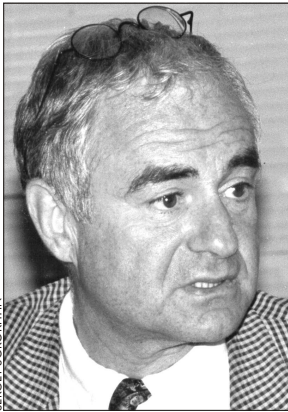


King David

by **Genna Sosonko**



*A personal view
on the chess opening*

In art a copy of a painting of great renown is worth almost nothing, even if painted with the greatest of skills. A copy of a copy is worth even less. In chess it's an entirely different story. Here we find hundreds of thousands of copies of the same idea, the same move. In fact the mere concept of opening theory is based on repetition and positions of which the final evaluation has crystallized over the years. In literature, copying someone's thoughts and words is called plagiarism and it's strictly forbidden. In chess it happens all the time and 'plagiarism' is even encouraged.

Still, even in chess someone stood at the origin of each and every opening idea or novelty and was the first to adopt it.

One of those pioneers was David Bronstein who passed away on

December 5, 2006, at the venerable age of 82.

Long before Evgeny Sveshnikov entered the arena, Bronstein already opined that the initial position was the most interesting of all. Once he explained his long thinking in the opening, sometimes even as early as the first move, by the seduction to play this line or that. Or that...

'Look', he told me once, 'if you play 1.e4, you deprive yourself of the possibility to play against openings like the Nimzo-Indian, which I know my opponent favours. After 1.e4 no more Sämisch Variation. Which is a pity, since that's a highly interesting system.'

'But David, it can only be a good thing', I replied, 'that you didn't enter the Sämisch.'

He stared at me with eyes full of incrimination.

There is no variation named after Bronstein like there is after, say, Petrosian. Or Isaac Boleslavsky, a good friend and also his father-in-law. On the other hand, few openings lack the indelible mark that David Bronstein has left on them.

In the first part of his chess career Bronstein used to play the King's Gambit a lot. He would tell that during tournament preparations Keres and he always played thematic blitz matches, using the King's Gambit exclusively. But as far as he was concerned, it is not the countless victories with this opening that counted, no, he just



David Bronstein (1924-2006)

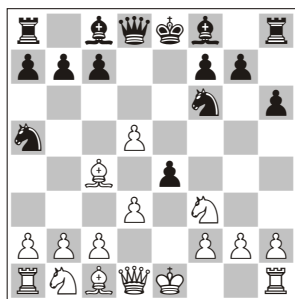
loved to sacrifice material in the opening, often leading to quiet and very positional games.

Bronstein, David

Rojahn, Ernst

Moscow ol prel 1956 (5)

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♞c6 3.♞c4 ♟f6
4.♞g5 d5 5.ed5 ♞a5 6.d3 h6
7.♟f3 e4



In this position, dating back to the days of Paul Morphy, White invariably played 8.♞e2. Bronstein has his own ideas.

8.de4?!?

This yields a piece for two centre pawns.

8...♞c4 9.♞d4 ♞b6 10.c4 c5?
11.♞d3 ♟g4 12.♞bd2 ♟e7
13.0-0 0-0 14.♞e5 ♟h5 15.b3
♞bd7 16.♞b2 ♞e5 17.♞e5 ♞d7
18.♞c3 ♟f6 19.♞ae1 ♞c3
20.♞c3 ♞f6 21.e5 ♞f5 22.f4
♟g6 23.♞e4 ♞ab8 24.♞f3 ♟h7
25.g4 ♞g6 26.f5 ♞b6 27.♞g3
f6 28.e6 ♞e5 29.h4 ♟h8 30.g5
♞bc8 31.♟h1 ♞d8 32.g6 ♟g6
33.fg6 b5 34.d6 ♞b6 35.d7 ♞d7
36.ed7 ♞cd8 37.♞f6 ♞c6
38.♞g2 1-0

'I was completely taken aback by your level-headedness', admitted the Norwegian amateur right after he had resigned. 'After blundering a piece you played on as if nothing had happened.'

