textit{xc}5
Black almost has the makings of a slight endgame advantage, but White has just enough time to activate his rook.

27.\textit{b}b1 \textit{a}a5 28.\textit{b}b8\textbf{t} \textit{e}e7 29.\textit{b}b7\textbf{t} \textit{e}e8 30.\textit{b}b8\textbf{t} \textit{e}e7 31.\textit{b}b7\textbf{t} ½–½

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
& & & & & & & \\
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\
\hline
 a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Conclusion

Variation A is deservedly rare, and we saw that White's pawn-grabbing expedition is likely to lead to nothing but trouble for him. Variation B with 6.\textit{f}3 is a bit more respectable, but here too we saw that Black can equalize and fight for the initiative in many lines.

It follows that variation C) with 6.\textit{xc}5 \textit{a}a5 is the only option that can really threaten the second player, and indeed the next two chapters will be devoted to the critical continuation of 7.\textit{c}1. In the previous pages we saw that none of White's alternatives on the seventh move should be feared. The only one that demands serious attention is variation C3) with 7.\textit{a}4\textbf{t}, but we saw that with the aid of an energetic pawn sacrifice Black can obtain a fine position with the kind of dynamic counterplay which is absolutely typical for the Grünfeld.
4. $\text{g}f4$

7. $\text{c}c1$ – Sidelines and 9. $\text{g}ge2$

**Variation Index**

1. d4 $\text{f}6$ 2. c4 g6 3. $\text{c}c3$ d5 4. $\text{f}f4$ $\text{g}7$ 5. e3 c5 6. dxc5 $\text{a}5$ 7. $\text{c}c1$ dxc4 8. $\text{xc}c4$

8...0–0

A) 9. a3

B) 9. $\text{g}ge2$ $\text{xc}5$ 10. $\text{b}b3$ $\text{c}6$ 11. $\text{b}b5$ $\text{h}5$

   B1) 12. $\text{c}c7$

   B2) 12. $\text{g}g3$ $\text{h}4$ 13. $\text{c}c7$ e5!

   B21) 14. $\text{xe}5$

   B22) 14. $\text{g}5$ $\text{xe}5$

   B221) 15. $\text{xa}8$

   B222) 15. $\text{h}4$

---

**note to 8. $\text{xc}c4$**

**B1) after 15. $\text{xf7}$†**

**B222) after 21. $\text{d}d6$**
1. d4 d5 2. c4 g6 3. e3 d6 4. f4 g7 5. e3 c5 6. cxd5 h5 a5 7. c1

Finally we reach the most critical battleground of the 4. f4 system.

7... dxc4
7... e4 is a valid alternative, but the text move is the main line and the one I like the most.

8. xf4
The only other move to have been tried is:
8. a4+ xxa4 9. xa4 d7 10. xxc4!
White should have preferred 10. c3 although Black equalizes easily: 10... a6
10... 0-0 11. f3

11. c6?
Black can also fight for the advantage with
11... c8 12. c3 c6 13. c5 e6 14. xc6 xc6 15. b4 Gunawan - Dorfman, Sarajevo 1988, and now after the strong 15... h5!N
16. xxb7 xxf4 17. xxf4 xc5 Black is better.
12. e1 d5?
Black has the initiative. Here is one possible continuation.

13. b5
Briet - Schrader, France 1998. Now Black should have played:

13... a6!N 14. f4
14... xe2 runs into the strong 14... cb4! with advantage to Black.
14... cb4 15. c3 xxf4 16. xxf4 a8 White will have to fight for a draw.
A well-known mistake would be 8...\textit{cx}c5?, after which 9.b5 \textit{b}4+ 10.f1! wins material.

From this position we will examine two moves in the present chapter: \textbf{A)} 9.a3 and \textbf{B)} 9.ge2.

The most frequently played option has been 9.f3, which will form the subject of the next chapter.

9.a4 \textit{xc}5 10.b5 is simply a dubious idea in view of: 10.d5! 11.e2 a6! 12.b3 \textit{xf}4 13.xf4 \textit{b}4+ 14.c3 \textit{xb}3 15.xb3 Farago – Schmidt, Bagneux 1980. Black could have secured his slight edge with the nice positional move 15...e6!N.

\textbf{A)} 9.a3

9...\textit{c}6!

Black has to postpone taking on c5, as 9...\textit{xc}5?! would allow the awkward 10.b5, when 10.e6 is necessary if Black is to avoid material losses.

From this position Black need not fear 11.e2 f5 12.c7, as played in Nikolov – Delchev, Pamperovo 2001, as after 12...a5†N 13.f1 \textit{c}6 14.xa8 \textit{xa}8 he has decent compensation for the exchange.

However, after the superior 11.b4!N \textit{c}6 12.xe6 xb5 13.c4 White's bishop pair gives him some advantage.

\textbf{B)} 9.ge2

In the event of 10.b3, as played in Almeida Quintana – Bacallao Alonso, Santiago de Cuba 2009, I do not see any problem with 10...\textit{xc}5N. From this position 11.b5?! does not work due to 11.d5N, and even after the superior 11.b5 \textit{xb}5 12.xb5 \textit{h}5! only Black can be better.

10...\textit{xc}5 11.b5

This is the only way to try and make sense of the early a2-a3.

11.h5 12.b4 d7 13.b3 \textit{ac}8 14.0-0 a6 15.bc3 b5

Black was doing fine in Almeida Quintana – Jerez Perez, Canovelles 2008.

This is a much more serious move than 9.a3, and has yielded a higher statistical score for White than the 'official' main line of 9.f3, which will be examined in the following chapter.

9...\textit{xc}5 10.b3
This is firmly established as the main continuation, but a few other moves have been tried.

10...b3 is harmless, for instance: 10...c6 11.0-0 a5 12.d4 d7 13.g3 xd4 (13...ad8N also comes into consideration) 14.exd4 This position was reached in Lund – Teplyi, Silkeborg 2009, and now after the natural 14...c6N 15.e5 f6 16.e2 e6 Black has a comfortable game.

10.b5?!
This looks principled, but it does not hold up to the hard scrutiny of analysis.

10...b4†!
Much better than 10...e6? 11.b3 when Black is in trouble.

11.fl

11...a6!
This is not the only playable move, but it is the strongest one, and effectively refutes White’s play.

12.a3 xb2 13.b1
After 13.xc2 xc2 14.xc2 axb5 15.xb5 xb2 16.a1† Black had...

13...xb1!
With this elegant queen sacrifice Black obtains the advantage.

14.xb1 axb5 15.b5

15...xa3!
This move and the associated tactics provide the justification for Black’s queen sacrifice.

16.b2
White had better avoid 16.xb8? e4 when he will suffer heavy material loses due to the weakness of his back rank: 17.xe4 (17.e1 a1 18.c1 x3 19.xd1 b2—+) 17...a1† 18.c1 xc1† 19.e2 xh1 Black was winning in Zaja – Brkic, Omis 2005.

16.a8 17.e5 c6 18.xc6 bxc6 19.h3
Dydyshko – Begun, USSR 1990. Although White’s opening was far from a success, he should still be able to hold the position.

10.d4
This has only been seen in two games, neither of which featured the strongest reply:

10...a5!N
10...h5 is not a bad move, and after 11.xb8 xb8 12.xa7 d7 Black had
enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn in Istratescu – Iordachescu, Predeal 2006.

11.b4

Otherwise Black will gain an important tempo with ...c6.

11...a3!

On this square the queen is quite safe and indeed rather disruptive for the opponent.

12.\textit{x}xb8

In the event of 12.b5 \textit{xf}5 13.0–0 \textit{bd}7

Black's pieces are much better placed.

12...\textit{xb}8 13.0–0 \textit{g}4! 14.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5 15.\textit{xe}7 \textit{f}6 16.\textit{d}6 \textit{e}5

Black regains his pawn and his two bishops provide him with an ongoing initiative.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}[line width=1pt]
\node at (-1,0) {a}; \node at (1,0) {b}; \node at (3,0) {c}; \node at (5,0) {d}; \node at (7,0) {e}; \node at (9,0) {f}; \node at (11,0) {g}; \node at (13,0) {h};
\draw (0,0) rectangle (13,13);
\draw (0,1) -- (13,1);
\draw (1,2) -- (12,2);
\draw (2,3) -- (11,3);
\draw (3,4) -- (10,4);
\draw (4,5) -- (9,5);
\draw (5,6) -- (8,6);
\draw (6,7) -- (7,7);
\draw (7,8) -- (6,8);
\draw (8,9) -- (5,9);
\draw (9,10) -- (4,10);
\draw (10,11) -- (3,11);
\draw (11,12) -- (2,12);
\draw (12,13) -- (1,13);
\fill [black] (0.5,0.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (1.5,1.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (2.5,2.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (3.5,3.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (4.5,4.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (5.5,5.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (6.5,6.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (7.5,7.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (8.5,8.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (9.5,9.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (10.5,10.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (11.5,11.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (12.5,12.5) circle (0.3cm);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

10...\textit{c}6

This natural move is unsurprisingly the main line. For those who wish to investigate a different path I can point you in the direction of 10...\textit{a}5, as played by Carlsen in 2009.

11.\textit{b}5

White's entire opening strategy is centred around this move and the subsequent invasion on c7. Other continuations are harmless, for instance: 11.0–0 \textit{a}5 12.\textit{b}5 \textit{xc}4 (There is also 12...\textit{xb}5 13.\textit{xb}5 \textit{a}6 14.\textit{d}3 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{e}4 \textit{c}6 16.\textit{b}1 \textit{e}6 with equality, Kakageldyev – Sasikiran, Esfahan 2005.) 13.\textit{xa}5

13...\textit{b}8?N (Black needs an improvement over 13...\textit{e}6?! 14.\textit{fd}1 \textit{b}6 15.\textit{a}3± when his queen is misplaced, Godesar – Gerfault, corr. 1993) 14.\textit{e}8 White is unable to take advantage of the apparently vulnerable queen on c4, for instance 15.\textit{e}5 \textit{b}7 16.\textit{fd}1 \textit{g}4 17.\textit{g}3 \textit{h}5 18.\textit{h}3 \textit{e}6 19.\textit{h}2 \textit{ec}8 and the position is balanced.

11...\textit{h}5

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}[line width=1pt]
\node at (-1,0) {a}; \node at (1,0) {b}; \node at (3,0) {c}; \node at (5,0) {d}; \node at (7,0) {e}; \node at (9,0) {f}; \node at (11,0) {g}; \node at (13,0) {h};
\draw (0,0) rectangle (13,13);
\draw (0,1) -- (13,1);
\draw (1,2) -- (12,2);
\draw (2,3) -- (11,3);
\draw (3,4) -- (10,4);
\draw (4,5) -- (9,5);
\draw (5,6) -- (8,6);
\draw (6,7) -- (7,7);
\draw (7,8) -- (6,8);
\draw (8,9) -- (5,9);
\draw (9,10) -- (4,10);
\draw (10,11) -- (3,11);
\draw (11,12) -- (2,12);
\draw (12,13) -- (1,13);
\fill [black] (0.5,0.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (1.5,1.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (2.5,2.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (3.5,3.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (4.5,4.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (5.5,5.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (6.5,6.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (7.5,7.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (8.5,8.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (9.5,9.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (10.5,10.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [black] (11.5,11.5) circle (0.3cm);
\fill [white] (12.5,12.5) circle (0.3cm);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

We will pay attention to the tricky though ultimately unimpressive B1) 12.\textit{c}7 followed by the main line of B2) 12.\textit{g}3.

12.\textit{a}3?! was seen in the game Dreev – Sutovsky, Internet (blitz) 2002, but the idea makes little sense, and after the logical 12...\textit{a}6!N 13.\textit{c}7 \textit{a}7 the knight invasion to c7 has accomplished nothing.
Objectively not great, but it took some time before the best response was discovered.

12...\texttt{B}b8

The tempting 12...\texttt{a}a5?! , as seen in the game Piket – Van Wely, Monte Carlo (blindfold) 2001, can be met strongly by 13.\texttt{a}a3!N  \texttt{c}xc4 14.\texttt{c}xc4 \texttt{b}b8 15.\texttt{g}g3 \texttt{g}g4 16.\texttt{d}d4! with some advantage for White.

13.\texttt{d}d5

13.\texttt{a}a6? is unimpressive: 13...\texttt{a}a5† 14.\texttt{c}c3 \texttt{a}a8 15.\texttt{c}c7 e5! 16.\texttt{x}xa8  \texttt{f}xf4 17.0–0  \texttt{f}xe3 18.\texttt{x}xc3 \texttt{e}e5 19.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{g}g4 20.\texttt{g}g3 \texttt{a}a5† Black’s advantage was close to decisive in Perun – Shishkin, Kiev 2005.

The tempting 13.\texttt{f}xf7?! \texttt{f}xf7 14.\texttt{xc}c6 allows a clever rebuttal:

14.\texttt{f}xf6†?!

White should have settled for the less ambitious 14.\texttt{g}33N, although after 14...\texttt{e}e4 Black has no problems whatsoever.
14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf6}} 15\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf7}†}

This was White's idea. It is too late to turn back with 15.g3, as after 15...a5 Black is much better.

We have been following the game Lukacs – Szeberenyi, Budapest 2000. At this point Black could have refuted his opponent's idea with:

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{15...g7!N} \\
\text{The following line is now forced.}
\end{array}\]

16.g3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf7}} 17.xc6 bxc6 18.xb8 a6 19.f3 e4!

Black has a serious initiative. One possible continuation is:

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{20.h2 exf3} 21.gxf3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b7}} 22.c8 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b5}} \\
\text{23.e1 e7} \\
\text{White is in trouble as he is losing all his queenside pawns.}
\end{array}\]

B2) 12.g3

Although the previous variation should be studied closely, the present line is where the serious work begins.

12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h4}}

The queen might look precariously placed, but she is in no real danger.
14.\(\text{bxa8? exf4}\) would open the position in Black's favour.

14.\(\text{\texttt{h6?!}}\)

According to the database this has only been played once. It is unlikely to become popular as it enables Black to activate his dark-squared bishop. The following game provides a remarkable example of how Black may develop his initiative.

14.\(\text{\texttt{hxh6}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{bxa8 g4}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{c7 d4!}}\)

Black takes full advantage of the position of his bishop.

17.\(\text{\texttt{a3}}\)

I examined a few other moves as well:
17.\(\text{\texttt{c3?!}}\) deserved attention. Black should respond by calmly bringing another piece into play with 17...\(\text{\texttt{d8}}\), when White's king remains rather uncomfortable.
17.\(\text{\texttt{b4?!}}\) looks riskier due to 17...\(\text{\texttt{xe3!}}\)
18.\(\text{\texttt{fxe3 xh2}}\) when Black has a dangerous attack. Here is a nice illustrative line: 19.\(\text{\texttt{exd4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xg3+}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{d1 xg4+}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{e2}}\)

21...\(\text{\texttt{f1!}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{xf1 d3+}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{d2 xxe2+}}\)
24.\(\text{\texttt{e1 xf1}}\) Black emerges with healthy extra pawn.

17...\(\text{\texttt{f5!}}\)

With this move Black brings huge pressure to bear on the c3- and g3-squares.

18.\(\text{\texttt{d5 gxe3!}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{xe3 xe3}}\)

20.\(\text{\texttt{xf7?}}\)

This is just agony, but even after the superior 20.\(\text{\texttt{xc2 g5}}\) 21.0-0 \(\text{\texttt{d4}}\) Black regains the sacrificed exchange and remains with a clearly better position.

20...\(\text{\texttt{xf7}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{b3+ f6}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{fxe3 xg3}}\)

White was completely busted and resigned a few moves later in Piskov – Dvoirys, Podolsk 1992.

B21) 14.\(\text{\texttt{xe5}}\)
With this move White grabs as much material as he can, but the drawback is that he opens additional lines for Black’s already active pieces.

14...\(\text{bxe5}\) 15.\(\text{bxa8}\)

This is actually a bit unusual, but it has scored well and my analysis has convinced me that it is at least as good as the more popular 15...\(\text{b7}\) 16.\(\text{c7}\) \(\text{c6}\).

15...\(\text{b6}\)!?

This is actually a bit unusual, but it has scored well and my analysis has convinced me that it is at least as good as the more popular 15...\(\text{d7}\) 16.\(\text{c7}\) \(\text{c6}\).

16.\(\text{c7}\)

So far this is the only move to have been tested, but I would like to share my analysis of a few other possibilities.

Firstly it should be noted that 16.0-0?! is already a fatal error in view of 16...\(\text{b7}\) 17.\(\text{c7}\) \(\text{f4}\) 18.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{f3}\)\(\text{f3}\)! 19.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{g5}\) with a crushing attack.

16.\(\text{b5}\)!!?N is quite a serious alternative, but I found what I believe to be a nice idea for Black: 16...\(\text{f7}\)!? The knight is heading for \(\text{c5}\), from where it will restrict the white queen while preparing ideas of ...\(\text{a6}\) or ...\(\text{d7}\). Here is an illustrative line: 17.0-0 \(\text{c5}\) 18.\(\text{c7}\) \(\text{g4}\) 19.\(\text{h3}\)

19...\(\text{xf2}\)! This tactical strike is obvious but pleasing nonetheless. 20.\(\text{xf7}\)\(\text{xf7}\) 21.\(\text{xf2}\) \(\text{xg3}\) 22.\(\text{xe8}\)\(\text{xf8}\) 23.\(\text{exe8}\)\(\text{xf8}\) 24.\(\text{xc5}\) bxc5 25.\(\text{xc8}\) \(\text{xe3}\)\(\text{e3}\)\(\text{e3}\) White will have to fight for a draw.

16...\(\text{b7}\)
21...\texttt{Ax}f7\texttt{t}
I also examined 21.\texttt{g}3\texttt{N} which is probably White's best continuation: 21...\texttt{wx}h2 22.\texttt{Ax}f7\texttt{t} This seems to lead to a forced draw after an incredible line: 22...\texttt{Bxf7} 23.\texttt{w}e\texttt{8}\texttt{t} \texttt{Bf}8 24.\texttt{B}xe\texttt{3} \texttt{g}1\texttt{t} 25.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{bxf2}\texttt{t} 26.\texttt{d}3 (26.\texttt{xf2}\texttt{t} \texttt{Bxc1} is winning for Black as the c7-knight will soon drop) 26...\texttt{g}2 27.\texttt{xc}2! This is the only move which allows White to escape. 27...\texttt{xc}2 28.\texttt{e}6\texttt{t} \texttt{h}8 29.\texttt{f}6\texttt{t} The game ends in a perpetual.

21...\texttt{Bxf7} 22.\texttt{w}e\texttt{8}\texttt{t} \texttt{Bf}8 23.\texttt{B}xe\texttt{3}
This position occurred in Lysyj – Kurnosov, Russia 2008, and here Black should have played:

23...\texttt{e}7\texttt{N} 24.\texttt{e}6 \texttt{g}4!
Regaining the piece with an obvious advantage.

17.f3
Surprisingly this natural-looking move has only been played once. My preferred response would be:

17...\texttt{fg}4\texttt{N}
17...\texttt{cc}8 was Black's choice in Ludwig – A. Hunt, France 2009. Here I found a remarkable improvement for White:

18.\texttt{xf7}\texttt{t}!\texttt{N} \texttt{xf7} 19.0–0 \texttt{h}6 20.\texttt{h}1
In this strange position White's chances are slightly higher.
23.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{g}4\texttt{t}

From here White should probably take the repetition, as the attempt to play on would be risky:

24.\texttt{g}1

24.\texttt{f}3=

24...\texttt{xp}3 25.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{h}5 26.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{d}6

Black has ongoing compensation for the small material sacrifice. Overall I prefer Black's position, as the white king will remain vulnerable for a long time to come.

20.\texttt{d}3\texttt{t} 21.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{xc}1\texttt{t}

Black should not be too hasty in regaining his pawn: 21...\texttt{f}6\texttt{t}! 22.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{xc}1\texttt{t} 23.\texttt{xc}1 \texttt{xb}2\texttt{t} 24.\texttt{xb}2 \texttt{xb}2 25.\texttt{c}7 Black faces a difficult endgame despite having level material.

22.\texttt{xc}1

With this strong move Black covers the c7-square against a rook invasion while also increasing his influence over the kingside.

22...\texttt{e}5!

Now there are two routes to equality.

23.\texttt{b}5

23...\texttt{b}8?!?

23...\texttt{lg}3 is also fine: 24.\texttt{hg}3 \texttt{g}4\texttt{t} 25.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{g}4 26.\texttt{d}1! This is tantamount to a draw offer. (White achieves nothing with other moves: 26.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{d}3 27.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{d}5 regains the pawn; 26.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{d}2 27.\texttt{g}1 \texttt{g}7 Black's activity fully makes up for his small material deficit.) 26...\texttt{xd}1\texttt{t} 27.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{b}1\texttt{t} 28.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{xa}2 29.\texttt{e}8\texttt{t} 1/2-1/2 Govciyan – Negi, Coubertin 2009.

24.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{lg}3 25.\texttt{hg}3 \texttt{h}5\texttt{t} 26.\texttt{f}3

26.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{h}1\texttt{t} 27.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{h}5\texttt{t} repeats the position.
26...\textit{h}2 27.\textit{f}4 \textit{gxg}3 28.\textit{fxf}3 \textit{h}4=

Golod – Nesterovsky, Israel 2009. The players kept fighting for another twenty moves, but the position remained balanced until a draw was agreed.

15...\textit{e}4!
This move is positionally useful and tactically essential in order to keep the a8-knight caged in.

16.0–0
Thanks to Black's last move 16.\textit{c}7?? is impossible due to 16...\textit{a}5+.

16...\textit{e}5
16...\textit{h}5 has been more popular, but I rather like the text move in conjunction with a new idea on the following turn.

17.\textit{e}2
White has to counter the threat of ...\textit{b}b8 trapping the knight, so he prepares the rebuttal of \textit{xc}6.

Other moves are likely to lead to trouble for White, for instance 17.\textit{fd}1?! \textit{g}4 18.\textit{e}2 \textit{xe}2 19.\textit{xe}2 \textit{e}7!+ and the knight is doomed.

17...\textit{h}5?!N
This is my new idea, with which Black commences his counterplay on the kingside.

In the one previous game to reach this position Black opted for 17...\textit{e}7?! but soon got into trouble: 18.\textit{a}3 \textit{e}5 19.\textit{b}4! White is able to
save his knight by tactical means. 19...\texttt{d}d7 20.b5 \texttt{a}xa8 21.bxc6 \texttt{d}xc6 22.fed1+ Kuzubov – Swinkels, Neuhausen 2007.

18.h4

It would be risky for White to allow the h-pawn to advance further, for instance: 18.fed1 h4 19.f1 h3 20.g3 (After 20.gxh3 Black has the strong manoeuvre 20...\texttt{h}7! 21.g3 \texttt{g}5 with good attacking chances.) 20...\texttt{g}4 21.xg4 \texttt{x}g4 22.fel±

Kuzubov

20...ttjd8!!

Now White has to swap queens in order to prevent the deadly knight manoeuvre ...\texttt{d}8-e6-g5-f3. 23.cc7 \texttt{e}6 24.xe5 \texttt{xe}5 25.xd8 \texttt{xa}8 26.xe4 \texttt{xb}2 With two minor pieces for the rook, Black stands better.

19...\texttt{d}8!

After this accurate move it seems to me that the logical outcome should be a draw by repetition.

20..b3

20.b4?! is too risky in view of 20...\texttt{g}4! 21.b5 \texttt{xe}2 22.xe2 \texttt{g}4 with a powerful attack.

20..d1?! is also inadvisable due to 20...\texttt{d}7 winning the knight on a8.

20..\texttt{e}7

It would be risky to play on with 20...\texttt{d}7?! as after 21.xb7 \texttt{xa}8 22.xa8 \texttt{xa}8 23.b5 \texttt{e}5 24.xd7 \texttt{ed}7 25.cc7 White’s extra rook and pawn are stronger than Black’s two minor pieces.

21.a3 \texttt{d}8=

Neither side has an advantageous way to avoid the repetition.

B222) 15.h4

This has been slightly the more popular of the two options, although statistically White has done less well with it.

15...\texttt{g}4 16.xa8 \texttt{a}5!
This was Black's choice in the first game which reached the present position. Since then both 16...e4 and 16...Nd7 have been tested (the latter most notably by Topalov), but I strongly prefer the text move.

17.Nb5

17...Nx c4 18.Nxc4

18...d7!
This tactical finesse justifies Black's play.

19Nb4

19...e4 20.Qc7
In the very first game in this line White preferred:
But Black equalized comfortably with:
21...Nd7! 22.Nxd7

22...Nx d7

23.Qc7
In a more recent correspondence game White deviated but never got close to an advantage:

23...Ne5 24.0-0 Nxb4
Mamedyrov – Eljanov, Gothenburg 2005. The position is complex and unclear, but it seems to me that it is White who will have to be more careful. At any rate, Black's eventual defeat should certainly not be attributed to his opening play.

20...Nc6
Chapter 16 - 7.\( \text{Bc1} \) – Sidelines and 9.\( \text{Dge2} \)

21.\( \text{d6} \)

So far this is the only move to have been tested in practice, but I also considered two alternatives.

21.0-0N \( \text{Nh4} \) (It is worth considering the positional approach with 21...\( \text{Nd8} \)! when ...\( \text{Nh8} \) becomes possible.) 22.\( \text{Nd1} \) \( \text{g4} \) 23.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{f5} \) 24.\( \text{e7} \)\( \text{h8} \) 25.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{bxc6} \) 26.\( \text{d7} \) \( \text{f4} \) 27.\( \text{exf4} \) \( \text{xf2}\)\# – Black forces a perpetual.

21.\( \text{e7N} \) can be met by: 21...\( \text{d7} \) 22.0-0 (22.\( \text{xc6} \)? does not quite work: 22...\( \text{bxc6} \) 23.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 24.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{b8} \)! Surprisingly White’s knight is still in danger. 25.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{e8} \) 26.\( \text{g6} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 27.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{c5}\)\# Black has emerged with a comfortable position and a slight plus.) 22...\( \text{f6}\)!? (22...\( \text{e5} \) also leads to a level position according to my analysis: 23.\( \text{e8} \) \( \text{xe6} \) 24.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{fxe6} \) 25.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{bxc6} \) 26.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c5} \) 27.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{a4} \)\#) 23.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 24.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{h4} \) 25.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{h4} \) 26.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{c8} \) The endgame is balanced.

21...\( \text{h5}\)\#?

This interesting move was mentioned by Ruslan Sherbakov in *New In Chess Yearbook* 93. I decided to recommend it as my main line, although it is important to emphasize that it is by no means the only playable move.

21...\( \text{d7} \)

This also leads to a decent position for Black.

22.\( \text{d5} \)

22.\( \text{f3}\)?! runs into 22...\( \text{e5} \) 23.\( \text{xf8}\)\# \( \text{xf8} \) 24.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{g3}\# 25.\( \text{xg2} \) \( \text{xc7} \) when Black's three pieces are stronger than White's two rooks.

22...\( \text{e5} \) 23.\( \text{c7}\# \)

Worse is 23.\( \text{xe5}\)?! \( \text{xe5} \) 24.\( \text{f6}\)\# \( \text{g7} \) 25.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 26.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{b6} \) 27.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{f5} \) with a better endgame for Black, Matveeva – Danelia, Rijeka 2010.

After the knight check a draw was agreed in T. Schmidt – Krzyzanowski, corr. 2010, but it is useful to see how the game might have continued.

23.\( \text{h8}\)!

23...\( \text{g7}\) is a mistake, although it would be difficult to spot the reason over the board:

24.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{a5} \) 25.\( \text{xa5} \) \( \text{e6} \) 26.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{d6} \)
27. \( \text{Wxd6!} \) In view of the potential check on \( f5 \), Black must settle for \( 27...\text{Wxc4} \) \( 28.\text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Wcl} \) \( 29.\text{Wd1} \) \( \text{Wxc6} \) 30.0–0 when White is a healthy pawn up.

24. \( \text{Wb4} \)

24. \( \text{Wxa3} \) also leads to a draw: \( \text{We6} \) 25. \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Wxc4} \) 26. \( \text{Wxe5} \) \( \text{Wc1} \) 27. \( \text{Wxe2} \) \( \text{Wc2} \)=

24... \( \text{a5}! \)

It is important to chase White’s queen away from the \( b4 \)-square.

25. \( \text{Wb3} \)

Another line leading to equality is: \( 25.\text{Wxa5} \) \( \text{We6} \) 26. \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{Wxc4} \) 27. \( \text{Wxe5} \) \( \text{Wc1} \) 28. \( \text{Wxe2} \) \( \text{Wxb2} \) 29. \( \text{Wd2} \) \( \text{Wb5} \) 30. \( \text{Wd3} \) \( \text{exd3} \) 31. \( \text{Wxd3} \) \( \text{Wb2} \) 32. \( \text{Wd2} \) \( \text{Wb5} \)=

25... \( \text{Wg3} \) 26. \( \text{Wxc6} \) \( \text{bxc6} \) 27. \( \text{fxg3} \) \( \text{Wxe5} \) 28. \( \text{Wc3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 29.0–0 \( \text{Wxc4} \) 30. \( \text{Wxe4} \) \( \text{Wxg3} \) 31. \( \text{Wxe4} \) \( \text{Wg7} \)=

The position is drawish.

22. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{Be8} \) 23. \( \text{a4} \)

23. \( \text{f3} \) allows a lovely queen sacrifice: \( 23...\text{exf3}! \) 24. \( \text{Wxf4} \) \( \text{Wxf4} \)

23... \( \text{a6} \)

Black has powerful compensation and White had better take the opportunity to force a draw by means of: \( 25.\text{Wd5}! \) \( \text{Ax} \text{d5} \) 26. \( \text{Gxf3} \) \( \text{Axf8!} \) 27. \( \text{Wf4} \) (The bishop is untouchable: 27. \( \text{Wxd5?} \) \( \text{Axb4} \) 28. \( \text{Wc2} \) \( \text{Axc2} \) 29. \( \text{Wd3} \) \( \text{Axd2} \) 30. \( \text{Axe4} \) \( \text{Wxe3} \) 31. \( \text{Wxb4} \) \( \text{Wxd5} \)=)

27... \( \text{Wf6} \) 28. \( \text{Wd6} \) \( \text{f8} \) The game ends in a repetition.

23... \( \text{Wcl} \)=

The game ends in perpetual check.

**Conclusion**

It is clear that line A with 9. \( \text{a3} \) is not in the least bit threatening to Black. On the other hand, variation B with 9. \( \text{Ae2} \) is a serious option which some would argue is a more critical try for an advantage than the more classical 9. \( \text{f3} \) of the next chapter. Black must react with great precision and be willing to sacrifice at least an exchange, relying on his superior development and active piece play to provide dynamic compensation. According to the latest games and analysis Black’s resources appear fully adequate; perhaps the only disappointing thing is that so many of the critical lines have been analysed all the way through to a perpetual check or drawn endgame, although in terms of the theoretical dispute this can at least be considered a moral victory for the Grünfeld.
Chapter 17

4. \( \text{g}f4 \)

\hspace{1cm} 9. \( \text{g}f3 \)

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.c4 \( g6 \) 3.\( \text{c}c3 \) d5 4.\( \text{f}4 \) \( \text{g}7 \) 5.e3 c5 6.dxc5 \( \text{a}5 \) 7.\( \text{c}c1 \) dxc4 8.\( \text{x}c4 \) 0–0 9.\( \text{g}f3 \)

9...\( \text{xc}5 \)

A) 10.\( \text{b}b5 \) \( \text{e}6 \)
   A1) 11.\( \text{c}c7?! \)
   A2) 11.\( \text{x}e6 \)

B) 10.\( \text{b}b3 \)

C) 10.\( \text{b}b3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 11.0–0 \( \text{a}5 \)
   C1) 12.\( \text{e}e2 \)
   C2) 12.h3 \( \text{f}5 \)
      C21) 13.\( \text{g}5 \)
      C22) 13.\( \text{e}e2 \) \( \text{e}4 \)
         C221) 14.\( \text{x}e4 \) \( \text{xc}4 \)
         C222) 14.\( \text{g}4?! \)
         C223) 14.\( \text{d}5 \) e5
            C2231) 15.\( \text{g}5 \)
            C2232) 15.\( \text{xc}6 \)
            C2233) 15.\( \text{h}2 \) \( \text{e}6 \)
               C22331) 16.\( \text{xc}6 \)
               C22332) 16.\( \text{fd}1 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. d4  d5 2. c4 g6 3. c3  dxe5 4. f4  g7 5. e3  c5 6. dxe5  a5 7.  a1  d4 8. xc4 0–0 9. 4f3

This classical knight development can at least historically be considered the ultimate
main line of the 4. f4 system.

9... a5

I do not see any point in allowing White an extra option with 9... c6?! 10.0–0 a5, since here instead of 11. b3 he can try the assault 11. b5!! with reasonable chances for an advantage.

After the text move there are three main moves to consider: A) 10. b5, B) 10. b3 and
C) 10. b3. Other moves are sometimes seen, but none of them should worry the second
player.

10. b3

This is a pet line of the Israeli IM Alexander
Mikhalevski as well as some of his students.
Mikhalevski is a good player but objectively
the move is harmless.

10... c6 11.0–0  g4 12. h3  fd8 13. e2  xf3 14. xf3  a5

After a series of natural moves, Black has obtained a comfortable position in which
the bishop pair is unlikely to hurt him.

15. 4e4

In the following encounter White played
too extravagantly and soon found himself in a worse position: 15. g4?  ac8 16.  g3  e6
17. b1  xa2+ A. Mikhalevski – Greenfeld, Tel Aviv 2001.

15... 4xe4 16. xe4  e6

With this solid positional move Black neutralizes the unopposed light-squared
bishop.

17. a4  a6 18. fd1  ac8

The game was balanced in Porat – Wittmann,

10. 4d4

This has also been used by some strong
players, but it too is absolutely harmless.

10... 4h5!?

With this move Black attempts to seize the
initiative.

If Black wishes to play it safe then the
following alternative is absolutely fine:
Chapter 17 - 9.\(f3\)

10...\(\text{\textae}a5\) 11.\(\text{\textae}e5\) \(\text{\textac}c6\) 12.\(\text{\textaa}xa5\) \(\text{\textaxa}5\) The endgame is harmless for Black, for example:
13.\(\text{\textae}e2\) \(\text{\textac}c6\) 14.\(\text{\textad}d4\) \(\text{\textad}d7\) 15.0-0 \(\text{\textaa}c8=\) Bu Xiangzhi – Peng Xiaomin, HeiBei 2001.

11.\(\text{\textaxb}8\) \(\text{\textbxb}8\) 12.\(\text{\textaa}a7\)

This position was reached in Golod – Ma. Tseitlin, Ashdod 2004, and here I found a remarkable idea for Black:

12...\(\text{\textah}3!N\)

In the aforementioned game Black easily obtained a draw after 12...\(\text{\textag}4\) 13.\(\text{\textae}e2\) \(\text{\textad}d5\) 14.0-0 \(\text{\textaa}a8\) 15.\(\text{\textaxb}7\) \(\text{\textaxc}3\) 16.\(\text{\textaxc}3\) \(\text{\textaa}f8\) 17.\(\text{\textac}6\) \(\text{\textac}8\) 18.\(\text{\textab}7\) \(\text{\textac}b8\) with a repetition, but he has every reason to be more ambitious.

13.\(\text{\textaf}1\)

Also after 13.\(\text{\textgxh}3\) \(\text{\textaf}f3\) 14.0-0 \(\text{\textaxh}3\) 15.\(\text{\textaf}3\)

\(\text{\textag}4\)! Black has a strong initiative.

13...\(\text{\textad}5!\) 14.\(\text{\textad}4\) \(\text{\textaxc}3\) 15.\(\text{\textaxc}3\) \(\text{\textad}5\) 16.\(\text{\textaf}3\)

\(\text{\textae}6\)

Black has great compensation for the pawn.

A) 10.\(\text{\textab}5\)

This is the first of White's three 'serious' options, but it should certainly not worry a well-prepared Grünfeld player.

10...\(\text{\textae}6\)

10...\(\text{\textab}4!\) is also fine according to theory, but I have chosen to recommend the text move, after which White has two main options: A1) 11.\(\text{\textac}7?!\) and A2) 11.\(\text{\textaxe}6\).

11.\(\text{\textad}3?!\) is ineffective: 11...\(\text{\textab}4\) 12.\(\text{\textad}2\) \(\text{\textac}6\) 13.\(\text{\textac}7\)

This occurred in Lenic – Predojevic, Portoroz 2005, and now Black should have played 13...\(\text{\textaxd}2\) 14.\(\text{\textaxd}2\) \(\text{\textad}8\) 15.\(\text{\textaxe}6\) \(\text{\textfxe}6\) 16.\(\text{\textae}2\) \(\text{\textad}5!\) when he has the better chances.

A1) 11.\(\text{\textac}7?!\)

This seems like a principled move, but the ensuing tactics work out in Black's favour.

11...\(\text{\textaxc}4\) 12.\(\text{\textbb}3\)

White has tried two other moves.

12.\(\text{\textad}2\) 13.\(\text{\textbb}3\) (13.\(\text{\textaxa}8\) is not much better: 13...\(\text{\textad}5!\) 14.\(\text{\textaxc}4\) \(\text{\textbx}4\) 15.\(\text{\textaa}4\) Eitel – Bensch, Bavaria 2003, and now after the simple 15...\(\text{\textaxf}4\) 16.\(\text{\textfx}4\) \(\text{\textac}8\) 17.\(\text{\textbc}2\) c3 18.0-0 \(\text{\textac}6\) 19.\(\text{\textbx}3\) \(\text{\textaxa}8\) Black is clearly better.)
13...\(\Box d5\) (A very 'human' move, but even stronger would have been 13...\(e5!\)N 14.\(\Box x a8\) exf4 when White is in serious trouble.) 14.\(\Box x a8\) \(\Box c3\) 15.\(\Box x c3\) \(\Box x c3\) 16.\(b x c4\) \(\Box x c4\) 17.\(\Box e2\) \(\Box x d2\)\(\Box t\) 18.\(\Box x d2\) \(\Box c6\) Black was winning in Popchev – Lalic, Sarajevo 1988.

12.\(\Box x a8\) \(\Box a5\)\(\Box t\)

13.\(\Box d2\)
I checked two other moves as well:
13.\(\Box d2\) \(\Box x a2\) 14.0–0 \(\Box c6\) Black is clearly better.
13.\(b 4\) \(\Box x b 4\)\(\Box t\) 14.\(\Box d 2\) \(\Box x d 2\)\(\Box t\) 15.\(\Box x d 2\) \(\Box x a 2\) 16.\(\Box a 1\) \(\Box c 6\) 17.\(\Box x a 2\) \(\Box x a 8\) With two connected passed pawns for the exchange, Black has good winning chances.
13...\(\Box x a 2\) 14.\(\Box e 5\)
14.\(\Box b 4\) was played in Boudignon – Baruchel, corr. 1994,

12...\(\Box a5\)\(\Box t\) 13.\(\Box d2\) \(\Box x d 2\)\(\Box t\) 14.\(\Box x d 2\) \(\Box d 3\) 15.\(\Box x a 8\) \(\Box d 5\)!

