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PREFACE

This book presents an opening repertoire for Black to players who are not excited by defending the dull endgames in the “Berlin Wall” variation and who strive for initiative, counterplay and a tense fight, having in mind the strategy of reliability defined by Tigran Petrosian. It is comprised on the principle “The best move for me – against all the reasonable moves for the opponent.”. In some lines we analyse alternatives for Black.

As our main weapon against 9.h3 we recommend the Zaitzev system – 9...♗b7 10.d4 ♖e8. At the beginning of the year 2015 the Svidler variation began to gain popularity 9...♗b7 10.d4 ♖e8 11.♘bd2 exd4 12.cxd4 ♘d7, which combines elements of the Zaitzev system and the Karpov variation 9...♘d7. We analyse it in this book as well, as a way for Black to avoid the already famous repetition of moves 11.♘g5 ♖f8 12.♘f3.

The book by Anatoly Bikhovsky “The Closed Spanish Karpov/Zaitzev Systems” (London 1993) was published long ago and many new ideas appeared in the Zaitzev system. Plenty of new practical material was amassed and we analysed it in the different chapters of our book.

The positions which arise in the Aseev variation, after the moves 9... ♗b7 10.d4 ♖e8 11.♘bd2 ♗f8 12.a4 h6 13.♙c2 exd4 14.cxd4 ♘b4 15.♗b1 c5 16.d5 ♘d7 17.♖a3 f5 18.♘h2 ♘h8 19.g4!, are simply beyond precise evaluation and maybe during the process of analysis some of the readers may see and understand the future development of the game of chess.

I devote this book to the memory of my dear friend Konstantin Nikolaevich Aseev (1960-2004), who fell a victim to an insidious incurable disease.

I have written this book for my students. I hope it will be useful to all the players who wish to have the Ruy Lopez as a part of their opening repertoire with Black and who desire to know its nuances and fine points in details.

*Evgeniy Solozhenkin
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