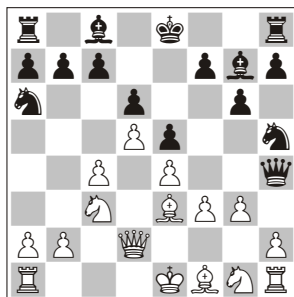
I am sure the young Spassky thought nothing like that at all when Bronstein took him by surprise on move 9 in the 1956 Candidates' Tournament in Amsterdam.

Spassky, Boris

Bronstein, David

Amsterdam ct 1956 (12)

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 g6 3.♞c3 ♟g7
4.e4 d6 5.f3 e5 6.d5 ♞h5 7.♞e3
♞a6 8.♞d2 ♞h4 9.g3



9...♞g3

A queen sacrifice for two bishops and two pawns.

10.♞f2 ♟f1 11.♞h4 ♞e3 12.♟f2
♞c4 13.b3 ♞b6 14.♞ge2 f5?
15.♞hg1 0-0 16.♟g2 ♟d7 17.a4
♟f6 18.♞g3 ♞b4 19.a5 ♞c8
20.ef5? ♟f5?
20...♞e7! 21.fg6 (21.♟h1 ♞f5
22.♞h3) 21...♞f5! 22.gh7
♟h8 23.♞e1 (23.♞f2 ♞d3+) 23...
♞d3 24.♞d2 ♞h4+ Bronstein.
21.♞a4 ♞d3 22.♞c4 ♞c5
23.♞e4± ♞a6 24.♞f6 ♞f6 25.f4
e4 26.♞c3 ♞e7 27.♞e1 ♞af8
28.b4 c6 29.♞e4 ♟e4 30.♞ce4
♞d5 31.♞e8 ♞ac7?!
31...♞f4 32.♟h1 ♞b4 33.♞f8 ♟f8
34.♞h4 ♞bd5 35.♞h7 ♞d3∞
Euwe.
32.♞f8 ♟f8 33.♟h1 ♞f5 34.♞h4
♞f6 35.♞f2 ♞b5 36.♞e2 ♞d5
37.a6 ba6 38.♞e8 ♟g7 39.♞c6
♟h6 40.♞a6 ♞b4?
40...♞f4!? 41.♞b7 ♞d4 42.♞e7
♟g5 43.♞h7 ♞e5!
41.♞b7 ♞d3 42.♞e7 ♞f4
43.♞h7 ♟g5 44.♞e7+ ♟g4
45.♞e3 ♟g5 46.h4 ♟g4
47.♟h2 ♞h5 48.♞h6 1-0

Despite the unfortunate result this powerful concept has stuck in the minds of many chess players. In the famous successor Karpov-Velimiric, Skopje 1976, Black

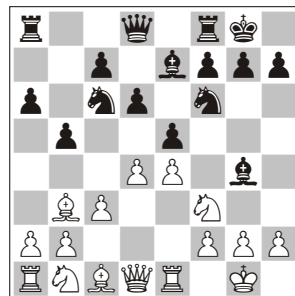
also failed to justify the queen sacrifice, but one nevertheless has the distinct feeling that the final verdict has not yet been passed.

Bronstein, David

Keres, Paul

Budapest ct 1950 (18)

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♞c6 3.♞b5 a6
4.♞a4 ♞f6 5.0-0 ♟e7 6.♞e1 b5
7.♞b3 0-0 8.d4 d6 9.c3 ♟g4



10.h3

In this last round Bronstein desperately needed a win in order to catch up with the tournament leader Boleslavsky. He came up with his favourite weapon: a pawn sacrifice.

10...♟f3 11.♞f3 ed4 12.♞d1 dc3 13.♞c3

White's compensation consists of the two bishops and his dominance on the light squares.