The key move, which solidifies Black's compensation for the exchange. Thanks to the powerful bishop on \(d 3\), he has a strong and easy-to-handle initiative.

16.\(\Box c 7\) \(\Box c 8\)
17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e3}}}

17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d1}}!N} would have been White's best chance to survive, for instance: 17...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}f4}}
18.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}2}} 19.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5}} b6 20.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}5}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}7}} 21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xd}3}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}} 22.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}1}} 23.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}8}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}7}} 24.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}8}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}h}2} 25.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}3}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}5}} 26.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}4}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}4}} 27.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}7}} White should be able to hold the endgame.

17...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}4}} 18.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}4}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}2}} 19.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}} 20.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}4}} 21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}5}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}} 22.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}3}} 23.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{gx}f}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}6}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}}


A2) 11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe}6}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}5}}

14...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}7}}!

This is not the only playable move, but it is the most accurate.

15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}1}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}6}}

Also 15...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}6}} 16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}5}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}6}} 17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}6}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xa}4}}
18.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xg}7}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xg}7}} 19.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}7}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}5}} leads to easy equality for Black.

16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xa}4}} 17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}7}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}5}}

in the previous line; on the other hand he is less likely to fall into trouble.

12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}4}}

12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}3}}?! is worse, and after 12...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}6}} White has difficulties arranging castling. After the further 13.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}4}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}} 14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xd}2}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{t}}} 15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xd}2}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}5}} Black had clearly taken over the initiative in Dlugy – Kasparov, Saint John 1988.

12...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}2}} 13.0–0 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}6}} 14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}4}}

14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}1}}?! was played in F. Portisch – Kaposztas, Lohmar 1999, and here Black should have replied with: 14...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}3}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{N}}} 15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}1}}
(The main point behind Black's last move is that 15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}7}}? can be refuted by 15...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}5}}
16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}7}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}8}}! winning material.) 15...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}}
16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{fx}c1}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}5}} and Black remains a pawn up.
White could and should have maintained the balance with 18.\textit{\texttt{b4N cxc4 19.a4!}}, when the endgame is equal.

\textbf{18...cxc4 19.bxc4 c3!+}

Black's powerful knight gave him the advantage in Boehnke – Brendel, Berkel 2003.

\textbf{B) 10.b3}

Compared with the analogous position occurring after 9.ge2, as seen in the previous chapter, this queen development fails to create real problems for Black. The difference is due to the fact that in the present position the c1-rook is unprotected.

\textbf{11.g5 e6 12.0–0 d5! 13.b5 xc4 14.xa5 b6 15.a3 b7 16.e7 a6!} With this slightly odd-looking but effective move, Black neutralizes his opponent's activity and starts putting his bishop pair to work. 17.e5 \textit{\texttt{ae8 18.b4 h6 19.h3}}

This looks tempting, but it fails to achieve the desired effect for the reason already mentioned. Other moves are also harmless.

\textbf{11.g5 e6 12.0–0 d5! 13.b5 xc4 14.xa5 b6 15.a3 b7 16.e7 a6!} With this slightly odd-looking but effective move, Black neutralizes his opponent's activity and starts putting his bishop pair to work. 17.e5 \textit{\texttt{ae8 18.b4 h6 19.h3}}

This position occurred in Tachikart – Guilleux, La Roche sur Yon 2008, and now Black could have obtained an excellent game with 19...\textit{\texttt{d5!}}, for instance 20.d5! \textit{\texttt{xe5 21.c7 xc7 xc7 22.cc7 xc7 xc8 23.xc8 xc8}} with a clear advantage.

\textbf{11.b5 xb5 12.xb5 d7} The queenless position is absolutely harmless for Black and he equalizes without any difficulties. 13.0–0 a6 (A worthy alternative is 13...\textit{\texttt{ac8 14.h3 \textit{\texttt{d8 15.fd1 \textit{\texttt{f8}} with balanced play, Olsen – Brinck Claussen, Naestved 1991.) 14.e2}}}
This was Ricardi – Barbosa Valdes, Santiago de Chile 2005, and here the simplest continuation for Black would have been 14...\text{\textit{ad}}8N 15.\text{\textit{fd}}1 \&f5! when Black is in no way worse.

11.0-0 White can hardly aspire to an advantage by giving up the bishop pair. 11...\text{\textit{d}}a5! 12.\text{\textit{b}}b5 \text{\textit{xc}}4 13.\text{\textit{xa}}5 b6 14.\text{\textit{a}}3

12.\text{\textit{c}}c7

It is too late for White to back out now: 12.0-0?! \text{\textit{a}}a5 13.\text{\textit{xe}}6? (The lesser evil was 13.\text{\textit{a}}a3, but even here after 13...\text{\textit{xa}}3 14.\text{\textit{xa}}3 \text{\textit{xc}}4 15.\text{\textit{xc}}4 \text{\textit{fc}}8 the endgame is clearly better for Black.) 13...\text{\textit{xb}}3 14.\text{\textit{xc}}5 \text{\textit{xc}}5 Black was already winning in Somogyi – Nogrady, Budapest 1996.

12...\text{\textit{xc}}4 13.\text{\textit{xc}}4 \text{\textit{a}}a5† 14.\text{\textit{d}}e2 \text{\textit{ac}}8 15.\text{\textit{hc}}1?

White had to play 15.\text{\textit{xb}}7! and after 15...e5 16.\text{\textit{xc}}6 \text{\textit{xf}}4 17.\text{\textit{hc}}1 \text{\textit{xa}}2 18.\text{\textit{a}}6! he holds on for equality.

We have been following the game Z. Almasi – Hracek, Germany 2003. At this point Black could have seized the advantage by means of:

15...\text{\textit{h}}5!N 16.\text{\textit{b}}b5 \text{\textit{xf}}4† 17.\text{\textit{exf}}4 \text{\textit{b}}6†

Black is better coordinated, his king is safer and ...\text{\textit{a}}a5 is a serious threat.

C) 10.\text{\textit{b}}b3
This natural move is the clear first choice.

10...\text{\texttt{c}}6

There is no need to move the queen yet, as any discovered attacks can be met by a check on a5 or b4.

11.0-0 \text{\texttt{a}}5

Sometimes Black tries 11...\text{\texttt{h}}5 but after 12.h3 e5 13.\text{\texttt{h}}2 \text{\texttt{d}}8 both 14.\text{\texttt{e}}2 and 14.\text{\texttt{d}}2 promise White good chances for an advantage.

White gets nowhere with other moves, for instance 12.\text{\texttt{d}}5?! \text{\texttt{x}}d5 13.\text{\texttt{x}}d5 \text{\texttt{x}}b2 14.\text{\texttt{b}}1 \text{\texttt{g}}7 15.\text{\texttt{f}}1 \text{\texttt{f}}5 16.e4 \text{\texttt{g}}4 and White has a hard time demonstrating compensation, Tikkanen – Hermansson, Gothenburg 2005

C1) 12.\text{\texttt{e}}2 \text{\texttt{h}}5!

It is not by accident that the main line C2 involves creating a retreat square for the dark-squared bishop.

13.\text{\texttt{g}}5

13.\text{\texttt{d}}5 is hardly a serious alternative, and after 13...\text{\texttt{x}}f4 14.\text{\texttt{x}}f4, Somogyi – Boros, Budapest 2000, 14...e6N 15.\text{\texttt{e}}3 \text{\texttt{b}}4 16.\text{\texttt{c}}4 \text{\texttt{c}}7 only Black can be better.

13...\text{\texttt{g}}4

Better than 13...h6 14.\text{\texttt{h}}4 g5 15.\text{\texttt{f}}d1! when White has promising play.

After the text move White sometimes plays C1) 12.\text{\texttt{e}}2 but the main line by far is C2) 12.h3.

14.\text{\texttt{h}}4

White has also tried two knight moves.

14.\text{\texttt{c}}4?! \text{\texttt{f}}5 15.\text{\texttt{c}}2 \text{\texttt{e}}6 (15...\text{\texttt{x}}f3 16.\text{\texttt{x}}f3 \text{\texttt{h}}3 17.a4 was unclear in Hauser – Connelly, e-mail 2008.) 16.\text{\texttt{b}}1
This position occurred in Levin – Shirov, Dagomys 2009, and now Black could have obtained an excellent position with: 16...\texttt{xf}3!N 17.gxf3 (After 17.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{xb}2 18.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{g}7 White does not have enough compensation.) 17...\texttt{h}3 18.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{h}6 19.\texttt{xf}5 hxg5 White might encounter serious problems along the h-file.

14.\texttt{e}5?! \texttt{e}6 15.\texttt{e}7+ \texttt{h}8 16.\texttt{xc}6

16...\texttt{xf}3! 17.\texttt{xf}5

17.\texttt{cd}4 is best met by: 17...\texttt{xd}4! (17...\texttt{e}7 is enough for comfortable equality, but Black can play for more.) 18.exd4 \texttt{f}4! 19.\texttt{e}5+ Roussel Roozmon – V. Mikhalievski, Montreal 2005, and now Black could have created problems for his opponent by means of: 19...\texttt{f}6N 20.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{xf}3 21.gxf3 \texttt{e}8+ 17...\texttt{xe}2 18.\texttt{fe}1 \texttt{xb}2 19.\texttt{c}2

19...\texttt{f}6N (This creates more problems for the opponent than 19...\texttt{b}5 20.\texttt{xa}7 \texttt{xa}7 21.\texttt{xb}2 \texttt{c}6 when the position was equal in Heinig – Konopka, Germany 1997.) 20.\texttt{exe}2 \texttt{cx}5 21.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{d}8 22.\texttt{ed}2 \texttt{f}6 23.\texttt{d}7 \texttt{xd}7 24.\texttt{xd}7 White should be able to hold this endgame.

14...\texttt{g}5!?

With this move Black aims for a more complex game in which he has chances to take over the initiative.

There is also a clear route to equality with 14...\texttt{b}4 15.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{xc}4 16.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xf}3 17.gxf3 \texttt{f}6+ as seen in Yusupov – Leko, Essen 2002, and a number of other games.

15.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{c}xg3 16.hxg3

16.f\texttt{g}3 \texttt{ad}8 (16...\texttt{h}6?!N also looks sensible)
was pleasant for Black in Gretarsson – Hellers, Sweden 2000.

This position was first reached in Szymczak – Ogaard, Lublin 1975, and has since been repeated in several other games. Usually Black has opted for 16...\(\text{a}d8\), but I would like to propose a modest deviation.

16...\(h6\)N

It is useful to stabilize the kingside before determining the position of the rook.

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

After 17.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{e}5\) 18.\(\text{b}6\) 19.\(\text{f}c1\) \(\text{a}d8\) the idea of ...\(\text{d}3\) is unpleasant for White.

17...\(\text{b}4\)!

Now that the g5-pawn is securely defended, Black can afford to offer a queen exchange. In the resulting position his bishop pair gives him some chances to take over the initiative.

C2) 12.\(h3\)

With this move White safeguards the future of his dark-squared bishop while incidentally preventing the pinning ...\(\text{g}4\).

12...\(\text{f}5\)

This logical developing move is the clear number one choice for Black. Now we will analyse C21) 13.\(\text{g}5\) and C22) 13.\(\text{e}2\).

13.\(\text{d}4\) has been considered harmless for Black ever since the following game: 13...\(\text{a}d7\) 14.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{a}d4\) 15.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 16.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{f}d1\) \(\text{f}d8\) Black has a comfortable position thanks to his firm control over the d5-square. 18.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}7\) 19.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{d}8\) Black has defended against White’s only active idea. Although the position is objectively equal, Black is a bit more comfortable and in the game Petursson – Ivanchuk, Reggio Emilia 1989, he eventually managed to win.

C21) 13.\(\text{g}5\)

This continuation recently became fashionable after it was employed by Kramnik to defeat Morozevich in 2009. (It was only in a blindfold game though...)

13...\(\text{e}5\)

Certainly the most active and principled response. Morozevich preferred 13...\(\text{a}6\)?! but after 14.\(\text{e}4\) the initiative is very much with White.

14.\(\text{h}2\)
Out of the two possible bishop retreats, this one looks more logical as the resource of g2-g4 might be useful. We will also consider the retreat to g3 after first looking at a few forcing continuations.

14.\textit{\textbf{xf7}?} does not work, as after 14...\textit{\textbf{h8}} 15.e4 (or 15.\textit{\textbf{g3}} h6) 15...\textit{\textbf{xf4}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xf5}} h6+ Black wins material.

14.\textit{\textbf{xf7}?!} is also premature. 14...\textit{\textbf{xf4}} 15.e4 From here Black's objectively strongest continuation is 15...\textit{\textbf{xe4}}! 16.e5 \textit{\textbf{e8}} when White lacks an effective discovered check. However, if Black yearns for safety then 15...\textit{\textbf{xe4}?!} is quite playable, and after 16.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{xe4}} 17.\textit{\textbf{g5}+} \textit{\textbf{h8}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} only Black can be better.

14.e4 This move is not dangerous, but it can lead to interesting complications. 14...\textit{\textbf{xf4}} 15.\textit{\textbf{xf5}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xf7}†} Otherwise the white queen lacks a decent square.

15.\textit{\textbf{xf7}†} If White refrains from this move then Black has no problems at all, for instance: 15.\textit{\textbf{f3}} h6 16.\textit{\textbf{g4}} \textit{\textbf{xe4}} 17.\textit{\textbf{xe4}} \textit{\textbf{b4}} 18.\textit{\textbf{c3}} e4 (18...\textit{\textbf{d2}?!N} 19.\textit{\textbf{d5}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} also deserves attention) 19.\textit{\textbf{e2}} This position occurred in Wang Li – Tan Zhongyi, Hefei 2010, and here I recommend:

16.\textit{\textbf{h8}?!N} (The game continuation was not bad either: 16.\textit{\textbf{xf7}} 17.\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textbf{dd7}} 18.\textit{\textbf{fd1}} \textit{\textbf{xf5}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xd7}} \textit{\textbf{xd7}} 20.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 21.\textit{\textbf{xf7}} \textit{\textbf{xb3}} 22.\textit{\textbf{axb3}} \textit{\textbf{xf7}} 23.\textit{\textbf{d6}†} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 24.\textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{e5}} The ending was more or less equal in De Blois Figueredo – Bortnik, corr. 2010.) The justification for the cheeky king move is revealed in the following line: 17.\textit{\textbf{b3}} \textit{\textbf{xf5}} 18.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{a5}!} 19.\textit{\textbf{e6}} \textit{\textbf{xf7}}! 20.\textit{\textbf{xf7}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} The queen is caught, so Black regains the sacrificed material with interest. 21.\textit{\textbf{h4}} \textit{\textbf{xf7}} 22.\textit{\textbf{xf5}} \textit{\textbf{gxf5}} 23.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{e4}} 24.\textit{\textbf{c8}†} \textit{\textbf{f8}} 25.\textit{\textbf{xa7}} \textit{\textbf{xc8}} 26.\textit{\textbf{xc8}} \textit{\textbf{xb2}†} In the resulting endgame Black's minor pieces are stronger than White's rook.

14.\textit{\textbf{g3}} This is the only serious alternative to the main line, although it does have the drawback of blocking the g2-pawn, as noted previously.

14...\textit{\textbf{ad8}!}

Black has no reason to fear the ensuing complications.
19...\textit{Ed3}N 20.\textit{Cd5} \textit{Wd2} 21.\textit{Wxd2} \textit{Exd2} 22.\textit{Ec2} \textit{Exc2} 23.\textit{Exc2} \textit{Ed8} 24.\textit{Ed1} \textit{Cf8} Black has no problems at all.

15...\textit{Exf7} 16.\textit{Wb3}

Now Black must find the right way to deal with the pin.

The position is complex and unbalanced, but in my opinion Black should be at least equal and has realistic chances to take over the initiative. Here is an illustrative line:

19.\textit{Ah4} g5 20.\textit{Ab5}! \textit{Ce4}! 21.\textit{Cd6} \textit{Xxh6} 22.\textit{Xg6} \textit{Xf6} 23.\textit{Cd8} \textit{Ff8} 24.\textit{Ed7} \textit{Wb4}

Following the queen exchange Black is by no means worse.

14...\textit{Ed8}!

This is a clear improvement over 16...\textit{Wc7}? as played in Grigore – L'Ami, Bratto 2010. In that game White missed the strong 17.\textit{Cc4}N which would have more or less forced Black to accept a clearly worse position by taking on e4, as 17...\textit{Cc8}? leads to even bigger problems: 18.\textit{Ed5} \textit{Wd7} 19.\textit{Xfd1} \textit{Cd4} 20.\textit{Exd4!} \textit{Exd4} 21.\textit{Cc7} \textit{Cxd5} 22.\textit{Exd7} \textit{Xfd7} 23.\textit{Cg6}! White has a huge advantage.

16.\textit{Ed8}N

This is the best way to force White to take on f7.

17.\textit{Ed1} \textit{Ah6}!

Once again Black should not fear the complications which result from White's next move.

15.\textit{Wf3}†

15.\textit{Wf3} does not lead anywhere special for White: 15...\textit{h6} 16.\textit{Cge4} (Not dangerous is 16.\textit{Xxf7} \textit{Xxf7} 17.\textit{Ffd1} \textit{Efd8} intending ...\textit{Cf7}.) 16...\textit{Cxe4} 17.\textit{Cxe4} \textit{Wb4} (It was worth considering 17...\textit{Efd3}! with the tactical threat of ...\textit{Cf4}.) 18.\textit{Cc4} \textit{We7} Black was doing fine in Littlewood – Conquest, Torquay 2009.

15...\textit{Xxf7} 16.\textit{Wb3} \textit{Ed8}!

I prefer this square for the rook, as 16...\textit{Ed7}, which was played in Garcia Roman – Garcia Gil, Barbera del Valles 2009, can be met by 17.\textit{Ffd1}N when 17...\textit{Eb4} allows White to regain his piece by means of 18.\textit{Exb4} \textit{Cxb4} 19.g4!.
17.e4?
This poor move allows the black knight to take up a dominating position on d4.

An obvious improvement is 17...f3N when I analysed the following line: 17...a6 I like this prophylactic move, which stops White's idea of b5-d6. (In the event of 17...h6 18.xf7 xf7 19.g4 c8 20.b5 e6 21.xe6 xb5 22.c2 the position looks rather unclear.) 18.g4 c8 19.a4 b5 20.xb5 axb5 21.xf7 xf7 22.c5 f8 Black is doing fine without queens.

17...d4 18.c4 b5 19.d3
This position was reached in Ristovic – Haessel, Calgary 2009, and here Black missed a good opportunity:

19...xe4!N 20.xe4 d7
Despite the level material, Black has an obvious advantage thanks to his superbly placed pieces.

C22) 13.e2

With this, the main line, White continues to mobilize his forces before embarking on any direct action.

13.e4
Black offers a knight exchange and opens the long diagonal for his dark-squared bishop. In response White may choose C221) 14.xe4, C222) 14.g4? or C223) 14.d5.

C221) 14.xe4 xe4
15.gf4

White develops his final piece and tries to make the tempting $g5$ more dangerous for Black.

The immediate knight jump is unimpressive:
15.$g5$ $d5$ 16.$c7$
16.$xd5$ $xd5$ 17.$b3$ $ec8$ 18.$fd1$ $a5$
cannot be dangerous for Black, and after the inaccurate 19.$f3$ e5 20.$g3$ e4 he took over the initiative in Orsag – Oral, Czech Republic 2002.
16...$xc7$ 17.$xd5$

17...$f6$ 18.$xc6$

Black need not worry about 18.$xf7$ $xf7$
19.$xf7$ $xf7$ 20.$c4$ $f8$ when his king is quite safe, and after 21.$fd1$ $f6$ 22.$d5$
$xb6$ I prefer Black's position.
18...$xc6$ 19.$f3$ $xa2$ 20.$d4$ $xd4$ 21.$exd4$
e6 22.$xc6$ $ab8$

The position should be a draw, but Black can press for a win without taking any risks, M. Horvath – Serner, corr. 1996.

15.$d2$

Retreating the knight is also unlikely to trouble the second player.
15...$d5$ 16.$xd5$ $xd5$ 17.$b3$ $fd8$
18.$fd1$

Now my slight preference is:
18...$f5$
18...$e4$ should also be absolutely fine.

19...$e4$

At this point Black has an easy improvement:

19...$e4$N

The inaccurate 19...$f6$ 20.$b5$ left Black facing awkward problems in Loetscher – Widmer, Zug 2003.

20.$c5$

Perhaps Black was put off by this knight move, but it fails to achieve much for White.

20...$b4$

Black has no problems.

15...$h5$!

This is my preferred solution, although the alternatives 15.$ad8$ and 15.$f3$ seem reliable enough as well.
Chapter 17 – 9.\( \mathcal{B}f3 \)

16.\( \mathcal{E}d7 \)
16.\( \mathcal{E}c2 \) \( \mathcal{B}xf3 \) This well-timed exchange completely solves Black's opening problems.
17.\( \mathcal{W}xf3 \) \( \mathcal{W}xf3 \) 18.\( \mathcal{G}xf3 \) \( \mathcal{E}ad8 \) 19.\( \mathcal{G}e4 \) 19...\( \mathcal{B}xb2 \)
20.\( \mathcal{E}xd8 \) \( \mathcal{E}xd8 \) 21.\( \mathcal{C}c2 \) \( \mathcal{A}a3 \) 22.\( \mathcal{A}xc6 \) \( \mathcal{B}xc6 \)
23.\( \mathcal{E}xc6 \) \( f6 \) Black has equalized comfortably, Portisch – Arakhamia-Grant, Roquebrune 1998.

16...\( \mathcal{B}ac8! \)
Such strong players as Shirov and Roiz have preferred 16...e6, but the text move is better. The immediate threat is ...\( \mathcal{B}d4 \).

17.\( \mathcal{A}cd1 \) e6 18.\( \mathcal{E}1d2 \)
The lesser evil would have been 18.\( \mathcal{D}d4N \) although after 18...\( \mathcal{W}xe2 \) 19.\( \mathcal{D}xe2 \) \( \mathcal{A}a5=\) White will have to work hard to equalize.

18...\( \mathcal{A}a5! \)
Now Black takes over the initiative.

19.\( \mathcal{A}c2 \) \( \mathcal{C}c6 \) 20.\( \mathcal{A}c7 \) e5! 21.\( \mathcal{A}xc8 \) \( \mathcal{A}xc8 \)
22.\( \mathcal{A}g3 \)
The tactical justification for Black's play is revealed after 22.\( \mathcal{A}xe5 \) \( \mathcal{A}xe5 \) 23.\( \mathcal{W}xh5 \) \( gxh5 \)
24.\( \mathcal{A}xe5 \) \( \mathcal{C}c4 \) when Black wins an exchange.

22...e4
Black was clearly better in Hoffmann – Holzke, Germany 1998.

C222) 14.g4?!
This aggressive continuation has become quite fashionable recently. White is willing to accept some weaknesses in his position in order to drive Black's pieces away from their active positions.

14...\( \mathcal{A}xc3 \) 15.bxc3 \( \mathcal{D}d7 \) 16.\( \mathcal{E}fd1 \) \( \mathcal{E}ad8 \) 17.\( \mathcal{E}d5 \)

17...\( \mathcal{W}a3! \)
This is stronger than 17...\( \mathcal{W}b6 \) 18.\( \mathcal{E}b1! \) \( \mathcal{A}c8 \), Kasimdzhanov – Svidler, San Sebastian 2009, at which point the unexpected 19.\( \mathcal{E}g5!N \) would have underlined the unfortunate position of Black's queen.

18.\( \mathcal{E}cd1 \) \( \mathcal{A}e6 \)
It is essential to exchange some pieces in order to dampen White’s initiative. In the event of 18...\(c8\) 19.e4 White retains some pressure.

19.\(\text{x}d8\) \(\text{x}d8\) 20.\(b5\) a6

It is best to insert this move, as in certain positions the pawn will be slightly less vulnerable on a6 than a7.

21.\(b6\) \(\text{x}b3\)

In an ideal world Black would prefer not to unite his opponent’s queenside pawns, but vacating the e6-square for the knight is a much more pressing concern.

22.axb3 \(\text{e}6\)

23.c4

This is the most ambitious idea at White’s disposal.

23.\(\text{xb7}\)!! is unattractive in view of 23...\(\text{xf4}\) 24.exf4 \(\text{xc}3\).

23.\(\text{c}5\) enables Black to play: 23...\(\text{c}5\)!
24.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 25.b4 This position occurred in Sachdev – Safarli, Delhi 2010, and now the most precise continuation would have been 25...\(\text{xe}5\)N 26.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}4\) 27.\(\text{d}7\) f6 28.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{f}7\) 29.c4 \(\text{c}8\) 30.c5 \(\text{b}8\) with equality.

23...\(\text{a}5!\)

Commencing counterplay.

24.\(\text{xb7}\)

We have been following the game Mamedyarov – Sutovsky, Bursa 2010. At this point Black should have played:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
& a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
1 & & & & & & & & \\
2 & & & & & & & & \\
3 & & & & & & & & \\
4 & & & & & & & & \\
5 & & & & & & & & \\
6 & & & & & & & & \\
7 & & & & & & & & \\
8 & & & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

24...\(\text{b}2!\)N

Activating the queen and threatening \(a4\). The position is just as dangerous for White as for Black, and according to my analysis the game should end in a draw after accurate play from both sides.

25.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{e}2\) 26.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{c}2!\)

Continuing to target the b3-pawn. Now 27.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{xb}3\) 28.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{b}4\) is fine for Black.

27.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{b}1\)† 28.\(\text{g}2\)
28...\(\text{\textit{d}c5!}\)

This small finesse seals the fate of the b3-pawn.

29.\(\text{\textit{e}d1}\) \(\text{\textit{w}}\text{xb3}\) 30.\(\text{\textit{e}e5}\) \(\text{\textit{x}xe5}\) 31.\(\text{\textit{x}xe5}\)

From here the following line looks like a logical end to the game:

31...\(\text{\textit{a}a4}\) 32.\(\text{\textit{a}a1}\) \(\text{\textit{w}}\text{b2}\) 33.\(\text{\textit{x}xc6}\) \(\text{\textit{w}}\text{xa1}\) 34.\(\text{\textit{e}xe7}\)
\(\text{\textit{w}}\text{b1}\) 35.\(\text{\textit{d}d7}\) \(\text{\textit{a}a8}\) 36.\(\text{\textit{f}f6}\) \(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g7}\) 37.\(\text{\textit{e}e5}\)
\(\text{\textit{w}}\text{b7}\) 38.\(\text{\textit{e}e4}\) 39.\(\text{\textit{d}d5}\) \(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g8}\) 40.\(\text{\textit{f}f6}\)

The game ends in perpetual check.

C223) 14.\(\text{\textit{d}d5}\)

This is White's latest try, and the only way to set Black any problems.

After 17.\(\text{\textit{f}f7}\)? \(\text{\textit{xf7}}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{c}c3}\) \(\text{\textit{e}e7}\) the players agreed a draw in Gustafsson – Lindinger, Hamburg 1999, but Black is clearly better in the final position.

17.\(\text{\textit{f}f3}\)

This has been the most popular choice, but it is much too timid.

17...\(\text{\textit{e}e4}\)! 18.\(\text{\textit{d}d2}\)

18.\(\text{\textit{h}h2}\) occurred in Lev – Alterman, Israel 1992, and a couple of subsequent games. Despite Black's good results I would like to recommend a new move, which seems to me like the most logical: 18...\(\text{\textit{e}e5}\)!N 19.\(\text{\textit{c}c1}\) \(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g5}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{h}h1}\) \(\text{\textit{a}ad8}\) Black is clearly better.

18...\(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g5}\) 19.\(\text{\textit{f}f4}\)

This position was reached in Meins – Kaufeld, Dortmund 2001, and here Black missed a good opportunity:

C2231) 15.\(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g5}\)

It is hard to believe that White can aspire to an advantage by giving up his dark-squared bishop. Nevertheless the idea is not completely without merit, and Black cannot afford to relax his guard.

15...\(\text{\textit{x}xg5}\) 16.\(\text{\textit{x}xg5}\) \(\text{\textit{d}d8}\)

This key defensive move is the only way to parry the dual threats of \(\text{\textit{x}xe6}\) followed by \(\text{\textit{e}e7}\), and \(\text{\textit{g}}\text{g4}\) followed by \(\text{\textit{f}f3}\).

17.\(\text{\textit{h}h4}\)

This is White's latest try, and the only way to set Black any problems.

After 17.\(\text{\textit{xf7}}?\) \(\text{\textit{xf7}}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{c}c3}\) \(\text{\textit{e}e7}\) the players agreed a draw in Gustafsson – Lindinger, Hamburg 1999, but Black is clearly better in the final position.
20...\texttt{xf4} 21.\texttt{e3 h6}
Black has the advantage.

![Chess Diagram](image)

17...\texttt{h6} 18.\texttt{g4}
This is the only move with which White can hope to justify his previous play.

18...\texttt{d7} 19.\texttt{e4 xh4} 20.f3
White's play looks a bit crazy, but his active minor pieces provide some compensation for the pawn.

20...\texttt{h8} 21.\texttt{g2} f5 22.\texttt{xh1}
Lysyj – Salem, Biel 2009. Here Black should have gone for the calm approach:

![Chess Diagram](image)

22...\texttt{d8N}

In the game he needlessly sacrificed material with 22...\texttt{fxe4?} and went on to lose.

23.\texttt{gxh5}
Worse is 23.\texttt{c5?! fxg4} 24.\texttt{fxg4 c8} when White's compensation is questionable.

23...\texttt{xh5}
We have reached a rich position in which White has sufficient compensation to maintain the balance, but not enough to claim an advantage.

C2232) 15.\texttt{xc6}

![Chess Diagram](image)

This exchange sacrifice is well-known, having most famously been used by Karpov in the eleventh game of his third match against Kasparov from London/Leningrad 1986.

15...\texttt{bxc6}
According to the latest theory this is the soundest response.

Kasparov preferred 15...\texttt{xf4} 16.\texttt{c7} and the game was eventually drawn after both sides missed some chances. Modern analysis indicates that White has good chances to obtain an advantage here.

16.\texttt{e7}+ \texttt{h8} 17.\texttt{xc6}
The careless 17.\(\text{c}e5?\) does not lead to a transposition in view of 17...\(\text{c}xe5!\) 18.\(\text{c}xe6\) \(\text{d}2\), and after the further 19.\(\text{c}xd2\) \(\text{c}xd2\) 20.\(\text{c}xe5\)\(f6\) 21.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{c}xf1\) Black had won a second exchange and obtained a technically winning position in I. Sokolov – Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 1999.

17...\(\text{b}6\) 18.\(\text{c}xe5\)

White must avoid 18.\(\text{f}xe5?\) \(f6\) when he loses material.

18...\(\text{c}e6\)

Of course it is essential to neutralize White's pressure along the a2-g8 diagonal.

19.\(\text{c}xe6\)

Other options are not dangerous, but still we need to examine a few of them.

19.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{a}6\) 20.\(\text{d}d4\) \(\text{d}5\) 21.\(\text{c}c1\) \(\text{ac}8\) gave Black a fine position in Shliperman – Ashley, Manhattan 1999.

19.\(\text{d}d4\) \(\text{xb}3\) 20.\(\text{xb}3\) \(\text{e}6\) By chasing the enemy knight away from the centre, Black easily solves his problems. 21.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{ac}8\)

22.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{f}d8\) 23.\(\text{xd}8\)\(\text{xd}8\) 24.\(\text{fd}4\) This was Karlzen – Carlhhammar, Gothenburg 2004, and now the natural 24.\(\text{d}d5\)\(\text{N}\) would have retained all the pluses of Black's position.

19.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{xb}3\) 20.\(\text{xe}4\)

After 20.\(\text{axb}3\) \(\text{b}7\) Black can feel happy playing against the weakened queenside pawns.

20...\(\text{e}6\) 21.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{g}8!\)

The best defensive move.

22.\(\text{c}6\) \(\text{xa}2\) 23.\(\text{d}6\)

This interesting position occurred in Gavrikov – Kochyev, Tallinn 1987. The white knights look quite dangerous, but Black could have solved all his problems with the following precise continuation:

23...\(\text{ac}8!\)\(\text{N}\)

24.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{d}5!\) 25.\(\text{e}7\)\(\text{xe}7\)

26.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{b}8\)

Black may be a pawn down, but his bishops are superb.

27.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{b}7\) 28.\(\text{f}4\) \(h6\) 29.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}8\)

Black has full compensation.

19...\(\text{xe}6\) 20.\(\text{c}2\)

This is White's main attempt to fight for the advantage.

I would also like to mention: 20.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{ac}8\)

21.\(\text{d}3\) (After 21.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{fd}8\) 22.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{gx}5\) 23.\(\text{gx}5\) \(\text{d}5\) only Black can be better, Heinig – Schulze, Bad Koenigshofen 2007.) This position was reached in Tarczykowski – Bugalski, Sepolno Kraj 2006, and now Black could have exploited the recent weakening of the c3-square by means of:
21...\( \text{c3!} \)

By removing the king from the long diagonal Black stops his opponent's main idea of \( \text{d4} \) followed by \( \text{f3} \).

Also worthy of consideration is 23...\( \text{c7?!} \)

24.\( \text{e5!} \)

The passive 24.\( \text{e1?!} \) occurred in Shyrenkov – Grandelius, Pardubice 2007, and here Black should have switched to active play on the kingside by means of 24...\( \text{e7!} \)

25.\( \text{h2 g5!} \)

when his chances are higher.

After the superior text move I discovered the following beautiful line:

24...\( \text{xe5} \) 25.\( \text{fxe5 d2!} \) 26.\( \text{e1} \) 27.\( f3 \)

28.\( \text{xe4} \) 29.\( \text{g4!} \) 30.\( \text{gxf4} \) 31.\( \text{xe2} \) 32.\( \text{g2} \)

33.\( \text{e1} \) 34.\( \text{g1} \)

We finish with a common scenario, as accurate play from both sides has resulted in a draw by perpetual check.
Chapter 17 – 9.\( \mathcal{f}3 \)

21...\( \mathcal{ac}8 \)

I do not see much point in entering the complications resulting from 21...g5 22.\( \mathcal{h}2 \) g4 23.hxg4 fxg4 24.\( \mathcal{xe}4 \) gxf3 25.gxf3.

22.\( \mathcal{xa}7 \)

One other game continued:

22.\( \mathcal{d}4 \) \( \mathcal{e}8 \) 23.\( \mathcal{ec}6? \)

With this unfortunate move White self-pins his knight and enables Black to generate strong play without any difficulties.

The correct continuation was: 23.\( \mathcal{xe}8 \) \( \mathcal{f}xe8 \) 24.\( \mathcal{ec}6 \) \( \mathcal{xd}4!! \) (I like this move, although there is also nothing wrong with the calm 24...g5 25.\( \mathcal{h}2 \) a6.) 25.\( \mathcal{xd}4 \) \( \mathcal{g}8 \)

Black is doing fine in this endgame; his plans include ...g5, ...f4 and ...\( \mathcal{f}6-d5 \).

23...g5! 24.\( \mathcal{h}2 \) f4

Advancing the kingside pawns is often a strong plan for Black in this variation.

24...\( \mathcal{f}6!! \)N 25.\( \mathcal{c}1 \) f4 was also very strong.

25.exf4 gxf4

White is in serious trouble, Kosyrev – Sakaev, Internet 2004.

22...\( \mathcal{a}8 \) 23.\( \mathcal{b}7 \) \( \mathcal{xa}2 \) 24.\( \mathcal{d}4 \) \( \mathcal{a}7 \)

The position is equal, Meins – Holzke, Germany 1999.

This calm retreat has been White’s most popular choice.

15...\( \mathcal{e}6 \)

Black has experimented with several alternatives, but I strongly prefer the old and classical approach. Now we reach a final division between C22331) 16.\( \mathcal{xc}6 \) and C22332) 16.\( \mathcal{fd}1 \).

16.\( \mathcal{c}3?! \) is unimpressive: 16...\( \mathcal{xb}3 \) 17.axb3 \( \mathcal{c}5! \) Immediately attacking the newly-created weakness. 18.\( \mathcal{c}4 \) \( \mathcal{b}4! \) 19.\( \mathcal{xb}4 \) \( \mathcal{xb}4 \) 20.\( \mathcal{xe}5 \) \( \mathcal{xb}3 \) 21.\( \mathcal{xf}7 \) \( \mathcal{xf}7 \) 22.\( \mathcal{cd}1 \) \( \mathcal{fd}8\dagger \)

Dziuba – Swinkels, Deizisau 2009. Black has the better chances in view of his potential to create a passed pawn on the queenside.

The simplest reaction to 16.\( \mathcal{c}4 \) would be 16...\( \mathcal{f}6 \) 17.e4 (or 17.\( \mathcal{xf}6\dagger \) \( \mathcal{xf}6 \) 18.\( \mathcal{c}2 \) \( \mathcal{xb}3 \) 19.\( \mathcal{xb}3 \) \( \mathcal{b}6= \)) 17.\( \mathcal{fd}8 \) and here White has nothing better than 18.\( \mathcal{fd}1 \), transposing to line C22332 below.

C22331) 16.\( \mathcal{xc}6 \)

We have already encountered this thematic exchange sacrifice, but this time the slight change in the position leads me to prefer a different reaction.
16...\textit{\textbf{xd5}}!  
16...\textit{\textbf{bxc6}} is less appealing, as after 17.\textit{\textbf{e7}}\textit{\textbf{h8}} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe6}} \textit{\textbf{fxe6}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} \textit{\textbf{xa2}} 20.\textit{\textbf{fxe5}} we reach a rather unbalanced position in which I prefer White's chances.

17.\textit{\textbf{xd5}} \textit{\textbf{xd5}} 18.\textit{\textbf{e7}} \textit{\textbf{ac8}} 19.\textit{\textbf{c2}}  
This position occurred in Soln – Perus, Bled 2001, and now Black could have obtained a slight advantage by means of:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard1.png}
\end{center}

19...\textit{\textbf{xc7}}N 20.\textit{\textbf{xc7}} \textit{\textbf{f6??}}
White's position is a bit uncomfortable due to his misplaced bishop.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard2.png}
\end{center}

19.\textit{\textbf{g5}}
This is the consistent and principled follow-up to White's previous play, and is justified by some tactical ideas.

