

Preface

Greetings, dear reader! In this short introduction I will tell you a bit about the content of this book, although I imagine you will already have a fair idea after reading the catchy title.

Why this subject?

I always thought there was a gaping hole in chess literature for a book of this type. If you play 1 e4, then you have to be ready for a wide array of defences. The Sicilian, Caro-Kann, French, and 1...e5 are all huge topics, and you can find entire books (or in some cases, multiple volumes) dedicated to fighting against each one of them. But the 'big four' are not the only riddles with which the 1 e4 player finds himself confronted; there are numerous other less common but still highly respectable defences for which one must be prepared. The Alekhine, Modern, Pirc, Scandinavian, and others all require serious attention, but where can you find the information needed to meet each one effectively? There are individual books offering a complete repertoire after 1 e4, and while such works may have a lot to offer some players, it is hardly possible for the author to go into much detail, especially against these minor openings.

Another approach would be to purchase specialist works on each defence. This enables you to obtain more detailed information, but buying separate books on each opening will hit your wallet where it hurts. Not to mention that a book about a particular defence is more likely to be written from Black's standpoint, which is hardly ideal for those looking for a path to an advantage for White.

This book is intended to solve the said problem. In these pages I have laid out a comprehensive repertoire for White against each of the aforementioned openings, plus all other irregular defences after 1 e4 which fall outside of the 'big four'.

Repertoire choices

My approach has been to meet each of these openings in a principled manner, choosing well-established main lines for White. Generally we will be looking to

seize space in the centre and pursue the initiative in whichever way best meets the demands of the position. Speaking from my own experience, there was a time when I used to feel apprehensive about meeting these unusual defences, but once I studied them properly and learnt how to confront them head-on, I began to relish facing them. I hope that after reaching the end of each chapter, the reader will feel the same way about the defence in question.

Unlike my previous repertoire books on the Ruy Lopez and Queen's Indian, I decided to cover the material using complete illustrative games rather than a tree of variations. I would love to tell you that this was due to some profound piece of creative insight, but the truth is I just thought it would be fun to do something different. At the start of each chapter you will find a plan describing which variations can be found within each game.

Open theory is ever-expanding, and even casting aside the 'big four' defences, there was a lot of ground to cover in a single volume. I have endeavoured to cover the material pragmatically: you don't need 20 moves of hard analysis telling you how to refute a useless move that shows up on the database having once been tried by a 1400-rated player on the internet; however, you do have every right to demand detailed coverage of the most theoretically critical lines. This kind of sensible balance is what I have endeavoured to provide. In each chapter I have started by analysing the most critical main lines, before gradually working backwards through the various secondary set-ups and sidelines.

I hope you will enjoy reading this book, and wish you every success in beating the unusual defences after 1 e4.

Andrew Greet,
Glasgow,
September 2011

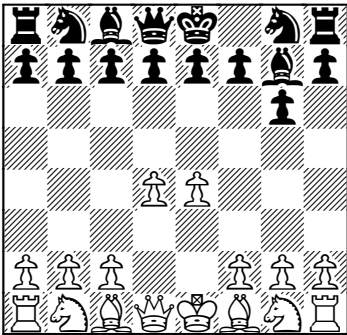
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Chapter Two

Modern Defence

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7



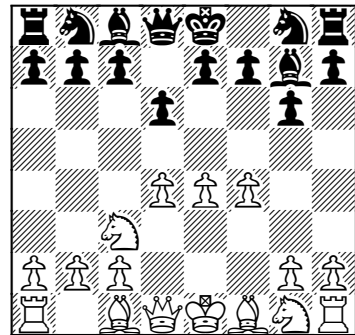
3 ♘c3

This is my preferred move order. Against the majority of replies, I will be recommending an aggressive set-up with 4 f4, known as the Austrian Attack. I consider this the most principled set-up at White's disposal; since Black has chosen not to contest the central squares over the opening moves, White takes the opportunity to seize additional space, with the prospect of developing an attack later in the middle-game.

From here Black has a number of options:

Part 1 – 3...d6

We will begin by examining 3...d6, Black's most popular move. Then after 4 f4 Black has several ideas:



Black's most frequently played option is 4...c6, which is usually a prelude to ...♖b6, although Black sometimes uses it to prepare queenside play with ...b5. After the natural reply 5 ♘f3 Game 13 features the main line of 5...♗g4, while Game 14 deals with the tricky sideline 5...♖b6, along with the rest of Black's 5th-move alternatives.