Preparing for his first Interzonal, Saltsjöbaden 1948

TUROY ARCHIVES

13...♘a5 14.♙c2 ♖e8 15.f4 b4
 16.♘d5 ♘d5 17.♗d5 c6
 18.♗d3 g6 19.♚h1 ♙f8 20.♖f1
 ♙g7? 21.♙d2 c5 22.♙a4 ♖f8
 23.♖ab1 ♗b6 24.f5! ♙d4
 25.♗g3 ♘c4 26.♙h6 ♙g7?
 26...♘b2 27.♙f8 ♖f8∞.
 27.♙g7 ♙g7 28.f6 ♘h8 29.♗g5
 b3 30.ab3 ♗b4 31.bc4 ♗a4
 32.♖f4 ♗c2 33.♗h6! 1-0

There are many more examples of Bronstein's sacrificial opening play. Let me start with a win against the same opponent.

Bronstein,David
Keres,Paul
 Gothenburg izt 1955 (7)
 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4
 4.e3 c5 5.♙d3 b6 6.♘e2 ♙b7
 7.0-0 cd4 8.ed4 0-0 9.d5 h6
 10.♙c2 ♘a6 11.♘b5 ed5 12.a3
 ♙e7 13.♘g3 dc4

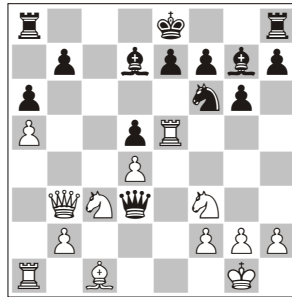


White has invested two pawns in his undertaking and now raises the stakes even further.

14.♙h6! gh6 15.♗d2 ♘h7
 16.♗h6 f5 17.♘f5 ♖f5 18.♙f5
 ♘f8 19.♖ad1 ♙g5 20.♗h5 ♗f6
 21.♘d6 ♙c6 22.♗g4 ♚h8
 23.♙e4 ♙h6 24.♙c6 dc6
 25.♗c4 ♘c5 26.b4 ♘ce6
 27.♗c6 ♖b8 28.♘e4 ♗g6
 29.♖d6 ♙g7 30.f4 ♗g4 31.h3
 ♗e2 32.♘g3 ♗e3 33.♚h2 ♘d4
 34.♗d5 ♖e8 35.♘h5 ♘e2
 36.♘g7 ♗g3 37.♚h1 ♘f4
 38.♗f3 ♘e2 39.♖h6 1-0

A kingside attack in truly magnificent style. This was one of his best games ever.

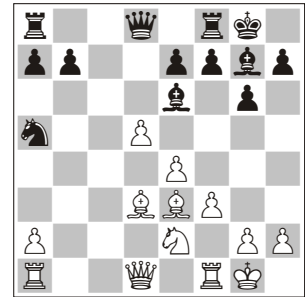
Bronstein,David
Geller,Efim
 Gothenburg izt 1955 (9)
 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 g6
 4.c3 ♙g7 5.d4 ♗b6 6.a4! cd4
 7.0-0 a6 8.♙c6 ♗c6 9.cd4 ♗e4
 10.♘c3 ♗f5 11.♖e1 d5 12.a5
 ♙d7 13.♗b3 ♘f6 14.♖e5 ♗d3



15.♖e7!
 With instant annihilation.
 15...♙e7 16.♘d5 ♘d5 17.♗d3
 f6 18.♙d2 ♘f7 19.♗b3 ♙c6
 20.♘e1 ♖he8 21.♘d3 ♖e6
 22.♖c1 ♙f8 23.♖c6 1-0

In the Exchange Grünfeld then and now the exchange sacrifice 14.d5 is considered one of the critical tests. More than half a century later this sacrifice was also played in Topalov-Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 2007.

Bronstein,David
Boleslavsky,Isaak
 Moscow m 1950 (1)
 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5
 4.cd5 ♘d5 5.e4 ♘c3 6.bc3 c5
 7.♙c4 ♙g7 8.♘e2 0-0 9.0-0 cd4
 10.cd4 ♘c6 11.♙e3 ♙g4 12.f3
 ♘a5 13.♙d3 ♙e6 14.d5



Bronstein was not the very first to play this exciting move, but thanks to his efforts this line rose to instant prominence, a state it has been in ever since.