The queenless position resulting from 19.\textit{\textbf{c5}} \textit{\textbf{xc5}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xc5}} is perfectly playable for Black, who can adopt a concrete approach to force further simplifications: 20...\textit{\textbf{xe4}} 21.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} \textit{\textbf{xc6}}! 22.\textit{\textbf{e7??}} \textit{\textbf{f8}} 23.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} \textit{\textbf{xd1??}} 24.\textit{\textbf{xd1}} \textit{\textbf{bxc6}} 25.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{d5}}! This seems like the easiest solution. 26.\textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{xe5}} 27.\textit{\textbf{xe5}} This position occurred in Cardon – Goormachtigh, Sas van Gent 1988, and now after 27...\textit{\textbf{c5N}} 28.a3 \textit{\textbf{e7}} 29.\textit{\textbf{f1}} \textit{\textbf{e6}} Black's more active pieces easily make up for the slight weakness
of his queenside pawns. Overall his position is slightly preferable, although it should be a draw of course.

19...\textit{d}4 20.\textit{e}7\textit{f}8
Black must certainly avoid 20...\textit{h}8?? 21.\textit{xe}6! \textit{fxe}6 22.\textit{f}7 mate!

21.\textit{x}e6\textit{f}7 22.\textit{xd}8 \textit{xc}4 23.\textit{xc}4
The position appears wildly complicated, but like many such variations, it has all been analysed out to a forced draw.

23...\textit{xe}4 24.\textit{xf}7 \textit{b}6!
There is not much that White can do about the impending raid on the \textit{f}2-square.

25.\textit{xe}5
It is not too late for White to go astray:
25.\textit{xe}5?? \textit{f}3†! 26.\textit{xf}3 \textit{xf}2† 27.\textit{h}1 \textit{xf}3†
28.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}2† 29.\textit{h}1 \textit{xe}5 30.\textit{xe}5 \textit{g}3#

25...\textit{xe}5 26.\textit{xe}5 \textit{f}3†
Leading to a trivial draw.

27.\textit{xf}3 \textit{xf}2† 28.\textit{h}1 \textit{xf}3† 29.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}2†
30.\textit{h}1 \textit{f}3†
\(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}\)

So far five subsequent games have ended in the same way.

Conclusion

The 9.\textit{f}3 system has been White’s most popular method of handling the 4.\textit{f}4 variation. White develops his pieces classically and will usually focus his energy towards the centre, although we have seen over the course of the chapter that the battle might play out across any and all areas of the board.

The unusual options of A) 10.\textit{b}5 and B) 10.\textit{b}3 should not be ignored, although neither will present much of a threat against a well-prepared opponent. The main line of C) 10.\textit{b}3 is more serious, and leads to rich positions in which both sides will face plenty of challenges. The list of variations requiring particularly careful study involves the tricky C21) 13.\textit{g}5, the presently fashionable C222) 14.\textit{g}4??, the two versions of the thematic exchange sacrifice, C2232) 15.\textit{xc}6 and C2233) 16.\textit{xc}6, and finally the classical C22332) 16.\textit{fd}1 which can lead to a forced draw.

We have reached the end of our investigation into the entire scheme of development starting with the move 4.\textit{f}4. The theoretical verdict looks perfectly healthy for Black at present, and although some improvements and refinements will inevitably be found for both sides, I am confident that the Grünfeld will continue to prove its soundness.
Sidelines

Variation Index

1.d4 ½f6 2.c4 g6 3.©c3 d5 4.©g5

4...©e4

A) 5.©f3
B) 5.h4
C) 5.cxd5 ½xg5 6.h4 ½e4! 7.©xe4 ½xd5 8.©c3 ½a5
   C1) 9.½a4†
   C2) 9.e3
   C3) 9.©f3
   C4) 9.h5
D) 5.©xe4 dxe4
   D1) 6.½a4†
   D2) 6.f3
   D3) 6.e3
   D4) 6.©d2 ½g7 7.e3 c5
      D41) 8.©e2
      D42) 8.d5 ½b6!
         D421) 9.0–0–0
         D422) 9.½b1

227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
Chapter 18 – Sidelines

1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3.e3 d5 4.e5

4...d4

This is the main line and undoubtedly Black's most principled reply. White has a number of possible responses; 5.f4 is the subject of Chapter 19, but the big main line is 5.h4 which will be considered in Chapters 20-22.

In the present chapter we will deal with the relatively minor, though still significant options of A) 5.d3, B) 5.cxd5, C) 5.h4 and D) 5.xe4.

A) 5.d3

It is hard to imagine that White can achieve much by giving up the dark-squared bishop, and indeed Black obtains a comfortable game with minimal fuss.

5...xg5 6.xg5 dxc4

Having obtained the advantage of the two bishops so early in the game, Black begins to open the centre.

7.a4†

7.e3 may be a slight improvement, although Black should have few problems in any case, for instance: 7.e5 8.d3 exd4 9.xd4 g7 10.xc4 0-0 11.0-0 Illichmann – L. Hoffmann, Hammuehren 2002, and now after 11...e6N or 11...d7N Black can look towards the middlegame with confidence thanks to his strong pair of bishops.

7...d7 8.xc4 e6 9.d3 g7 10.e3

10.b5 can be met strongly by 10...e5! 11.dxc5 (or 11.d6† e7 12.dxc5 xxb2†) 11...0-0 12.0-0-0 a6 13.d6 a5 when Black has the initiative.

10...0-0 11.e2

This position occurred in Lautner – Jansa, Passau 1999, and here it would have been good for Black to play:

11.e5!N

With the possible continuation:
12.d5
Otherwise Black will improve the scope of his powerful bishop by taking on d4.

12...b6! 13.b3
13.c5 is well met by 13...e4 14.d4 e8 intending ...e5.

13...e4 14.xe4 xd5
Black's bishop pair gives him the better chances.

B) 5.h4

Initially I was not going to cover this move, but when I saw that Jobava had played it recently I decided to pay more attention to it.

5...g7
Amazingly this natural move has only been played a couple of times. The whole variation is quite rare, but in the majority of games Black has exchanged on c3 or g5.

6.cxd5 xc3 7.bxc3 xd5 8.e3
8.b3 was tried in Naumov – Kanter, Kazan 2008, and here I like 8...e6!N when I do not see how White can pose his opponent any problems, for instance 9.xd5 xd5 10.f3 f5! (10...c4?!) 11.e3 e5 and Black has an excellent game.

8...c5
A natural improvement, since White managed to obtain a slight plus in the following game: 8...h6 9.f4 e5 10.xe5 xe5 11.dxe5 xe5 12.xd4 c6 13.b5! d7 14.f3 xd4 15.cxd4 Jobava – Safarli, Aix-les-Bains 2011.

9.cb3 cxd4!
9...c6 gives White the extra option of 10.b3?, as well as 10.e2 when 10...cxd4 11.cxd4 reaches the main line.

10.cxd4 c6 11.e2 a5!
With this move Black highlights the negative side of White's fifth move.

12.d2
12.d2 is well met by 12...h6 13.f4 e5! 14.dxe5 0–0 when Black has the better game.
12...\texttt{xd2} 13.\texttt{xd2}
In the analogous position that may arise after the main line of 5.\texttt{h4}, White can obtain a pleasant endgame after recapturing with his king. In the present position the same idea suffers from a flaw: 13.\texttt{xd2} f6! Black can take advantage of the fact that the bishop is still on g5. 14.\texttt{f4} e5! 15.\texttt{g3} exd4 16.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{xd4} 17.exd4 \texttt{e6} White will have to play carefully to equalize.

13...e5!
This freeing move is a key idea for Black in this type of pawn structure.

14.\texttt{e4}
14.dxe5 \texttt{xe5} 15.\texttt{b1} h6 16.\texttt{f4} \texttt{xf4} 17.exf4 \texttt{d4}! is good for Black.

14...\texttt{e6}
I have chosen to focus on this move, although Black has other reliable options as well.

15.\texttt{b1}

15...h6!
This move leads to mild complications which soon peter out to equality.

16.d5
16.\texttt{f6} is also not unfavourable to Black: 16...0–0 (16...\texttt{xf6}? 17.d5! \texttt{e7}! 18.dxe6 f5 leads to a highly unclear position.) 17.\texttt{xg7} \texttt{xg7} 18.\texttt{c5} exd4 19.\texttt{xe6}+ fx6 20.\texttt{b7}+ \texttt{f7} The endgame is drawish.

16...\texttt{xd5} 17.\texttt{f6}+ \texttt{xf6} 18.\texttt{xf6} 0–0 19.\texttt{xb7}

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

19...\texttt{d4}!
The most accurate way to force a draw.

20.\texttt{d7} \texttt{xg2} 21.\texttt{g1} \texttt{f3}+ 22.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{xf3} 23.\texttt{g6}+
White had better take the draw while he has the chance.

23...\texttt{fxg6} 24.\texttt{g7}= The game ends in perpetual check.

C) 5.\texttt{xd5}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}
This is not fully correct, but it could be an effective surprise weapon if Black is unprepared.

5...\(\text{exd}5\)
This important move takes the sting out of White's idea.

6...\(\text{exd}5\)
I do not believe White has enough activity to compensate for the absence of his dark-squared bishop, which is a key piece in the Grünfeld.

7...\(\text{exf}4\)
8...\(\text{exf}4\)
This was tested in one recent game against a world-class player.

8...\(\text{h}4\) 9...\(\text{f}3\)
Black is also okay after the game continuation of 9...\(\text{c}6\), but this move interferes with my principal concept of preparing the \(\ldots\text{c}5\) advance in order to activate the Grünfeld bishop. The game continued 10...\(\text{c}3\) 11...\(\text{a}5\) 12...\(\text{b}5!\) when White had a reasonable position, Ezat – Jakovenko, Bursa 2010.

After my suggested improvement, I examined the following line:

9...\(\text{a}4\) 10...\(\text{a}4\)
The queen exchange is not really consistent with the overall spirit of the present variation, but it has been tested in a few games.

9...\(\text{a}4\) 10...\(\text{a}4\)
White's opening play has not been particularly threatening, but if he can develop smoothly and stabilize the centre then he might obtain a decent position with chances to press on the c-file. Fortunately Black has a convincing way to prevent any of this from happening.

10...\(\text{c}6!\) 11...\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}5!\)
With this key move Black ensures that his dark-squared bishop will enter the game.

12...\(\text{exf}4\)
12...\(\text{exf}4\) 13...\(\text{g}7\) also looks promising for Black.
12...\text{\texttt{d}}xd4 13.\text{\texttt{e}}e6 14.\text{\texttt{e}}e3 \text{\texttt{g}}7 15.\text{\texttt{f}}3

We have been following the game Meduna - Votava, Lazne Bohdanec 1996. At this point the best way for Black to proceed with his development would have been:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard1.png}
\end{center}

15.\text{\texttt{d}}d7N 16.\text{\texttt{c}}c3 \text{\texttt{c}}5\#

Black's strong bishop pair gives him the better chances.

C2) 9.\text{\texttt{e}}3

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard2.png}
\end{center}

15.\text{\texttt{d}}d8!

This strong move secures Black's advantage.

16.\text{\texttt{c}}c4

The tactical justification for Black's play can be seen in the following variation: 16.\text{\texttt{d}}xc7\# 17.\text{\texttt{f}}f8 18.\text{\texttt{b}}b1 \text{\texttt{e}}e6 19.\text{\texttt{d}}xc5 \text{\texttt{x}}xb2 20.\text{\texttt{b}}b1 \text{\texttt{c}}c3\# 21.\text{\texttt{f}}f1 \text{\texttt{x}}xa2\#

The text move is not much of an improvement for White though...

16.\text{\texttt{c}}c6 17.\text{\texttt{d}}xc5 \text{\texttt{x}}xb2

Black is clearly better, Gavariev - Brendel, St Petersburg 2006.

10.\text{\texttt{f}}3 reaches the note to White's tenth move in line C3 below.

10.\text{\texttt{b}}b3 0-0 11.h5 \text{\texttt{c}}5

In positions in which White has allowed his dark-squared bishop to be exchanged for a knight, a good rule of thumb is that if Black can arrange to attack the centre with ...\text{\texttt{c}}5, without suffering any immediate consequences, then he will almost always obtain an excellent game.

12.hxg6 hxg6 13.\text{\texttt{b}}b5

Objectively this may well be the best move, but it is obvious that Black's bishop pair stands him in excellent stead for the endgame.

13.\text{\texttt{b}}xb5 14.\text{\texttt{a}}xb5 a6 15.\text{\texttt{d}}d5

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard3.png}
\end{center}

9.\text{\texttt{g}}7 10.\text{\texttt{c}}c4

The most common continuation is 10.h5 which transposes to variation C4 beginning with 9.h5. In the present section we will deal with a few minor lines.

10...\text{\texttt{e}}5

Once again this central strike offers excellent prospects to Black.
Black keeps everything under control, and his extra pawn and bishop pair give him excellent winning chances.

C3) 9.\( \text{e}3 \)

At first glance it appears as though White has some attacking chances, but in reality he cannot create any serious threats as Black's mighty dark-squared bishop controls all the important squares.

14.\( \text{e}4 \) 15.\( \text{e}4 \) 16.\( \text{h}x\text{e}4 \) \( \text{h}x\text{e}4 \)

This position was reached in Canal – Gligoric, Dubrovnik 1950, and here the most accurate continuation would have been:

17.\( \text{c}5 \)N

Maintaining the bishop's strong central position while eyeing the king on the c-file.

In the following game Black equalized without difficulty, but never had a chance to take over the initiative either: 11...\( \text{g}4 \) 12.e3 \( \text{d}7 \) 13.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 14.\( \text{c}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 15.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 16.gx\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}5 \) 17.f4 e6 18.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \) = Voloshin – Šmejkal, Mlada Boleslav 1994.
clear that White's opening has been a failure, Shianovsky - Suetin, Kiev 1958.

10.e3 c5 11.hxg6 hxg6 12.\texttimes h8\texttt{\textdagger} 13.\texttt{\textdagger} cxd4 14.exd4 \texttt{\textdagger} c6 15.d5 \texttt{\textdagger} d4 16.\texttt{\textdagger} ge2 This position was reached in Meister - Michaelsen, Germany 1992, and now the simple 16...\texttt{\textdagger} f5N 17.\texttt{\textdagger} d2 \texttt{\textdagger} d7 would have given Black a clear advantage.

10...c5 11.dxc5 \texttt{\textdagger} c6 12.e4 \texttt{\textdagger} e6
Black has easy play, and in the following game the absence of White's dark-squared bishop soon made itself felt.

\texttt{\textdagger} g7 10.\texttt{\textdagger} d2
White has also failed to obtain much success with other moves.

10.h6 \texttt{\textdagger} f6 11.e4 c5 12.\texttt{\textdagger} b5\texttt{\textdagger} 13.\texttt{\textdagger} c6 14.\texttt{\textdagger} cxd4 0-0 15.\texttt{\textdagger} de2 \texttt{\textdagger} d8\texttt{\textdagger} It is
This variation leads to rather irregular positions – it is not often that one encounters such a pawn structure in the early stages of the game. From the present position White has tried practically every legal move, but I only consider the following four to be worthy of serious investigation: D1) 6.\(\text{a}4\text{t}\), D2) 6.f3, D3) 6.e3 and D4) 6.\(\text{d}2\).

**D1) 6.\(\text{a}4\text{t}\)**

This move has seldom been played, but according to the database it is one of the very few options from the previous position to have yielded a score of at least 50% for White. Nevertheless if Black responds correctly he has nothing to fear.

6...\(\text{d}7\)!

The most popular reply has been 6...c6, but the text move seems like the simplest route to a good game.

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

Another game continued: 7.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 8.e3 c5 9.\(\text{e}2\)!! Wensch – Auburger, Mittelfranken 2009, and here Black could have obtained an excellent position with 9...\(\text{a}5\)\text{t}!N 10.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{a}6\)

White's position is already becoming precarious.

**D2) 6.f3**

The present position was reached in Hirn – Reitzler, Fuertth 2000, and here Black should have played a strong temporary pawn sacrifice:
This move is less than impressive, as White's centre will quickly come under fire.

6...\texttt{g7} 7.e3 \texttt{c5} 8.fxe4

8.\texttt{d2} is not much of an improvement: 8...\texttt{xf3} 9.gxf3 \texttt{cxd4} 10.exd4 (10.\texttt{xd4??} \texttt{a5\texttt{f}} Weirowski – Bornschein, Kiel 2000) 10...\texttt{c6} 11.\texttt{e3} 0–0 Black is already more comfortable in view of White's weakened kingside, Theodorakis – Gustafsson, Ano Liosia 2000.

8...\texttt{cxd4}

8...\texttt{a5\texttt{f}} is also good.

9.exd4 \texttt{wxd4} 10.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{xd4} 11.0–0–0 \texttt{c6} 12.\texttt{f3}

This position was reached in Br. Miller – G. Nunes, Sackville 2001, and here I found a modest improvement.

12.\texttt{b6N}

In the game Black opted for 12...\texttt{g7} and was doing fine, but I prefer to post the bishop on a different diagonal.

13.\texttt{e2} \texttt{e6f}?

Black's position is preferable in view of his more compact pawn structure and active prospects on the queenside.

D3) 6.e3
White's best continuation is 8.\(\text{d2}\), which transposes to variation D41 beginning with 6.\(\text{d2}\). The text move is the most significant independent try.

8...\(\text{a4}^+\)

White's best continuation is 8.\(\text{d2}\), which transposes to variation D41 beginning with 6.\(\text{d2}\). The text move is the most significant independent try.

8...\(\text{d7}\) 9.\(\text{a3}\) cxd4 10.\(\text{xd4}\)

10.exd4 \(\text{c6}\) 11.\(\text{d1}\) occurred in Granda Zuniga – Kekki, Embalse 1981, and here Black missed a strong idea in 11...a5!\(^N\) intending ...\(\text{b4}\) when it is hard to see how White completes development.

The present position was reached in Guilbert – Platel, Le Touquet 2005. At this point Black should have developed naturally by means of:

10...\(\text{c6}^N\)

This should ensure a comfortable game, as shown by the following analysis.

11.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 12.\(\text{e2}\)

I also examined: 12.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{c7}\) 13.\(\text{f4}\) (White cannot play 13.\(\text{e2}\) in view of 13...\(\text{e5}\) 14.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{g5}\) 15.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{xb2}\) winning a pawn.) 13...\(\text{b6}\) 14.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{a6}\)! 15.\(\text{xa6}\) \(\text{c3}^+\) 16.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{bxa6}\) 17.a3 \(\text{a5}\) 18.b5 \(\text{d7}\) Black has strong counterplay on the queenside.

12...\(\text{0–0}\) 13.\(\text{e1}\)

13.\(\text{e7}\)? \(\text{xb2}\) only leads to trouble for White, and 13.\(\text{0–0}\) allows 13...\(\text{d2}^!\) winning material. Therefore White has to spend time securing his queenside before completing development.

13...\(\text{e8}\) 14.\(\text{0–0}\) \(\text{d2}\) 15.\(\text{fe1}\)

15...\(\text{h6}!\)

Once again Black can take advantage of the fact that the e7-pawn is indirectly defended.

16.\(\text{h4}\)

After 16.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xb2}\) White's split queenside pawns might become weak in the long run.

16...\(\text{g5}\) 17.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{a5}\)

Black has a good game.
This has only been White’s second most popular move, although it often leads to the same positions as 6.e3. The present move order has been the most common choice amongst higher-rated players.

**6...\(\text{g7}\) 7.e3**

A frequently-played alternative is:

7.0-0-0

It looks logical to prevent \(\text{h6}\) by means of:

7...h6 8.\(\text{e}3\)

Another option is: 8.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{c6}\)! Usually it would not be a good idea to block the c-pawn, but due to the position of the white bishop it makes more sense to prepare ...e5.

9.d5 (After 9.e3 e5 10.dxe5 \(\text{dx}d2\) 11.\(\text{x}d2\) \(\text{xe}5\) Black has an excellent game.) 9...\(\text{e}5\) 10.\(\text{e}2\)

I would evaluate Black’s chances as somewhat higher in this complex middlegame.

10...0-0!N 11.\(\text{x}e5\) (11.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{f5}\)\)

11...\(\text{x}e5\) 12.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{g}7\) The powerful dark-squared bishop gives excellent compensation.

8...b5!

This energetic move enables Black to obtain promising play on the queenside.

9.\(\text{f3}\)

9.\(\text{cxb5 a6}\) gives Black a promising initiative.

9...\(\text{bxc4}\) 10.\(\text{fxe4}\)

This position was reached in Kempinski – Urban, Lubniewice 1995. At this point it looks good for Black to play:

10...\(\text{d}7\)N 11.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{b}7\) 12.e5 \(\text{b}6\)!

I would evaluate Black’s chances as somewhat higher in this complex middlegame.

7...\(\text{c5}\)

In this position White’s main options are **D41)** 8.\(\text{e}2\) and **D42)** 8.d5.
D41) 8.\(\mathit{\Delta}e2\)

8...\(\mathit{h}6\) 9.\(\mathit{\Delta}h4\) \(\mathit{cxd}4!\)

This concrete approach works well for Black, as demonstrated by the following game.

10.\(\mathit{exd}4?!\)

Recapturing with the e-pawn will make it harder for White to complete his development.

10.\(\mathit{\Delta}xd4\) would have been the lesser evil, although Black has no problems here either: 10...\(\mathit{\Delta}c6?!\)N (There is also 10...0–0 11.\(\mathit{\Delta}d1\), K. Savage – Kern, e-mail 2002, 11...\(g5\)N 12.\(\mathit{\Delta}g3\) \(\mathit{wb}6\) with unclear play.) 11.\(\mathit{\Delta}xc6\) (Too risky is 11.0–0–0?! \(\mathit{wb}6\) when the white king can hardly feel safe on the queenside.) 11...\(\mathit{\Delta}xd2\)† 12.\(\mathit{\Delta}xd2\) \(\mathit{bxc}6\) 13.\(\mathit{\Delta}c2\) \(a5\)= Black’s pressure on the long diagonal fully compensates for his structural defects.

10...0–0 11.\(d5\)

This seems to be the best way to solve the problem of the \(d4\)-pawn, but Black is well placed to meet it.

11...\(g5\) 12.\(\mathit{\Delta}g3\) \(f5!\)

This active approach is fully justified.

13.\(f4\)

13.\(\mathit{\Delta}xb8\) would have been an obvious concession, and after 13...\(\mathit{\Delta}xb8\) 14.\(\mathit{\Delta}c3\) \(\mathit{wb}6\) Black has a clear advantage.

This concrete approach works well for Black, as demonstrated by the following game.

14.\(\mathit{fxe}5\)

The alternatives are much worse, for instance 14.\(\mathit{dxe}6\) \(\mathit{wd}2\)† 15.\(\mathit{\Delta}xd2\) \(\mathit{xe}6\) 16.\(\mathit{\Delta}c3\) \(\mathit{ed}8\)† 17.\(\mathit{\Delta}c1\) \(\mathit{\Delta}c6\) and Black has a huge advantage.

14...\(f4\) 15.\(\mathit{\Delta}xf4\)

Giving up the bishop is much worse: 15.\(\mathit{\Delta}f2?\) \(e3\) 16.\(\mathit{\Delta}xc3\) \(\mathit{fxe}3\) 17.\(\mathit{\Delta}xe3\) \(\mathit{wa}5\)† 18.\(\mathit{\Delta}c3\) \(\mathit{wxf5}+\)

15...\(\mathit{gx}f4\) 16.\(\mathit{\Delta}xf4\) \(\mathit{\Delta}g4\) 17.\(h3\)

We have been following the game Golod – Khmelniker, Israel 2010, and now Black could have gained the upper hand as follows:
17...\textit{h5!N} 18.\textit{xe2}

18.e6 is unsatisfactory in view of 18...\textit{xb2}!.

18...\textit{xe2} 19.\textit{xe2} c7! 20.\textit{ac1} \textit{xe5} 21.\textit{xe6}

From a materialistic point of view the situation is more or less balanced, but the quality of Black’s position is higher. A logical continuation would be:

21.\textit{f6} 22.\textit{hfl} g6 23.g4 \textit{d7}!

Black’s extra knight is more valuable than White’s three pawns.

\textbf{D42) 8.d5}

8...\textit{b6!}

With this strong move Black forces his opponent to decide how to deal with the threat to the b2-pawn. The alternatives are weaker, for instance 8...\textit{d7} 9.\textit{e2} \textit{e5} 10.\textit{c3} f5 11.\textit{c2} and White has reasonable chances to fight for the advantage.

We will examine two responses: \textbf{D421)}, 9.0–0–0 and \textbf{D422) 9.\textit{b1}}.

\textbf{D421) 9.0–0–0}

This has been the higher-scoring of the two moves, but Black should be happy to see it.

9...\textit{a6!}

This strong move gives Black promising play on the queenside.

10.\textit{e2}

In the following game White quickly got into trouble: 10.f3?! \textit{b4} 11.\textit{b1} h6 12.\textit{h4} g5 13.\textit{g3} \textit{f5} H. Meyer – Lihtonen, corr. 1957.

10...\textit{b4!N}

This tempting idea is an obvious improvement over 10...\textit{g4} 11.a3 h6 12.\textit{f4} when the position was rather unclear in Groszpeter – Pidorozhni, Zalakaros 1999.
11.\( \text{\#c3} \text{\#g4!} \)

Exploiting the fact that a bishop exchange on e2 would leave the d3-square too weak.

12.\( \text{\#e1} \text{\#a5} \text{13.a3} \)

White has no comfortable way to defend the a2-pawn, because 13.\( \text{\#b1} \) runs into the following interesting line: 13...\( \text{\#xa2!} \) 14.\( \text{\#xe4} \text{\#b4} \text{15.\( \text{\#c3} \text{h6} \text{16.\#h4} \text{\#d8} \text{17.\#g3} \))}

17...\( \text{\#d7!} \) The bishop is heading for a4 and b3, from where it will create decisive threats. 18.\( \text{\#d3} \text{\#a4} \text{19.\#c7!} \) This is the only way to survive, but after 19...\( \text{\#xc7} \text{20.\#xa4} \text{b5!} \) White faces a powerful attack.

13...\( \text{\#xc3} \)

The bishop was a strong piece, but it is worth taking the opportunity to weaken the enemy pawns.

14.\( \text{bxc3} \text{\#d3\#!} \)

14...\( \text{\#xa3\#!} \) is less convincing: 15.\( \text{\#b2} \text{\#xb2\#!} \text{16.\#xb2} \text{\#d3\#!} \text{17.\#xd3} \text{exd3} \text{18.\#f3} \text{\#d7} \text{19.e4} \text{\#a4} \text{20.\#a1 \#c2} \text{21.\#a5 \#d7} \text{22.\#xc5 a6 23.\#c3} \text{\#hc8} \text{24.\#xc8 \#xc8} \text{25.c5} \) White is OK.

15.\( \text{\#xd3} \text{exd3} \)

Black has the advantage.

D422) 9.\( \text{\#b1} \)

This is a more reliable continuation, but it is not particularly threatening.

9...\( \text{\#d7} \text{10.\#e2 \#e5} \text{11.\#c3 h6} \)

I like the idea of driving the bishop away from the h4-d8 diagonal in order to remove
the pressure on the e7-pawn. Another idea is 11...f5 12.e2 d7 13.0-0 f6 with an unclear position.

12.h4 g5 13.g3 f5 14.e2

14...g6?!N

This is my new idea. 14...0-0 was played in Golod – Fercec, Rijeka 2010, but here I am slightly worried by 15.h4N when White might obtain some attacking chances.

15.0-0

If White refrains from this move, for instance with 15.h4?! then he will have to deal with the consequences of 15...f3†! 16.gxf3 exf3 when Black has good chances to take over the initiative.

15...0-0

Black is not yet ready to embark on a kingside offensive with 15...h5?! in view of 16.b4! cxb4 17.b5† when White is better.

16.b4 cxb4

16...f3†? would be a mistake due to 17.gxf3 exf3 18.xf3 xc3 19.xc3 xb1 20.xc5 when White has excellent compensation for the exchange.

17.xb4 b6 18.b5

18...h5!

This is the correct moment for Black to commence his kingside counterplay.

19.xe5

19.h3 h4 20.xe5 xexe5 21.e1 ffd8 leads to similar play.

19...xe5 20.a4 d7 21.a5 h4

Black’s chances are not worse in this complicated position.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have dealt with all of White’s sensible options after 4.g5 e4 which do not involve retreating his bishop. The rare options of A) 5.f3 and B) 5.h4 should not cause Black too much concern, although the latter is not a bad move at all. The temporary piece sacrifice C) 5.cxd5 is tricky, but we saw that Black’s bishop pair should stand him in excellent stead.

Of the four options examined in the present chapter, variation D with 5.xe4 dxe4 is by far the most significant. The resulting positions with doubled e-pawns are a bit irregular, but we saw that in most lines Black can obtain good counterplay by means of an early ...c5, making full use of the Grünfeld bishop.
4. \( \text{g}5 \)

5. \( \text{f}4 \)

**Variation Index**

1. \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 2. \( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 3. \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 4. \( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{e}4 \) 5. \( \text{f}4 \)

5... \( \text{xc}3 \) 6. \( \text{bxc}3 \) \( \text{g}7 \) 7. \( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 8. \( \text{f}3 \) 0–0

A) 9. \( \text{b}1 \)
B) 9. \( \text{b}3 \)
C) 9. \( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{xd}4 \) 10. \( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 11. \( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 12.0–0 \( \text{f}5 \) 13. \( \text{a}4 \) \( \text{a}5 \)

C1) 14. \( \text{xa}5 \)
C2) 14. \( \text{b}3 \)

note to 7.\( \text{c}3 \)

A) after 16. \( \text{b}4 \)

C2) note to 16. \( \text{c}4 \)

8... \( \text{a}5! \)

16... \( \text{d}5! \)

20... \( \text{xd}4!! \)
Chapter 19 – 5.\f4

1.d4 \f6 2.c4 g6 3.\c3 d5 4.\g5 \e4
5.\f4

This variation has been tested in numerous high-level games.

5...\x3c3 6.bxc3 \g7

It is important to understand that in the present position Black should avoid 6...dxc4?!, as in that case the white bishop will be much more effective on d4 than h4. White has at least two good replies:

a) 7.\a4t \d7 (or 7...c6 8.\xc4 \g7 9.\f3) 8.\xc4. Compared with the 5.\h4 variation Black has no time for ...b6 followed by ...\a6 as the c7-pawn is hanging.

b) White can also play 7.e3 \e6 8.\lb1 and once again Black cannot continue in the same way as in the 5.\h4 variation, as there is no time for the ...\d7-b6 manoeuvre due to the vulnerable c7-pawn.

7.e3

This is the usual continuation, but there are some minor options as well.

7.\f3 c5 usually transposes to a main line, for instance 8.cxd5 (8.e3 transposes immediately) 8...\xb5d5 9.e3 \xd4 10.cxd4 \c6 11.\e2 0–0 and we have reached the main position after move 11 in variation C below.

7.cxd5 \bxd5 8.\b3 (8.e3 c5 transposes to the main line.) So far in all games Black has gone for the queen exchange, but a much more purposeful idea would have been:

8...\a5!N The queen exerts useful pressure along the a5-e1 diagonal. 9.e3 0–0 10.\f3 c5 11.\c4 (11.\c2 \e6! is nice for Black, and illustrates another point behind avoiding the queen exchange.) 11...\xd4 12.exd4 When White recaptures with the e-pawn instead of the c-pawn, it practically ensures Black of a good game. 12...\c6 13.0–0 \f5! White must deal with the attack on the bishop, after which ...\a5 will eliminate his light-squared bishop.

7.\a4t \d7 8.\a5 is not dangerous for Black. The simplest solution seems to be:

8...c5! 9.\xe5?!! This natural move gives Black chances to fight for the initiative. (Safer would have been 9.dxe5N \xc4 10.\f3 \c6 11.\c5 \c7 12.\xe7 \xe7 although Black...
is comfortably equal here.) 9...c6! 10...xd5 cxd5 11...dxe5 c7 12...d3 c6 13...a5 xf3 14...xf3 xe5² Despite being a pawn down it is Black who has the upper hand, Anastasian – Wu Wenjin, Dubai 2005.

7...c5 8...d3
8.cxd5 cxd4 9.cxd4 ...xd5 10...d3 is just another way of reaching the main line.

12...a5†! This timely check enables Black to solve his problems easily. 13...d2 This was Anastasian – Mirumian, Yerevan 1996, and now the simplest route to equality would have been 13...f5N 14.0–0 ...xd2 15...xd2 e5 16...xe5 xe5 when Black is fine.

9...e2 dxc4
Black is happy to make this exchange now that White must move his bishop for the second time.

9...e2 dxc4 10...e1 B) 9...b3 and C) 9...xd5 in detail, after first considering a few of White’s minor options.

9...b3 cannot pose any problems; the following is one good example: 9...xe5 10...xe5 c6 11...xc6 bxc6 12...a4 ...a6 13...a3 This position occurred in Wu Wenjin – Huzman, Moscow 2004, and now the simple 13...cxd4N 14...d4 ...b8 15...d3 ...b2 16...xb2 ...xb2 leads to a position in which only Black can be better.

9...e1 B) 9...e2 (10...xd5 ...xd5 11.c4? does not work in view of 11...d8 12.d5 ...a5†! 13...d2 ...e4 when Black is clearly better, as shown in the following game: 14...e5 ...xa2 15...xg7 ...xd2† 16...xd2 ...xg7² Bernei – Nogrady, Kobanya 1996.) 10...xc4 11...xc4 cxd4 12...xd4

I also examined: 13...a4 a6! Black should have no qualms about sacrificing the c5-pawn. 14...xc5 ...a5! Black regains his pawn and White will have nothing to make up for his damaged pawn structure. 15...b3 ...xc5 16...xf7†? White was already worse, but this
was hardly the way to solve his problems. 16...\texttt{Exf7} 17.\texttt{Qg5} \texttt{Qc8} 18.\texttt{Qxf7} \texttt{Qxf7}
Black emerged with a winning position in Balcerowski – Gligoric, Moscow 1963.
13...\texttt{cxd4} 14.\texttt{exd4}
This was the idea behind putting the rook on the e-file, although we already know that this pawn structure is unlikely to cause us any problems.
Alternatively after 14.\texttt{cxd4} \texttt{Qe4} 15.\texttt{h3} \texttt{Qa5} 16.\texttt{Qe2} \texttt{Qd7} Black is fine.
14...\texttt{Qd7} 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{a6}
Black is doing well, Gligoric – Olafsson, Bled 1961.

A) 9.\texttt{Qb1}

Both this and line B share a common idea: White delays the development of his light-squared bishop, hoping to save time by recapturing on c4 in one move rather than two. As we will see, Black is well-placed to counter this plan.

9...\texttt{Qc6} 10.\texttt{Qe2}
Another idea is:
10.\texttt{Qa4}
White is waiting for his opponent to release the tension in the centre, but Black has another useful move available.
10...\texttt{a6}!

I only found one game from this position, which continued as follows:
11.\texttt{Qa3} \texttt{cxd4} 12.\texttt{cxd4} \texttt{dxc4} 13.\texttt{Qxc4} \texttt{Qf5}!
14.\texttt{Qc1}
14.\texttt{Qxb7} could have been met by 14...\texttt{Qa5}!
15.\texttt{Qxa5} \texttt{Qxa5} 16.\texttt{Qc7} \texttt{Qxc4} 17.\texttt{Qxc4} \texttt{Qfc8}
18.\texttt{Qxc8}+ \texttt{Qxc8} 19.0–0 \texttt{Qe7} when Black's bishop pair gives him fantastic compensation for the pawn.
14...\texttt{Qa5}+ 15.\texttt{Qxa5} \texttt{Qxa5} 16.\texttt{Qb3} \texttt{Qxb3}
17.\texttt{Qxb3} \texttt{Qac8} 18.\texttt{Qd2}
Fernandez Garcia – Quintero Torres, Madrid 1999. Now the most logical continuation would have been:

18...\texttt{Qe4}N 19.\texttt{Qc7} \texttt{f6}
Black's bishop pair offers him slightly better chances.

10...\texttt{dxc4} 11.\texttt{Qxc4}
11...\texttt{\textnumero}f5!
Winning an important tempo.

12.\texttt{\textnumero}b5
After 12.\texttt{\textnumero}xb7? \texttt{\textnumero}a5 13.\texttt{\textnumero}c7 \texttt{\textnumero}c8 White loses the exchange.

12...\texttt{\textnumero}a5!?
12...\texttt{cxd4}N 13.\texttt{cxd4} \texttt{\textnumero}c8 is also nice for Black.

13.\texttt{\textnumero}c2
Presumably White was not satisfied with the position arising after 13.\texttt{\textnumero}xc5 \texttt{\textnumero}xc4 14.\texttt{\textnumero}xc4 \texttt{\textnumero}c8 15.\texttt{\textnumero}xc8 \texttt{\textnumero}xc8 16.\texttt{\textnumero}b3 \texttt{\textnumero}d3!. Indeed, in the long run the exposed position of White's king should eventually tell. Nevertheless the game continuation is also pleasant for Black.

13...\texttt{cxd4} 14.\texttt{cxd4} \texttt{\textnumero}c8 15.0-0 a6 16.\texttt{\textnumero}b4
We have been following the game Kraus – Vydeslaver, Budapest 1992. At this point the best continuation would have been:

16...\texttt{\textnumero}d5!N
Black has achieved everything he could wish for in the Grünfeld. The b4-rook is misplaced, and it is obvious that White's strategy beginning with 9.\texttt{\textnumero}b1 has been an abject failure.

B) 9.\texttt{\textnumero}b3

This is another way in which White can attempt to save time by developing his lightsquared bishop to c4 in one move. However, we will soon see that the present idea suffers from its own drawbacks.

9...\texttt{cxd4}! 10.\texttt{exd4}

My personal opinion is that White can almost never hope for an advantage with the hanging-pawn structure against the Grünfeld. However, in this position the otherwise desirable 10.\texttt{cxd4} runs into the disruptive 10...\texttt{\textnumero}a5†! when White will have to spend valuable time arranging casting: 11.\texttt{\textnumero}d2 \texttt{dxc4} 12.\texttt{\textnumero}xc4

Now in Shahisavandi – Struiges, Ladenburg 1992, Black missed the strong idea of 12...\texttt{\textnumero}d7N 13.\texttt{\textnumero}d1 \texttt{\textnumero}b6 with comfortable
play, for instance 14.0-0 $g4 15.f3 $d7 16.$b2 $xc4 17.$xc4 $b5 and Black's bishop pair offers him a slight plus.

10...$c6 11.cxd5 $a5 12.$a4

12.$b5 was played in Versporten - Deman, Gent 2000, and here the best continuation would have been:

12...a6!N 13.$c5 b6 14.$b4 $b7 15.c4 e6!† Black has the initiative, thanks to his better development.