In Game 15 we will look at 4...a6, intending an early counterattack with ...b5. This is quite a challenging system

which should be studied carefully. After that we will turn our attention to 4...♘d7 which has the principal aim of preparing ...c5. This plan has fallen out of fashion and Game 16 gives an idea as to why.

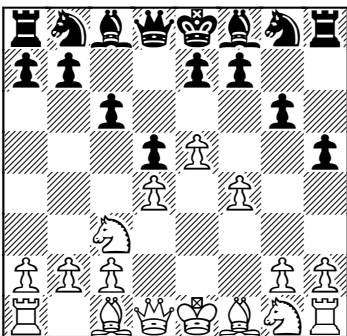
Part 2 – Unusual third moves

Next on the agenda are two slightly unusual third moves. In Game 17 we will address the ambitious 3...c5, while Game 18 deals with the even more eye-catching 3...d5.

Part 3 – The ‘Modern Caro-Kann’

The final part of the chapter will focus on a very different interpretation of the Modern, in which Black aims for a light-squared strategy based on an early ...c6 and ...d5.

Game 19 shows how White should handle the blocked positions which arise after the sequence 1 e4 g6 2 d4 d6 3 ♘c3 c6 4 f4 d5 5 e5 h5.



As we will see, Black can and should aim to reach this position with his bishop still on f8, as it has absolutely

no future on g7. Black can also play the position more dynamically and in Game 20 we will consider the system based on 2...♗g7 3 ♘c3 c6 4 f4 d5 5 e5 ♘h6 intending a quick ...f6.

Finally, Game 21 deals with an unusual but slightly tricky move order with 2...c6, against which I recommend an ‘Accelerated Austrian’ with 3 f4.

Part 1 – 3...d6

Game 13 I.Glek-E.Cekro Belgian League 2001

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 ♘c3

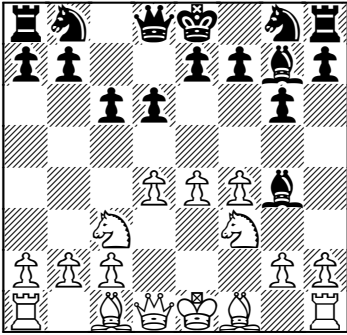
It is worth mentioning that the immediate 3 f4 allows Black a couple of attractive options in 3...c5 and 3...d5!?. We will see that both of these moves can also be played against 3 ♘c3, but White is better equipped to deal with them in this case.

3...d6 4 f4 c6

According to the database, this has been Black’s most frequently played move here – with the exception of 4...♘f6, which takes us into the next chapter.

5 ♘f3 ♗g4

By pinning the knight, Black continues his policy of fighting for the centre using pieces rather than pawns. This has been the most popular choice, although several alternatives have been tried. These will be seen in Game 14.



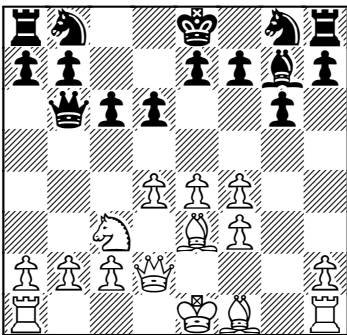
6 ♖e3

White logically supports the centre.

6... ♗b6

This is the consistent follow-up to Black's previous move. Less forcing alternatives such as 6... ♘d7 allow White to obtain easy play with 7 h3 ♕xf3 8 ♗xf3 followed by castling and a subsequent advance in the centre and/or on the kingside.

7 ♗d2 ♕xf3 8 gxf3



White incurs a slight weakening of his kingside pawns. On the other hand, the bishop pair and open g-file are significant assets, especially when one factors in White's lead in development

and central domination.

8... ♗a5

This move order is slightly unusual, but we soon transpose back into a normal position. Alternatives include:

a) 8... ♘d7 has been more popular. The black queen does not have to move immediately, but nor will she want to remain on b6 indefinitely. For instance, after 9 0-0-0 0-0-0 (9... ♗a5 is the main line, after which 10 ♖b1 transposes to the game) 10 ♕c4 Black is unable to play the natural move 10...e6? as then 11 d5 is too destructive.