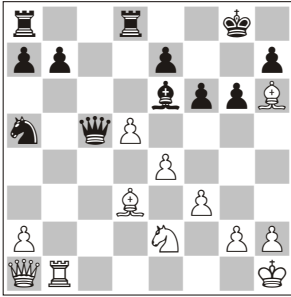
14...♙a1 15.♗a1 f6 16.♙h6 ♗b6?! 17.♚h1

A brilliant new idea! In the Candidates' Tournament in Budapest earlier that year he had tried 17.♘d4 against the same opponent, but after 17...♙d7 18.♖b1 ♗c5 19.♖c1 ♗b6 20.♙f8 ♖f8



Boleslavsky, Furman and Bronstein during the 1949 Soviet Championship

21.h4 ♖d8 22.♗h1 ♖d6 23.♗e2 b6 24.♖d4 ♜c8 25.♜c8 ♙c8 things petered out to a draw. What White plays now is much sharper. **17...♜fd8**
 17...♙f7 or 17...♙d7 was better.
18.♜b1 ♖c5

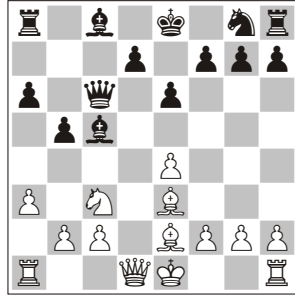


19.♙d2!! b6
 19...♙d7 20.♙b4 ♖e3 21.♜d1 ♙a4 22.♙a5 ♙d1 23.♖d1 leaves White well on top.
20.♙b4 ♖c7 21.♜c1 ♖b7
 21...♖d7 22.♗d4 ♙f7 23.♙b5 ♖b7 24.♗c6 is totally cheerless.
22.♖b1 ♜ab8?
 The only chance at survival lay in 22...♙c8.
23.de6 ♗c6 24.♙c3 ♗e5
25.♙b5 ♜bc8 26.♙e5 ♜c1
27.♖c1 fe5 28.♙d7 ♖a6
29.♗g3 ♖a2 30.h4 ♜f8 31.♖g5
♜f6 32.♖f6 1-0

This flying start helped Bronstein to win the play-off match with the narrowest of margins (7½-6½) and earned him the right to challenge the reigning champion Mikhail Botvinnik.

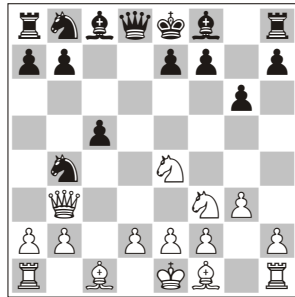
The craftiness of Bronstein was renowned and widely feared. From the word go, one had to be alert and pay close attention in order to prevent accidents from happening.

Bronstein,David
Taimanov,Mark
 Baku ch-URS 1961 (9)
1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cd4
4.♗d4 ♗c6 5.♗c3 ♖c7 6.♙e3
a6 7.a3 b5 8.♗c6 ♖c6 9.♙e2
♙c5



10.♙d4
 At first sight an innocuous move.
10...f6?
 This natural reply meets a gruesome refutation.
11.♙b5!
 Suddenly everything is clear.
11...ab5 12.♖h5 g6 13.♖c5
♖c5 14.♙c5 ♜b8 15.e5 f5
16.0-0-0 ♗e7 17.♙e7 ♗e7
18.♜d4 ♙b7 19.♗b5 ♙g2
20.♜hd1 ♙c6 21.c4 ♜hf8 22.b4
f4 23.♗d6 ♜a8 24.♜1d3 ♙g2
25.♗b7 ♜f5 26.♜d7 ♗f8 27.♗c5
♜e5 28.♜h7 ♗g8 29.♜dd7 ♙c6
30.♜dg7 ♗f8 31.♜c7 ♗g8
32.♜hg7 ♗h8 33.♜ge7 ♙f3
34.♜h7 1-0

Polugaevsky,Lev
Bronstein,David
 Leningrad ch-URS 1971 (6)
1.c4 c5 2.♗f3 ♗f6 3.♗c3 d5
4.cd5 ♗d5 5.g3 g6 6.♖b3 ♗b4
7.♗e4



This line didn't have a good reputation. The pawn on c5 is hanging and the queen move to c3 is also in the air. Bronstein's solution is strikingly simple: he sacrifices a pawn!