12...$xd5 13.$e2 $d7 14.$b4

Frih - Stephan, France 2008. Now it looks promising for Black to play:

14...$a6!N 15.0-0 $e4! 16.$xe7 $fe8 17.$xc4 $xe4

Black has nice compensation, for example:

18.$a3 $ec8 19.$fc1 $f5 20.$e3 $c6 21.$d2 $a4 22.$b2 $b6

With two excellent bishops, a sounder pawn structure and active major pieces, Black has every reason to feel optimistic.

C) 9.cxd5

This is the main line.

9...$xd4 10.cxd4 $xd5 11.$e2

Alternatives have seldom been seen. One example that is worth mentioning briefly is 11.$d2 $f5 12.$c1, as played in Berezhnoi - Silakov, Rostov on Don 1975. At this point I believe Black should have continued in the spirit of the main line with: 12...$c6!N 13.$e2 (13.c4 can be met comfortably by 13...$a5.) 13...$ac8 14.0-0 (14.$c5 $d7 is not dangerous, for instance 15.0-0 $b6 16.$xc1 $e5 and Black is already slightly better.) 14...$a5 15.$xa5 $xa5 The endgame is equal.

11...$c6 12.0-0 $f5

The $f5-square is generally the best home for the light-squared bishop in the present variation.

13.$a4

This is the main continuation, but it is worth checking the numerous alternatives which have been tried.
Firstly, it is important to understand that 13.\textit{Q}d2, which works well in the analogous position with the bishop on h4, is not so strong here in view of: 13...\textit{e}5!N Strangely, in the only two games on the database Black refrained from this logical move. 14.\textit{f}3

14...\textit{d}7?! With this ambitious move Black attempts to fight for the advantage. (Alternatively 14...\textit{b}5 15.\textit{x}c6 \textit{bxc6} 16.\textit{x}e5 \textit{xe}5 is just equal.) 15.\textit{xc6} \textit{xc6} 16.\textit{xe}5 (After 16.\textit{dxe5} \textit{f}d8 the evaluation is similar.) 16...\textit{xe}5 17.\textit{dxe5} \textit{f}d8 Black has a great game, and will easily regain his pawn with the imminent ...\textit{e}6.

13.\textit{b}3 \textit{x}b3 14.axb3 This type of endgame holds no dangers for Black.

14...a6?!N I like this prophylactic move, which allows the a8-rook to enter the game. (Black has achieved excellent results with 14...\textit{f}c8 as well.) 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{ac8} Black has no problems.

13.a3 Taking control over the b4-square is not a bad idea for White. 13...\textit{ac8} 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{a}5 This is my preferred reaction; it looks logical to eye the b3-square, as well as the a3-pawn after a future knight jump to c4.

15.\textit{d}2?! After this unfortunate move the initiative passes to Black. (White should have played 15.\textit{a}4N after which 15...\textit{e}4 16.\textit{b}4 \textit{f}6 reaches a roughly equal position.) 15...\textit{x}c1 16.\textit{xc1} \textit{c}8 Having taken over the c-file Black stands clearly better, Nistri – Albesa, e-mail 2007.

13.\textit{c}1

This pawn sacrifice has been tried in two blitz games. White won both of them, but Black’s play can easily be improved.

13...\textit{xa}2 14.\textit{c}4

The more active 14.d5?! occurred in Anand – Wolff, New York (blitz) 1993, but it was not a good idea, as after the natural 14...\textit{ad}8N
Chapter 19 – 5.\textit{g}f4

15.\textit{c}4 \textit{w}a3 16.\textit{w}e2 \textit{d}a5 17.\textit{c}4 \textit{g}4 Black is clearly better.
14...\textit{w}a3 15.\textit{w}e2
This position occurred in the game Gofshtein – Casella, Internet (blitz) 2000, and here Black should have played:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[thick] (0,0) -- (8,8); \draw[thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw[thick] (1,1) -- (7,7);
\draw[thick] (2,2) -- (6,6);
\draw[thick] (3,3) -- (5,5);
\draw[thick] (4,4);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

15...\textit{B}ac8\textsuperscript{N}
This natural move improves on the somewhat strange 15...\textit{B}ad8 as occurred in the game.
16.\textit{B}a1
I do not see any other way for White to create problems for his opponent.
16...\textit{B}b4 17.\textit{d}d3 \textit{x}d3 18.\textit{B}xd3 \textit{e}6 19.\textit{x}b1 \textit{e}7
White has some compensation for the pawn, but the most he can realistically hope for is equality.

13.\textit{h}h4 \textit{c}8\textsuperscript{!!}
This slightly surprising move, with its tacit draw offer, makes a good deal of sense. The point is that if White does not intend to offer a repetition with 14.\textit{f}f3, then he will have to address the threat of ...\textit{g}5, winning a piece. The most natural way to meet this challenge would be to play \textit{B}b1, after which ...\textit{g}5 can be met by \textit{B}b5. In view of this, Black anticipates the attack on the b7-pawn.
Nevertheless, if Black prefers not to allow a repetition then 13...\textit{d}d7 is a reasonable alternative, and after 14.\textit{B}b1 as played in R. Garcia – Lujan, Buenos Aires 2002,

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[thick] (0,0) -- (8,8); \draw[thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw[thick] (1,1) -- (7,7);
\draw[thick] (2,2) -- (6,6);
\draw[thick] (3,3) -- (5,5);
\draw[thick] (4,4);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Black can play 14...\textit{b}6\textsuperscript{N} with a reasonable position.
14.\textit{B}a4
Other moves are also not dangerous.
14.\textit{B}b3 \textit{x}b3 15.axb3 \textit{e}6 is comfortable for Black.
14.\textit{B}b1 can be met by 14...\textit{B}xa2, and with the b7-pawn defended, White will have to work hard to demonstrate compensation.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[thick] (0,0) -- (8,8); \draw[thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw[thick] (1,1) -- (7,7);
\draw[thick] (2,2) -- (6,6);
\draw[thick] (3,3) -- (5,5);
\draw[thick] (4,4);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

14...\textit{B}xd4!
This clever tactical idea is based on the disharmony of White's minor pieces.
15.exd4 \textit{e}4 16.\textit{B}xg6! \textit{hxg6}
Ftacnik's 16...\textit{fxg6}\textsuperscript{?} also looks decent.
17.\textit{e}3 \textit{g}4!
The exchange of light-squared bishops enables Black to maintain a balanced position.
18.\textit{x}g4 \textit{x}g4 19.\textit{a}c1
This position occurred in Zvjaginsev – Leko, Tilburg 1998, and now the most accurate continuation would have been:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[thick] (0,0) -- (8,8); \draw[thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw[thick] (1,1) -- (7,7);
\draw[thick] (2,2) -- (6,6);
\draw[thick] (3,3) -- (5,5);
\draw[thick] (4,4);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
19...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}e4}\textcolor{black}{\textit{N}} 20.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}fe1 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}fd8
With easy equality.

13...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}a5
There is nothing wrong with 13...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}ac8, but the text move is Black's first choice according to theory. From this position White can choose between removing the queens with C1) 14.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}xa5 and keeping them on the board with C2) 14.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}b3.

C1) 14.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}xa5
Of the two continuations, this is the slightly less challenging option.

14...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xa5

15.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}fc1
This has been White's usual choice. The alternatives are harmless, for instance:

15.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c7 is best met by 15...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c6 followed by a rook to the c-file, rather than 15...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b6? which weakens the queenside and gives White the option of \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}a6 to control the c-file.

15.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}acl \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}fc8 16.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}e5 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}e6! Attacking the a2-pawn. 17.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}d3

17...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}d5 (It is understandable that Black preferred to refrain from 17...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xa2?!N 18.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}a1 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c2 19.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}f3, even though 19...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b3 20.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b4 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xa1 21.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xa1 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}ac8! should enable him to maintain the balance.) 18.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c5 (In the event of 18.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b4 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c4 19.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xc4 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}xc4 20.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}d5 e6 Black has no problems.) 18...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}e6 The position was equal in Loginov – Turov, Bor 2000.

15...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}fc8 16.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}f1
Another game continued 16.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}d2 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}e6 17.a3 \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}d5 18.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b5, Novikov – Ulko, Moscow 1995, and now 18...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}e6N intending ...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}f8 would have maintained equality.

16...\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c6
Black is trying to activate his knight via the b4-square.

17.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{W}}}e1
White played inaccurately in the following encounter: 17.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}c3?! \textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b4 18.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b3 a5 19.\textit{\textcolor{black}{\textit{B}}}b2
Shaposhnikov – Shipov, Internet (rapid) 2002, and here Black could have obtained some initiative by means of:

19...b6!N 20.a3 \d5 21.\g3 \c3↑ Black's control over the c-file gives him some advantage.

17...\f8
Also worthy of consideration was 17...\b4!?N 18.\d2 \d5 19.\g3 \f6!? intending to jump to e4.

18.a3
Preventing any ...\b4 ideas, but the a3-pawn might eventually become a target for Black's dark-squared bishop.

18...\a5
White's last move weakened the b3-square.

19.\d2 \c2=

C2) 14.\b3

14...\b4
Once again the queen exchange suits Black just fine.

15.\f1
This is generally considered the best try. Also possible is:

15.\c4
This leads to similar positions to the main line.

15...\xb3 16.axb3 a6
It is always useful to free the rook from the defence of the a7-pawn.

17.\c7
17.\fc1 reaches the note to White's 17th move in the main line below.

17...\ac8 18.\b6
18...e5!
Now that White’s dark-squared bishop has vacated the h2-b8 diagonal, this central break becomes possible.
19.h3 exd4 20.exd4
This position occurred in Boensch – Holzke, Germany 2004. At this point Black’s play can be improved with:

![Diagram]

20...e4N
This leads to easy equality, for instance:
21...ad1
21...g5 c2 leaves White nothing better than 22.f3 e4 with a repetition. The attempt to play more ambitiously with 22.c5?! only leads to trouble after 22...xd4 23.xf8 xa1 24.h6 g7 25.xf7+ h8 when Black stands slightly better.
21...xf3 22.gxf3 b8 23...fe1 d7 24.a5 fe8=
The position is equal, as Black can easily blockade his opponent’s passed pawn.

![Diagram]

20...a6!
This move has only been played in two games, but both of them involved Peter Svidler, one of the greatest Grunfeld experts in the world.
The main theoretical continuation is 15...ac8, but it seems to me that after 16.c4 xb3 17.axb3 a6 18.d5 White can develop some pressure.
16.c4
This was an attempt to improve over the following game:
16.h3 ac8 17.g4 e4 18.d1
This position was reached in Vallejo Pons – Svidler, Dresden (ol) 2008, and here I found a nice idea:

![Diagram]

18...a3!N
Preventing a2-a3. This easily solves Black’s problems, while also setting a devious trap.
19.d2
19.b3 xb3 20.axb3 b4 is equal.
19...d5 20.c4?
This natural move meets with a stunning refutation.
The best continuation is 20.c4 xc4 21.xc4 e5 22.dxe5 xex5! 23.a4 e7 when Black is fine.
20...xd4!! 21.exd4
Or 21.xd5 xc1 22.xc1 xc1! 23.xc1 e2+ with a decisive material advantage.
21...xc4! 22.xc4
22.c4 xc4 wins easily.
22...xh3 23.f3
23...b5! 24.axb5 axb5 25.b3
White can allow his rook to be captured, but then he will just be a pawn down with a miserable position.

25...\texttt{xd4t} 26.
26.e3 \texttt{xb3--}
26...e5
Black is winning.

16...\texttt{xb3} 17.\texttt{xb3}
17.axb3 transposes to Spassov – Lopez Martinez, Salou 2009. At this point it was necessary to play 17...\texttt{b4!N} taking control over the d5-square, when Black is fine. Instead 17...\texttt{d7?!} allowed 18.\texttt{d5!} c6 19.\texttt{e4=} when White had some pressure.

17...\texttt{ac8} 18.\texttt{d5} \texttt{a5}
There is a playable alternative in 18...\texttt{fd8!!N} 19.\texttt{xc6 bxc6} 20.\texttt{e5} \texttt{d5!} 21.\texttt{ac1} f6! when Black is not worse, as his bishop pair makes up for his weakened queenside structure, and 22.\texttt{xc6? xxc6} 23.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{a5} is better for Black.

19.\texttt{e5}
The inaccurate 19.\texttt{d2?!} allows the tactical idea 19...\texttt{cd8} 20.\texttt{f3} e5! and Black is better.

19...\texttt{xe5}
Usually Black will not wish to exchange his Grünfeld bishop for a knight, but in simplified positions such as the present one, the idea can work well.

20.\texttt{xe5}
At this point the game Eljanov – Svidler, Bundesliga 2009, was agreed drawn, but it is worth considering how the game might have continued. At this point my preferred continuation would be:

20...\texttt{e6!!N} 21.\texttt{d1}
After 21.\texttt{xe6} fxe6 Black’s doubled pawns are not weak, and White runs the risk of ending up with a bad bishop against a good knight.

21...\texttt{xc1+}
Another idea is 21...b5 22.d5 \texttt{d7} when the strong outpost on c4 should be enough to compensate for White’s bishop pair.
22.\texttt{Exc1 }\texttt{Axa2 23.\texttt{Ec7}}

23.\texttt{Ea1?} is met by 23...\texttt{Ec8} when the weakness of the first rank gives Black time to prepare ...\texttt{Ec2} next.

From here I do not see anything better for White than regaining his pawn:

24.\texttt{Exb7} \texttt{Dxb7 25.\texttt{Exb7}}

It is hard to see this opposite-coloured bishop endgame finishing in anything other than a draw.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The system beginning with 5.\texttt{Eh4} is a sensible try which has been tested in numerous high-level games. Following the usual sequence of 5...\texttt{Dxc3} 6.\texttt{bxc3 Eg7} 7.\texttt{e3 c5 8.Ef3 0-0}, we investigated three main moves. Attempting to save time with either A) 9.\texttt{Eb1} or B) 9.\texttt{Eb3} leads nowhere for White, so the main line of C) 9.\texttt{cxd5 cxd4 10.cxd4 Dwxd5 11.Ee2 Dc6 12.0-0} is critical. Then after 12...\texttt{Df5} 13.\texttt{Dd4} \texttt{Da5} both C1) 14.\texttt{Dxa5} and C2) 14.\texttt{Dd3} lead to roughly similar situations without queens. The latter is considered slightly more challenging, but according to the above analysis Black should experience no particular problems. In all these lines his position remains fundamentally sound, with considerable dynamic potential, as illustrated by lines such as the note to White's 16th move in line C2.
Chapter 20

4. g5

5. h4 – Sidelines

Variation Index

1. d4 f6 2. c4 g6 3. c3 d5 4. g5 e4 5. h4

5... dxc3 6. bxc3 dxc4

A) 7. e4?!
B) 7. a4†

A) after 12. hfl

B) note to 12. e3

B) after 12. e3

12... d5!N

13... e6N

12... cxd4!N
Finally we arrive at White's most popular option on the fifth move.

5...\( \text{dxc3} \) 6.bxc3 dxc4
Capturing the c4-pawn works better against the bishop on h4 compared with f4. Now we will consider the rare and dubious A) 7.e4?!., followed by the more interesting B) 7.\( \text{a4} \). The main line of 7.e3 will be handled in the following three chapters.

A) 7.e4?!

This move cannot work properly when the h4-bishop is so far away from the defence of the d4-pawn.
This is an important alternative, and a speciality of the Greek grandmaster Efstratios Grivas.

7...\(\text{W}d7\)

This is the main line, and my preferred choice. The minor pieces have more appealing squares than \(d7\) available.

8.\(\text{W}x\text{c}4\) \(\text{b}6\)!

This is an important resource. Black intends to exploit the slightly vulnerable position of White's queen by winning a tempo with ...\(\text{W}a6\).

9.\(\text{W}g3\)?

It is this move which gives the present variation an independent character. In the event of 9.\(\text{W}f3\) \(\text{a}6\) 10.\(\text{W}b3\) \(\text{g}7\) 11.e3 the play transposes to line B22 of Chapter 25, beginning with 4.\(\text{W}f3\).

9...\(\text{c}5\) 10.\(\text{W}e5\)

Again 10.\(\text{W}f3\) \(\text{g}7\) reaches Chapter 25.

10...\(\text{f}6\)

With this move Black hopes to exploit his bishop pair later in the game. 10...\(\text{a}6\) looks tempting, but after 11.\(\text{W}b3\) \(\text{f}6\) 12.\(\text{W}x\text{b}8\) \(\text{W}x\text{b}8\)

13.\(\text{f}3\) White will soon be able to exchange the light-squared bishops – a definite achievement for him.

11.\(\text{W}x\text{b}8\) \(\text{W}x\text{b}8\)

This is my main recommendation, but it is worth pointing out that Black has a solid alternative available: 11...\(\text{b}5\)? 12.\(\text{W}b3\) (Black would have excellent compensation after 12.\(\text{W}x\text{c}5\) \(\text{W}x\text{b}8\) 13.\(\text{W}b4\) \(\text{e}5\) 14.\(\text{W}b2\) exd4 15.cxd4 \(\text{W}c7\) 16.a4 \(\text{a}6\) 17.\(\text{e}2\) 0–0 18.0–0 \(\text{f}5\) The position is roughly equal, Postny – Kurnosov, Evora 2007.

12.\(\text{e}3\)

White has also tried:

12.\(\text{W}f3\) cxd4 13.cxd4

Malakhatko – Stephan, Gibraltar 2010. In this position I found the following idea:

10.\(\text{f}6\)

With this move Black hopes to exploit his bishop pair later in the game. 10...\(\text{a}6\) looks tempting, but after 11.\(\text{W}b3\) \(\text{f}6\) 12.\(\text{W}x\text{b}8\) \(\text{W}x\text{b}8\)
13...e6N 14.e3 a5!
Intending a check on b4, which should offer Black nice play as shown by the following lines:
15...d3
15...d2  f7 (15...b7??) 16.e2 b4 17.d3 (After 17.a3 xd2 18.xd2 b7 intending ...hcd8 Black's position is preferable.) 17.b7 18.0-0 hcd8 Black has a nice game.
15...b4+ 16.e2 b5 17.d3 b7 18.hcd1 0-0 19.a3 d5 20.b2 hcd7
The position is complicated, but it seems to me that the bishop pair and queenside pawn majority gives Black the upper hand.

12...cxd4!N
This is an important improvement over the following game: 12.b7 13.b3 cxd4 14.cxd4 e6?! (14...a6 was necessary) 15.b5 c6 16.xc6 xc6 17.e2 f7 18.0-0+
Following the exchange of light-squared bishops White had the better chances in Hillarp Persson - Grandelius, Stockholm 2009.

13.cxd4 e6 14.b3
14.f3 a5! transposes to 12.f3 above.

14...d5!
The queen exchange works well for Black in this line.

15.b5+ f7 16.xd5 exd5
Black has one extra pawn island, but the d5-pawn is not really weak. A more significant factor is Black's bishop pair, which could become a powerful force in the endgame.

17.0-1

17...a6?!
17...d6 is fine, but Black can even allow the rook to come to c7 temporarily.

18.c7+ e6 19.d3 d7
Black will soon chase the rook away with ...d6, and his bishop pair promises him the better chances.

Conclusion

In this short chapter we have examined two rare lines. A) 7.e4?! is just a mistake which allows Black to develop strong pressure against White's pawn centre. B) 7.a4† is more significant, especially as Black must keep in mind the possibility of a transposition to Chapter 25. Fortunately we saw that, in the cases where White attempts to derive independent value from the early queen check, Black has at least enough resources to maintain the balance, and quite possibly fight for the advantage.
4. \( \text{g5} \)

7.e3 – Sidelines

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \text{f6} \) 2.c4 \( \text{g6} \) 3.e3 d5 4.\( \text{g5} \) \( \text{h4} \) \( \text{xc3} \) 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3

7...\( \text{e6} \)

A) 8.\( \text{h3} \) 260
B) 8.\( \text{c2} \) 261
C) 8.\( \text{b1} \) c5! 9.xb7 \( \text{d5} \) 10.b5\( \text{d7} \) 11.b1 \( \text{xb5} \) 12.xb5 \( \text{d7} \) 262
   C1) 13.\( \text{f3} \) 263
   C2) 13.\( \text{c2} \) 264

A) after 12.\( \text{xc4} \)

C) note to 9.\( \text{xb7} \)

C1) after 18.\( \text{g3} \)

A...\( \text{g2} \)!N

12...\( \text{f6} \)!N

18...\( \text{f5} \)!N
1.d4⇧f6 2.c4 g6 3.⇧c3 d5 4.⇧g5⇧e4 5.⇧h4⇧xc3 6.bxc3 dxe4 7.e3

7...⇧e6
This is a key move in Black’s strategy. Black may not be able to keep his extra pawn indefinitely, but he can force White to waste time regaining it.

From this important tabiya White has tried several moves. The two most important options of 8.⇧b1 and 8.⇧f3 will be covered in Chapters 22 and 23 respectively. In the present chapter we will consider the alternatives of A) 8.⇧h3, B) 8.⇧c2 and C) 8.⇧b1.

8.⇧c2 ⇧h6! This important move is directed against the idea of ⇧f4. 9.⇧g3

9...0–0 (The immediate 9...c5?!N also comes into consideration.) 10.⇧f4 ⇧xf4 11.⇧xf4 c5 12.⇧e2 cxd4 13.exd4 Manor – Groszpeter, Haifa 1989. Now the simple 13...⇧a5N 14.⇧d2 ⇧d7 15.0–0 ⇧f6? would have led to a position in which White does not have sufficient compensation for the pawn.

A) 8.⇧h3

This move has seldom been seen, but it is not without merit. White’s idea is to attack the light-squared bishop with ⇧f4 or ⇧g5.

8...⇧h6!
This move works well, just as it did against 8.⇧c2.

It is worth pointing out that Black should refrain from 8...⇧xh3, as after 9.gxh3 ⇧d5 10.⇧g1 White’s light-squared bishop comes into the game with a lot of power.

9.⇧g5 ⇧d5 10.e4
If White delays taking action then Black will drive the knight away with ...f6.

10...⇧xg5 11.⇧xg5 ⇧xe4 12.⇧xc4
This position occurred in Schlehoefer – Kurz, Germany 1987, and here Black could have safely eaten a second pawn:
Black has a decisive attack, with ...\( \mathcal{E}e5 \) coming next.

### B) 8.\( \mathcal{E}e2 \)

8...\( \mathcal{E}g7 \) 9.\( \mathcal{A}b1 \)

This is an independent try. The more popular 9.\( \mathcal{A}f3 \) reaches line A of Chapter 23.

9...\( \mathcal{D}d7? N \)

I decided to analyze this as yet untested move. I must stress that there is also nothing wrong with 9...b6, after which 10.\( \mathcal{A}f3 \) 0–0 reaches line C3 of Chapter 23.

10.\( \mathcal{A}f3 \)

Once again, 10.\( \mathcal{A}f3 \) \( \mathcal{A}b6 \) is a transposition, this time to line C2 of Chapter 22.

10...\( \mathcal{A}b8 \)

Objectively White should prefer 15.\( \mathcal{A}h6 \), but after 15...e6 16.\( \mathcal{A}xf8 \) \( \mathcal{W}xf8+ \) Black reaches a stable position with two pawns for the exchange and a better pawn structure.

12...\( \mathcal{D}xg2! N \) 13.\( \mathcal{A}b3 \)

13.\( \mathcal{A}g1 \) \( \mathcal{D}d5 \) leaves White without much compensation.

13...0–0 14.\( \mathcal{A}g1 \) \( \mathcal{A}c6 \) 15.d5?!

This looks critical, but it turns out that Black can refute it.

15...b5! 16.dxc6 bxc4 17.\( \mathcal{B}b7 \)

Nothing else can cause Black any problems.

17...\( \mathcal{W}d6! \) 18.\( \mathcal{A}xa8 \) \( \mathcal{A}xc6 \) 19.\( \mathcal{A}b7 \) \( \mathcal{B}b8 \) 20.\( \mathcal{A}a6 \) \( \mathcal{W}xh2 \)
11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xb7}
\textnormal{11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}e2 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b6}} is fine for Black.}

11...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xb7} 12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xb7} c5 13.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}e2} cxd4
14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xd4}
\textnormal{After 14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xd4} 0-0 15.0-0 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}f6} 16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}g3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}a5}
Black has a solid position with equal chances.}

14...g5!?
\textnormal{This is my preferred solution, exploiting the fact that taking on \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}g5} would cost White his bishop.}

15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}g3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}f5} 16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}c3}
\textnormal{After 16.0-0?! \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b6} 17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d5} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d3}
Black has the initiative.}

16...0-0 17.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}c4} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xe4} 18.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xe4}

18...e5!
\textnormal{With this dynamic move Black maintains enough activity to offset his minor pawn weaknesses.}

19.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xe5} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xe5} 20.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xd8} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xd8} 21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}e2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b8}
\textnormal{Black is not worse in the endgame.}

C) 8.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b1}

8...c5!
\textnormal{With this great solution, Black returns his extra pawn but gets a lot of activity. The alternative 8...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d5} has been tested in several top-level games, but it seems to me that White has reasonable chances to fight for the advantage against that line.}

9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xb7}
\textnormal{In one game White tried taking a different pawn:}
9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b5} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}c6} 10.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xc5}
\textnormal{But Black found a strong reply:}
10...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}b6}! 11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}xb6}
\textnormal{Black has a nice game after 11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}a3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d5}
12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}f3} c5 13.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}c1} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}g7} followed by ...0-0.
11...axb6 12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}h3}
12.e4?! looks premature, since after 12...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}g7}
13.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}a3} 14.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}e2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{B}}d7!}, intending ...b5-b4, Black has clearly better chances.
Black's light-squared bishop is a key piece which should be safeguarded. This is an important improvement over 12...b5 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}4\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}3\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{h}6\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{x}e6\) \(\text{f}xe6\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}2\) when White was better in Iljushin - Dominguez Perez, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007.

13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}4\)

Worse is: 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{g}3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}3\) 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}4\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}7\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}2\) (or 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}5\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}6\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{x}e6\) 17.dxe6 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{g}7\text{\textit{f}6}\) 15...e5 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}2\) b5= The impending ...b4 will be highly unpleasant for White.

13...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}7\) 14.e4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}3\)

White's idea must have been to meet 14...g5 with 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}5\).

15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{x}d5\) 16.exd5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}5\text{\textit{f}6}\)

Black has the better game.

11.\(\text{\textit{W}}\text{xc}5\) looks too risky, and it is hardly surprising that nobody has tested it yet. Black should respond with 11...e5! 12.\(\text{\textit{W}}\text{a}5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{c}6\) 13.\(\text{\textit{W}}\text{a}4\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xd}4\) 14.exd4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}6\text{\textit{f}6}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}6\) and it is hard to see how White can complete development.

11...\(\text{\textit{W}}\text{xb}5\) 12.\(\text{\textit{W}}\text{xb}5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}7\)

From here White has tried C1) 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}3\) and C2) 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}2\).

13...e6 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}2\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}7\)

Another game saw 14...a6, which is also not bad, but I prefer to concentrate on the text move.

15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{d}2\)

After 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{g}3\) Black should play 15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xd}4\) 16.exd4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{f}6\) with equal chances.

15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xd}4\) 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xd}4\)

16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xd}4\) runs into the nice trick: 16...c3\text{\textit{f}6}\! 17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{c}1\) (The pawn is untouchable: 17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xc}3\) ? \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xf}3\) ! 18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{xf}3\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e}8\text{\textit{f}6}\) White loses his bishop on h4.) 17...a6 18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{a}5\) \(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{b}8\) Black is better as ...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{b}2\) is coming.

16...a6
was mentioned by Krasenkow. I decided to analyse further:

Perhaps White should have preferred:
18.Edg5 Eh5 19.Edf3 Edg2 20.Edg3 (In the event of 20.Edh1?! Edg1 21.Edg1 Edh4 22.Edg8+ Edf8 23.Edxh4 Edb8 Black is better, as he will penetrate along the b-file.) 20...Edf6 21.Edc1 Edf8! The position is more or less balanced.

So far we have been following the game Sargissian – Naiditsch, Germany 2006. In this position I would suggest:

18.Edf5

The game continuation of 18...Ed4 19.Edf1 h5 was at least equal for Black, but I like the text move even more. The positional threat of ...Ed4 is not easy for White to meet, for example:

19.Edf5

This creative solution falls short.

19.Edf5 is met by 19...Ec0 followed by ...Ed4 when White is in big trouble.

Perhaps White should consider 19.Edh3?, although I doubt that many players would be comfortable with the prospect of the bishop being driven back to h2 at any moment.


The two minor pieces outclass White's rook.

C2) 13.Edf3

This move was tested in a couple of subsequent games, but it does not seem to be much of an improvement. Indeed, it soon transpires that White will have trouble equalizing.

13...Ed5!

Black should play actively, without worrying about such trivialities as an imperfect pawn structure.
I also examined the natural alternative:

14...dxe5N 15.Qf4 Qc6 16.Qa5 (After the passive 16.Qb1 Qc7 Black already stands better.) 16...Qe7

17.Qg3 (Clearly worse is 17.Qxe7? Qxe7
18.Qxe5 Qd6 19.Qa5 Qhb8 when Black takes over the initiative.) 17...0-0 18.Qe2 Qf6
Black's activity more than makes up for his doubled pawns, for instance: 19.0-0 Qd2
20.Qd1 Qxd1† 21.Qxd1 Qd8 22.Qc2 Qd7!
With ...Qd3 coming soon, Black has the more promising position.

14...Qg7

Also after 15.dxc5 0-0 16.e4 Qc6 17.Qb1 Qf6! Black emerged with the better position in Arutinian – Pashikian, Armenia 2007.

15.Qc6 16.Qc1

Allowing a favourable liquidation of the centre, but it was hard to suggest another way to develop the kingside pieces.

16...exd4 17.cxd4 Qcxd4 18.Qc4 dxe3 19.Qg5 Qb6 20.Qb5 Qxb5 21.Qxb5 0-0
22.Qxe3 Qc4
Black was clearly better in Sanikidze – Rodshtein, Plovdiv 2008.

Conclusion

After the moves 7.e3 Qe6, none of the sidelines presented here should worry Black. A) 8.Qh3 is not completely without merit, but analysis shows that Black can obtain an excellent game with resolute play. B) 8.Qe2 is not such a bad move, and usually transposes to a line examined in a different chapter. As we have seen, Black has nothing to fear from the independent possibilities. In terms of popularity, C) 8.Qb1 is the most important of the options examined in the present chapter, but after the active 8...c5! I have full confidence in Black's chances.
4. \textit{g5}

8. \textit{b1}

**Variation Index**

1. \textit{d4} \textit{f6} 2. \textit{c4} \textit{g6} 3. \textit{c3} \textit{d5} 4. \textit{g5} \textit{e4} 5. \textit{h4} \textit{xc3} 6. \textit{bxc3} \textit{dxc4} 7. \textit{e3} \textit{e6} 8. \textit{b1}

8... \textit{d7}!

A) 9. \textit{xb7} \hspace{1cm} 267
B) 9. \textit{wa4} \hspace{1cm} 267
C) 9. \textit{f3} \textit{b6}
   C1) 10. \textit{a4} \hspace{1cm} 271
   C2) 10. \textit{e2} \hspace{1cm} 273

B) after 15. \textit{xb3}

C1) after 17. \textit{g4}

C2) after 15. \textit{g4}

Tiger Hillarp Persson's queen sac

17... \textit{xd5N} \hspace{1cm} 15... \textit{f6N}
Chapter 22 – 8.\text{f}b1

1.d4 \text{f}6 2.c4 \text{g}6 3.\text{c}3 \text{d}5 4.\text{g}5 \text{e}4 5.\text{h}4 \text{xc}3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 \text{e}6 8.\text{f}b1

8...\text{d}d7!

Once again Black should be happy to return his extra pawn for the sake of activity. It is essential to understand that after 8...\text{b}6 White has the promising idea of 9.\text{h}3! \text{h}6 10.e4 with interesting play.

After the text move White has three main options: A) 9.\text{xb}7, B) 9.\text{a}4 and C) 9.\text{f}3.

It is barely worth considering 9.d5? \text{f}5 10.\text{xb}7 \text{c}5 when Black is clearly better.

A) 9.\text{xb}7

Of course this move should not be ignored, but it is too simplistic and Black easily gets a good game.

9...\text{b}6

9...\text{g}7 is also fine, but I prefer to limit the rook’s movement.

10.\text{g}3 \text{c}5 11.\text{f}3

The c5-pawn is untouchable: 11.\text{xc}5?? \text{xd}1† 12.\text{xd}1 0–0–0†!–+

In the event of 11.\text{c}7 Black should play 11...\text{c}8! 12.\text{xa}7 \text{g}7 with nice play for the sacrificed pawn, for instance 13.\text{f}3 \text{xd}4

11...\text{g}7

Black has an easy game. In the following encounter White quickly went downhill.

B) 9.\text{a}4

Amazingly, this move already implies a queen sacrifice, at least if White wishes to conduct the opening in a remotely principled way. The critical line runs as follows.
9...\textbf{d}d5

9...\textbf{g}g7?! would be a serious concession, as after 10.\textbf{x}xc4 \textbf{x}xc4 11.\textbf{xc}xc4 White has regained the pawn while keeping a safe positional edge.

After the text move Black is threatening to consolidate his extra pawn with ...a6 followed by ...b5, so White is more or less forced to take the following path:

\textbf{10.\textbf{x}xc4 \textbf{x}g2 11.\textbf{b}b3 \textbf{h}h6!}

It is crucial to take the f4-square under control, as after 11...\textbf{g}g7? 12.\textbf{x}xf7+ \textbf{f}f8 13.\textbf{e}e2 \textbf{x}xh1 14.\textbf{f}f4 White has a serious initiative, Kaganskiy – Bykhovsky, Petah Tiqwa 2008.

\textbf{12.\textbf{x}xf7+ \textbf{f}f8 13.\textbf{d}d5}

\textbf{13...\textbf{c}c5!}

Without this key move Black would be worse, as after 13...\textbf{x}xh1? 14.\textbf{x}xh1\textbf{c}c5 White has fantastic compensation for the exchange.

\textbf{14.\textbf{x}xg2!}

White’s preceding play has been leading up to this sacrifice.

\textbf{14...\textbf{xb}3 15.\textbf{x}xb3}

\textbf{15...\textbf{b}b8}

This was a new move at the time, although it is logical enough, as Black needs to activate his rook with ...b5 followed by ...\textbf{b}b6.

15...b5 had already occurred in three games, and after 16.\textbf{f}f3 \textbf{b}b8 the play is similar to the main game and may even transpose directly.

\textbf{16.\textbf{f}f3 \textbf{g}g7}

It is useful to take control over the e5-square, preventing White from strengthening his position by means of \textbf{e}e5 and \textbf{f}f4. A secondary point behind the last move is to prepare the regrouping plan of ...\textbf{g}g7-f6 followed by ...\textbf{g}g7(f7).

\textbf{17.0–0}
Chapter 22 – 8.\texttt{b1}

17...b5!
I consider this the most accurate move. I rejected 17...f6 18.g3 b5 in view of 19.a3! when suddenly it is not easy to defend the a7-pawn.

18.g3
There are two important alternatives to consider.

In the present position 18.a3 is not dangerous, as after 18...c8! 19.xa7 a8 Black achieves a highly desirable rook exchange, which more than justifies the loss of the a-pawn.

18.g5?!
This is more interesting, but Black has sufficient resources to meet the challenge.
18...b6 19.xb5
Otherwise there would be no point to White's previous move.

19...xb5!
Black should be content to return most of his material in order to reach a good endgame. Less advisable would be 19...c8 20.c5 a6 21.g3 c6 22.e4=, or 21.xg5 22.xg5 c6 23.c5=, with interesting compensation for White in both cases.

20.e6+ f7 21.xd8+ xd8 22.g3
Black has kept a modest material advantage, and now he has a pleasant choice.

22...c6?!
This is the more ambitious option.
In the event of 22...e5 23.c4 a5 (23...b4 24.d5+ f8 25.dxe5 c6 26.xc6 xc4 27.b7=) 24.dxe5 xex5 25.d5+ edx5 26.cxd5 edx5 the endgame is equal.
23.xc7 c8 24.a4 bb2 25.a5 f6=*
The endgame is slightly better for Black, although it looks to me like White should be able to hold it.
18...\texttt{b}6 19.c4?
White opts for a temporary pawn sacrifice in order to open the c-file for his rooks.

A serious idea was: 19.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{h}6 20.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{f}7 21.\texttt{c}5 The knight is very well placed on c5, but I am not convinced that this can offer White full compensation, and for this reason after the quiet 21...\texttt{a}6+ I prefer Black's position.

19...\texttt{bxc}4 19...\texttt{a}6 is too passive, and after 20.c5 \texttt{f}6 21.\texttt{e}5 White obtains some pressure.

20.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{f}6
Black continues the strategy of improving his piece coordination. With his last move he vacates the g7-square for his king, enabling him to develop the h8-rook.

21.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{c}6 22.\texttt{e}5
After 22.\texttt{f}c1 \texttt{f}7 23.\texttt{e}5+ \texttt{x}e5 24.\texttt{x}e5 \texttt{g}8 we transpose to the game.

22.\texttt{x}e5?! 22...\texttt{x}e5! is better. Eliminating the knight is a very human decision, but it is worth noting that our silicon friend prefers 22...\texttt{g}7 N 23.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{d}7, evaluating the position as favourable for Black.

The following line clearly justifies Black's safety-first strategy: 24.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{xc}6! 25.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{d}5 26.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{f}7 Black can press for a win without taking any real risk.

24...\texttt{f}7 25.\texttt{d}5!
This fantastic tactical resource enables White to keep the game interesting. Clearly inferior is 25.\texttt{xc}6? \texttt{xc}6 26.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{a}5+ and with a pair of rooks off the board, Black is clearly better.

25.\texttt{xc}6 can once again be met strongly by 25...\texttt{xc}6! 26.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{d}5, just as in the note to the previous move.

25...\texttt{xd}5 26.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{e}8!
The strongest continuation. Instead after 26...\texttt{d}6 27.\texttt{xd}6 \texttt{xd}6 28.\texttt{c}7+ \texttt{f}6 29.\texttt{xa}7 White is not worse.

27.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{d}6!
Black must obviously avoid 27...\texttt{a}8?? 28.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{b}7 29.\texttt{d}5+ and White wins.

28.\texttt{xd}6 \texttt{xd}6 29.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{e}6+
Hillarp Persson – Avrukh, Dresden (ol) 2008. The complications have mostly subsided, and we have reached a calm position in which White has a rook and bishop against Black's queen. Overall Black stands slightly better, as he has managed to secure his king while preserving a small material advantage.
Nevertheless White has managed to construct a fortress which is hard to breach, and in the game I had to settle for a draw.

\[ 9.\texttt{\textsf{\textit{h}}3} \]

This useful developing move also carries the threat of \( \texttt{g}5 \), harassing the bishop.