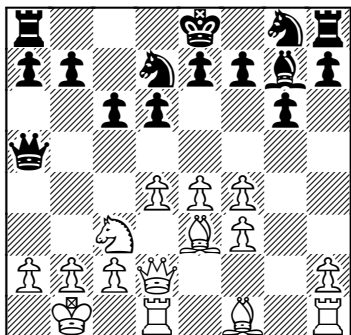
b) It is worth mentioning that 8... ♗xb2? is a bad idea: 9 ♖b1 ♗a3 10 ♖xb7 (the exchange of pawns has clearly benefited White, whose rook stands proudly on the seventh rank) 10... ♘d7 (there is also 10... ♘f6 11 ♕c4 when White is clearly better) 11 ♖c7! c5? (the lesser evil would have been to jettison the c-pawn, not that Black could hope to obtain any compensation for it) 12 ♕b5 ♖d8 13 e5! ♘h6 14 dxc5 ♘f5 15 cxd6 and with ♖xa7 coming next, White was already winning in M.Dimitriadis-J.Cobb, correspondence 1997.

9 0-0-0 ♘d7

9...b5 10 ♖b1 ♘d7 leads to the same position.

10 ♖b1

White takes a moment to improve the position of his king and defends the a2-pawn in anticipation of ...b5-b4. At this point Black must make an important choice.



10...b5

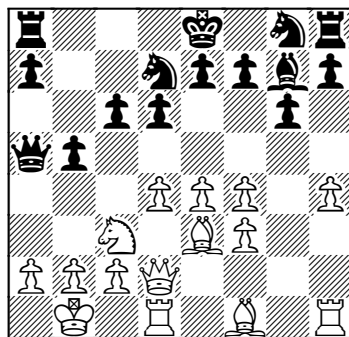
Cekro elects to start an attack. The strategy entails some risk, as Black's kingside pieces are undeveloped and his king lacks a safe haven. On the other hand, if he plays more solidly he may find it difficult to obtain any active play, as illustrated by the following examples:

a) 10...♘g6 11 ♖g1 0-0-0 (11...♘h5 12 f5 0-0-0 13 ♗c4 ♜df8 was played in B.Laursen-H.Madsen, correspondence 1999, and now after 14 f4! Black must pay serious attention to the retreat ♗e2, which might even be preceded by e5, taking away the h5-knight's retreat square) 12 f5 ♜c7 13 ♜f2 ♜hg8 14 ♗h3 ♗b8 15 f4 ♘b6 16 ♗c1 ♘c4 17 e5 ♘d5 18 ♘xd5 cxd5 19 e6 ♜b6 20 ♗a1 fx6 21 fxg6 hxg6 22 ♗xe6 ♜h8 23 ♜xg6 ♗f6 24 ♗xd5 sees White's strategy prevail. He has won a pawn and his light-squared bishop dominates the board, L.Kritz-V.Arapovic, Mallorca Olympiad 2004.

b) 10...0-0-0 11 ♖g1 ♗b8 (for 11...♘g6 12 f5 see variation 'a') 12 ♗c4!

(White has a couple of decent alternatives available in 12 f5 and 12 ♖g5 ♜c7 13 d5, but I like this developing move the most) 12...e6 (12...d5 was played in J.Brueggemann-C.Meis, German League 1997, and now instead of the strange retreat to f1, White should have preferred 13 ♗b3 e6 14 f5! with a strong initiative, as pointed out by Khalifman) 13 f5! (once again this key resource enables White to get his light-squared bishop working) 13...exf5 14 ♗xf7 ♘e7 15 h4 ♜hf8 16 ♗b3 when with two powerful bishops, a central pawn majority and a clear plan of attack on the kingside, White stood clearly better in I.Smikovski-A.Utkin, St Petersburg 2002.

11 h4!



White begins to soften up his opponent's kingside.

11...♘b6 12 h5!

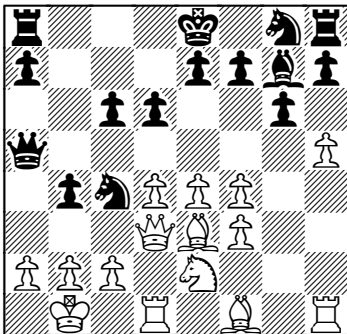
This method of handling the position can be considered a near-refutation of Black's opening system. In the past it was more common for White to play moves like 12 ♗d3 or even 12 b3 in order to prevent the black

knight from hopping to c4. Although these two moves are not bad and offer reasonable chances for an advantage, it turns out that White does have to worry about the knight invasion and can instead press on with his own attack. The results have simply been overwhelming: according to the database, White has scored a massive nine wins, with two draws and no defeats.