During the Petrosian Memorial, Moscow 2004

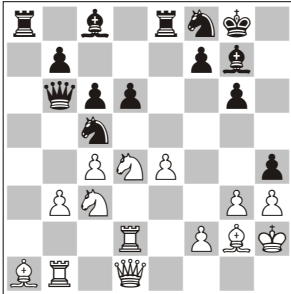
7...♙g7! 8.♗c5 ♖a5 9.a3 ♗4c6
10.♖c4 b5! 11.♖h4 b4 12.♗d3
♗a6 13.♙g2 ♙d7 14.0-0 ♜c8
15.♗de1 ♙c5 16.♗c2 ♗b3
17.♜b1 ♖c5 18.♙e3 ♗cd4
19.♗d4 ♗d4 20.♜e1 ♙b5
 Black has a strong initiative.
21.ab4
 The natural 21.d3 runs into 21...♗e2!.
21...♖d6 22.♙f1 0-0 23.♖e4 e6
24.b3 f5 25.♖f4 e5 26.♖g5 ♙e2
 A similar motif: 27.♙e2 ♗e2
 28.♜e2 ♖d3 picks up a stray rook.
27.♙g2 ♙d3 28.♜a1 e4 29.♗c4
♖d7 30.♙b2 ♙c4 31.♙d4 ♙d4
32.bc4 ♙a1 33.♜a1 ♜c4 34.♙f1
♜d4 35.♜a6 ♗g7 36.b5 ♜d2
37.♜a7 ♖a7 38.♖d2 ♖b6
39.♖c3 ♖f6 40.♖c5 ♜d8 41.b6
♙d6 42.♖c3 ♖d4 43.♖c6 ♜d6
44.♖c7 ♜d7 45.♖c6 ♖d6
46.♖c3 ♖f6 47.♖c5 ♜b7
48.♖b5 ♖b6 49.♖e5 ♖f6 0-1

In the way he approached the opening Bronstein was a predecessor of other great players such as Tal, Spassky and Stein. They were all masters at creating unbalanced positions.
 The King's Indian epitomizes this approach more clearly than any other opening line. Its theory really got started with the following two masterpieces.

**Pachman,Ludek
Bronstein,David**

Moscow-Prague tt 1946 (2)

- 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 d6 3.♙c3 e5
4.♙f3 ♘bd7 5.g3 g6 6.♙g2 ♙g7
7.0-0 0-0 8.b3 ♗e8 9.e4 ed4
10.♙d4 ♙c5 11.♗e1 a5 12.♙b2
a4 13.♗c1 c6 14.♙a1 ab3
15.ab3 ♗b6 16.h3 ♙fd7 17.♗b1
♙f8 18.♙h2 h5 19.♗e2 h4
20.♗d2

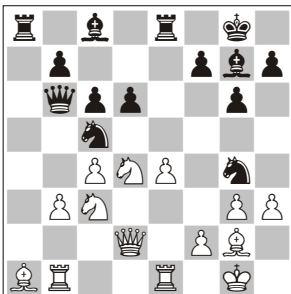


- 20...♗a1! 21.♗a1 ♙d4 22.♗d4
♙b3 23.♗d6 ♗f2! 24.♗a2
24.♗b3 hg3 25.♙h1 ♙h3 26.♗g1
♙g2 27.♗g2 ♗f1 28.♗g1 ♗h3
mate – Bronstein.
24...♗g3 25.♙h1 ♗c3 26.♗a3
♙h3 27.♗b3 ♙g2 28.♙g2 ♗c4
29.♗d4 ♗e6 30.♗b7 ♗a8
31.♗e2 h3 0-1

**Zita,Frantisek
Bronstein,David**

Moscow-Prague tt 1946 (6)

- 1.c4 e5 2.♙c3 ♙f6 3.♙f3 d6
4.d4 ♘bd7 5.g3 g6 6.♙g2 ♙g7
7.0-0 0-0 8.b3 ♗e8 9.♙b2 c6
10.e4 ed4 11.♙d4 ♗b6 12.♗d2
♙c5 13.♗fe1 a5 14.♗ab1? a4!
15.♙a1?! ab3 16.ab3 ♙g4!
17.h3?