9...\texttt{b6}

Black creates an escape route for the bishop, while also safeguarding the b7- and c4-pawns. At this point White's most important choices are C1) 10.\texttt{a4} and C2) 10.\texttt{e2}, although a few other moves have also been tried.

10.\texttt{c2} \texttt{g7} 11.\texttt{e2} \texttt{d7}?! 12.0–0 \texttt{a4} This slightly unusual queen manoeuvre gives Black interesting play. 13.\texttt{d2} \texttt{f5} 14.\texttt{b4} \texttt{c6} 15.\texttt{c1} a5 16.\texttt{b2} Now in Tomashevsky – Sutovsky, Kallithea 2008, Black should have played:

16...\texttt{e4}!N Setting up a nice bind on the light squares, for instance: 17.\texttt{e1} f5 18.f3 \texttt{d5}+

With an extra pawn and a firm grip on the centre, Black stands better. The plan for the next few moves is ...\texttt{f6} and ...0–0.

10.c4

This move seems a bit premature, as it allows Black an extra option.

10...\texttt{g7} 11.\texttt{e2} c5?!

The fact that White has not yet castled is what makes this move a viable option. It is also quite reasonable to play 11...f5?!N, just as in line C2 below. I do not see any way for White to take advantage of the fact that neither side has castled.

12.0–0

This position occurred in Halkias – L'Ami, Amsterdam 2006, and now the logical continuation of Black's play would have been:

12...\texttt{cxd4}N 13.\texttt{cxd4}

In the event of 13.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{d7} 14.f4 \texttt{a4} 15.\texttt{d2} 0–0 16.e5 \texttt{d7} Black has an extra pawn and a very solid position.

13...\texttt{d7} 14.\texttt{c2} 0–0 15.h3 \texttt{f6} 16.\texttt{g3} \texttt{ac8}∞

In this complex position Black looks to be in good shape.

C1) 10.\texttt{a4}
This is a thematic idea in positions where the black knight goes to b6, but in the present position the inclusion of the move a1-b1 renders the a4-pawn vulnerable.

10...a5 11.dg5
White provokes complications, which is understandable as normal development does not promise him much: 11.c2 g7 12.0-0 e4

13.d5! The a4-pawn is a clear target. 14.c1 (14.a1 is pointless in view of 14.e8!) 14...xa4 15.a3 d6! 16.xe7 xa3 17.xa3 fxe8 18.d2 c2 19.b2 d3! 20.xd3 cxd3 Black was clearly better in Akopian – Roiz, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007.

11.d5! 12.e4 h6
Black accepts the challenge, and indeed the complications are not unfavourable to him.

14.xg5
After 14.xb6 Sutovsky demonstrates the following illustrative line in ChessBase Magazine 113: 14...xb6 15.xc4 c7! 16.b5+ d8 17.xg5 xc3+ 18.d2 xd4=

Black is clearly better due to 19.0-0 h6! 20.xa5 f4! with a winning position.

14.h6
This seems more thematic than 14...xd5 15.b5 e4+ 16.e2 f6 17.d2 xg2 18.f3 h3 19.xb7 fxe7 Banikas – Smirin, Athens 2007. The position is messy and interesting but unfortunately it seems that neither player was in the mood for a fight.

15.xh6 xh6 16.f3
Now Black found a natural, but still highly attractive idea:

Now Black found a natural, but still highly attractive idea:

Otherwise the rook will be activated along the fifth rank. This occurred in Hillarp Persson – Sutovsky, Turin (ol) 2006, and now for some reason Black refrained from the natural continuation:

17...\textit{xd5N}

The following continuation is more or less forced:

Black clearly has the upper hand. Material is level, but White's pawns are weaker and his pieces lack coordination.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\node (a) at (0,0) {a}; \node (b) at (1,0) {b}; \node (c) at (2,0) {c}; \node (d) at (3,0) {d}; \node (e) at (4,0) {e}; \node (f) at (5,0) {f}; \node (g) at (6,0) {g}; \node (h) at (7,0) {h}; \node (a1) at (0,1) {a}; \node (b1) at (1,1) {b}; \node (c1) at (2,1) {c}; \node (d1) at (3,1) {d}; \node (e1) at (4,1) {e}; \node (f1) at (5,1) {f}; \node (g1) at (6,1) {g}; \node (h1) at (7,1) {h}; \node (a2) at (0,2) {a}; \node (b2) at (1,2) {b}; \node (c2) at (2,2) {c}; \node (d2) at (3,2) {d}; \node (e2) at (4,2) {e}; \node (f2) at (5,2) {f}; \node (g2) at (6,2) {g}; \node (h2) at (7,2) {h}; \node (a3) at (0,3) {a}; \node (b3) at (1,3) {b}; \node (c3) at (2,3) {c}; \node (d3) at (3,3) {d}; \node (e3) at (4,3) {e}; \node (f3) at (5,3) {f}; \node (g3) at (6,3) {g}; \node (h3) at (7,3) {h}; \node (a4) at (0,4) {a}; \node (b4) at (1,4) {b}; \node (c4) at (2,4) {c}; \node (d4) at (3,4) {d}; \node (e4) at (4,4) {e}; \node (f4) at (5,4) {f}; \node (g4) at (6,4) {g}; \node (h4) at (7,4) {h}; \node (a5) at (0,5) {a}; \node (b5) at (1,5) {b}; \node (c5) at (2,5) {c}; \node (d5) at (3,5) {d}; \node (e5) at (4,5) {e}; \node (f5) at (5,5) {f}; \node (g5) at (6,5) {g}; \node (h5) at (7,5) {h}; \node (a6) at (0,6) {a}; \node (b6) at (1,6) {b}; \node (c6) at (2,6) {c}; \node (d6) at (3,6) {d}; \node (e6) at (4,6) {e}; \node (f6) at (5,6) {f}; \node (g6) at (6,6) {g}; \node (h6) at (7,6) {h}; \node (a7) at (0,7) {a}; \node (b7) at (1,7) {b}; \node (c7) at (2,7) {c}; \node (d7) at (3,7) {d}; \node (e7) at (4,7) {e}; \node (f7) at (5,7) {f}; \node (g7) at (6,7) {g}; \node (h7) at (7,7) {h}; \node (a8) at (0,8) {a}; \node (b8) at (1,8) {b}; \node (c8) at (2,8) {c}; \node (d8) at (3,8) {d}; \node (e8) at (4,8) {e}; \node (f8) at (5,8) {f}; \node (g8) at (6,8) {g}; \node (h8) at (7,8) {h}; \draw[black, thick] (0,0) -- (7,0); \draw[black, thick] (0,1) -- (7,1); \draw[black, thick] (0,2) -- (7,2); \draw[black, thick] (0,3) -- (7,3); \draw[black, thick] (0,4) -- (7,4); \draw[black, thick] (0,5) -- (7,5); \draw[black, thick] (0,6) -- (7,6); \draw[black, thick] (0,7) -- (7,7); \draw[black, thick] (0,8) -- (7,8); \end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

This time White simply completes his development before taking any direct action.

10...\textit{g7} 11.0–0 0–0 12.e4 \textit{f5}!

This looks a bit dangerous, but in fact it is the most active and principled idea available to Black, without which White could obtain long-term positional compensation. This strong move has only been played once, by a sub-2100 player. Curiously, in 2010 two grandmasters reached the same position with Black, but both of them opted for different and in my opinion less promising continuations.

13.\textit{g5}

This must be the critical reply.

13...\textit{d7} 14.\textit{exf5}

White opts for a positional approach, presumably hoping to develop pressure along the e-file.

It is important to note that the following tactical solution does not quite work for White:

14.\textit{xb6 axb6} 15.\textit{xc4†}
15...e6!
The key move.
16.\texttt{b3}
16.g3 can be met comfortably by 16...\texttt{f6}.
The other important line is 16.exf5 \texttt{xxf5}
17.\texttt{xh6? \texttt{xh6} 18.gxh6+ \texttt{g7 19.xg5 \texttt{xg5}}
16...\texttt{h6} 17.\texttt{xe6+ \texttt{g7 18.xd7 \texttt{xd7}}
19.\texttt{xd7 \texttt{xg5}}
White's compensation is hardly sufficient.

14...\texttt{xf5}
In return for his damaged pawn structure Black has secured the use of the important d5-square.

15.\texttt{g4}
This position occurred in Gladyszev – Dubois, Metz 2007, and now Black should have played:

15...\texttt{xf5}!\texttt{N}
After 16.\texttt{xf5 \texttt{xf5}} Black has great compensation for the exchange, for instance
17.\texttt{xb5 e6} and White's material advantage is unlikely to last for much longer.

It is also worth mentioning that 16.\texttt{d2} can be met strongly by 16...\texttt{e5}!

16...\texttt{a5}!

White's compensation for the pawn is highly questionable.

\textbf{Conclusion}

We have seen that the active move 8.\texttt{b1} leads to complex and dynamic positions which can present tricky problems for both sides. After the correct 8...\texttt{d7}, taking the b7-pawn is harmless, but White's two alternatives should be studied carefully. The queen sacrifice associated with B) 9.\texttt{a4} is fascinating, but as long as Black keeps a cool head and finds the right moves at a few key moments, he should be able to count on at least equal chances. Line C with 9.\texttt{f3} sees White developing more calmly, but after 9...\texttt{b6} Black secures his extra pawn and keeps enough dynamic potential to fight for the initiative, perhaps with a material sacrifice of his own.
Variation Index

1. d4 △f6 2. c4 g6 3. △c3 d5 4. g5 △e4 5. h4 △xc3 6. bxc3 dxc4 7. e3 △e6 8. △f3

8...△g7

A) 9. a2 c5 10. 0–0 0–0
   A1) 11. g5
   A2) 11. b1 cxd4 12. △xd4 △d5 13. c2 △d7
       A21) 14. e4
       A22) 14. △fd1
B) 9. b1 △d5 10. a2 △f5
   B1) 11. b4
   B2) 11. △b2
C) 9. b1 b6
   C1) 10. g5
   C2) 10. d2
   C3) 10. a2 0–0
       C31) 11. d2
       C32) 11. 0–0

A1) after 21.h5?!  

21...△f4!N

C1) after 13. △a4† 

13...c6!N

C32) after 18. △bd1 

18...f5!N
This time White makes a kingside developing move before deciding which of his major pieces, if any, to place on the b-file. Compared with the previous chapter, this small difference leads to some significant differences in the subsequent play for both sides.

8... \textit{g}7

From here we will analyse the patient A) 9.g2, the recently fashionable B) 9.b1, and finally C) 9.b1. Before doing so, it is worth checking a couple of rare knight moves.

9.g5?! is premature: 9... d5 10.e4 h6 11.exd5 hxd5 12.xg5 xxd5 13.h4 This was Gerber – Belov, Biel 2009, and now Black should have immediately attacked the opponent's centre by 13...c5!N, with the following point: 14.a4\textit{f} 15.xc4 \textit{d}d8 16.xd5 \textit{xd}5 Black is clearly better.

9.d2

With this retreat White is not going for outright aggression, but instead strives for long-term compensation.

9...b5 10.a4 c6 11.g2

In the following game White played too slowly and soon got into trouble: 11.b1 a6

This position was reached in Lehmann – Fracnik, Kiev 1978, and here Black's play could have been improved by:

14...f5!N

Provoking the following move.

15.e4

This is practically forced, since 15.g4 c7 leaves White with very few ideas.

15.g6

White's 'free' move e3-e4 has reduced the scope of his minor pieces, especially his light-squared bishop. The resulting position is complex and holds chances for both sides. Black is a bit cramped, but his extra pawn is secure and White still needs to prove his compensation. Here is one illustrative line:

16.a4!?!

This natural move turns out to be a mistake.
16...b4! 17.\(g3\)
White cannot play 17.\(\text{x}b4\) in view of 17...c5!.
17...\(d7\)
Black stands better.

A) 9.e2

9...c5
This is my top choice, although there is a serious alternative in the \(d7\)-b6 manoeuvre, which can be carried out either immediately or after castling.

10.0-0 0-0
At this important crossroads White's principal choices are A1) 11.g5 and A2) 11.b1.

11.b1
This move should prove harmless if Black responds correctly.
11...c6!
This idea is already known to us from the two preceding chapters: Black returns his extra pawn in order to maximize the activity of his pieces.
In the event of 11...b6 12.d1 White's position looks preferable to me.
12.xb7 d5

13.b5
I also checked 13.a6N cxd4 14.exd4 (after 14.cxd4 \(b4\) 15.a4 a5 Black has sufficient counterplay) 14...c8 15.xc8 ecx8 when the position is balanced.
13...cxd4 14.xd4 b8 15.c5 c8 16.xc6 ecx6 17.xa7
White has won a pawn, but after Black's next accurate move, his piece activity easily makes up for the small material investment.

17...a8! 18.xa8 ecx8 19.fd1 e6 20.ac1
20...h6!N
This would have been the best way to safeguard the king. Black will easily regain one of the queenside pawns, and if anything it is White who will have to take care to avoid becoming worse.

A1) 11.g5
In the 2009 Gibraltar tournament I chose an inferior option: 11...\(\text{d5}\) I should mention that during this event my computer was only working for a maximum of five minutes at a time before switching off, and my preparation suffered accordingly. 12.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{Cc}6\) 13.\(\text{Bb}3\) (the more accurate 13.\(\text{f}3\) would have created more serious problems) 13...\(\text{e}6\) 14.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{d}6\) 15.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{cxd}4\) 16.\(\text{cxd}4\) \(\text{f}c8\) Black was fine in Harikrishna – Avrukh, Gibraltar 2009, although I later went wrong and lost.

12.e4 \(\text{h}6\) 13.\(\text{exd}5\) \(\text{hxg}5\) 14.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xd}4\) 15.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{dx}c3\)

After a more or less forced sequence we reach a position in which White has tried two different moves.

\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{h}6\) 13.\(\text{exd}5\) \(\text{hxg}5\) 14.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xd}4\) 15.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{dx}c3\)

Here I like the new idea:

17...\(\text{e}5\)!N

17...\(\text{e}8\) also looks good enough for Black, despite the fact that he went on to suffer a painful loss. 18.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{f}6\)! 19.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{d}7\) Black has consolidated his position and there is no way he can be worse with such a strong pawn on c3. 20.\(\text{f}4\) This was Harikrishna – Svidler, Dresden (ol) 2008, and now the best idea would have been:

20...\(\text{f}6\)!N 21.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{g}5\)! 22.\(\text{xd}7\) \(\text{ed}8\) The simplifications work in Black’s favour.

18.\(\text{f}4\)

18.\(\text{e}2\) was mentioned by Mikhalchishin, but now instead of 18...\(\text{f}6\)? Black should prefer 18...\(\text{d}7\) when he is doing fine.

18...\(\text{f}6\) 19.\(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xf}6\)
Black is at least equal, with ...\textit{d}d7 and ...	extit{ac}8 coming quickly.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

16...\textit{xf}6!

This is a key defensive idea. After the inferior 16...\textit{e}e8? 17.d6! White seized a decisive initiative in Banikas – Fier, Internet (blitz) 2009.

17.h6?!

This is the most challenging move, although White is also taking a serious risk in allowing the c-pawn to live.

After the safer 17.\textit{xf}6 a draw was agreed in Banikas – Rodshtein, Budva 2009. The logical continuation would seem to be 17...\textit{xf}6 18.\textit{xc}1 \textit{wd}6 19.\textit{xc}3 \textit{dd}7 with a perfectly playable position for Black.

17...\textit{d}d6

This seems like the most natural and ‘human’ move, especially taking into account that after 17...\textit{e}e8 18.d6! White’s bishops look extremely powerful.

However, I considered another interesting exchange sacrifice: 17...\textit{d}d7?!N 18.d6? (after 18.\textit{xf}8 \textit{xf}8 19.d6 \textit{e}e6 20.\textit{b}b3 \textit{c}c5 21.\textit{c}c2 \textit{g}g7?! Black’s position is more pleasant) 18...\textit{e}e6 19.\textit{c}c2 \textit{e}e8 20.\textit{ad}1 (20.\textit{xe}6? does not work: 20...\textit{xe}6 21.\textit{xe}6 \textit{xe}6 22.\textit{gx}g6\textit{h}h8\text{--}) 20...\textit{a}a5 21.\textit{e}e3 \textit{ad}8 22.\textit{g}g3 \textit{h}h5 23.\textit{h}h3 \textit{c}c5 Black is holding his own in this complicated position.

18.\textit{xf}8 \textit{xf}8 19.\textit{b}b1 \textit{b}6

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

20.h4!

Opening the kingside with h4-h5 is White’s only attractive plan.

20...\textit{d}d7

Of course the h-pawn is untouchable: 20...\textit{dh}4?? 21.\textit{g}g4 \textit{f}f6 22.\textit{c}c8+ \textit{g}g7 23.\textit{b}b7+-

21.h5?!

In his column for the famous Russian magazine \textit{64}, Alexey Kuzmin proposed 21.g3N as an improvement for White.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw [black, line width=0.5mm] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
However, it seems to me that after 21...Ec8
22.Eb3 (or 22.Eg4 Ec5 23.Eb3 b5!) 22...Ec5
23.Ec2 Ed8 24.h5 gxh5 25.Exh5 Exd5 Black
is out of danger.

We have been following the game Al Sayed
- Kasimdzhanov, Guangzhou (rapid) 2010. In
this position Kuzmin points out a significant
improvement for Black:

21...Ef4!N
Black takes over the initiative, with ...
Ec4 or ...
Ec5 coming next.

A2) 11.Eb1
In my opinion this is the critical continuation.
It featured twice in the recent World
Championship Candidates match between
Gelfand and Kamsky, which took place just a
few weeks before the book went to print.

11...Exd4
In the first of the two aforementioned games
Black tried a different approach but soon
found himself in trouble: 11...Ed5? This looks
rather risky. 12.Ec2 Exd4?! (If Black is to make
his previous move work then 12...Ec5N might
be the way, although I have my doubts about
it...) 13.Exd4 b6?! (13...Ec7 was the lesser evil,
although Black is struggling here too.) 14.Ec4
Ec6 15.Ef1 Exc4 16.Ec4 Ec5 17.Ec7
Black had a depressing position although he
eventually managed to hold a draw, Gelfand –
Kamsky, Kazan (2.2) 2011.

12.Exd4
White has also played:
12.Exd4 Ed7
I should mention that the alternative
12...Ec7? also deserves attention.

15...Exd4N
This looks better than 15...Exd4 16.Eb3,
which gave White dangerous compensation
for the pawn in Leitao – Lima, Sao Paulo
2005.
16.Eb3 e6 17.Exe6
Sacrificing on e6 is clearly critical.
There is also: 17.Ed1 Eb2 18.Exe6 Exb3
19.Exb3 Ec6 Black intends to continue ...
Ec5 with a fine position.
17...Exe6 18.Exe6+
Much worse for White is: 18.Ec5 Exe4
Chapter 23 – 8.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^3\)

18...\(\text{\textbf{c}}^7\) 19.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^b^6\)
After 19.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^c^6\) \(\text{\textbf{x}}^c^6\) 20.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^2\) (or 20.\(\text{\textbf{c}}^4\) \(\text{\textbf{d}}^7\))
20...\(\text{\textbf{d}}^7\) 21.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^b^6\) \(\text{\textbf{c}}^8\) Black will very soon regain the pawn.
19...\(\text{\textbf{x}}^a^7\) 20.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^b^7\) \(\text{\textbf{d}}^7\) 21.\(\text{\textbf{b}}^3\) \(\text{\textbf{b}}^5\) 22.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^2\)
\(\text{\textbf{x}}^c^3\) 23.\(\text{\textbf{xa}}^6\) \(\text{\textbf{d}}^2\)
Black has powerful compensation for the pawn; indeed it is White who must play accurately in order to maintain the balance.

13...\(\text{\textbf{d}}^7\)
Not the most aesthetic move, but definitely the strongest one. After 13...\(\text{\textbf{b}}^6\) 14.\(\text{\textbf{e}}^4?!\) \(\text{\textbf{b}}^7\)
15.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^c^4\) \(\text{\textbf{c}}^6\) 16.\(\text{\textbf{b}}^d^1\) \(\text{\textbf{e}}^8\) Black was doing well in Caruana – Nepomniachtchi, Moscow (blitz) 2010; but instead 14.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^d^1!\) \(\text{\textbf{f}}^d^1\) would have been highly unpleasant for Black to meet.

After the text move White has tried A21) 14.\(\text{\textbf{e}}^4\) and A22) 14.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^d^1\).

A21) 14.\(\text{\textbf{e}}^4\) \(\text{\textbf{c}}^6\) 15.\(\text{\textbf{x}}^c^4\) \(\text{\textbf{x}}^d^4\)! 16.\(\text{\textbf{c}}^d^4\)
\(\text{\textbf{x}}^d^4\)

It looks a bit scary to give up the dark-squared bishop, but it’s very principled, and according to my analysis it is not easy for White to pose Black many problems.

17.\(\text{\textbf{b}}^d^1\)
I also examined: 17.\(\text{\textbf{e}}^f^1\) \(\text{\textbf{e}}^6\) 18.\(\text{\textbf{b}}^d^1\) \(\text{\textbf{c}}^5\)
19.\(\text{\textbf{f}}^6\) This is not as dangerous for Black as
it looks at first sight. 19...\textit{d}d7 20.\textit{d}d4 (after 20.\textit{x}d7 \textit{x}d7 21.\textit{d}d2 \textit{f}f8 Black will have ...\textit{f}f8 to defend the dark squares on the kingside) 20...\textit{e}7 I do not think that White has enough for the pawn.

17...\textit{w}xe4

The endgame is not dangerous for Black.

18.\textit{w}xe4 \textit{w}xe4 19.\textit{f}f1 \textit{f}f5 20.\textit{f}f7

White avoids the totally equal 20.\textit{x}e7 \textit{c}c6 21.\textit{x}b7 \textit{a}a5, but he lacks the resources to fight for an advantage.

20...\textit{e}8 21.f3 \textit{c}c6 22.\textit{f}f6

The strong dark-squared bishop gives White enough compensation to hold the balance, but not more. In the game, Black decided to liquidate into a drawish endgame.

22...\textit{f}xe1\textdagger 23.\textit{x}e1 \textit{e}6 24.\textit{x}e6 \textit{e}8 25.\textit{x}f7\textdagger \textit{xf7}

\textfrac{1}{2}-\textfrac{1}{2}

Moiseenko – Kurnosov, Moscow 2009.

**A22) 14.\textit{f}d1**

This logical move was introduced by Boris Gelfand in the second of his recent games against Kamsky in this line. I had analysed it already, having proposed it as a novelty at a seminar I gave in Stuttgart.

14...\textit{f}d4!

This is one of the key motifs associated with the move ...\textit{d}d7.

15.\textit{c}xd4

15.\textit{e}4 \textit{e}5 16.\textit{x}d5 \textit{b}5 is fine for Black.

15.\textit{x}d4 is also harmless: 15...\textit{c}c6 16.\textit{d}d2 \textit{e}6 The queen is well-placed here. 17.\textit{d}d1 \textit{e}4 18.\textit{x}b7 \textit{ab}8 The position is equal.

15...\textit{e}6!

This is clearer than 15...\textit{c}8 16.\textit{e}4 \textit{c}6 17.\textit{b}4! with interesting play for White.

16.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}3 17.\textit{gx}f3 \textit{d}d7!

The idea of returning the pawn for quick mobilization works well here. In the event of 17...\textit{d}5 18.\textit{e}4! White has the advantage.
18.\text{\texttt{Exb7?!N}}

This is a natural attempt to improve White's play. In fact I had already analysed the move, along with what follows, at a time when the "N" mark could be found four moves earlier.

18.\text{\texttt{Exe4}} led nowhere for White in the recent Candidates match: 18...\text{\texttt{b6}} 19.\text{\texttt{Ac1 Ac8}} 20.\text{\texttt{Bc4 c3}} 21.\text{\texttt{Bb3 f6}} 22.\text{\texttt{Exe6 fxe6}} 23.\text{\texttt{Exf6}} 1/2-1/2 Gelfand – Kamsky, Kazan (2.4) 2011.

18.\text{\texttt{Efb8}} 19.d5

After 19.\text{\texttt{Db1 xb7}} 20.\text{\texttt{Bxb7 Ac8}} 21.\text{\texttt{Bxa7 c3}} the c-pawn gives Black sufficient counterplay.

19.\text{\texttt{Wh3}} 20.\text{\texttt{Bxb8}} 21.\text{\texttt{Ee4}} c3 22.\text{\texttt{Exe7}}

24.\text{\texttt{Ee8}}+ \text{\texttt{g7}} 25.\text{\texttt{Ee5}}+ \text{\texttt{Exe5}} 26.\text{\texttt{Exe5}}+ \text{\texttt{g8=}}

White is not forced to take the perpetual, but avoiding it does not bring him any advantage.

\textbf{B) 9.\text{\texttt{Bb1}}}

The idea of sacrificing a pawn by 9...c5 doesn't work here; continuing in the same way as we did in line C of Chapter 21 with 10.\text{\texttt{Exb7 c5}} 11.\text{\texttt{Bb5}}+ \text{\texttt{d7}}, then both 12.\text{\texttt{Bxc5}} and 12.\text{\texttt{Bxc4}} are advantageous for White.

9...\text{\texttt{d5}}

Black's latest word in this fashionable line.

The idea of sacrificing a pawn by 9...c5 doesn't work here; continuing in the same way as we did in line C of Chapter 21 with 10.\text{\texttt{Bxb7 c5}} 11.\text{\texttt{Bb5}}+ \text{\texttt{d7}}, then both 12.\text{\texttt{Bxc5}} and 12.\text{\texttt{Bxc4}} are advantageous for White.

9...\text{\texttt{b6}} 10.\text{\texttt{Ee2}} 0–0 11.0–0 c5 12.\text{\texttt{Ee1}} looks quite pleasant for White.

10.\text{\texttt{Ee2}} \text{\texttt{f5}}

It is essential to improve the position of the light-squared bishop with tempo, taking control over the important e4-square at the same time.

White now has a choice of squares for his queen: \textbf{B1) 11.\text{\texttt{Ee4}}} or \textbf{B2) 11.\text{\texttt{Ee2}}}.

\textbf{B1) 11.\text{\texttt{Ee4}}}
Capturing the c4-pawn the other way allows Black a surprising resource:

12...\(\text{xc4}\)

12...\(\text{xc4}\)

12...\(\text{xd4}!N\)

12...\(\text{xf3} 13.\text{a4}^+ \text{d7} 14.\text{xd7}^+ \text{xd7}\)

15.gxf3 gave White a slight pull in Aronian – Svidler, Novi Sad 2009, although Svidler defended well to draw. Even before that game finished, Svidler realized that he had missed this spectacular move.

13.\(\text{b5}^+\)

The critical response.

13...\(\text{d7}!\)

Black now manages to achieve the favourable exchange of light-squared bishops.

14.\(\text{xd4} \text{cxd4} 15.\text{xd7}^+ \text{xd7} 16.\text{cxd4} \text{e5}\)

17...\(0-0\)

This is simplest, although 17...\(\text{exd4} 18.\text{xd4} 0-0 19.\text{e2} \text{fc8}\) is also okay.

18.\(\text{e2} \text{ac8}\)

The position is equal.

12...\(\text{xc4} 13.\text{xc4} \text{c6}\)

Black might be slightly worse after 13...\(\text{d7} 14.0-0 \text{c8} 15.\text{d5}\).

14.0-0 \(\text{c8} 15.\text{ac1} \text{a5} 16.\text{b5}^+ \text{d7}\)

17.\(\text{e2} \text{e6} 18.\text{d2}\)

This position was reached in Pantsulaia – Sutovsky, Gothenburg 2005. Black can easily equalize with:

18...\(\text{f5}!N\)

The attack on the e7-pawn prevents Black
castling, however the king can find a safe haven on f7.

19.\(\text{cxd4}\) \(20.\text{cxd4}\) \(\text{f7}\)

Black has comfortable equality.

B2) 11.\(\text{b2}\)

11...\(\text{d7}\) 12.\(0-0\) \(\text{d3}\)

There have been another couple of Grünfeld clashes between Aronian and Svidler:

12...\(\text{e5}\) 13.\(\text{b4}\) c5 14.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 15.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{c8}\) 16.\(\text{d5}\) White had definite pressure in Aronian – Svidler, Dortmund 2006.

12...\(\text{b6}\) 13.a4 a5 14.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{d3}\) 15.\(\text{d3}\) cxd3 16.\(\text{b1}\)? (16.\(\text{fb1}\) \(\text{c6}\) 17.\(\text{a3}\) 0–0 was unclear in Aronian – Svidler, Moscow 2006) 16...\(\text{e5}\) (after 16...\(\text{c6}\) 17.\(\text{xd3}\) \(\text{xa4}\) 18.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{b6}\) 19.\(\text{fb1}\) White has good compensation for the pawn) 17.\(\text{xd3}\) 0–0 18.\(\text{fb1}\) White had an edge in Paikidze – Popova, Plovdiv 2008.

13.\(\text{xd3}\) cxd3 14.\(\text{fd1}\)

White has tried 14.e4, but 14...\(\text{e6}\) 15.e5 \(\text{a6}\)! 16.\(\text{fc1}\) e6 17.\(\text{d2}\) 0–0 18.\(\text{e4}\) c5 gave Black the better position in Romanov – Nepomniachtchi, St Petersburg 2009.

14...\(\text{e4}\) 15.\(\text{b1}\) c5 16.\(\text{xd3}\)

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

I offer this as an improvement on 16...\(\text{c8}\) as played in Eljanov – Svidler, Astrakhan 2010. In that game White later penetrated with his rook along the a-file, suggesting that it may have been a bit premature for Black to move his rook away from a8.

17.\(\text{d1}\)

Another line runs: 17.a4 0–0 18.a5 (18.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{xb1}\) 19.\(\text{xb1}\) e5 20.a5 is just a transposition) 18...\(\text{c5}\) 19.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{xb1}\) 20.\(\text{xd1}\) \(\text{exd1}\) 21.\(\text{xc8}\) \(\text{xc8}\) Black has no problems.

17...\(\text{xb1}\) 18.\(\text{axb1}\) \(\text{c8}\)

Now that the white rook has left the a-file, this move is natural and good.

19.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{cxd4}\)

This is necessary in order to activate our rook.

20.\(\text{cxd4}\) \(\text{f6}\)

This seems to be the best way to solve the problem of the e7-pawn.

21.\(\text{f7}\) 22.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{c4}\)

Black doesn't have any problems in this endgame.

C) 9.\(\text{b1}\) b6
Black is unable to use the same remedy as in the previous chapter, because here 9...\( \text{d}7? \) runs into the unpleasant 10.\( \text{g}5. \)

White now has three main options, C1) 10.\( \text{g}5, \) C2) 10.\( \text{d}2 \) and C3) 10.\( \text{e}2, \) although he has also tried a fourth move:

10.\( \text{c}2 \) c6N

10...\( \text{0–0}?! \) allows White to reveal his idea with: 11.\( \text{g}5! \) d5 12.e4 b7?! (after 12...f6 13.f3 f7 14.d2 White regains the pawn with an edge) 13.xc4 c8 14.b3 White had strong pressure in I. Sokolov – Arman, Stockholm 2011.

11.\( \text{g}5 \) d5 12.e4 f6! 13.f3 f7 14.a4

Otherwise White may not get the pawn back.

14...a6 15.a2 b5! 16.axb5 cxb5 17.xb5 axb5 18.xa8 0–0 19.xe2 \( \text{d}7 \)

Black has a good game, with chances to take over the initiative.

C1) 10.\( \text{g}5 \) d5

11.e4

11.a4† is pointless, in view of: 11...\( \text{d}7N \)

12.xd7† xd7 13.e4 b7 14.xc4 h6! 15.xf7 f8 The complications turn out in Black's favour.

11...h6 12.exd5 hxg5 13.a4†

The alternatives have not brought White success:

13.xg5 xd5 14.g4 d7! 15.e2 Kahn – Caruana, Budapest 2005. Black should now play the straightforward: 15...c8N 16.0–0 c5†

13.g3 xd5 14.e2 a5 15.0–0 Jorczik – P. Popovic, Germany 2009. Black can simply capture the c-pawn: 15...xc3N 16.a4† c6 17.xb6 axb6 18.xa8 0–0 19.xb8 xd4! 20.xb7 x2 21.f3 xd2 Black's position is close to winning, thanks to the powerful c-pawn.

13...c6N

I believe that this move, suggested by the computer, effectively refutes this line. In all the games that have reached this position Black played the natural 13...f8. Although that is also fine for Black, it gives White more chances than the text.

14.dxc6

After 14.xg5 xd5 15.e3 b5 Black remains with a healthy extra pawn and the better position.

14...\( \text{d}5! \)
This strong follow-up is the point of Black's novelty. It transpires that c6-c7\# is not such a deadly threat. Meanwhile the white bishop is hanging and Black threatens ...\\w e4\# winning the rook on b1.

15.\\g g3 \w e4\# 16.\\d d2 \w x b1 17.\\x c4
This is White's most challenging try.

17...\\f f5!
17...\\w x h1\# allows the stunning 18.\\c c7\#\\d d7 19.\\w x d7\#\\x x d7 20.\\b b 5\# with a most unusual perpetual check.

18.\\d d3!
This is stronger than 18.\\x x b 8 \w x f 2\# 19.\\d d 1 0-0, when Black is decidedly better.

18...\\a a 5
18...\\b b 5\# looks interesting as well.

19.\\w x a 5 \b b 5 20.\\e e 4
White clearly has some compensation, but not quite enough.

20...0-0 21.\\b b 1 e 5
Black has the advantage.

C2) 10.\\d d 2

This has been White's most popular choice, but it is not particularly dangerous. White ensures that he will regain his pawn, but Black gets enough time to develop his counterplay.

10...0-0 11.\\f f 3
Other options include the following:

11.\\c c 2 c 5 transposes to C31.

11.\\c c 4? is certainly no good, due to 11...\\x c 4 12.\\x c 4 \w d 5 followed by 13...\\w x g 2.

11.\\c c 4 c 5 12.\\e e 2

12...\\c c 6
12...\\c c 4 d 7 13.0-0 \d d 6\# is worth considering. 13.0-0 c x d 4 14.c x d 4 \e e 8 15.\\e c 1
White has also tried 15.\\w a 4, but after 15...\\w d 7 White has to spend a tempo
defending against the ...\texttt{Qxd4} threat.  
16.\texttt{Qh1} Kahn – Todor, Budapest 1994. 
Simplest now is: 16...\texttt{Qe5N} 17.\texttt{Qxd7} \texttt{Qxd7} 18.\texttt{Rxc1 Qf6} 19.\texttt{Qg3 Qf5} 20.\texttt{a4} \texttt{Qf8} Black is not worse.  
15...\texttt{Qd7} 16.\texttt{Qd2}

Here I found an interesting idea:  
16...\texttt{Qh6!?N}  
Threatening to play ...\texttt{Qxd4}.  
17.f4  
Not the most desirable move, but after  
17.\texttt{Rfd1} Black's idea works well: 17...\texttt{Qxd4} 18.\texttt{Qf1 Qf8=}  
17...\texttt{Qg7} 18.\texttt{Rfd1 Qfd8}  
Black will play ...\texttt{Qd5} next; his position is very comfortable.  

15.\texttt{Qg3 Qe5} 16.\texttt{Qxe5} \texttt{Qxe5} 17.\texttt{Qe3} occurred in Hillarp Persson – Izoria, Kusadasi 2006, and now strong for Black is: 17...e6N 18.dxe6 (after 18.0–0 exd5 19.exd5 \texttt{Qe8} Black has an excellent game) 18...fxe6 19.\texttt{Qxe6+ Qh8} White is in trouble, as he cannot castle due to ...\texttt{Qf4}.  
15...\texttt{Qe5} 16.\texttt{Qe2} f5 17.f4 \texttt{Qg4!}  
This is more active than 17...\texttt{Qf7}, which has been played a couple of times.  
18.\texttt{Qxg4 fxg4} 19.0–0 \texttt{Qd7} 20.a4 e6! 21.dxe6 \texttt{Wxe6} 22.a5 \texttt{Qae8} 23.axb6 axb6 24.\texttt{Qbe1 h6}  
Black had solved all his opening problems in Wang Yue – L'Ami, Istanbul 2005.  

C3) 10.\texttt{Qe2} 0–0  
White now chooses between C31) 11.\texttt{Qd2} and C32) 11.0–0.  

C31) 11.\texttt{Qd2}  

11...\texttt{c5!} 12.\texttt{Qf3}  
After 12.0–0 Black has no problems: 12...\texttt{cxd4} 13.\texttt{exd4} \texttt{Qd7} 14.\texttt{Qxc4 Qf6=} Nogueiras – Sasikiran, Internet 2005.  
12...\texttt{cxd4!} 13.\texttt{Qxa8}  
Taking the rook seems critical. The stem game continued:
13.cxd4 ♘d7! 14.♘xa8
Another line is 14.d5 ♘f5 15.e4 and here Krasenkow in ChessBase Magazine 107 gives 15...c3 (15...♗c8 first may be more accurate) 16.♗b3 ♗c8 17.♖c2 g5! 18.♕xg5 ♘g6 with an excellent position for Black.
14...♗xa8
Black's strong passed pawn and bishop pair gives him more than enough compensation for the exchange.
15.0-0 ♙c3 16.♘f3 ♗c8 17.♕a4 ♘f6
Black was better and went on to score a convincing victory in Moiseenko - Svidler, Sochi 2005.

13...dxe3! 14.♗f3 ♘d3!
In this incredible position Black has excellent compensation for the rook.

15.♖c1 ♘a6 16.♗b7 ♘c5 17.♗xe7
We have been following Sorokina - Gorozhankina, St Petersburg 2005. Black should now play:

17...♗xb7N 18.♗xf8 ♘xf8
I feel that Black should be able to slowly take over the initiative.

19.♗c2
Black is also better after: 19.♗d4 ♘b4 20.♗c2 ♘d5!

19...♗b4 20.♗e2
White sensibly prepares to castle.

20...♖c5 21.♗d4
After 21.0-0 Black has 21...♗f5! with advantage.

21...♗d7 22.0-0 ♘a4
Black clearly has the initiative.

C32) 11.0-0 ♙c6

12.e4
One game continued:
12.♗d2 b5 13.♗f3 a6 14.a4 ♘a7 15.♗g3
This was Ruehlemann – Rohde, Krumpa 1972, and now I believe Black should play:

19...♗f5!N
Black provokes a pawn move that will block the pressure of White's light-squared bishop - just as was suggested against the sideline 9.\(\text{Qd}2\) at the start of the chapter.