12...b4

In one game Black tried the tricky 12...♖b8, but White's reaction was convincing: 13 hxg6 fxg6 (perhaps Black should have considered 13...hxg6, although here too after 14 ♖xh8 ♙xh8 15 ♖h2 ♙g7 16 f5 White's attack looks the faster) 14 ♔a1 (14 b3!?) 14...♗a4 (after 14...♗c4 15 ♙xc4 bxc4 16 f5 ♖b4 17 ♖b1 White defends his king easily, but the same cannot be said for Black) 15 ♗xa4 ♖xa4 (15...♗xd2 16 ♖xd2 bxa4 17 ♙h3 is highly promising too) 16 f5 gxf5 17 ♖g2 ♙f8 18 e5 and White has a crushing attack, M.Pichler-A.Padros Simon, correspondence 1981.

13 ♗e2 ♗c4 14 ♖d3



14...♗xe3

Black can also try 14...d5, keeping his knight on c4. In such situations White's main concern will be defending against the plan of ...♖b8 and ...♗a3+ (or ...♗c3+ in related positions with the knight on a4). Fortunately he has enough pieces in close proximity to the queenside to deal with such 'cheap' tricks, and meanwhile his kingside attack will continue to fire on all cylinders: 15 ♙c1 ♖b8 16 hxg6 hxg6 17 ♖xh8 ♙xh8 18 f5! gxf5 19 ♗g3! and White has a powerful initiative, O.Korneev-K.Movsziszian, Berga 1996.

15 ♖xe3

White no longer has the advantage of the bishop pair, but on the other hand he still has the superior bishop, which forms the basis of a powerful light-squared attacking strategy. White's lead in development and extra space are also important factors of course.

15...♖b6

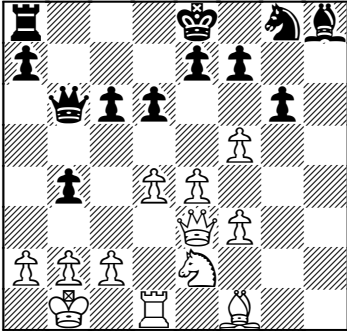
This seems too slow to be effective, but it is doubtful that Black has a notable improvement – his position is simply bad by this stage. For example:

a) 15...0-0-0?! 16 ♖b3! e6 17 ♙h3! ♔c7 (17...d5 18 f5! smashes Black open on the light squares) 18 f5! exf5 19 exf5 d5 20 fxg6 fxg6 21 ♗f4 and Black was swiftly crushed in R.Basden-L.Kempen, correspondence 2001.

b) 15...♗f6?! 16 h6! ♙f8 17 d5! cxd5 18 e5! ♗d7 19 e6 fxe6 20 ♖xe6 gives White a huge initiative while his oppo-

ment's kingside pieces cannot even move, V.Bologan-M.Todorcevic, Las Palmas 1993.

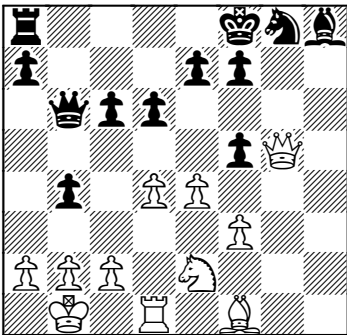
16 hxg6 hxg6 17 ♖xh8 ♙xh8 18 f5!



White proceeds with the standard attacking plan. The preliminary 18 ♙h3 is also good.

18...gxf5 19 ♖g5 ♙f8

19...♗f6 runs into 20 e5! when White wins material.



20 ♙h3!?

Not a bad move, but my recommendation would be the straightforward 20 ♖xf5 which gives White a clear plus without allowing any real counterplay.

20...♙f6

20...fxe4?? loses instantly to 21 ♖g1.

21 ♖g3

21 ♖h5!?! is also dangerous.