17...♗a1!

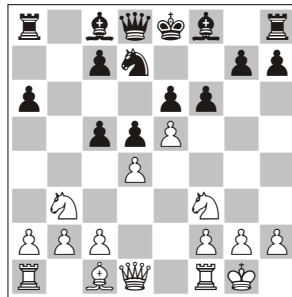
The immediate 17...♙f2? fails to
18.♙a4!±.

- 18.♗a1 ♙f2! 19.♗e3 ♙h3
20.♙h2 ♙f2 21.♗f3 ♙ce4
22.♗f4 ♙g4 23.♙h1 f5 24.♙e4
♗e4 25.♗d6 ♗d4 26.♗b8 ♗d8
27.♗a8 ♙e5 28.♗a7 ♗b4
29.♗g1 ♗f8 30.♙h3 ♗h6 0-1

**Bronstein,David
Szabo,Laszlo**

Saltsjöbaden izt 1948 (10)

- 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♙d2 ♙c6
4.♙gf3 ♙f6 5.e5 ♙d7 6.♙b3 f6
7.♙b5 a6 8.♙c6 bc6 9.0-0 c5



If White now plays 10.ef6 ♗f6
11.♗e1, Black has 11...c4 12.♙c5
♙c5 13.dc5 0-0 14.c6 ♙b8 15.♙e5
a5! ready, which gives him an excel-
lent game. Therefore Bronstein
opens up the centre.



Devik, 20 years old

10.c4! dc4

In Bronstein-Barsauskas, Lithuanian
Championship 1947, Black tried to support
his pawn centre with 10...c6 11.ef6 gf6 (if
11...♗f6 12.cd5 cd5 13.dc5 ♙c5 14.♙c5
♙c5 15.♗c2 ♗e7 16.b4) 12.♗e2
♙f7 13.♗e1 ♙b6 14.♙c5 ♙c5
15.dc5 ♙c4 but was quickly wiped out:
16.h3 ♙a5? 17.♙e5! ♙e7
18.♙d2 ♙f8 19.♗h5 fe5 20.♙h6
1-0 .

- 11.♙a5 ♙b6 12.ef6 ♗f6 13.dc5
♗f5 14.♙g5 ♗c5 15.♗d8 ♙f7
16.♗ad1 ♙b7 17.♙b7!
and White won effortlessly.

Bronstein himself was mighty proud of the
surprise manoeuvre in the following game.

**Porreca,Giorgio
Bronstein,David**

Beograd 1954 (10)

- 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♙c3 de4
4.♙e4 ♙f5 5.♙g3 ♙g6 6.h4 h6
7.♙h3 ♙h7 8.♙c4 ♙f6 9.♙f4
♙bd7 10.0-0 ♗c7 11.♗e1



In this position it's not so easy for
Black to complete his development. 11...e6
is an open invitation to sacrifices on e6,
while 11...♙b6 12.♙b3 e5 followed by
13...0-0-0 sheds a pawn on f7.

11...♙g8!

Bronstein was quite economical with the
use of exclamation marks, but he awarded
himself one for this unusual prophylactic
move.

- 12.♙d3 e6 13.♙f4 ♙d6 14.♙d6
♗d6 15.♙f5 ♗f8 16.♗f3 0-0-0
17.♙g3 ♙h7

Now that the immediate danger is

NEW IN CHESS ARCHIVES

gone the bishop returns to base. Black won.

**Bronstein, David
Damjanovic, Mato**

Zagreb 1965 (9)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f3 d5 3.c4 c6
4.♗c3 e6 5.e3 ♗bd7 6.♙d3
♙d6 7.e4 de4 8.♙e4!?



Nobody had thought of this move before and few have followed in Bronsteins footsteps since. Taking back on e4 with the knight is so obvious, why play something else?