16.e4

After 16.\(\text{Ba}1\) \(\text{Qd}3\) 17.\(\text{Qe}2\) \(\text{Qxe}2\) 18.\(\text{Qxe}2\) \(\text{Qd}7\) Black is better.

16...\(\text{Qe}6\) 17.\(\text{Qe}2\) \(\text{Qd}7\) 18.\(\text{Qe}3\)

Here Black can even play:

18...\(\text{Qb}6\) 19.\(\text{axb}5\) \(\text{axb}5\) 20.\(\text{d}5\) cxd5 21.exd5 \(\text{Qxd}5\) 22.\(\text{Qx}d5\) \(\text{Qxd}5\) 23.\(\text{Qxa}7\) \(\text{Qxc}3\)

Black's two queenside pawns could well decide the issue.

12...b5 13.\(\text{Qg}5\) \(\text{Qd}7\) 14.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 15.\(\text{Qf}3\)

If White plays 15.\(\text{Qh}3\) then I recommend:

15...f5 16.\(\text{Qf}3\) (or 16.e5 \(\text{Qe}6\) 17.a4 a6 18.\(\text{Qf}3\) \(\text{Qa}7\) 19.\(\text{Qc}1\) \(\text{Qd}5\) 20.\(\text{Qa}3\) \(\text{Qb}7\)) 16...\(\text{Qa}6\)

Followed by ...\(\text{Qc}7\); I prefer Black, since it is not clear how White should continue.

15...\(\text{h}6!\) 16.\(\text{Qg}3\) \(\text{Qa}6\)

Black activates his knight; it is heading for c7 and later to e6 or d5, depending on circumstances.

17.\(\text{Qc}2\) \(\text{Qc}7\) 18.\(\text{Qbd}1\)

This occurred in Postny – Bykhovsky, Israel 2010. It is now the right moment to play the thematic:

18...\(\text{f}5!\)N 19.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{Qe}8!\)

Black has the better chances.

**Conclusion**

Simply developing with A) 9.\(\text{Qe}2\) is a sensible option; Black must play accurately, but if he does so then he can count on securing equal chances. Attacking the b7-pawn with B) 9.\(\text{Qb}1\) is well met by 9...\(\text{Qd}5\). White will regain the c4-pawn, but the queens are liable to come off, resulting in a level endgame. The other method of attacking the b7-pawn is 9.\(\text{Qb}1\), which can lead to very interesting tactical play; in particular, C31) 9...b6 10.\(\text{Qe}2\) 0-0 11.\(\text{Qd}2\) c5! 12.\(\text{Qf}3\) cxd4! is a highly promising rook sacrifice.
Rare Fifth Moves

Variation Index

1. d4  \( \text{d}6 \) 2. c4  \( \text{g}6 \) 3. \( \text{c}3 \)  \( \text{d}5 \) 4. \( \text{f}3 \)

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

A) 5. \( \text{a}4 \)†
B) 5. g3  \( \text{dxc4} \) 6. \( \text{a}4 \)†  \( \text{fd7} \) 7. \( \text{xc4} \)  \( \text{b6} \)
   B1) 8. \( \text{b3} \)
   B2) 8. \( \text{d3} \)

B1) note to 10.e3
B1) after 13.a3
B2) note to 9.g2

12... \( \text{c5} \)†
13... \( \text{e5} \)
11... \( \text{f5} \)!
We shall look at A) 5.\textit{\texttt{a4\#}} and B) 5.g3. Note that 5.e3 was covered via the move order 4.e3 \textit{\texttt{g7}} 5.\textit{\texttt{f3}} in Chapter 12.

A) 5.\textit{\texttt{a4\#}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 6.\textit{\texttt{b3}} \textit{\texttt{dxc4}} 7.\textit{\texttt{xc4}} 0–0

This variation is clearly similar to the line with 4.\textit{\texttt{a4\#}} that we examined in Chapter 9. Indeed the two most popular moves here, 8.\textit{\texttt{f4}} and 8.\textit{\texttt{e4}}, transpose directly into that chapter, to lines A and B1 respectively. There remains one other reasonable move to look at:

8.g3 \textit{\texttt{e6}}

Chasing the white queen away should help Black to get in the desirable ...\textit{\texttt{e5}}, although it might also be interesting to try 8.\textit{\texttt{d6\#}} 9.\textit{\texttt{g2}} \textit{\texttt{c5}}.

9.\textit{\texttt{a4}}

Another option is 9.\textit{\texttt{d3}} but Black is doing well after: 9...\textit{\texttt{c5}} 10.\textit{\texttt{g2}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} 11.\textit{\texttt{dxc5}} \textit{\texttt{a5\#}} (also quite attractive is 11...\textit{\texttt{xd3}} 12.\textit{\texttt{exd3}} Ahrendt – Gerlach, corr. 1973, and now 12...\textit{\texttt{d5\#}} is at least equal for Black) 12.\textit{\texttt{b5}} \textit{\texttt{xb5}} 13.\textit{\texttt{xb5}} \textit{\texttt{ac8}} 14.0–0 \textit{\texttt{e4}} White will have to play accurately in order to avoid being worse.

9...\textit{\texttt{d5}} 10.\textit{\texttt{g2}}

10...\textit{\texttt{c6}} is also playable.

11.\textit{\texttt{xd5}} \textit{\texttt{xd5}} 12.\textit{\texttt{dxc5}} \textit{\texttt{a6}} 13.\textit{\texttt{a3}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 14.0–0 \textit{\texttt{b5}}

The calm 14...\textit{\texttt{fd8}} deserves attention.

15.\textit{\texttt{c6\#}}

White should be satisfied with: 15.\textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{xd4}} 16.\textit{\texttt{xd5}} \textit{\texttt{e6}} 17.\textit{\texttt{f3}} \textit{\texttt{xc5}} The game is fairly equal.

15...\textit{\texttt{dxc6}} 16.\textit{\texttt{xe7 fxe8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{h4 e4}} 18.\textit{\texttt{f4}} \textit{\texttt{xe2}}

Black was clearly better in Adianto – Formanek, Liechtenstein 1992.
B) 5.g3

I have never faced this move in practice, but in my database I found over 600 games where it has been played.

5...dxc4 6.\textit{a}4\dagger

The alternative is:

6.\textit{g}2 c6!

It is already not so easy for White to regain the pawn. The arising position slightly resembles some Catalan lines where White plays for compensation for the pawn, but I believe that Black's dark-squared bishop makes a big difference here – from g7 it has a lot of influence on the centre.

7.\textit{e}5

7.0-0 0-0 and 7.a4 0-0 8.0-0 transpose to lines C and C2 respectively of Chapter 5.

7...\textit{g}4!

With this thematic reaction we immediately feel the influence of the dark-squared bishop.

8.\textit{x}g4 \textit{x}g4 9.d5 0-0 10.h3

10.0-0 is another transposition to Chapter 5, this time to the note to White's ninth move in line C3.

This was Hvenekilde – Knudsen, Aarhus 1984, and now I like:

10...\textit{c}8\dagger

Black is intending to exchange on d5 next move, so the bishop is better placed on c8 rather than d7.

11.0-0 cxd5 12.\textit{d}xd5

After 12.\textit{xd}5  \textit{xd}5 13.\textit{xd}5 (13.\textit{xd}5 \textit{c}6 is just a pawn up for Black) 13...\textit{c}6

14.\textit{g}2 \textit{e}6, Black is better.

12...\textit{c}6

Black is doing well, particularly after:

13.\textit{a}4 \textit{x}h3\dagger

6...\textit{d}7 7.\textit{xc}4

After 7.\textit{g}2 0-0 White is obliged to play 8.\textit{xc}4 anyway, returning to the main line.

7...\textit{b}6

White has to choose between two different retreats: B1) 8.b3 or B2) 8.\textit{d}3.

B1) 8.b3 0-0 9.\textit{g}2 \textit{c}6
10.e3
Other moves do not promise White much either:

10.d5 This pawn sacrifice doesn’t work here: 10...\textit{ex}c3\textsuperscript{+} 11.bx3 \textit{Wxd}5 12.0-0 \textit{q}e6 White had no compensation for the pawn in Niebaum – Krueger, Essen 2006.

10.0-0 \textit{Wxd}4 11.\textit{Wxd}4 \textit{Wxd}4 12.\textit{Wd}1 (after 12.\textit{b}5 Docekal – Dvorak, Znojmo 2002, Black should play 12...\textit{c}5!N 13.\textit{e}e3 \textit{Wc}4 and White does not have enough compensation for the pawn) 12...\textit{g}4 13.\textit{f}3 Schwartzman – Martinovsky, Saint John 1988. Here 13...\textit{f}5N 14.\textit{f}4 c6 would make it difficult for White to demonstrate compensation.

10...\textit{e}6 11.\textit{Wd}1 \textit{c}4
An important idea, disrupting White’s development.

12.\textit{Wd}2

12...\textit{d}3!
This is stronger than: 12...\textit{a}6 13.\textit{Wd}4 e5 14.d5 \textit{b}4 15.\textit{c}5 White had achieved an acceptable game in Mascarinas – Djuric, Subotica 1984.

13.\textit{a}3 13.\textit{f}1 \textit{xf}1 14.\textit{xf}1 e5 is obviously very good for Black.

13...e5N
Not so clear is 13...\textit{g}x\textit{d}4 Machacek – Jansa, Havirov 1970, and now White should take the bishop: 14.\textit{xd}4N \textit{Wxd}4 15.\textit{c}e4\textsuperscript{+} \textit{c}2\textsuperscript{+} 16.\textit{Wxc}2 \textit{Wxc}2 17.\textit{xc}2 With three pieces for the queen, I would rather be White here.

14.d5 \textit{d}4!

15.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 16.\textit{de}4
16.\textit{ce}4 f5\textsuperscript{+} is dangerous for White.

16...\textit{x}c3 17.\textit{Wxd}3 \textit{xb}2 18.\textit{x}b2 \textit{xb}2 19.\textit{xb}1 \textit{g}7 20.0-0
White has some compensation for being a pawn down, but it’s obvious that he is fighting for a draw.

B2) 8.\textit{d}3 0-0 9.\textit{g}2

After 9.\textit{f}4 Black can quickly arrange counterplay in the centre, and the white queen on d3 is quite vulnerable: 9...\textit{a}6 10.e4 (White cannot complete his development normally, since 10.\textit{f}2 c5 puts his centre under too much pressure) 10...c5 11.d5
10...\(\text{xd}4!\)
A convincing way to solve any opening problems.

11.\(\text{xd}4\) e5 12.\(\text{db}5!!\)
This may look at first sight to be the most challenging continuation, but objectively better is 12.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 13.\(\text{d}1\), which leads to an only slightly inferior position: 13...\(\text{c}7\) 14.0-0 \(\text{c}5\) (14...\(\text{c}6\)?N also gives Black a comfortable game) 15.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 16.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{f}5\) 17.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{e}6\) Massimini Gerbino – Krueger, e-mail 2003.

12...\(\text{xd}3\) 13.\(\text{exd}3\) \(\text{exf}4\) 14.\(\text{xc}7\) \(\text{xb}8\)
Black has a strong initiative.

15.0-0
15...\(\text{xf}4\) runs into 15...\(\text{d}8\) 16.0-0 \(\text{g}4\).

15...\(\text{fxg}3\) 16.\(\text{hxg}3\) \(\text{d}8\)
Black enjoys a clear advantage, thanks to his bishop pair and superior pawn structure, Hübner – Topalov, Dortmund 1996.

**Conclusion**

The rare fifth moves we looked at in this chapter should not trouble Black unduly. In particular, if White wants to enter the Fianchetto System then I don’t think that the move order featured in this chapter with 5.g3 is the most accurate; after 5...\(\text{dxc}4\) 6.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{fd}7\) 7.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{b}6\) Black quickly obtains good play against the white centre.
Variation Index

1. d4  \( \text{\textit{f6}} \) 2. c4  \( g6 \) 3.  \( \text{\textit{c3}} \)  d5 4.  \( \text{\textit{f3}} \)  \( \text{\textit{g7}} \) 5.  \( \text{\textit{g5}} \)  \( \text{\textit{e4}} \) 6.  \( \text{\textit{h4}} \)

6...\( \text{\textit{xc3}} \) 7. bxc3 dxc4

A) 8. e3
B) 8. \( \text{\textit{a4}} \uparrow \\
   \text{B1)} 8...\( \text{\textit{d7}} \uparrow \\
   \text{B2)} 8...\( \text{\textit{d7}} \) 9. \( \text{\textit{xc4}} \) b6!
   \text{B21)} 10. \( \text{\textit{g3}} \)
   \text{B22)} 10. \( \text{\textit{b3}} \) \( \text{\textit{a6}} \) 11. e3 \( \text{\textit{xf1}} \)
   \text{B221)} 12. \( \text{\textit{xf1}} \)
   \text{B222)} 12. \( \text{\textit{xf1}} \) 0–0 13. \( \text{\textit{e2}} \) c5
   \text{B2221)} 14. \( \text{\textit{fd1}} \)
   \text{B2222)} 14. dxc5

B21) after 14. d5

B221) after 17. \( \text{\textit{xc4}} \)

B2221) after 15. dxc5
Chapter 25 – 6.h4

1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3.d3 d5 4.e3 g7 5.g5 e4

6.h4

The most popular 6.cxd5 will be covered in the following chapter.

The other main alternative is 6.f4 xc3 7.bxc3 c5, reaching a position that was examined in Chapter 19 (note to White's seventh move).

6...xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4

White now chooses between A) 8.e3 and B) 8.a4.

A) 8.e3 b5

Black can of course play 8...e6 transposing to Chapter 23. However White's move order allows Black the option of defending the c4-pawn in a different way, and it is certainly tempting to take advantage of this opportunity.

9.a4 c6 10.d2 a6 11.e2 0–0 12.f3

12...a7

This move has been played in all the games to reach this position, but I fail to understand why 12...b7 has never occurred in practice. I guess everybody is worried about 13.e4, but I don't see anything wrong with 13...e8 (after 13...d7? 14.d6 White regains the pawn with advantage) 14.c5 e8 followed by ...d7. It seems to me that the onus is on White to demonstrate sufficient compensation.

13.0–0

We have already examined this type of position in the note on 9.d2 at the start of Chapter 23 (page 276), but here Black has an improved version since he hasn't wasted time defending the c-pawn with ...e6.

13.e5

This is a well-known idea to provoke the move e3-e4, which significantly reduces the pressure on Black's queenside.
14.e4
Another option for White is:
14...e5
Black can avoid offering the repetition by playing 14...b6 with a complicated game.
15.b3 d5 16.d2
Black has no problems after 16.c5 d7.
16...d3 17.g4?!
Objectively there was no reason for White to avoid the repetition.
17...c7!
As always, it is a great pleasure to see how Kasparov handles the middlegame.
18.b3 cxb3 19.axb3 c5 20.g3 e5! 21.axb5 c4 22.e4 axb5
Black was clearly better in Sorin – Kasparov, Buenos Aires (simul) 1997.

14...e8
14...e6 is also playable, but I prefer not to block the e-pawn.

15...b1?!

Black now forcefully takes over the initiative.

15...c5! 16.axb5 b7! 17.xc4 cxd4 18.e5
b5 19.d3 d7 20.e1 e5
Delchev – Karr, Marseille 2010.

B) 8.a4+?

I would like to look at two options for Black, B1) 8...d7? and B2) 8...d7.

B1) 8...d7?

This is the more combative choice, although objectively it may be weaker than blocking with the queen.

9.e3
White aims to recapture the c4-pawn with his bishop. Not so good is:
9...xc4 c5 10.e3 a5!
Black has an ideal game.
11.e1
Other possible moves are:

a) 11.e2 cxd4 (Black can also consider 11...b6N 12.b5† b5 13.xb5† d7 with a good endgame) 12.exd4 b6
13.b5† (better is 13.c7 0–0 14.0–0 d7!) 13...xb5 14.xb5† d7 15.e1
Black's superior pawn structure promises him the better chances, Heinsohn – Von Alvensleben, Germany 1989.

b) Relatively best may be 11.d2N in order to recapture with the c-pawn, but Black is certainly doing fine after 11...cxd4
12.cxd4 e5!
11...cxd4 12.xd4
Not a good sign for White, as his pawn structure will be weak in the long term.

12...\textit{c}5! 13.\textit{b}5 \textit{e}5! 14.\textit{g}3 \textit{xc}4 15.\textit{xc}4 0-0 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{xg}3 17.\textit{hxg}3 \textit{c}5+

Black was positionally better in Cebalo – Avrukh, Biel 2008.

9...0-0 10.\textit{a}3

Other continuations do not pose Black any problems:

10...\textit{xc}4 \textit{c}5 11.\textit{e}2 \textit{cxd}4 12.\textit{exd}4 (after 12.\textit{xd}4 \textit{a}5† 13.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}5! Black has an initiative) 12...\textit{b}6 13.\textit{c}5 \textit{d}5 14.0-0 \textit{g}4 Black was better in Bogner – Romanov, Neustadt 2008.

10.\textit{xc}4 \textit{b}6 11.\textit{b}3 \textit{xc}4 12.\textit{xc}4 \textit{b}6 13.0-0 \textit{b}7 14.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}5 15.\textit{fd}1 \textit{cxd}4 16.\textit{xd}4 \textit{d}7 Black is slightly better thanks to his bishop pair, Beilfuss – Giemsa, Germany 1991.

After 12.\textit{e}5 \textit{b}7 13.0-0 \textit{xd}6! 14.\textit{b}3 \textit{e}6 15.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}5 16.\textit{ad}1 \textit{ac}8 Black had equalized in Raetsky – Timofeev, Sochi 2005, and now the inaccurate 17.e4? let him take over the initiative: 17...\textit{xd}4 18.\textit{xd}4 \textit{eh}5! 19.\textit{h}1 \textit{c}7 20.\textit{e}1 \textit{xe}5 21.\textit{dx}e5 \textit{xe}5 White does not have enough for the pawn.

12...\textit{b}7 13.\textit{fd}1 \textit{d}6 14.\textit{b}3

This occurred in V. Georgiev – Swinkels, Ohrid 2009, and here Black should play the calm:

14...\textit{e}6N 15.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}7=

The position is complex.

B2) 8...\textit{d}7
The main theoretical continuation.

9...\textxc4 b6!
Black wants to use the slightly misplaced white queen in order to win a tempo with ...\texta6.

We shall now examine two independent lines, \textbf{B21}) 10...\textg3 and \textbf{B22}) 10...\textb3. In practice 10.e3 is frequently played, but then 10...\texta6 11...\textb3 is just a transposition to B22.

\textbf{B21}) 10...\textg3 c5 11...\texte5

The alternative 11.e3 \texta6 12...\textb3 \textxf1 13...\textxf1 \textc6 is just an inferior version of line B222 for White. After 14...\texte2 \texta5 15...\textb2 0–0 Black has the better game, Sahovic – Dorfman, Lvov 1984.

11...\textxe5 12...\textxe5
White's bishop pair is not significant here, since Black will obtain a serious lead in development.

12...\texta6 13...\textb3 0–0 14.d5
White has also tried: 14.dxc5 \textc6 (the immediate 14...\textf5 also deserves attention) 15...\textd1 \textf5 16...\textc7

This position occurred in Kantsler – Avrukh, Israel 2002, and here I missed a very nice idea: 16...\textxc5N 17...\textd5 \textc4! 18...\textc5 \textxb3 19...\textxc6? \textd5\textplus White's rook is surprisingly trapped on c6.

14...\textf5\textplus
This is a strong and forcing novelty. Black's play in the two previous games to reach this position was rather unconvincing.
15.\(\text{g3}\)

Clearly White cannot be happy with:
15.\(\text{xxb8}\) \(\text{xb8}\) 16.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{fd8}\) Black's lead in development looks scary.

15...\(\text{c4!}\) 16.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 17.\(\text{d1}\)

This is better than: 17.\(\text{xb8}\) \(\text{xb8}\) 18.\(\text{xa6}\) \(\text{bd8}\) 19.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{d2}\)† 20.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 21.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{d2}\) Black's c-pawn should decide the issue.

17...\(\text{b7}\) 18.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{b5}\)

I do not believe that White has full compensation for the pawn.

B22) 10.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{a6}\) 11.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{xf1}\)

Much of the time, both of White's recaptures will come to the same thing, but there are a few possible divergences, so we shall look at B221) 12.\(\text{xf1}\) and B222) 12.\(\text{xf1}\).

B221) 12.\(\text{xf1}\) 0–0

13.\(\text{e2}\)

Bringing the queen's rook to d1 did not prove successful: 13.\(\text{d1}\)†! \(\text{c6}\) 14.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{a5}\) 15.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{e8}\) (15...\(\text{d5}\)† is also promising for Black) 16.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{ac8}\) 17.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{d5}\) 18.\(\text{a4}\)

Cifuentes Parada - Rodriguez Guerrero, Dos Hermanas 2005.

Now the simple 18...\(\text{c4}\)N 19.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{a5}\) 20.\(\text{b1}\) \(\text{b8}\)! followed by ...\(\text{b5}\), would give Black excellent play.

13...\(\text{c5}\) 14.\(\text{xc5}\)

More common is 14.\(\text{hd1}\), transposing to B2221.

14...\(\text{a6}\) 15.\(\text{ad1}\)

This seems illogical, since it is not clear what White intends to do with his king's rook. The more natural 15.\(\text{hd1}\) leads to B2222.

15...\(\text{c7}\) 16.\(\text{c6}\) \(\text{c5}\)!

Black is not satisfied with 16...\(\text{xc6}\) 17.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{e8}\) 18.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{ac8}\) with equality.

17.\(\text{c4}\)

17...\(\text{e8}\)!N
302 5.\textit{g5}

This is stronger than: 17...e5 18.\textit{g3} \textit{wxc6} 19.\textit{axe5} \textit{axe5} 20.\textit{xc6} \textit{wgc2} 21.\textit{g4}
With mutual chances, Stefanova – Cmilyte, Dagomys 2009.

18.\textit{d4} e5 19.\textit{g3} \textit{we7}
Black regains the pawn with a clear positional advantage.

\textbf{B222) 12.\textit{xf1} 0–0 13.\textit{e2} c5}

Here we have the main crossroads for White in this variation: \textbf{B2221) 14.\textit{fd1}} or \textbf{B2222) 14.\textit{xc5}}.

\textbf{B2221) 14.\textit{fd1} \textit{c6}!}

14...\textit{xd4} 15.\textit{xd4} \textit{c6} is more frequently played, but I rather like the text move.

15.\textit{xc5}
This looks more critical than 15.\textit{ab1}, as played in Cramling – Howell, Hinckley 2009. Here I like the following line for Black: 15...\textit{a5}N 16.\textit{b5} \textit{c6}! 17.\textit{f1} \textit{xd4} 18.\textit{xc6} \textit{fc8} Black has good Grünfeld play.

15...\textit{f5}!!N
I believe that this is stronger than: 15...\textit{c8} 16.\textit{ab1}!! From here Black has suffered a bit in practice.

16.\textit{d5}
Black has easy equality after 16.\textit{xb6} \textit{axb6} 17.\textit{f1} \textit{c5} 18.\textit{a4} \textit{fc8} 19.\textit{d4} \textit{e6} 20.\textit{ab1} \textit{c5} 21.\textit{xb6} \textit{xc3}, as White is also losing the a-pawn.

16...\textit{e4}!
16...\textit{a5} 17.\textit{d1} \textit{e6} is very close to equality, but Black would still need to be accurate after 18.\textit{d7}.

17.\textit{xb6} \textit{axb6} 18.\textit{ad1} \textit{e6} 19.\textit{d7} \textit{a5} 20.\textit{b4} \textit{c4}
20...\textit{c4}† also equalizes.

21.\textit{f1} \textit{a4}! 22.\textit{b3} \textit{a3}=
White cannot profitably avoid the repetition.

\textbf{B2222) 14.\textit{xc5}}

This wins a pawn but seriously damages White's pawn structure.

14...\textit{a6}!
Black nearly always obtains good compensation in the Grünfeld when White captures the c5-pawn and is left with his a2- and c3-pawns.

15.\textit{fd1}
15...\(\text{b}7!\)
An important point here is that Black shouldn’t play: 15...\(\text{b}7?!\) 16.c6! \(\text{xc}6\)
17.\(\text{xe}7 \text{fe}8\) 18.\(\text{a}3 \text{xc}3\) 19.\(\text{xc}3 \text{xc}3\)
20.\(\text{ac}1 \text{b}4\) 21.\(\text{b}2=\) White went on to win an instructive endgame in Carlsen – Eljanov, Wijk aan Zee 2008.

16.\(\text{xb}6 \text{AXB}6\) 17.\(\text{g}3\)
This seems best, as other moves can lead to an advantage for Black:

17.\(\text{ab}1?! \text{c}5\) 18.\(\text{c}4\) This was the game Mascaro March – Llaneza Vega, Villava 2009, and now I found the following idea: 18...\(\text{a}4N\) 19.\(\text{b}4 \text{b}5!\) 20.\(\text{xb}5 \text{e}4!\) The point. 21.\(\text{xe}4 \text{xe}4\) 22.\(\text{Ed}7 \text{xc}3\) 23.\(\text{xe}7 \text{e}8\) It is not clear whether White can hold this.

17.\(\text{a}4\) 18.\(\text{b}4 \text{a}5!\) 19.\(\text{g}3 \text{e}5\) 20.\(\text{d}2?!\) \(\text{fa}8\) 21.\(\text{c}4 \text{a}4\) White was facing difficulties in Lautier – Ivanchuk, Terrassa 1991.

17...\(\text{c}6\)
This is an attempt to avoid the inevitable draw which might arise after: 17...\(\text{xc}3\)
18.\(\text{xc}3 \text{xc}3\) 19.\(\text{ac}1 \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}\) Ibragimov – Volzhin, Ubeda 1996.

18.\(\text{f}1\)
It is too risky for White to play 18.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{xb}2\) 19.\(\text{xb}6 \text{c}8\). The exposed position of the white king gives Black an edge.

18...\(\text{c}5\) 19.\(\text{d}5 \text{xd}5\) 20.\(\text{xd}5 \text{xc}3\)
21.\(\text{c}1 \text{f}6\) 22.\(\text{c}2=\)
The position was equal in Bosboom Lanchava – Gustafsson, Amsterdam 2001.

Conclusion

Following 6.\(\text{h}4 \text{xc}3\) \(7.\text{bxc}3 \text{dxc}4\) White has to decide how to go about recovering the c4-pawn. After A) 8.e3 Black can keep the pawn with 8...\(\text{b}5\), when it is not clear that White can obtain enough compensation. Therefore it is safer for White to regain the pawn immediately with B) 8.\(\text{a}4\)†. However Black can then choose between B1) 8...\(\text{d}7?!\) and B2) 8...\(\text{d}7\), and can reasonably expect to achieve equal chances in either line.
Chapter 26

5.\( \square g5 \)

6.cxd5

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \square f6 \) 2.c4 g6 3.\( \square c3 \) d5 4.\( \square f3 \) \( \square g7 \) 5.\( \square g5 \) \( \triangle e4 \) 6.cxd5

6...\( \square xg5 \) 7.\( \square xg5 \) e6

A) 8.\( \square a4 \dagger \)

B) 8.\( \square d2 \) h6

B1) 9.\( \square f3 \) exd5

B11) 10.\( \square e3 \dagger \)

B12) 10.b4

B2) 9.\( \square h3 \) exd5

B21) 10.\( \square f4 \)

B22) 10.\( \square e3 \dagger \) \( \square f8 \) 11.\( \square f4 \)

B221) 11...c6

B222) 11...c5

C) 8.\( \square f3 \) exd5 9.e3 0–0

C1) 10.b4

C2) 10.\( \square e2 \) c6 11.0–0 \( \square e6 \) 12.b4 \( \square d7 \)

C21) 13.a4

C22) 13.\( \square c1 \)

A) after 18.d5

B12) note to 12.\( \square e2 \)

C22) after 16.axb5
Chapter 26 - 6.cxd5

1.d4 Øf6 2.c4 g6 3.Øc3 d5 4.Øf3 Øg7
5.Øg5 Øe4 6.cxd5 Øxg5 7.Øxg5 e6

White has a wide choice here. Before examining the three main lines, A) 8.Øa4†, B) 8.Ød2 and C) 8.Øf3, we shall take a brief look at three minor options:

8.dxe6? is adventurous, but not correct:
8...Øxg5 9.exf7† Øxf7 10.e3 Øe8 11.Øc4† Øf8 12.0-0

This occurred in Rossen – R. Pert, Copenhagen 2002, and now the simple 12...c6N 13.Øf3† Øf6 14.Øg3 Ød7 would keep a clear advantage for Black.

8.h4 is hardly sensible either: 8...exd5 9.e3 0-0 10.Ød3 c5! Black strikes first.

11.Øxh7 cxd4 12.exd4 (after 12.Øxf8 dxc3 Black is much better) 12...Øxh7 13.h5 Øg8 14.hxg6 Øg5 15.e2 Øc6 Black was winning in Sjodahl – T. Ernst, Sundsvall 1989.

8.Øh3 exd5 9.Øf4
This is not very impressive; White obtains an inferior version of line B21.

9...0-0 10.e3
After 10.g3 Øe8 11.Øg2 Black can afford to play actively: 11...c6 (11...c6 is perfectly playable too) 12.0-0 Øxd4 13.Øfxd4! c6 14.Øf4 Øg4 15.f3 Ød7 The opening up of the position clearly favours the bishop pair, and Black has a clear advantage, Kovacevic – Jansa, Amsterdam 1973.

10...c5
If Black manages to get his dark-squared bishop involved then White can easily stand worse.

11.dxc5 d4 12.exd4 Øxd4 13.Øe2 Øc6 14.0-0
This was Hebert – Gutman, Hastings 1984, and now Black should play the natural:
15...\( \text{Kc}5 \) 16.Ec1 3g7
Black retains the better chances, thanks to his bishop pair.

**A) 8.\( \text{Kxa}4 \)**

8...c6
This is a clearer line than 8...d7 9.Eb3 \( \text{Kxg}5 \) 10.EXb7 0–0 0–0 with great complications.

9.dxc6 \( \text{Kxc}6 \) 10.Ef3 3d7 11.Ed1
It is dangerous for White to play:
11.0–0–0 0–0 12.\( \text{Kxa}3 \)

12...b5! 13.Exb5 3b8
Black has a serious initiative.
14.Ee4 3b6 15.Ed6 3b4
15...\( \text{Kxd}4 \) is not bad either.
Black had emerged with a clear positional edge in Lindsalu – Trubetsko, e-mail 2009.

11...\( \text{Ke}6 \) 12.Ed2 3xd4 13.0–0–0 3c6
14.3xd4 3d8 15.e3 e5 16.3e1 3xd4
17.exd4† 3f8 18.d5

18...d7!?
I find the text quite an interesting attempt to avoid the drawish: 18...\( \text{Kxd}5 \) 19.\( \text{Kxd}5 \) 3xd5 20.Ec7† 3xc7 21.\( \text{Kxd}5 \)† 3d6 22.3xb6 axb6
This totally level endgame has occurred in more than a dozen games.

19.\( \text{Ke}3 \)
After 19.\( \text{Kb}1 \) 3c8 20.\( \text{Ka}1 \) 3f6 21.\( \text{Kc}1 \) 3g7 the strength of the dark-squared bishop secures Black excellent compensation for the pawn.

19...\( \text{Kxe}3 \)
Here too, Black can go for a drawish line:
19...h5 20.\( \text{Kb}1 \) 3c8 21.\( \text{Kc}1 \) 3xc3 22.\( \text{Kxc}3 \) 3xd5=

20.fxe3 3c8 21.3d2 3c5 22.e4 3e7
Black has good compensation for the pawn and is definitely not worse.

**B) 8.\texttt{d2} h6**

The approach I recommend here is quite similar to what I give against 8.\texttt{f3} in line C below. Personally I have never liked 8...exd5 9.\texttt{e3}† g8 10.\texttt{f4} \texttt{f6} 11.h4; although it is considered perfectly playable for Black, it requires a lot of theoretical knowledge.

White has a choice of retreats for the knight: B1) 9.\texttt{f3} or B2) 9.\texttt{h3}.

**B1) 9.\texttt{f3} exd5**

We shall examine B11) 10.\texttt{e3}† and B12) 10.\texttt{b4}, but first there are a couple of other options:

10.e3 is frequently played, but is not of independent significance, since White will soon follow up with b2-b4. For instance, 10...0-0 11.\texttt{c2} c6 12.0-0 \texttt{e6} 13.\texttt{b4} \texttt{d7} transposes to the main line of B12.

10.g3 0-0 11.\texttt{g2} The kingside fianchetto against the black pawn chain b7-c6-d5 does not offer White much, for example: 11...c6 12.0-0 \texttt{d7} 13.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{e8} 14.e3 \texttt{b6} 15.b3 a5 16.\texttt{e1} h5? 17.\texttt{d3} h4? White is very solid, but Black's position is definitely the more promising, Scekic – Golod, Schaumburg 2006.

**B11) 10.\texttt{e3}†**

This doesn't make much sense in my opinion, since Black is happy to play:

10...\texttt{e6}

11.g3

It is a mistake to be tempted by: 11.\texttt{c5}? (threatening 12.\texttt{xg6}) 11...c5! Black immediately strikes in the centre and takes the initiative. 12.0-0 0-0 13.\texttt{exd4} 0-0 14.\texttt{d1} \texttt{c6} 15.\texttt{xc6} bxc6 The strength of the bishop down the long diagonal gave Black a decisive queenside attack in Jorgensen – Paaske, Copenhagen 2000.

11...0-0 12.\texttt{g2} c5 13.\texttt{d2} \texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{xc5} d4?!

Black goes for complications; instead 14...\texttt{a5} 15.0-0 \texttt{xc5} 16.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{ac8} 17.e3 \texttt{a5} would lead to just a small plus for Black.

15.\texttt{a4}

Black also keeps the initiative after 15.\texttt{e4} \texttt{d5} 16.\texttt{d6} b6.

15...\texttt{c4} 16.0-0 \texttt{b5} 17.b3 \texttt{d3} 18.\texttt{c3}
We have been following Beliavsky – Sutovsky, Heraklion 2007. Black should now play:

18...dxc2\textsuperscript{N} 19.\textit{axb5} exf1=\textit{w} 20.\textit{xf1} b6

Black has a serious advantage.

B12) 10.b4 0–0 11.e3 \textit{\&e6}

Black develops normally; his set-up will include ...c6 and ...\textit{\&d7}.

12.\textit{\&e2}

White may also try:

12.\textit{\&d3} \textit{\&d7} 13.0–0 c6 14.a4

Black is ready to meet 14.b5 with:

14...c5! 15.h3 (or 15.dxc5 \textit{\&xc5} 16.\textit{\&d4} \textit{\&a5} 17.\textit{\&ac1} \textit{\&ac8=} 15...c4 16.\textit{\&c2} f5

White has no prospects for activity, while Black can play on the kingside, Peltz – Benesa, Chicago 1993.

14...a6

Black could consider: 14...a5?! 15.\textit{\&ab1} (as we have already seen, 15.b5 can be comfortably met by 15...c5) 15...\textit{axb4} 16.\textit{\&xb4} b6 The position is complex and unclear.

15.\textit{\&e2}

White has also played 15.b5 \textit{axb5} (also good is 15...c5?) 16.\textit{\&b5} \textit{\&xa1} 17.\textit{\&xa1} c5 18.\textit{\&e2} Jakab – Farkas, Budapest 1998. Now 18...\textit{\&g4=} would have been rather unpleasant for White.

15...\textit{\&e7} 16.h3 g5 17.\textit{\&ac1}

This occurred in Barsov – Rowson, York 2000. The logical continuation of Black's strategy would be:

17...f5

Depending on circumstances, Black may go for ...f4 or ...g4. Undoubtedly Black has the more promising position.

12.\textit{\&d7} 13.0–0 c6 14.\textit{\&ab1} \textit{\&e8}

Black carries out an original idea, although I also like 14...a6, playing in the style of the previous note.

15.\textit{\&fc1} \textit{\&b8}?

Black's bishop may turn out to be useful on this diagonal.
Black was ready to meet 16.b5 with 16...\textit{a}5.

16...\textit{a}5

Black wants to play ...b5 followed by ...\textit{b}6, without worrying about \textit{a}4-c5 hitting his bishop on e6.

17.\textit{d}3 \textit{g}4 18.\textit{e}1 b5 19.\textit{b}2 \textit{b}6 20.\textit{x}c6 \textit{c}4! 21.\textit{x}c4 dxc4 22.\textit{c}2 a6!

White's rook has invaded the black camp, but most probably he will end up losing the exchange.

23.\textit{d}1 \textit{f}5 24.\textit{c}2 \textit{e}4

Black was clearly better in Khmelniker - Greenfeld, Tel Aviv 2002.

B2) 9.\textit{h}3 exd5

White now chooses between B21) 10.\textit{f}4 and B22) 10.\textit{f}3.

B21) 10.\textit{f}4 0-0 11.c3

11.g3 has been played quite a few times: 11...\textit{e}8 12.\textit{g}2 \textit{c}6! 13.c3 \textit{xd}4 14.0-0-0 \textit{e}6 15.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xf}4! 16.gxf4 (or 16.exf4 \textit{f}5?) 16...\textit{e}7 Black had an edge in Rajkovic - Ceschia, Caorle 1982.

11...c5 12.dxc5 d4
13.exd4
Compared to the line with 8.Qh3 that we mentioned at the start of the chapter (page 305), White has an extra option here: 13.0-0-0 dxc3 Black may consider other moves, but this equalizes comfortably. 14.Qxd8 cxb2† 15.Qb1 Qf5† 16.Qd3 Marchand – Feher, Eger 1997. Now the simplest is:
16...Qxd3† N 17.Qd3 Qc6 18.Qe4 Qac8=
13...Qxd4 14.Qxd4 Qxd4

15.0-0-0
Other possibilities are:
15.Qc4 Qe8† 16.Qd2?! The wrong square. (After the correct 16.Qf1 Qd7 17.Qxc6 Qxc6 18.Qd1 Qxc3 19.Qxc3 Qe6 20.Qxe6 Qxe6 21.Qf4 Qa6 22.Qd2 Qe4 23.Qc2 Qc8 the position is equal.) 16...Qa6 (16...Qxc5 17.Qxg6 Qc6 would give Black slightly the better chances) 17.Qae1 Qd8 18.Qc1 Qb8 19.Qd1 Qg4 20.Qf3? Qe3† 21.Qb1 Qf5† 22.Qd3 Qxc5 White ended up in a very bad position in Renman – Svidler, Copenhagen 1991.
15.Qfd5 Qc6 16.Qe2 (this is too passive; 16.0-0-0 returns to the main line) 16...Qxc5 17.0-0 Liguaard – Macieja, Copenhagen 1996. Now Black should continue with the calm:
17...Qg7N 18.Qfd1 Qb8 19.Qac1 Qd8 The bishop pair gives Black an edge.
15...Qc6 16.Qd5 Qxc5 17.Qe4 Qb6
I believe this is best.
18.Qxb6 axb6 19.Qc4 Qf5 20.Qd6 Qe5 21.Qxf5 Qxc4 22.Qe7† Qg7=
Black has enough activity to compensate for his doubled pawns, Davies – King, Hamar 1982.