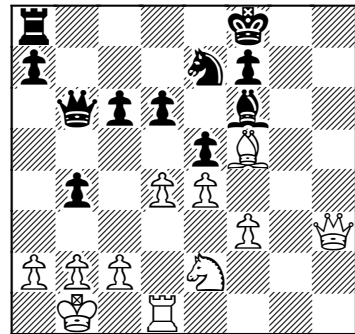
21...e5

White's last move was probably directed against 21...e6, although this might still have been the lesser of the evils for Black:

a) In the event of 22 ♖xd6+ ♗e7 23 exf5 ♖d8 24 ♖f4 (24 ♖g3 exf5) 24...♗d5 Black gets some counterplay based on the theme of ...♗c3+.

b) Instead White should prefer 22 exf5 e5 23 dxe5 dxe5 (if 23...♙xe5 24 f4 ♙f6 25 ♖xd6) 24 ♗c1 when he keeps some advantage, but Black has some chances to resist.

22 ♙xf5 ♗e7 23 ♖h3!?



Glek decides to sacrifice a pawn. White's position is certainly strong enough to justify it, although simpler moves were possible as well.

23...exd4 24 f4

24 ♗f4 also looks promising.

24...♗xf5 25 ♖xf5 ♙g7 26 ♖g4 ♗e8?

Under pressure, Black blunders. He

should have preferred 26...♖d8, or perhaps the counterattacking 26...d3!? to activate his pieces.

27 ♖g1 ♕f6 28 ♖g3!

Now Black's king is caught.

28...d3

If 28...♗e7 29 ♖f5+ ♗d7 (or 29...♗d8 30 ♖xd6) 30 ♖g7+ White wins easily.

29 ♖f5 dxc2+ 30 ♖c1 1-0

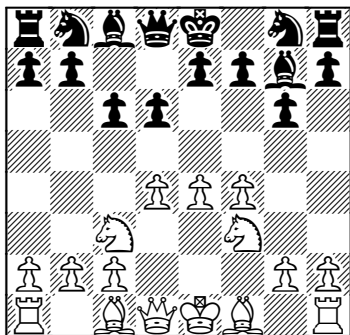
Game 14

**I. Martin Alvarez-
K.Movsziszian
Pamplona 2009**

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7

The game actually began with the somewhat unusual sequence 2...d6 3 ♖c3 c6 4 f4 ♗b6 5 ♖f3 ♗g4 6 ♗c4 ♖h6 7 ♗b3 ♗g7 8 ♗e3 d5 9 ♗d2, but I will substitute the standard move order in order to demonstrate some of the other deviations available to Black.

3 ♖c3 d6 4 f4 c6 5 ♖f3



So far everything is the same as the previous game, but Black has a few

other ideas at his disposal.

5...♗b6!?

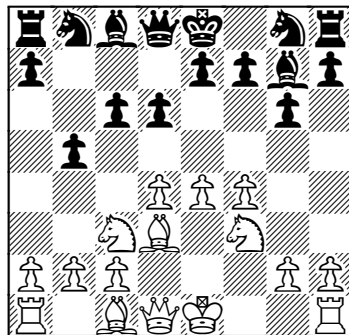
By shuffling his move order (compared with the plan of 5...♗g4 and 6...♗b6 as seen in Glek-Cekro), Black hopes to inhibit the development of the c1-bishop. The plan is interesting, but we will see that it has certain drawbacks.

Before going any further, we should check some of Black's other options. Only the third of the following lines is of any real significance:

a) 5...d5?! has been played in several games, but after 6 e5 Black has an inferior version of Game 19, having already committed his bishop to g7.

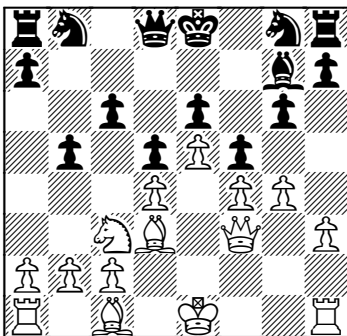
b) 5...♖d7 transposes to note 'b' to Black's sixth move in Game 16.

c) 5...b5 is possible, but the early queenside attack is unlikely to hurt White. The first player should develop quickly and look for an opportunity to attack. After 6 ♗d3 (6 ♗e3 is not bad, but with Black's queenside advance already underway, it looks more logical to castle on the kingside),



here are some lines to show how the game may develop:

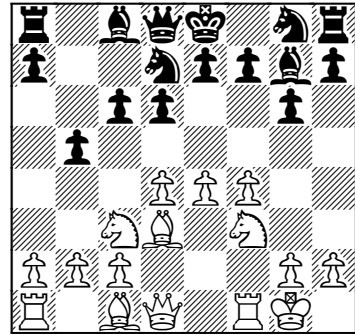
c1) 6...♗g4 (a good rule of thumb is that queenside expansion with ...b5 should generally not be combined with the development of the bishop to g4 – the point is that after the probable exchange of this piece for the knight on f3, Black is liable to become weak on the light squares, as the advancing pawns will leave plenty of holes which can be exploited later on) 7 e5!? (with this active move White wastes no time in opening the h1-a8 diagonal towards Black's weakened queenside; 7 ♗e3 is a reasonable but less incisive alternative) 7...f5?! (Black embarks on a blockading plan on the light squares; positionally it makes some sense, given that he is about to exchange his light-squared bishop, but as things turn out, Black is soon left in a passive position with no counterplay) 8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♖xf3 d5 10 g4 e6.



This position was reached in K.Malinovsky-J.Bernasek, Olomouc 2007, and here the strongest continuation looks

to be 11 gxf5 ♖h4+ 12 ♔e2 gxf5 13 ♖g1 when White has numerous positional advantages and can develop his initiative on either side of the board.

c2) 6...♘d7 7 0-0 and now:



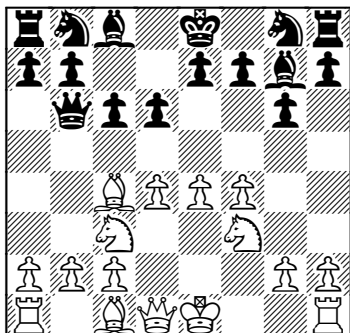
c21) 7...♗b7 8 e5! sees White's initiative running smoothly.

c22) 7...♖b6 does not achieve much after 8 ♗e3: for instance, 8...e5 (8...♘gf6 should be met by 9 h3!, guarding the g4-square) 9 fxe5 dxe5 10 ♗f2! exd4 11 e5! ♘xe5? (11...♘e7 was better, although after 12 ♘xd4 ♗xe5 13 ♘xc6! ♖xc6 14 ♗e4 White wins material) 12 ♖e1 f6 13 ♘xd4 c5 14 ♗xb5+ ♔f7 15 ♖xe5 fxe5 16 ♗c4+ ♔e8 17 ♖f3 cxd4 18 ♖f7+ ♔d8 19 ♘d5 1-0 T.Chua Zheng Yuan-Wong Meng Kong, Singapore 2009.

c23) 7...♘b6 8 a4!? (we will see the same idea working well in Game 15) 8...b4 9 ♘e2 a5 (after 9...♘f6 10 a5 ♘bd7 11 ♖e1 the b4-pawn is weak) 10 c3 bxc3 11 bxc3 ♘f6 12 ♖b1 0-0 13 f5 and White had a promising initiative in J.Degraeve-E.Cekro, Istanbul Olympiad 2000.

Returning to 5...♖b6:

6 ♖c4!



This seems like the most challenging response, although 6 h3 and 6 a4!? are also not bad.

6...♘h6

The main point of White's last move was to prevent 6...♖g4? which now loses to 7 ♖xf7+!

7 ♖b3

Covering the b2-pawn and thus facilitating the development of the other bishop.

7...♖g4

We are now directly back in Martin Alvarez-Movsziszian, which started with an unusual move order, as noted at move 2.

8 ♖e3 d5!?

This is practically forced, as if Black makes no attempt to fight for the central light squares, he will have serious trouble justifying the position of the knight on h6.

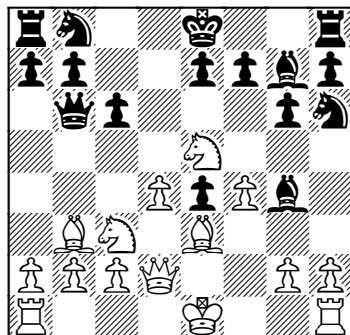
9 ♗d2!

An important move.

9...dxe4

After 9...♖xf3? 10 gxf3 e6 11 f5 ♘g8 12 fxe6 fxe6 13 ♘a4 ♗c7 14 ♘c5 ♗f7 15 0-0-0 Black's position was already highly suspect in G.Cools-R.Kasimdzhanov, Antwerp 1998.

10 ♘e5



White's pawn sacrifice is likely to be temporary and all his pieces enjoy excellent prospects.

10...♖c8?!

It is hard to believe that Black can solve his opening problems by playing such a move.