Bronstein has a different train of thought. After 8...♗e4 9.♗e4 ♙b4 10.♙d2 ♙d2 11.♙d2 he wants to exchange another pair of knights and head for a middlegame with imbalances: ♖ and ♗ vs ♖ and ♙. A deep concept.

Damjanovic chose to let White's bishop live but after

8...♙b4?! 9.♙c2! 0-0 10.0-0 c5
11.♗e2! ♙a5 12.♙g5 a6 13.dc5
♙b4 14.♙d4 h6 15.♙c1!

he was soon with his back up against the wall.

15...♙c5 16.♙h4 ♖e8 17.♗c3
♙e7 18.♙g3 ♗h5 19.♙h3 ♗hf6
20.♖e1 ♙c7 21.♙h4 ♗f8
22.♙d2 ♙d7 23.♗e5 ♙d6
24.♙f4 ♙e5 25.♙e5 ♙d8
26.♖ad1

Black's position is beyond repair. White soon won. A highly instructive game!

It seems appropriate to conclude this homage with a recent game. One of Bronstein's old ideas yielded Morozevich a magnificent

win just two weeks after the man himself had passed away.

**Morozevich, Alexander
Shirov, Alexey**

Pamplona 2006 (3)

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5
4.cd5 ♗d5 5.♙d2 ♗b6 6.♗f3
♙g7 7.♖c1 0-0 8.♙g5

Bronstein introduced this idea in 1970.

8...h6 9.♙h4 g5 10.♙g3 c5!

Kortchnoi's preference in the stem game. 10...♗c6, 10...♙g4 and 10...c6 have also been seen in this position, but they put insufficient pressure on White's pawn centre and therefore cannot win any laurels.



11.d5

The first match game Bronstein-Kortchnoi, Leningrad 1970, revealed the drawback of Bronstein's choice 11.dc5: 11...♙c3! 12.♖c3 ♙d1 13.♗d1 ♗a4 14.♖a3 ♗c5 15.e3 ♖d8 16.♗e1 ♗c6 17.♙c7 ♗d7 18.♙b6 ♗a6 19.♙a6 ab6 20.♙c4 ♖a3 21.ba3 1/2-1/2. By the way, Bronstein won this training match 4-2!

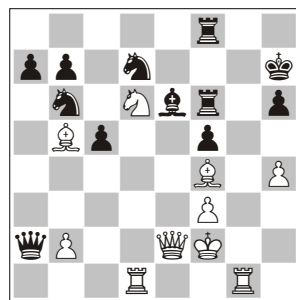
11.e3! was tried on several occasions in the early 1970s and deserves further research.

11...e6 12.d6 ♗d5

Shirov tries to exploit his lead in development. 12...♗c6 13.e3 e5 14.♙b5 ♖e8 15.h4 g4 16.♗d2 f5 17.0-0 ♙d6 18.♗c4 ♙g6 19.♗d5 ♗d5 20.♙d5 ♙e6 21.♙c5± proved unsatisfactory in the postal game Borwell-A.Poulsen, 1992.

13.h4 g4 14.♗e5 ♙d6?! 15.e4 f5 16.ef5 ♙e5 17.♗b5 ♙c6

18.♙e5 ef5 19.♗d6 ♗b6 20.f3
♙e6 21.♙b5 ♙d5 22.♙e2
♗8d7 23.♙f4 gf3 24.gf3 ♗h7
25.♖d1 ♙a2 26.♗f2 ♖f6
27.♖hg1 ♖af8



28.♙e5!!

In his famous book on Zurich 1953 Bronstein wrote in the notes to the game Smyslov-Reshevsky, one of the crucial games from the final stages of the tournament: 'We must give this move two exclamation marks, as otherwise we would have to give one to each of Smyslov's moves.'

Exactly the same applies to Morozevich here. Bronstein would surely have approved of the way he conducted this game.

28...♗e5 29.♙e5 ♗d7 30.♙d7
♙d7 31.♗e4 fe4 32.♖d7 ♗h8
33.♖g6 1-0



Alexander Morozevich, playing in Bronstein's style

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