B22) 10.Qe3† Qb8 11.Qf4

Black has two very different approaches here, and I have decided to cover them both: B221) 11...Qc6 and B222) 11...c5.

B221) 11...c6
Black first supports his centre and will then slowly solve the problem of his king.
12.Qf3 Qf6
Another plan is: 12...Qg8 13.e3 Qd7 14.Qd3 Qf6 15.h3 Qd6 16.a3 Qd7 17.0-0 h5 Black had obtained a perfectly playable position in Schroll – Wach, Austria 1995.

13.e3
It looks a bit risky to play 13.0-0-0 h5 as
in Penalver - Eksmyr, Sweden 2009. Black threatens \( \ldots \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}6 \), and of course \( 14.e3? \) is impossible due to \( 14...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}4 \).

13...\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}5

An important resource; Black not only plans to activate his dark-squared bishop via \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}6, but also \( ...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}4 \) will come with tempo.

14.h4

White grabs some space on the kingside and prevents the possibility of the \( ...\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}5 \) advance. Previously White had tried: 14.\textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}4 (14...\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}5 15.\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}2 \textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}3 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}4 is possible, but seems rather unclear to me) 15.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\text{f}}5 (15...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}7??) 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}5 \textcolor{blue}{\text{xf}}5 17.\textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}1 \textcolor{red}{\text{h}}4 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\text{h}}x3 Black had equalized comfortably in Guramishvili – Karavade, Yerevan 2007, which was agreed drawn here.

14...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}4

White is okay after 14...\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}6 15.\textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}3 \textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}3 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}3. Black’s bishop pair is not a significant advantage, because the coming \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}3-\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}4 will leave the dark-squared bishop somewhat passive.

15.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}7 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}2

After 16.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3 I intended to play 16...\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}8 17.0-0 \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}8 18.\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}}1 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}8 followed by \( ...\textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}6 \), with balanced play.

16...\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}5?!

Also fine is 16...\textcolor{blue}{\text{xe}}2 followed by 17...\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}7 and 18...\textcolor{blue}{\text{f}}6.

17.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}1

White didn’t like 17.0-0 in view of 17...\textcolor{red}{\text{dd}}8. The threat of \( ...\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}6 \) looks unpleasant, but White can still maintain the balance with: 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}2 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}6 19.\textcolor{red}{\text{g}}3 \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}7 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3=

17...\textcolor{blue}{\text{b}}6

A useful move, principally defending against possible sacrifices on \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}5, but also looking to improve the knight with \( ...\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}8-\text{d}6 \).

18.\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}4

White starts his play on the queenside, but it is already somewhat risky. It was still not too late to play 18.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3 with equality.

18...\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}6

I believe that it is useful for Black to swap the \textcolor{red}{\text{a}}-pawns in order to activate his queen’s rook.

19.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}4 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}7 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}5

The tactical idea 20.a5?! \textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}8 21.\textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}xd5?! doesn’t work: 21...\textcolor{red}{\text{xd}}5 22.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}8! (but not 22...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}6?? 23.\textcolor{blue}{\text{xc}}8†++)

20...\textcolor{red}{\text{xb}}5 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{xb}}5 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}6

White is starting to experience problems
with the defence of his h-pawn, Markos – Avrukh, Germany 2009.

**B222)** 11...c5

Undoubtedly the most challenging continuation.

12.dxc5

Less popular is 12...f3 cxd4 13...cxd5 g8 when Black has good chances for an advantage. For example: 14.e4 (or 14.c1 c6 15.b4 g5! 16.h5 c5 17...g3 xd5 18.xg7 xg7 19.c5 e4 20.xc5† xe5 21.xe5 c6 and the vulnerability of the white queenside gave Black the better endgame in Salus – Blees, Lyon 1990) 14...c4

15.d1

White can easily become worse after other moves:

15.exd4 xd4 16.xa6 bxa6 17.0–0–0 (after 17.xd4 xd4 18.0–0–0 c3 19.bxc3 c8 the endgame is very pleasant for Black) 17...xc5 Black had a good position in Damaso – Avrukh, Albufeira Algarve 1999.

15...0–0–0 dxc3! 16.xd8† xd8 17.xd8† c7 18.d4 cxb2† 19.xb2 c5† White will have to fight for the draw.

15...dxc3 16.xd8† xd8 17.d8† c7 18.xh8 cxb2 19.d5† e6

½–½


C) 8...f3 exd5 9.e3
White can play the immediate 9.b4 but then 9...0-0 10.e3 just transposes to C1.

As always I am sceptical about a kingside fianchetto in this variation. Here is one example that I like: 9.g3 0-0 10.fg2 c6 11.0-0 Ec7 12.d2 d7 13.a3 6b6 14.b3 6d7 15.e3 6c8!? 16.6b2 6d6 17.6d2 f5 Black had a nice game in Jackson – Groszpeter, Novi Sad (ol) 1990.

9...0-0

White generally chooses between C1) 10.b4 and C2) 10.6e2, although they often come to the same thing.

C1) 10.b4 c6 11.6c1

11.6e2 6e6 12.0-0 just transposes to C2.

11...a6

11...6e6 followed by ...6d7 is of course playable, and is likely to transpose below.

12.6e2 Ec7 13.6b3 6e6? Illescas has suggested that 13...6g4N is equal.

14.0-0 6d7

15.a4

White has another way to try and generate play on the queenside, but it's harmless: 15.6a4 6a8 16.6c5 6xc5 17.6xc5 (It is surely much more natural to recapture with 17.bxc5N, although 17...6c8! is still slightly better for Black. The b7-pawn is soundly protected, making White's queenside play irrelevant, while Black will slowly advance his kingside pawns.) 17...f5 Black's main idea in this middlegame is to advance ...f5-f4 and get the dark-squared bishop involved in the play. 18.a4 f4 19.6c3 This was Martin – Hoffmann, Seefeld 1998, and now 19...g5N would give Black a serious initiative.

15...6e8

Black can also start a kingside advance immediately by: 15...f5 16.6fe1 g5 17.6d3 g4 18.6d2
This occurred in Toth – Cocozza, Nuoro 1984, and now Black should continue his attack with 18...f4!N. For example: 19.\textit{c}c2 fxe3 20.\textit{x}xh7\textdagger (20.fxe3 \textit{x}h6 also looks promising for Black) 20...\textit{x}h8 21.fxe3 \textit{x}h6 22.\textit{d}d3 g\textdagger 23.hxg3 \textit{g}g4 24.e4 \textit{w}xb4 25.\textit{b}b3 \textit{e}ae8 Black has the better chances.

16.\textit{e}e1?! \newline Better is 16.\textit{f}df1 and Black has only a slight edge.

16...\textit{b}b6 17.\textit{d}d3 \textit{c}c4 18.\textit{f}e1 \textit{f}f5! \newline Black had a clear positional advantage in Franco – Illescas Cordoba, Spain 1997.

C2) 10.\textit{e}e2 c6 11.0–0 \textit{e}e6 12.b4 \textit{d}d7

White has a wide choice in this position. We shall examine the main lines C21) \textbf{13.a4} and C22) \textbf{13.\textit{c}c1}, first let's first take a look at four other possibilities:

13.\textit{b}b3 \textit{e}e7 14.a4 (14.\textit{a}ac1 a6 transposes to line C1 above) 14...f5 (14...\textit{b}b6 deserves attention) 15.\textit{f}e1 (After 15.b5 Waldmann – Krueger, Germany 1992, I like the prophylactic 15...\textit{a}ab8!N 16.a5 f4 17.exf4 \textit{a}xh4 18.\textit{a}ad1 \textit{d}d6. In this complex position, I rate Black chances as being better.) 15.\textit{f}e1 \textit{h}h8 16.\textit{f}f1 g5 17.b5 g4 18.\textit{d}d2 This was Nemet – Peredy, Basle 1999, and now 18...f4!N would offer Black good attacking chances.

13.\textit{a}a4 \textit{e}e7

There is a good alternative in 13...b5 14.\textit{b}b2 and now very logical is: 14...a5! 15.a3 \textit{b}b6 Black has a promising position.

14.\textit{c}c5 \textit{d}xc5 15.bxc5 \textit{e}ae8
We have already seen this idea, centralizing the rook before securing the queenside with ...\_c8.

16.\_a4 a6 17.\_ab1 \_c8 18.\_fe1 f5 19.\_d3 \_f6 20.g3 g5

½–½ Ostermeyer – Brueckner, Germany 1986. Black would be justified in playing on. Although White has a solid position, he is lacking a good plan, whereas Black can continue ...\_g7 and then try to play ...f4 under favourable circumstances.

C21) 13.a4

13...\_c7

The active counter 13...a5!? also comes into consideration: 14.b5 (14.\_b3 axb4 15.\_xb4 b6 looks slightly preferable for Black, although White does have reasonable counterplay on the queenside) 14...c5 15.\_c1 \_c8 (15...c4 reaches a different type of position, but one that is also good for Black) 16.dxc5 This occurred in Antoshin – Jansa, Sochi 1974, and now best is: 16...\_xc5N 17.\_d4 \_b6 18.\_d2 \_c7 Black enjoys the better chances.

14.\_b3 a6 15.b5

15.\_ac1 would transpose into line C1.

15...axb5 16.axb5 c5!

Black is doing well. He needn't worry about:

17.\_xd5 \_xd5 18.\_xd5 \_b6 19.\_g5

Or 19.\_b3 cxd4=.

19...\_f6 20.\_h6 cxd4

Black is clearly better.

C22) 13.\_c1 a6 14.a4

Another option for White is: 14.\_a4 f5 15.g3 g5 16.\_e1 (or 16.h4 h6 17.hxg5 hxg5 18.\_g2 f4 19.exf4 gxf4 20.\_c5 \_xc5 21.bxc5 Raetsky – Tukmakov, Biel 1995, and now 21...\_xf3 22.\_xf3 \_d7 23.\_h1 \_f5! 24.\_d3 \_ae8 would give Black the better chances) 16...f4 17.exf4 gxf4 18.\_g4

This happened in Raetsky – Liss, Biel 1993, and now Black should play: 18...\_f6N
19.\textit{xe6}^+ \textit{xe6} 20.\textit{c5} \textit{xc5} 21.\textit{bxc5} \textit{ae8}

Black has some advantage.

14...\textit{e7} 15.\textit{b5}

15.\textit{wb3} is another transposition to line C1.

15...\textit{axb5} 16.\textit{axb5}

\textbf{Conclusion}

Of White's eighth move options, A) 8.\textit{wa4}^+ is not too threatening. Black should equalize easily, although the resulting positions can be very drawish; perhaps 18...\textit{d7}?!N in the main line can keep some life in the game.

After 8.\textit{d2} \textit{h6} 9.\textit{h3} \textit{exd5} 10.\textit{e3}^+ \textit{f8}

11.\textit{f4} the displacement of the black king should not be too worrying. With B221) 11...\textit{c6} Black aims to unravel slowly, but his long-term prospects seem good; however if that is not to your taste then B222) 11...\textit{c5} offers a more direct route to equal chances.

The lines B1) 8.\textit{d2} \textit{h6} 9.\textit{f3} and C) 8.\textit{f3}

tend to be quite similar, often leading to a strategical battle between White's minority attack on the queenside and Black's kingside attack. Matters are not entirely clear, but my view is that in most lines it is Black's attack that is the more dangerous.

17.\textit{dxc5} \textit{xc5} 18.\textit{d4} \textit{d6} 19.\textit{g4} \textit{f6}

20.\textit{xe6} \textit{fxe6}

Black stands slightly better.
Russian System

Variation Index

1. d4 \( \text{d6} \) 2. c4 g6 3. c3 d5 4. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{g7} \) 5. \( \text{b3} \) dxc4 6. \( \text{xc4} \) 0–0 7. e4

7... \( \text{d6} \)

A) 8. d5?! 318
B) 8. \( \text{f4} \) 318
C) 8. \( \text{e3} \) 320
D) 8. \( \text{g5} \) 322
E) 8. h3 323
F) 8. e5 324

A) after 14. \( \text{xf3} \)

B) after 14. \( \text{xc7} \)

E) after 18. \( \text{d3} \)

14... \( \text{d4} \) !

14... \( \text{f3} \) !

18... \( \text{f8} \) !
1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.e3 d6 4.d3 g7 5.b3 dxc4 6.bxc4 0-0 7.e4
White grabs space in the centre, but falls a little behind in development. Black will try to use this lead in development to tear the White centre apart.

The alternative 7.f4 a6 8.e4 was covered as line A of Chapter 10.

7...c6
This is not the most popular choice at the top level, but I am convinced that this move is a viable alternative to the more common lines.

White most frequently chooses 8.e2, which is the topic of the following chapter, but he has a host of other options: A) 8.d5?, B) 8.f4, C) 8.e3, D) 8.g5, E) 8.h3 and F) 8.e5.

A) 8.d5? a5
Black will continue with ...c6 and easily destroy the white centre.

9.c5
Black also obtains an ideal position after:
9.d3 c6 10.dxc6 bxc6 11.xd8 xd8 12.e2 b6 13.0-0 b7 14.f4 b4! Black begins active operations before White has managed to consolidate. 15.e5 (15.a3 d3

9...c6 10.dxc6
There is no way that 10.b4? should work. The easiest refutation is: 10...xd5 11.bxa5 xxe4 12.xe4 dxe4 13.e5 w6d6 Black is winning.

10...xc6 11.e2 g4 12.e3 d7 13.wa3 xf3 14.xf3

It is clear that Black has a comfortable game, Richardson – S. Ernst, Lichfield 2000. Most accurate now is:

14.d4!N
The position is unpleasant for White.

B) 8.xf4
The start of a remarkable line.

8.xg4 9.d5
9.d1?! was played in Gereben – Doncevic, Zurich 1986, and should be met by the thematic:
9...xf3N 10.xh5 e5 12.dxe5 (12.d5 d4 13.g2 f6! is fantastic for Black)
12...\texttt{Wh4} Black has the better chances – he will regain the e5-pawn and maintain control over the important dark squares.

\textbf{11.\texttt{Oxb5}}

For a long time I considered 11.\texttt{Oxb5} to be a serious alternative, but I recently discovered that Black can reply: 11...\texttt{Oxe4!} (much stronger than the natural-looking 11...\texttt{Oxe4}) 12.\texttt{Oxe4} \texttt{Oxe4} 13.\texttt{Ed1} \texttt{Oe8} 14.\texttt{Ed7} \texttt{Ob8} 15.\texttt{Oa4} \texttt{Of5} Black has a clear advantage.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\
\hline
d & e & f & g & h & a & b & c \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

11...\texttt{Oxe4} 12.\texttt{Ed1}

The c7-pawn is untouchable: 12.\texttt{Oxc7}?! \texttt{Oxc7} 13.\texttt{Ee5} (neither 13.\texttt{Oxb5} \texttt{Ob6} nor 13.\texttt{Oxb5} \texttt{Oxe3} 14.\texttt{bxc3} \texttt{Oab8} 15.\texttt{Oe5} \texttt{Of4} is any better) 13...\texttt{Oxe3} 14.\texttt{Oxc3} \texttt{Oab8} 15.\texttt{Oh3} \texttt{Oe6} 16.0-0-0 \texttt{Oxf4} Black clearly has the better chances, thanks to the superiority of his knight over the white bishop.

11...\texttt{a5} 12.\texttt{Ob4} \texttt{c6} 13.0-0-0 \texttt{Oc7}∞

The game is very complicated.

\textbf{10.b5!}

A very important resource.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\
\hline
d & e & f & g & h & a & b & c \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

This position occurred in Van Heirzeele – Pujo, Guingamp 2010. Black now missed an important tactical resource:
14...\texttt{xf3!N} 15...d3

It transpires that White cannot take the bishop: 15.gxf3 \texttt{xf3} 16...g1 \texttt{e3!}+-

15...d5 16...xf5 \texttt{xc4} 17...d3 \texttt{xd3}

18...xd3 \texttt{xe8}

The c6-pawn is falling and Black will remain with an extra pawn.

C) 8...e3 \texttt{g4}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

9.e5

In my opinion this is the only continuation that makes some sense and can try to justify giving up the dark-squared bishop.

9.0--0 \texttt{xe3} 10.fx e3 e5!

I believe that after this important move only Black can be better.

11...b1 \texttt{g4} 12.d5

White certainly cannot find 12.dxe5 \texttt{e8} satisfactory, in view of his exposed pawns.

12...e7 13.h3 \texttt{d7} 14.h4

This occurred in Jakobsen -- Howell, Copenhagen 2006. Now I really like the positional:

14...g4N

Black prevents h4-h5 and will follow up with ...\texttt{c8-d6}. I believe that in the long term Black will be positionally better, due to White's weakened pawn structure.

9...d1

This doesn't change the character of the game.

9...\texttt{xe3} 10.fx e3 e5 11.d5

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

11...e7

This is slightly stronger than: 11...b8

12...e2 a6 13.0--0 \texttt{d6} 14...d2 (or 14...c1 b5 15...b3 \texttt{d7=} 14...d7 Black gradually obtained the better game in Beliavsky -- Avrukh, Dresden (rapid) 2007.

12...b5

After 12...e2 Raceanu -- Gerard, Bucharest 2002, Black should continue with 12...a6N. Play will be similar to the above Beliavsky -- Avrukh game, but with the black knight rather better placed.

In my analysis during that game I was a bit concerned about the text move, but it transpires that it is not such a big deal.
Chapter 27 – Without 8.e2

12...c6! 13.dxc6 b6 14.c7 e6 15.c3 a6 16.d6 a2
Black is a little better.

9...c6
Before capturing the bishop it is important to include this developing move.

10.c5 xe3 11.xe3 d7
I think that Black’s only constructive plan is to prepare the ...c5 break. To do this he first needs to chase the white queen away from the c5-square by arranging to play ...b6.

12.0–0–0

12...b6N
A natural novelty. Previously played was: 12...h6?! 13.d5! b6 14.d4 xe3† 15.b1 a5 16.c2 (16.h4†N may be even stronger) Lima – Tsuboi, Brasilia 2000. Black has won the e3-pawn, but his pieces have lost coordination and White has seized the initiative.

13.a3
I also examined 13.d5, but that allows Black to gain important tempos for regrouping: 13...e6 14.d4 b4! 15.a3 (after 15.c4 b5! 16.xb5 xb5 17.xb5 a2† Black has a strong attack) 15.c6 16.d4 d5 17.d5 x5 18.b1 (18.d3 allows 18.a4, and with ideas of ...a2 and ...c5, Black’s queenside initiative looks dangerous)

18...e4† A solid approach, although keeping the queens on should also be promising. 19.xe4 xe4† 20.d3 b7 Black will continue with ...c5, with the better endgame.

13...a5 14.h4
After 14.b5 b4 15.xd7 xd7 16.b3 c5 17.dxc5 c7 18.cx b6 xb6† Black has good play for the pawn.

14.b4 15.h5 c5 16.hxg6 hxg6

17.dxc5
Or 17.d5 b8! and the plan of ...b5 and ...c4 looks strong for Black.
17...\texttt{e}8 18.\texttt{cxb6} \texttt{e}6
Black has plenty of play for the sacrificed pawns.

D) 8.g5 g4 9.0--0--0 \texttt{d}7

10.e5
It is not a good idea to play: 10.d5 \texttt{c}e5 11.\texttt{c}e2 \texttt{f}5 Black takes over the initiative.

10...\texttt{b}6 11.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{f}6 12.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{xe}5
12...\texttt{h}8? is a serious mistake: 13.e6 \texttt{f}5 14.d5 White was clearly better in Epishin - Roiz, Valle d'Aosta 2002.

13.\texttt{dxe}5 \texttt{e}8!
I found this improvement in late 2003, but as so often happens I did not get a chance to employ it myself. Clearly worse is 13...\texttt{c}e8 14.h4! with an initiative for White, as has occurred in three games of Epishin's.

14.\texttt{e}2
An important idea behind 13...\texttt{e}8 is seen in the following line: 14.h4 \texttt{xf}3! 15.\texttt{gxf}3 \texttt{xf}3 16.\texttt{h}3 Now this move does not gain a tempo by attacking the queen. 16...\texttt{xf}7 17.e6 \texttt{f}8 18.\texttt{hg}1 \texttt{xd}1 19.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{h}6! White has no compensation for the pawn.

14...\texttt{f}5??
This is an interesting improvement on: 14...\texttt{h}8 15.\texttt{he}1 (15.\texttt{h}3??) 15...\texttt{f}5 16.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{xf}3 17.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{e}5 Atalik - Khmelniker, Dresden 2007. Now 18.\texttt{b}3N would lead to an unclear game, with White having sufficient compensation for the pawn.

15.\texttt{he}1
I also examined: 15.d3 \texttt{h}5! (less clear is 15...\texttt{xf}3 16.\texttt{gx}f3 \texttt{xf}3 17.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{h}1 18.\texttt{hx}h1) 16.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{xe}5 17.\texttt{xc}7 \texttt{c}8 18.\texttt{xb}7 \texttt{ec}4 Black's attack is very powerful.
After 16...\texttt{dxe5} White has the following resource: 17.\texttt{xb7! d3† 18.exd3 ex5}
19.\texttt{xex5 dxc3 20.xxc3} White has decent compensation for the queen.

17.\texttt{xc6 bxc6 18.a3 \texttt{d5}}
Black is better.

E) 8.h3 e5!
Black's first choice according to theory is 8...d7, but the text seems to solve Black's opening problems quite convincingly.

\texttt{dxe5}
After 9.d5 d4 Black has great play, since the pawn is untouchable: 10.\texttt{d4? exd4}
11.\texttt{xd4 xe4 12.fxe4 dxe8†}

9...d7 10.e6
White does not benefit from: 10.g5?!

10...\texttt{dxe5! 11.exd8 ex4 12.xc4 xd8†}

10...\texttt{xe6 11.bxe6 h8 12.d5}
White fails to pose Black any problems with:
12.g5

12...\texttt{d5} 13.xd8 (both 13.exd8 xe5 14.xd8 xf3† 15.xf3 exd8 and 13.exd8 xe6 14.xd8 xe5 15.gxe5 xxe5 offer Black fine compensation for the pawn) 13...xf3†
14.gxf3 xe6 15.xc7 d4 16.0-0-0 xac8
17.d6 xf3 Black will regain the second pawn and have the better chances.

12.b3 c5 13.c4 d4! 14.d5? (this should lose on the spot; relatively best is 14.xc5 c2† 15.e2 xa1 16.g5 d7†)
In Ranson – McNally, e-mail 1998, Black now missed the nice:
14...\textit{\text{Q}}xe4!N 15.\textit{\text{Q}}xd4 \textit{\text{Q}}xf2 16.\textit{\text{Q}}g1 c6++

12...\textit{\text{Q}}xf3!

The key move; Black will pay any price to obtain the d4-square for his knight.

13.gxf3 \textit{\text{Q}}d4 14.\textit{\text{Q}}e3

I considered 14.\textit{\text{Q}}d1 for White, but his position is very shaky after: 14...c6 15.\textit{\text{Q}}g5 (15.\textit{\text{Q}}d6? \textit{\text{Q}}e5 16.\textit{\text{Q}}c3 \textit{\text{Q}}c5! gives Black a decisive attack) 15...\textit{\text{Q}}f6 16.\textit{\text{Q}}e3 \textit{\text{Q}}xf3 17.\textit{\text{Q}}c2 \textit{\text{Q}}de5 18.\textit{\text{Q}}g2 \textit{\text{Q}}d4† 19.\textit{\text{Q}}b1 \textit{\text{Q}}c4 20.\textit{\text{Q}}d3 \textit{\text{Q}}e6 Black has a definite initiative here.

14...\textit{\text{Q}}c2† 15.\textit{\text{Q}}d2 \textit{\text{Q}}xa1 16.\textit{\text{Q}}e2

There is also:

16.\textit{\text{Q}}d3 c6!N

This is an important improvement over:

16...\textit{\text{Q}}e8 17.f4 \textit{\text{Q}}b6 Portisch – Korchnoi, Bad Kissingen (6) 1983. Here I am not sure how Black should counter 18.\textit{\text{Q}}g5!N followed by \textit{\text{Q}}xa1.

17.\textit{\text{Q}}d6

17.\textit{\text{Q}}g5 is now well met by: 17...\textit{\text{Q}}f8 18.\textit{\text{Q}}xa1 \textit{\text{Q}}e5 19.\textit{\text{Q}}e2 \textit{\text{Q}}xf3† 20.\textit{\text{Q}}xf3 \textit{\text{Q}}xf3 21.\textit{\text{Q}}d8† \textit{\text{Q}}f8 22.\textit{\text{Q}}xf8† \textit{\text{Q}}xf8 23.\textit{\text{Q}}d4† \textit{\text{Q}}g8

The bishop pair gives Black a plus in this endgame.

17.\textit{\text{Q}}e5 18.\textit{\text{Q}}e6 \textit{\text{Q}}f8 19.\textit{\text{Q}}xa1 \textit{\text{Q}}g7

Preparing to discover an attack on the white queen.

20.\textit{\text{Q}}f4 \textit{\text{Q}}e5 21.\textit{\text{Q}}b3 \textit{\text{Q}}xd3 22.\textit{\text{Q}}xd3 \textit{\text{Q}}xh3

Again the bishop pair means that Black's chances are preferable.

16...c6 17.\textit{\text{Q}}d6 \textit{\text{Q}}e5 18.\textit{\text{Q}}d3

18...\textit{\text{Q}}f8!N

Another important improvement in this line. Ki. Georgiev – W. Schmidt, Warsaw 1987, continued: 18...\textit{\text{Q}}f6 19.\textit{\text{Q}}xa1 \textit{\text{Q}}f8! 20.\textit{\text{Q}}c2 \textit{\text{Q}}c6 21.\textit{\text{Q}}d1 Although Black clearly has some compensation for the pawn, I do not believe that he has full equality.

19.\textit{\text{Q}}xa1 \textit{\text{Q}}c5 20.\textit{\text{Q}}c4 b6! 21.\textit{\text{Q}}c2 \textit{\text{Q}}e6

Black has a safe alternative in 21...\textit{\text{Q}}a6, which seems likely to lead to a draw: 22.\textit{\text{Q}}xc5 (or 22.\textit{\text{Q}}d4 \textit{\text{Q}}f6 23.\textit{\text{Q}}xe5 \textit{\text{Q}}xe5 24.\textit{\text{Q}}f7 \textit{\text{Q}}xe2 25.\textit{\text{Q}}xe2 \textit{\text{Q}}xe4 26.\textit{\text{Q}}xe4 \textit{\text{Q}}xe4† 27.\textit{\text{Q}}d2 \textit{\text{Q}}d8† 28.\textit{\text{Q}}c1 \textit{\text{Q}}d3 29.\textit{\text{Q}}f6† \textit{\text{Q}}g8 30.\textit{\text{Q}}e6† with perpetual check) 22...\textit{\text{Q}}xc4 23.\textit{\text{Q}}xf8 \textit{\text{Q}}xe2 24.\textit{\text{Q}}d6 \textit{\text{Q}}xc3 25.\textit{\text{Q}}xc3 \textit{\text{Q}}xf3 The endgame is drawish.

22.\textit{\text{Q}}b4 \textit{\text{Q}}xh3#

The position is very complex.

F) 8.e5 \textit{\text{Q}}d7

A position with three minor pieces versus queen and two pawns arises after: 8...\textit{\text{Q}}e6 9.\textit{\text{Q}}xf6!
Chapter 27 – Without 8...e2

After 11.a3 Black's second idea work well: 11...a4 12...b5? (White should play 12...e2  
13...d5 14...g4∞ with a complex game) 12...a5! Now White is in trouble, since the  
pin along the fifth rank is highly unpleasant. 13...d1 This was Miranda – Tsuboi, Curitiba  
1999, and already Black could have virtually decided the game with the simple 13...d7N  
followed by ...a7.

11...b4 12.0-0  
12...c1?! is inaccurate: 12...f5 13.0-0 d3!  
White unexpectedly faces serious problems. 14.e6 fx6 15...e5 d7 16...xd7 xd7 Black  
had a clear plus in De Barros – Shankland, Sautron 2009.

12...c6  
Black establishes total control over the d5-  
square.

13...e4 d5 14...g3  
After 14...fd2?! 6d5 the white pieces are  
lacking in coordination: 15...g3 6e6 16.a4  
V. Milov – Ma. Tseitlin, Tel Aviv 1994. Black  
can now seize a clear advantage by: 16...b6N  
17...c1 c5! White's position is on the verge  
of collapse.

14...d3
15.\textit{d}2  
Other possibilities are:

15.\textit{xd}3  \textit{xd}3  16.\textit{wc}2  \textit{b}4  17.\textit{we}4  \textit{d}5  
18.\textit{wh}4 (this looks logical, but it is better  
to allow the queen swap with 18.a3  \textit{x}e4  
19.\textit{xe}4  \textit{d}4d5 with approximately equality)  
18...\textit{f}6! This strong move greatly restricts  
White's play on the kingside. 19.\textit{h}6 This was  
Gershon – Ma. Tseitlin, Ramat Aviv 2000, and  
now I believe that Black can afford to capture  
the pawn with: 19...\textit{xa}2N  20.\textit{g}7  \textit{g}7  
21.\textit{ae}1  \textit{b}4  22.\textit{e}2  \textit{f}7! Black will continue  
with ...\textit{d}6d5 and he seems to keep everything  
under control.

15.\textit{wc}1  \textit{xe}2  16.\textit{xe}2 This occurred in  
Volke – Brendel, Dresden 2007, and here I  
developed the following regrouping for Black:  
16..\textit{d}7N  17.a3  \textit{d}4d5  18.\textit{g}3  \textit{c}7  19.\textit{e}4  
\textit{e}6 20.\textit{d}1  \textit{fd}8 The position is balanced.

15...\textit{d}7  16.\textit{c}1  \textit{xe}2  17.\textit{xe}2  \textit{c}5  18.a3  
18.dxc5 is not a good idea, because 18...\textit{xe}5  
gives Black a fine game.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  &  \\
\hline
  & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h  \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

We have been following Kozul – Borisek,  
Nova Gorica 2001. Black should now play:

18...\textit{d}5N 19.\textit{c}3  \textit{c}6∞  
The position is complex.

\textbf{Conclusion}

After 7...\textit{c}6 White has a wide range of  
alternatives to the usual 8.\textit{e}2, but none of  
these moves promise him any advantage.

Perhaps the two most tricky lines are variation  
B) 8.\textit{f}4, which we meet with a spectacular  
line, leading to an advantage for Black, and  
variation E) 8.\textit{h}3, when instead of the usual  
8...\textit{d}7, the blunt 8...\textit{e}5! solves all problems.
Chapter 28

Russian System

8.\( \text{g}2 \)

Variation Index

1.d4 \( \text{\textacuten}}f6 \) 2.c4 g6 3.\( \text{\textacuten}c3 \) d5 4.\( \text{\textacuten}f3 \) \( \text{\textacuten}g7 \) 5.\( \text{\textacuten}b3 \) dxc4 6.\( \text{\textacuten}xc4 \) 0–0 7.e4 \( \text{\textacuten}c6 \) 8.\( \text{\textacuten}e2 \)

8...\( \text{\textacuten}g4 \)

A) 9.\( \text{\textacuten}e3 \) \( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \)
   A1) 10.\( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \)
   A2) 10.gxf3 e5
      A21) 11.dxe5
      A22) 11.d5

B) 9.d5 \( \text{\textacuten}a5 \)
   B1) 10.\( \text{\textacuten}a4 \) \( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \) 11.\( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \) c6 12.0–0 b5!
      B11) 13.\( \text{\textacuten}b4 \)
      B12) 13.\( \text{\textacuten}d1 \)
   B2) 10.\( \text{\textacuten}b4 \) \( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \) 11.\( \text{\textacuten}xf3 \) c6
      B21) 12.dxc6
      B22) 12.\( \text{\textacuten}e3 \) cxd5 13.exd5 \( \text{\textacuten}c8 \)
         B221) 14.\( \text{\textacuten}xa7 \)
         B222) 14.0–0
      B23) 12.0–0 \( \text{\textacuten}b6 \) 13.\( \text{\textacuten}a4 \) \( \text{\textacuten}d7 \)
         B231) 14.\( \text{\textacuten}e3 \)
         B232) 14.dxc6
         B233) 14.\( \text{\textacuten}e2 \)
         B234) 14.\( \text{\textacuten}d1 \)

328
328
329
329
331
332
332
333
334
334
335
335
335
336
336
337
338
338
338
339

White's options are A) 9. e3 and B) 9. d5.

A) 9. e3 Nxf3

Black immediately prepares to attack the white centre. White has a choice of recaptures: A1) 10. Nxf3 or A2) 10. gxf3.

A1) 10. Nxf3

10... e5 11. d5 Nbd4 12. e2

This will be our main continuation, since it recently led to a victory against a strong grandmaster. White has also tried various alternatives:

12. Nxd4? is just bad here, in view of the following line: 12... exd4 13. Nxd4 Qxe4 14. Bxd4? Qe8++

12. 0-0-0 Nxe8 13. e2


14... e5

This gives Black a strong initiative. In both games to reach this position Black instead went for the strange-looking 14... N6b5.


White just manages to survive.

12. d1

I believe that Black has several ways to obtain good play here; my preference is for the following idea:

12... e6 13. dxc6 Qxc6 14. Qa7 Qc7 16. Qa3 Qd8 (threatening the deadly ... Qf8) 17. Qxd4 exd4 18. Bd5 Qxd5 19. exd5 Qe5+ 20. Bf1 Qxd5± 15. a6 16. Nxb3 Qe8!
Chapter 28 – 8...e2

Here too, the threat of ...f8 is a real headache for White.

17.b4 d6 18.xb2 xxc8 19.xc1 x7 20.xe2 xxc1 21.xxc1 xe4

White was lost in Rajkovic – Sedlak, Kragujevac 2009.

12...b5N

This novelty makes a lot of sense. The most recent game from this position saw: 12...xf3 13.xf3 c6 14.d6 d7 15.gxf3 h5 16.0-0-0; Black had failed to equalize in Riazantsev – Delchev, Le Port Marly 2009.

13.c1

Nor do other squares for the queen offer White any advantage:

13.d3 xf3 14.xf3 c6 15.d6 d7! White is liable to lose his passed pawn very soon.

13.c5 d7 14.c3 b4! 15.b6 c6 16.d3 c5 17.0-0 f5 Black has good activity and is at least equal.

13...e8

This is more challenging than: 13 xf3 14.xf3 d7 15.g3 eac8 16.e6 xc6 17.dxc6 fd8=

14.d1

14.d2 d7 15.0-0-0 c5! is dangerous for White.

14...e6 15.dxc6 a5 16.d2 xf3 17.gxf3 a6

Black regains the pawn and equalizes easily.

A2) 10.gxf3

The pawn recapture is thematic for the Russian System, but here Black obtains timely counterplay.

10...e5

White must decide what to do with his d-pawn: A21) 11.dxe5 or A22) 11.d5.

A21) 11.dxe5 xe5
**12. \( \text{wb5} \)**

This is rather risky. Other options are:

12. \( \text{wb4} \) is objectively best, but Black will be comfortable in the endgame: 12...\( \text{xd4} \) 13.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 14.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{f4} \) 15.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{d4} \) 16.\( \text{h5} \) (I also checked 16.e5 \( \text{h5} \) 17.f4 and here Black equalizes with 17...\( \text{xe2} \) 18.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{c6} \) 19.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{g3} \) 20.\( \text{hxg3} \) \( \text{f6} \)) 16...\( \text{xb5} \) 17.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{e5} \) 18.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{h5} \) 19.0-0 \( \text{e5} \) The position is level, M. Gurevich – Kaidanov, Lvov 1987.

12.\( \text{wb3} \) \( \text{h5} \)

The same idea as we shall see in the main line.

13.h4

I won a nice game after: 13.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{c6} \) 14.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{xf4} \) 15.\( \text{xf4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 16.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{h6} \) 17.h4?!

(17.0-0 would limit Black's advantage)

17...\( \text{e8} \) 18.0-0 \( \text{d2} \) 19.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{xb2} \) Aloma Vidal – Avrukh, Andorra 2003.

13.\( \text{f4} \) is just bad: 13...\( \text{d3} \) 14.\( \text{xd3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 15.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{xc3} \) 16.\( \text{xc3} \) \( \text{xe4} \) Black was winning in Maurer – Korchnoi, Arvier 2006.

13...\( \text{d3} \) 14.\( \text{f1} \)

After 14.\( \text{xd3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 15.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{a6} \) Black has slightly the better chances.

14...\( \text{xf4} \) 15.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c8} \) 16.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 17.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{c7} \)

Black's position is preferable, due to White's weakened pawn structure and exposed king. Amigues – Karr, Besancon 1999.

12...\( \text{h5} \)!

The key move; otherwise Black would be in trouble.

13.\( \text{xb7} \)

White has three other notable tries:

13.\( \text{f4} \)? \( \text{c6} \) followed by ...\( \text{d3} \) is very good for Black.

13.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{h4} \) 14.\( \text{xb7} \) Kaufman – Winer, Washington 1999. Now the natural 14...\( \text{d3} \) would leave White in great danger.

13.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 14.\( \text{xb7} \)
14...\(e\_f6\)!N (I believe that this is stronger than 14...\(b8\) 15.\(g3\) \(c7\) \(xb2\) 16.\(f1\) \(e6\) 17.\(g5\) \(e6\) 18.\(b1\) \(xb1\)! 19.\(c2\) and White managed to hold in Werle – Howell, London 2009.) 15.0–0–0 \(b8\) 16.\(a6\) \(h4\) 17.\(d2\) \(xe2\)! 18.\(xe2\) \(xf3\) Black has a very promising position.

13...\(b8\) 14.\(d5\)

At a tournament in Zurich I witnessed the following remarkable encounter:

14.\(xa7\) \(xb2\) 15.\(d5\)

After 15.0–0 Black wins by force: 15...
16.\(xe2\) \(xf3\) 17.\(g2\) \(h4\) 18.\(h1\)
15...\(h4\)

I discovered that even without queens White is in trouble: 15...f5?! 16.\(xc7\) 17.\(xc7\) \(f5\) 18.\(xe4\) \(f4\) 19.\(xf4\) \(xf4\) 20.\(d5\) \(xe4\) 21.\(e3\) \(h6\) Black’s attack looks decisive.

16.f4 \(xe2\)

16...\(g4\) is also worth considering.

17.\(xe2\) \(g4\) 18.\(d2\) \(c4\) 19.\(d3\) \(b2\)

We have been following the game Miroshnichenko – Brendel, Zurich 2009, in which Black later missed a forced win and eventually lost. Simplest now is:

20...c6N

White is defenceless, for example:

21.\(c7\) \(h8\) 22.\(c7\) \(c4\) 23.\(d3\) \(xf4\)

24.\(x4\) \(e5\) 25.\(d2\) \(d7\) 26.\(d5\) \(cxd5\)

Black has a winning attack.

19.\(c5\)

In none of the three games that reached this position did Black play the strongest move:

19...\(fd8\)!N 20.\(d1\) \(d1\)

Black has a clear advantage.

A22) 11.d5 \(d4\)
12.0-0-

It is obviously bad to grab the pawn:
12.\(\text{cxd4}\) exd4 13.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{h}5\) 14.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{e}5\)
15.\(\text{xf1}\) \(\text{xf6}\) Black was dominating in Reimaa – L’Ami, Internet 2000.

After 12.\(\text{b5}\) I like: 12...\(\text{h}5\) 13.\(\text{xd4}\) exd4
14.\(\text{xd4}\)

14...\(\text{c6}\)!N (an improvement on 14...\(\text{xd4}\)
15.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{f}4\) 16.\(\text{xf1}\) ± Ackermann – Peschlow, Essen 2003) 15.\(\text{e}3\) (after 15.\(\text{xf7}\) \(\text{xd5}\)!
16.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 17.exd5 \(\text{xg7}\) Black will regain the d5-pawn and then be slightly better)
15...\(\text{xb2}\) 16.\(\text{b1}\) \(\text{f6}\) Black has a comfortable position.

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

A thematic idea; the knight is heading for the ideal d6-square.

13.\(\text{h}4\)

13.\(\text{f4}\) is premature: 13...\(\text{d6}\) 14.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{xe2}\) 15.\(\text{xe2}\) \(\text{xf4}\) 16.\(\text{xf4}\) \(\text{e}8\) 17.\(\text{f3}\)
Feldman – Kudrin, North Bay 1998. Now the straightforward operation 17...\(\text{xc3}!\) 18.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 19.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{ac8}\) followed by 20...\(\text{c6}\) would give Black a serious edge.

13...\(\text{d6}\) 14.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{a6}\)

14...\(\text{c5}\) is also an option.

15.\(\text{dgl}\) \(\text{b5}\) 16.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{xe2}\) 17.\(\text{xe2}\) exf4

18.\(\text{xf4}\) \(\text{e}8\)

Black was better in Dimitrijevic – Damljanovic, New York 1987.

B) 9.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{a}5\)

White must choose where to put his queen:
B1) 10.\(\text{a}4\) or B2) 10.\(\text{b}4\).

A third option doesn't pose Black any problems at all: 10.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 11.\(\text{h3}\) (11.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 12.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{xa1}\) 13.\(\text{bxa5}\) \(\text{xa5}\) 14.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{xd5}\) is just bad for White) 11...\(\text{xf3}\) 12.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 13.\(\text{exd5}\) \(\text{c8}\) 14.0-0 \(\text{d7}\) (14...\(\text{c4}\) is also worth considering) The position is roughly balanced.

B1) 10.\(\text{a}4\)
10...\(\text{Q}x\text{f}3\)

It is important to include this exchange, thereby avoiding the nice trap: 10...c6?? 11.e5!+

11.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}3\) c6 12.0–0 b5!

I definitely prefer this to 12...cxd5 13.\(\text{d}1\).

\[\text{Diagram}\]

Again the queen has a choice of squares:
B11) 13.\(\text{W}b4\) or B12) 13.\(\text{Ad}1\).

B11) 13.\(\text{W}b4\) a6 14.\(\text{A}e3\)

The alternative is:
14.\(\text{Ad}1\) \(\text{d}7\)

Already it appears that White cannot maintain equality.
15.\(\text{b}1\)

Black was clearly better after 15.\(\text{e}2\) c5 16.\(\text{e}1 \text{e}5\) 17.\(\text{f}4 \text{xf}3\) 18.\(\text{g}x\text{f}3 \text{c}4\)


15.\(\text{e}3\) runs into a nice idea: 15...c5! 16.\(\text{x}c5 \text{xc}5\) 17.\(\text{xc}5 \text{c}8\) 18.\(\text{a}7 \text{c}4!\)

Black has a serious initiative. 19.\(\text{ab}1 \text{d}6\) 20.\(\text{e}5 \text{xe}5\) 21.\(\text{e}3 \text{c}4\)


15...cxd5 16.\(\text{exd}5 \text{c}8\)

Black had the more pleasant game in Kozul – Rowson, Istanbul (ol) 2000.

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

\[\text{Diagram}\]

15.\(\text{e}2\)

Weaker is:
15.\(\text{ad}1\)!

This allows Black to carry out a familiar idea.
15...c5! 16.\(\text{x}c5 \text{xc}5\) 17.\(\text{xc}5\)

This was Lugovoi – Ma. Tseitlin, Chalkidiki 2002. Now the best continuation is:

\[\text{Diagram}\]

17.\(\text{c}4!\)N 18.\(\text{b}4 \text{d}6\) 19.\(\text{xd}6\)

No better is 19.\(\text{b}3 \text{f}8!\) and Black will regain the pawn with advantage.

19...\(\text{exd}6\)

Black retains the initiative, for instance:
20.\(\text{b}3 \text{b}2\) 21.\(\text{c}1 \text{d}3\) 22.\(\text{cd}1 \text{b}4\)

22...\(\text{xf}2\) is also slightly better for Black.
23.\(\text{a}3 \text{xc}3\) 24.axb4 \(\text{xb}4\)

White will have to work hard to draw this opposite-coloured bishop endgame, since Black's a-pawn is potentially very dangerous.
Now I have nothing to add to the following correspondence game. Both sides played perfectly in my opinion.

17.\texttt{d1 \texttt{e6} 18.\texttt{dxe6} \texttt{fxe6} 19.\texttt{c1} \texttt{b6} 20.\texttt{b4} \texttt{b7} 21.\texttt{bxc5} \texttt{dxc5} 22.\texttt{b4} \texttt{d6} 23.\texttt{c3} \texttt{e5} 24.\texttt{g3} \texttt{d7} 25.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{xd6} 26.\texttt{fd1} \texttt{f6} 27.\texttt{f4} \texttt{xc3} 28.\texttt{xd6} \texttt{xe4} 29.\texttt{xa6} \texttt{d4}!}

And when both sides play flawlessly, the game ends in a draw, De Carlos Arregui – Fenwick, e-mail 2008.

White's latest attempts have involved this retreat.

13...\texttt{e8}!

This accurate move easily solves Black's opening problems.

14.\texttt{dxc6}

After 14.\texttt{f4} \texttt{b4} 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{cxd5} 16.\texttt{exd5} \texttt{d7} I prefer Black's position.

14...\texttt{b4} 15.\texttt{e5}

Maybe White could try 15.\texttt{b5} \texttt{xc6} 16.\texttt{a4}, although Black has no problems and can respond 16...\texttt{e5} with some attacking ideas.

15...\texttt{bxc3} 16.\texttt{exf6} \texttt{xf6} 17.\texttt{bxc3} \texttt{xc6} 18.\texttt{h6} \texttt{g7} 19.\texttt{g7} \texttt{g7}

Although the position looks fairly equal, there is some strategical danger for White due to his weak c-pawn. In Vallejo – Roiz, Dresden (ol) 2008, White had to suffer for a while before eventually securing the draw.

\textbf{B2)} 10.\texttt{b4}

Undoubtedly the most challenging option.

10...\texttt{xf3}

Once again, 10...c6?? 11.e5+ must be avoided.
Chapter 28 – 8...e2

11...xf3 c6

The threat of ...b8 forces White to give up the exchange.

15...d1

15...f5? is just bad: 15...b4 16.a3 xf3 17.gxf3 b3 White is in trouble.

15...f8 16.xd4

16...xe5 fxe5 17.xa8 bxa8 18.xa8 g4 19.g3 h5 20.h4 c5 21.e1 f5++

16...xd4 17.xc7 b8 18.c7 d6 19.a5 e5 20.xe5 c5=

White is facing a fight for a draw.

14...d6 15.f4 bab8 16.e5

But not: 16.xa7? b8 17.xb7 f8 18.e5 d8++

16...xb7 17.exd6 exd6 18.0-0 e8

Black is slightly better, but White should be able to hold the position.

B22) 12.e3 cxd5 13.exd5 e8

With the clear intention of playing the knight to the c4-square.

14.d1

This is probably better than:

14.0-0 d6!

14...d6! 15...d4 c4! 16.d6! White usually chooses between B221) 14...xa7 and B222) 14.0-0. A third option is:

14.d1 c4! 15.d4 d6! Black is already better. 16.b3 (after 16.xb7 b8 17.xa7
336 Russian System

\( \text{B221) 14.} \text{xa7} \)

Snatching this pawn is rather risky.

14...\text{c4} 15.0-0

15.\text{d1?!} runs into the spectacular: 15...\text{xb2!} 16.\text{xb2} \text{e4} 17.\text{d4} \text{xd4} 18.\text{xd4} \text{xc3} 19.0-0 b5 Black is slightly better, due to the superiority of his knight over the white bishop, Vshivkov – Vokarev, Omsk 1998.

15...\text{d2} 16.\text{fd1} \text{c4!}
An important resource; before capturing the bishop, Black arranges for his rook to join the kingside offensive.

17.\text{b5}

White has also tried: 17.\text{b6} \text{xf3} 18.\text{gxf3} \text{c8} 19.\text{d4} Farago – J. Horvath, Budapest 1991. Now I believe Black should play: 19...\text{xd4}N 20.\text{xd4} \text{d7} 21.\text{c3} b6! 22.\text{xb6} \text{xb6} 23.\text{xb6} \text{xc3} 24.\text{bxc3} \text{xc3} 25.\text{d1} \text{xf3} 26.\text{d4} \text{d8} Despite the equal material, White is facing a difficult defensive task due to his exposed king.

I also examined: 17.\text{xb7} \text{xf3} 18.\text{gxf3} \text{c7}! This is an important idea; it transpires that the a7-bishop is in danger. 19.\text{f6} 20.\text{xf8} \text{h3} leads to a quick mate) 21...\text{xf8} Black is clearly better, since the h2-knight is untouchable.

19...\text{xd4} 20.\text{d4} \text{h3} 21.\text{xf6}

The natural 21.\text{e2} runs into the unpleasant 21...\text{xf6}.

21...\text{c6} 22.\text{e2} \text{c8} 23.\text{e4} \text{c5} 24.\text{g3} \text{d6+}

Miton – Tyomkin, Philadelphia 2004. Despite White’s extra pawn, it is clear that Black’s chances are preferable, in view of the vulnerable white king.

15...\text{c7!}N

This is an important improvement over:

15...\text{d2} 16.\text{xe7} \text{xf3} 17.\text{gxf3} \text{d5} 18.\text{xd8} \text{xb4} 19.\text{c7} \text{c2} 20.\text{xf8} \text{xc3} 21.\text{ab1!} Black was in trouble in C. Horvath – Vegh, Hungary 1991.
Chapter 28 – $8.\text{c}e2$

16.\text{xe}a7  
16.\text{xe}c7? loses to: 16...a5 17.d6 axb4 18.dxc7 bxc3 19.\text{xf}8 cxb2++

16...b6 17.\text{fc}1  
17.\text{b}5 \text{d}7 18.a4 \text{e}5! looks dangerous for White.

17...\text{xa}7 18.\text{b}5 \text{d}7 19.\text{xc}4 \text{xd}5 20.\text{b}3  
The position is equal.

B23) 12.0–0 \text{b}6  
Black has often tried 12...\text{xd}5 13.\text{ex}d5 \text{c}8, but theory considers White's chances to be preferable after 14.\text{e}e1±.

13.\text{a}4  
The only challenging move. Other continuations are quite easy for Black to meet:

13.\text{xb}6 axb6  
The endgame is comfortable for Black.  
14.dxc6 bxc6 15.\text{d}1  
After 15.\text{b}1 \text{fd}8 16.\text{e}2 \text{d}7 17.\text{e}3 \text{b}5 18.\text{fc}1 \text{c}4 19.\text{xc}4 bxc4 Black had some pressure in Kaspi – Sutovsky, Ramat Aviv 2000.  
15...\text{b}3N

The idea of exchanging White's dark-squared bishop appears very logical to me. Instead 15...\text{xa}7 was played in Radjabov – Rowson, Torshavn 2000, and although Black managed to draw this game, the text seems simpler.

16.\text{b}1 \text{xc}1 17.\text{bxc}1 \text{e}6=  
White cannot hope for any advantage without his dark-squared bishop.

13.\text{xe}7 \text{c}4 14.\text{dx}c6  
The inclusion of 14.a3 a5! does not really change the situation.  
Note that White does have the option of forcing a repetition by: 14.\text{a}4 \text{a}5 15.\text{c}3 \text{b}6=  
14...\text{bxc}6 15.\text{f}4 \text{fc}8 16.\text{c}7 \text{xc}7  
Black may also play: 16...\text{xb}2 17.\text{ac}1 \text{b}6 18.\text{a}4 \text{xc}7!N (but not 18...\text{b}5? Gyimesi – Berkes, Hungary 2007, when White can obtain a serious advantage with 19.\text{e}2!) 19.\text{xc}7 \text{d}2 20.\text{fd}1 \text{fx}e4 21.\text{xd}2 \text{xd}2 22.\text{xc}6 \text{d}4 The position is equal.

17.\text{xc}7 \text{ac}8 18.\text{g}3 \text{h}5! 19.\text{ac}1 \text{gx}3 20.\text{hx}g3 \text{xb}2 21.\text{c}2 \text{d}3 22.a3  
The game was balanced in Gyimesi – Swinkels, Liverpool 2006.

13...\text{d}7
We have arrived at an important crossroads, with four options for White: B231) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}) 3\), B232) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{xc6}\), B233) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e2}\) and B234) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{d1}\).

B231) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e3}\)

This leads to a forced sequence.

14...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{x}}}\textit{xb2}\) 15.\(\textbf{\textit{f}}\textit{fc1}\) \(\textbf{\textit{x}}\textit{xc3}\) 16.\(\textbf{\textit{ab}}\textit{b1}\)

16...\(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{b5}\)

Black has good chances to hold the position after 16...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{b6}\) 17.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{xb6}\) \(\textit{axb6}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xb2}\) 19.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{b1}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textbf{f}}}\textit{f6}\) Kovacs – Roiz, Oberwart 2004. But the text seems to be more active.

17.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xb2}\) \(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{xa4}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xc3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{cxd5}}\) 19.\(\textbf{\textit{exd5}}\)

White has also tried: 19.\(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{b5}\) \(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{c4}\) 20.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xd5}\) \(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{d6}\) 21.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xb6}\) \(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{d6}\) 22.\(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{b4}\) \(\textit{axb6}\) 23.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{xb6}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{b8}\) Black was slightly better in Gyimesi – Roiz, Tel Aviv 2001.

19.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{ac8}\) 20.\(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{bc2}\) \(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{b6}\) 21.\(\textbf{\textit{ac7}}\)

21.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{f1}\) \(\textbf{\textit{ac4}}\) 22.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{f4}\) \(\textbf{\textit{fd8}}\) gives Black easy equality.

21.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{c5?!}\) runs into 21...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{ac4!}\) and White cannot take due to back rank problems: 22.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xe7}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{fe8}\) 23.\(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e2}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{e5}\)!

21...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{ac4}\) 22.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xe7}\) \(\textbf{\textit{x}}\textit{xe3}\) 23.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{xc8}\) \(\textbf{\textit{xc8}}\)

24.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{x}}}\textit{xe3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{d8}\) 25.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{h}}}\textit{h4}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{b}}}\textit{b6}\)

Black comfortably achieved a draw in Babula – Mirumian, Olomouc 1998.

B232) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{xc6}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xc6}\) 15.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{d5}\) \(\textbf{\textit{wd8}}\) 16.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{g}}}\textit{g5}\)

Black is comfortable after: 16.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{d1}\) \(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e6}\) 17.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{c3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{e7}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{fd8}}\)=

16...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{b}}}\textit{b6}\)!

In Cmilyte – Howell, Gibraltar 2005, Black played 16...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{b6}\), which was enough to maintain the balance, but I prefer the text move.

17.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{h4}\)

17.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{e3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e6}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{d}}\textit{c3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{b}}\textit{b6}\), followed by ...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{d4}\), is also slightly better for Black.

17...\(\textbf{\textit{g}}\textit{g5}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{g}}}\textit{g3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{e}}\textit{e6}\) 19.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{e3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{c7}\)

Black has the better chances, thanks to the passivity of White’s light-squared bishop.

B233) 14.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}}}\textit{e2}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{c5}\) 15.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{c2}\)

White should avoid the following line: 15.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{a3?!}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xc3}\) 16.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{xc3}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xe4}\) 17.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{d}}}\textit{e5}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{c}}}\textit{xd5}\) 18.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{h}}}\textit{h6}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{f6}\) 19.\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{xf8}\) \(\textbf{\textit{\textit{f}}}\textit{xf8}\) With two pawns for the exchange, Black has the better chances.

15...\(\textbf{\textit{\textit{b}}}\textit{b4}\)
Chapter 28 – 8...e2

16...e3
16...dxc6?!  dxc6 17.d5? doesn't work:
17...xe4 18.xc5 xe2

16...ac3 17.ac1 d4! 18.xd4 xd4
19.xc5 xb2! 20.f3 b6
20...xa2 loses to: 21.a1 b3 22.c3!
xa1 23.bxa1+-

21.xe7 ef8 22.g5
The alternative is: 22.d7 e5!N
(this is an important improvement over
22...ed8?! 23.c7! and White was better
in Bareev – Lalic, Jahorina 2003) 23.dxc6
(23.fd1 e7 24.g4 ed8 25.dxc6 xd1+ 26.ad1 ac7 27.g3 g7 also results in
an equal position) 23..ed8 24.g4
ac8= Black regains the pawn and has no
problems.

22...e5 23.d2 ed8 24.g3 cxd5 25.exd5
b7 26.fe1 ef6 27.g2 xe1 28.xe1
d5
Black had equalized without any difficulty in
Babula – Ruck, Novi Sad 2009.

B234) 14.fd1 fd8

14...c5 15.e2 c4 16.b1! led to serious
problems for Black in Kasimdzhanov –

15.c2
Black is ready to meet 15.dxc6 with 15...c5
16.c2 xd1+ 17 xd1 xxc6 18.d5 b5!
with full equality.

15.e2 In the following encounter Black
demonstrated the correct route to equality:
15...c5 16.c2 b4 17.e3 xc3

18.ac1! b6! 19.xc5 xc5 20.xc3 xc3
21.xc3 cxd5 22.xd5 edc8! 23.a6 xc3
24.bxc3 d8 25.f1 e8 26.e2 e6 27.b5!
f8 28.ed7 a6 29.ad3 c8 Rakay – Van den
Bos, e-mail 2008. Incredibly, I had all these
moves written in my notes in 2007.

15...ac8
15...c4?! is pointless on account of
16.e2.

16.e3
After 16.dxc6 Qxc6! 17.Qd5 Bc5 Black is slightly better, thanks to his powerful dark-squared bishop.

16...Bc7!N
This is an important improvement over a game of mine in which I opted for 16...Bb4 but failed to equalize after 17.dxc6± in Onischuk – Avrukh, Biel 2007.

17.Bac1
I also examined 17.dxc6 Qxc6 18.Bac1 and here Black shouldn't have any problems after: 18...Bb8 19.Bb3 e6=

17...Qxd5 18.Ba4
This is the move I was worried about during the above-mentioned game. Instead 18.Bxd5 e6 19.Bdd1 a6= is not dangerous.

18...Qc5!
This solves all Black's problems, but it requires accurate calculation.

19.Ba3
The alternative is: 19.Qxc5 Qxc5 20.Qg4 (20.Bb4 Qc6 21.Qxa5 Qxc3 is just equal) 20...Qc7 21.b4 Qc6 22.Qxc6 Qxc6 23.Qxd5 Qxc1 24.Qxe7+ Qxe8 25.Qxc1 Qxe7 26.Bxa5 Qd2 27.Qc7+ Qf8=

19...Qc4 20.Qxd5 Qxa3 21.Qxc7 Bxd1† 22.Bxd1 Qxc7 23.Qd8† Qf8 24.Bxa3 Qg7
Black has full equality.

Conclusion
When White develops with A) 9.Qe3 Black should immediately strike in the centre with 9...Qxf3 and 10...e5, which promises him equal chances in all lines.

Chasing the black knight away with B) 9.d5 is a more challenging approach, but in return White loses time with his queen, and with careful play Black can be confident of equalizing. However White must also play with care; as I point out in the notes to line B11, the pawn sacrifice with 14.Qd7 and 15...c5 can be dangerous in certain circumstances. Finally in line B234 I refer to a game in which I suffered, but that was because I chose the wrong square for my queen; with 16...Bc7!N Black can solve all his problems.
Chapter 1

1.d4 ֑f6 2.c4 g6
A) 3.֑e2 8
B) 3.d5 9
C) 3.֑g5 ֑e4 4.֑f4 c5 10
   C1) 5.d5 10
   C2) 5.֑c2 11

Chapter 2

1.d4 ֑f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5 4.cxd5 ֑xd5 5.e4 ֑b6
A) 6.a4 14
B) 6.֑c3 ֑g7 7.֑e3 0–0 15
   B1) 8.֑c1 15
   B2) 8.f4 ֑c6 9.d5 ֑a5! 10.֑d4 e5! 11.֑xe5 ֑xe5 12.֑xe5 ֑h4 13.g3 ֑c7 14.֑d4 ֑d8!
      15.b4 ֑ac4 16
      B21) 16.֑xc4 ֑xb4 17.֑f3 ֑xc4 18.֑e3 ֑e8!N 19
         B211) 19.֑d1 20
         B212) 19.e6 20
         B213) 19.֑c1 20
      B22) 16.֑f3 21
   B3) 8.֑d2 ֑c6 9.0–0–0 f5 22
      B31) 10.exf5 23
      B32) 10.h4 fxe4 11.h5 gxh5! 23
         B321) 12.d5 24
         B322) 12.֑xh5 25
      B33) 10.e5 ֑b4 29
         B331) 11.֑h6 29
         B332) 11.֑h4 ֑e6 30
            B3321) 12.֑b1 31
            B3322) 12.h5 31
            B3323) 12.a3 32
         B333) 11.֑h3 34

Chapter 3

1.d4 ֑f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6
A) 4.d5 38
B) 4.֑g2 d5 39
   B1) 5.b3 39
   B2) 5.֑b3 40
   B3) 5.֑a4 41
Chapter 4

1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.²f3 d5 5.b3 ²g7 6.²g2 0–0

A) 7.²b2 44
B) 7.0–0 dxc4 8.bxc4 c5 45
   B1) 9.e3 45
   B2) 9.²b2 ²b6 10.²b3 ²e4 11.e3 ²c6 12.²e5 ²d6 47
      B21) 13.²d2 47
      B22) 13.²xc6 48

Chapter 5

1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.²g2 d5 5.²f3 ²g7 6.0–0 0–0

A) 7.²a4 51
B) 7.²bd2 51
C) 7.²c3 dxc4 55
   C1) 8.e4 55
   C2) 8.a4 56
   C3) 8.²e5 57

Chapter 6

1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.²g2 d5 5.²f3 ²g7 6.0–0 0–0 7.²b3 ²b6

A) 8.c5 59
B) 8.²xb6 59
C) 8.²c3 ²d8 60
   C1) 9.cxd5 61
   C2) 9.²f4 61
   C3) 9.²a3 62
   C4) 9.²d1 63
   C5) 9.h3 64
   C6) 9.c5 64

Chapter 7

1.d4 ²f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6

A) 4.²f3 68
B) 4.²g2 d5 69
   B1) 5.²f3 69
   B2) 5.cxd5 cxd5 70
      B21) 6.²c3 ²g7 70
      B211) 7.²h3 70
      B212) 7.e3 71
      B22) 6.²f3 ²g7 72
      B221) 7.²c3 72
      B222) 7.²e5 ²e4 74
Chapter 8

1.d4 .gf6 2.c4  g6 3.  c3  d5
A) 4.g4  86
B) 4.h4  87
C) 4.f3  e5  90
    C1) 5.cxd5  90
    C2) 5.dxe5  91
D) 4.  d2  92

Chapter 9

1.d4  gf6 2.c4  g6 3.  c3  d5 4.  a4  d7 5.  b3  dxc4 6.  xc4  g7
A) 7.  a6 8.  f3  0–0 9.e4  e5  95
    A1) 10.e5  96
    A2) 10.dxc5  97
B) 7.e4  0–0 100
    B1) 8.  f3  100
    B2) 8.e5  102

Chapter 10

1.d4  gf6 2.c4  g6 3.  c3  d5 4.  b3  dxc4 5.  xc4  g7 6.e4  0–0
A) 7.  a6 8.  f3  c5  106
    A1) 9.  d1  107
    A2) 9.e5  108
    A3) 9.d5  e6  109
        A31) 10.  e2  110
        A32) 10.d6  c5! 11.  xe5  b4  110
            A321) 12.  c1  111
            A322) 12.d1  112
B) 7.  e2  112

Chapter 11

1.d4  gf6 2.c4  g6 3.  c3  d5 4.e3  g7
A) 5.b4  0–0 6.  f3  c6  116
    A1) 7.  e2  117
    A2) 7.a2  118
B) 5.  b3  e6  120
Chapter 12

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.e3 dxe5 4.c3 Ag7 5.d3 0–0
A) 6.0–0 c5 128
   A1) 7.dxc5 128
   A2) 7.cxd5 130
   A3) 7.0–0 cxd5 8.exd5 Qc6 131
       A31) 9.c5 Qe4 133
       A311) 10.Qf4 134
       A312) 10.Qc3 135
   A32) 9.cxd5 135
   A33) 9.Be1 Qg4 136
       A331) 10.c5 136
       A332) 10.cxd5 137
   A34) 9.h3 138
B) 6.d2 139
C) 6.d3 141
D) 6.cxd5 Qxd5 7.Qc4 Qb6 143
   D1) 8.Qe2 143
   D2) 8.Qb3 144

Chapter 13

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.e3 dxe5 4.Qf4 Qg7
A) 5.Qb3 149
B) 5.Qa4† 150
C) 5.Qc1 Qh5† 152
   C1) 6.Qg5 152
   C2) 6.Qe3 153
   C3) 6.Qd2 154

Chapter 14

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.e3 dxe5 4.Qf4 Qg7 5.d3 0–0 6.Qc1 dxc4
A) 7.e3 Qe6 8.Qg5 Qd5 9.e4 h6 10.exd5 hxg5 11.Qxg5 Qxd5 12.Qxc4 Qb6 13.Qb3 Qc6 160
   A1) 14.d5 161
   A2) 14.Qc2 163
B) 7.e4 Qg4 8.Qxc4 Qh5 9.Qe3 Qxf3 165
   B1) 10.Qxf3 166
Chapter 15

1. d4 ∆f6 2. c4 g6 3. ∆c3 d5 4. ∆f4 ∆g7 5. e3 c5
A) 6. ∆xb8?! 173
B) 6. ∆f3 cxd4 174
   B1) 7. exd4 174
   B2) 7. ∆xd4 175
C) 6. dxc5 ∆a5 177
   C1) 7. cxd5 ∆xd5 178
   C2) 7. ∆b3 179
   C3) 7. ∆a4+ ∆xa4 8. ∆xa4 ∆d7 9. ∆c3 ∆e4! 10. ∆xd5 ∆a6 11. f3 ∆xc5 180
      C31) 12. ∆g5 182
      C32) 12. ∆b1 183
      C33) 12.0–0–0 184

Chapter 16

1. d4 ∆f6 2. c4 g6 3. ∆c3 d5 4. ∆f4 ∆g7 5. e3 c5 6. dxc5 ∆a5 7. ∆c1 dxc4 8. ∆xc4 0–0
A) 9. a3 189
B) 9. ∆ge2 ∆xc5 10. ∆b3 ∆c6 11. ∆b5 ∆h5 189
   B1) 12. ∆c7 192
   B2) 12. ∆g3 ∆h4 13. ∆c7 e5! 193
      B21) 14. ∆xe5 194
      B22) 14. ∆g5 ∆xg5 198
         B221) 15. ∆xa8 198
         B222) 15. h4 199

Chapter 17

1. d4 ∆f6 2. c4 g6 3. ∆c3 d5 4. ∆f4 ∆g7 5. e3 c5 6. dxc5 ∆a5 7. ∆c1 dxc4 8. ∆xc4 0–0 9. ∆f3 ∆xc5
A) 10. ∆b5 ∆e6 205
   A1) 11. ∆c7! 205
   A2) 11. ∆xe6 207
B) 10. ∆b3 208
C) 10. ∆b3 ∆c6 11.0–0 ∆a5 209
   C1) 12. ∆e2 210
   C2) 12. h3 ∆f5 212
      C21) 13. ∆g5 212
      C22) 13. ∆c2 ∆e4 215
         C221) 14. ∆xe4 ∆xe4 215
         C222) 14. g4?! 217
         C223) 14. ∆d5 e5 219
Chapter 18

1.d4 2.f6 2.c4 g6 3.e3 d5 4.g5 e6
A) 5.g3 227
B) 5.h4 228
C) 5.cxd5 2xe5 6.h4 2e4! 7.2xe4 2xd5 8.c3 2a5 229
   C1) 9.2a4† 230
   C2) 9.e3 231
   C3) 9.g3 232
   C4) 9.h5 233
D) 5.2xe4 dxe4 233
   D1) 6.2a4† 234
   D2) 6.f3 234
   D3) 6.e3 235
   D4) 6.2d2 2g7 7.e3 c5 237
      D41) 8.2e2 238
      D42) 8.d5 2b6† 239
        D421) 9.0–0–0 239
        D422) 9.2b1 240

Chapter 19

1.d4 2.f6 2.c4 g6 3.e3 d5 4.g5 e6 5.f4 2xc3 6.bxc3 2g7 7.e3 c5 8.f3 0–0
A) 9.2b1 245
B) 9.2b3 246
C) 9.cxd5 cxd4 10.cxd4 2xd5 11.e2 2c6 12.0–0 2f5 13.2a4 2a5 247
   C1) 14.2xa5 250
   C2) 14.2b3 251

Chapter 20

1.d4 2.f6 2.c4 g6 3.e3 d5 4.g5 e4 5.h4 2xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4
A) 7.e4? 256
B) 7.2a4† 257
Chapter 21

1.d4 ³f6 2.c4 g6 3.³c3 d5 4.³g5 ³e4 5.³h4 ³xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 ³e6
A) 8.³h3 260
B) 8.³e2 261
C) 8.³b1 c5! 9.³xb7 ³d5 10.³b5† ³d7 11.³b1 ³xb5 12.³xb5 ³d7 262
   C1) 13.³f3 263
   C2) 13.³c2 264

Chapter 22

1.d4 ³f6 2.c4 g6 3.³c3 d5 4.³g5 ³e4 5.³h4 ³xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 ³e6 8.³b1 ³d7!
A) 9.³xb7 267
B) 9.³a4 267
C) 9.³f3 ³b6 271
   C1) 10.a4 271
   C2) 10.³e2 273

Chapter 23

1.d4 ³f6 2.c4 g6 3.³c3 d5 4.³g5 ³e4 5.³h4 ³xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 ³e6 8.³f3 ³g7
A) 9.³e2 c5 10.0–0 0–0 277
   A1) 11.³g5 277
   A2) 11.³b1 cxd4 12.³xd4 ³d5 13.³c2 ³d7 280
      A21) 14.e4 281
      A22) 14.³fd1 282
B) 9.³b1 ³d5 10.³e2 ³f5 283
   B1) 11.³b4 283
   B2) 11.³b2 285
C) 9.³b1 b6 285
   C1) 10.³g5 286
   C2) 10.³d2 287
   C3) 10.³e2 0–0 288
      C31) 11.³d2 288
      C32) 11.0–0 289

Chapter 24

1.d4 ³f6 2.c4 g6 3.³c3 d5 4.³f3 ³g7
A) 5.³a4† 292
B) 5.g3 dxc4 6.³a4† ³fd7 7.³xc4 ³b6 293
   B1) 8.³b3 293
   B2) 8.³d3 294
Chapter 25

1.d4  d6 2.c4  g6 3.d3  d5 4.d3  g7 5.e4  e6 6.c4  xc3 7.bxc3 dx4
A) 8.e3 297
B) 8.d4 298
   B1) 8...d7! 298
   B2) 8...d7 9.xc4 b6! 299
      B21) 10.xg3 300
      B22) 10.xb3  a6 11.e3  xf1 301
         B221) 12.xf1 301
         B222) 12.xxf1 0–0 13.e2 c5 303
            B2221) 14.xf1 303
            B2222) 14.xc5 303

Chapter 26

1.d4  d6 2.c4  g6 3.d3  d5 4.d3  g7 5.e4  e6 6.cxd5  xc5 7.xc5  e6
A) 8.d4 306
B) 8.d2  h6 307
   B1) 9.xf3  exd5 307
      B11) 10.e3 307
      B12) 10.b4 308
   B2) 9.h3  exd5 309
      B21) 10.xf4 309
      B22) 10.e3  f8 11.xf4 310
         B221) 11...c6 310
         B222) 11...c5 312
C) 8.xf3  exd5 9.e3 0–0 312
   C1) 10.b4 313
   C2) 10.e2  c6 11.0–0 e6 12.b4  d7 314
      C21) 13.a4 315
      C22) 13.c1 315

Chapter 27

1.d4  d6 2.c4  g6 3.d3  d5 4.d3  g7 5.b3  xc4 6.xc4 0–0 7.e4  c6
A) 8.xd5? 318
B) 8.xf4 318
C) 8.e3 320
D) 8.g5 322
E) 8.h3 323
F) 8.e5 324
Chapter 28

1.d4 OTOS 2.e4 g6 3.9c3 d5 4.e5 9g7 5.9b3 dxc4 6.9xc4 0-0 7.e4 9c6 8.9e2 9g4
A) 9.9e3 9xf3 328
A1) 10.9xf3 328
A2) 10.gxf3 e5 329
   A21) 11.dxe5 329
   A22) 11.d5 331
B) 9.d5 9a5 332
   B1) 10.9a4 9xf3 11.9xf3 c6 12.0-0 b5! 332
      B11) 13.9b4 333
      B12) 13.9d1 334
   B2) 10.9b4 9xf3 11.9xf3 c6 334
      B21) 12.dxc6 335
      B22) 12.9e3 cxd5 13.exd5 9c8 335
         B221) 14.9xa7 336
         B222) 14.0-0 336
   B23) 12.0-0 9b6 13.9a4 9d7 337
      B231) 14.9e3 338
      B232) 14.dxc6 338
      B233) 14.9e2 338
      B234) 14.9d1 339
Middlegame books

Tibor Karolyi: Karpov's Strategic Wins 1 & 2


Jacob Aagaard: Attacking Manual 1 & 2

Vladimir Popov: Chess Lessons

Aagaard & Shaw: Grandmaster Versus Amateur

Artur Yusupov: Chess Evolution 1
This book is part of a new series from Quality Chess examining the cutting edge of opening theory. The idea is to identify the most important theoretical battlegrounds and then analyse as deeply as possible in search of improvements. Thus the reader will be ahead of the current state-of-the-art, rather than lagging behind trying to memorise old games. The Cutting Edge 2 considers the Sicilian Najdorf—a favourite opening of ambitious players at every level. This book concentrates on lines where White chooses 6...e3, heading for the English Attack.

After one move of the Scandinavian opening, 1.e4 d5, Black decides where the battle will be fought—a significant gain for any competitive player. Grandmaster Christian Bauer is one of the world’s leading experts on the Scandinavian and in this book he reveals the secrets of his over-the-board success. Bauer focuses particularly on 2.exd5...xd5 3...c3...a5, the established main line of the Scandinavian. An understanding of the move order nuances is essential, and Bauer is an ideally-qualified guide.

The Sicilian Defence, 1.e4 c5, is one of the popular chess openings. In this book several grandmasters present state-of-the-art analysis of lines where White meets the Sicilian by avoiding the Open variations. The editors, 2007 British Champion GM Jacob Aagaard and three-time Scottish Champion GM John Shaw, have recruited a line-up of strong chess grandmasters to share their expert opinions both on how to play the Sicilian Defence and how to play against it.
Creating the Grandmaster Repertoire series seemed a natural idea. There has been a glut of opening books offering simplistic coverage of a subject. Apart from a few exceptions, it almost seemed like the concept of a high-level repertoire book had been forgotten. As chess players and fans, we felt we were missing out, and because we can, we decided to do something about it.

The books in the Grandmaster Repertoire series are written by grandmasters, edited by grandmasters, and will certainly be read by grandmasters. Of course, this does not mean that players who are not grandmasters cannot benefit from them. We have worked hard to make our books clear in their presentation and to make it possible for the readers to decide the depth to which they want to study them.

It is our conviction that most players will eventually enjoy greater success by playing the main lines, simply because they are, in most cases, based on stronger moves. Instinctively most players know this, but for one reason or another they employ easy-to-learn but unambitious systems, or dubious gambits. These approaches may yield success from time to time, but we would argue that they are less conducive to a player’s overall development.

In these days of multi-million game databases, we all have access to information. The difficulty comes from trying to navigate through the ever-expanding jungle of games and variations. In this groundbreaking new series, readers will be guided by the insights of grandmasters, each chosen for their special expertise in the opening in question.

We are immensely excited about this new series, and we hope that the readers will share our enthusiasm.
Grandmaster Repertoire 8

The Grünfeld Defence
VOLUME ONE
by Boris Avrukh

Grandmaster Repertoire is a series of high quality chess books based on the main lines, written by strong grandmasters. The aim is to provide the reader with a complete repertoire at a level good enough for elite tournaments, and certainly also for the club championship.

Grandmaster Repertoire 8 – The Grünfeld Defence
Volume One offers a repertoire for Black after 1.d4 ܪf6 2.c4 ܪg6. This volume covers the Fianchetto Variation, the Russian Variation with 5.ߪb3, the ܪf4 and ܪg5 lines, as well as all White’s minor tries. Grandmaster Repertoire 9 will complete the repertoire.

• Hundreds of novelties
• Busts many recommended lines
• Critical lines explained by an expert
• A world-class repertoire against 1.d4

Boris Avrukh is a grandmaster from Israel. He is an Olympiad gold medallist, former World Junior Champion and analysis partner of World Championship finalists. Avrukh’s two previous Grandmaster Repertoire books on 1.d4 received universal rave reviews and have been hugely influential on chess players all over the world, including at the very highest level.

€24.99 $29.95

ISBN 978-1-906552-75-6

QUALITY CHESS
www.qualitychess.co.uk