10...♖f5 is Black's best try according to both the computer and basic common sense. The position after 11 h3 f6 was reached in E.Andreev-A.Kornev, Tula 2001. At this point I agree with Khalifman's recommendation: 12 g4! fxe5 13 dxe5 ♗d8 (Black had better take the opportunity to exchange queens, but even this does not guarantee him an easy life) 14 gxf5 ♗xd2+ (14...♘xf5 15 ♘xe4 ♗xd2+ 16 ♖xd2 reaches variation 'b' below) 15 ♖xd2. Black has a few ideas here, but none of them are good enough to equalize:

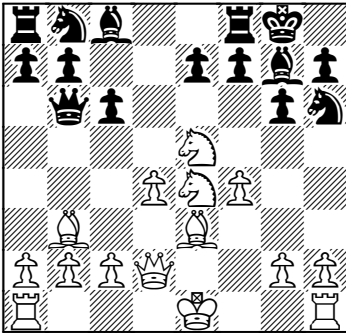
a) 15...gxf5?! 16 ♖g1 ♕f8 17 ♕e3 when Black's kingside pieces are almost stalemated and the b3-bishop is tremendously powerful.

b) 15...♖xf5 16 ♖xe4 ♖d4 17 ♕e3 ♖xb3 18 axb3 ♖a6 19 ♖e2 and White is strong in the centre, whereas Black's bishop is restricted and his queenside weak.

c) 15...e3!? 16 ♕xe3 ♖xf5 17 ♕f2 ♕h6 18 ♖e2 leaves White clearly better thanks to his dominant light-squared bishop.

This analysis, from 12 g4! onwards, is largely based on that of Khalifman.

11 ♖xe4 0-0



12 h3

This is a bit on the slow side. If I had this position over the board I would be more inclined to go for 12 0-0-0 or the direct 12 h4!?

12...♖f5 13 g4!?

13 ♕f2 was fine, but White decides he does not need his bishop.

13...♖d6

Also after 13...♖xe3 14 ♖xe3 ♖d7 15 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 16 0-0-0 White is some-

somewhat better.

14 ♖f2

14 ♖c5 looks like a more active way to avoid the knight exchange.

14...a5 15 a4 ♖a6 16 h4 ♖c7?

Black should have preferred 16...♖b4, forcing a queen exchange. He is still worse here, but at least he is not about to be mated on the kingside.

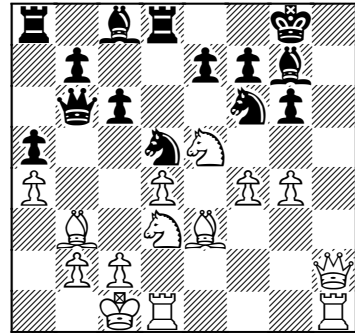
17 h5 ♖d5

17...♖b4? 18 hxg6 hxg6 19 ♖xg6 wins a pawn.

18 hxg6 hxg6 19 ♖fd3 ♖d8 20 0-0-0

Already it is doubtful that Black can defend.

20...♖e4 21 ♖h2 ♖ef6



22 ♖de1?

22 f5! would have been crushing: for instance, 22...♖xe3 (22...gxf5 23 gxf5 followed by ♖dg1 is terminal) 23 ♕xf7+ ♖f8 24 ♖f4 and Black can resign.

22...♕xg4

Now the game becomes unclear again.

23 ♖xg4 ♖xg4 24 ♖h7+ ♖f8 25 ♖e5?!

This works out well in the game, but

objectively it was unsound.

25 ♖g1 would have kept the game highly unclear.

25...♗g6?

This proves to be the fatal error.

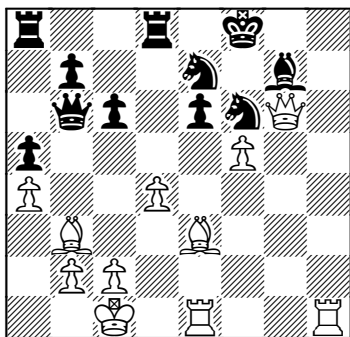
After the correct 25...♗gxe3! 26 ♖xe3 ♗xd4! (26...♗xe3?? 27 ♖xf7 wins) 27 ♖f3 e6 White is two pawns down and does not seem to have a convincing way through on the kingside.

26 ♗xg6+! fxg6 27 ♗xg6 e6

From here White makes up for his earlier errors by finishing the game in style.

28 f5! ♗e7

Or 28...♗xe3 29 fxе6 ♗c7 30 ♖xe3 ♗e7 31 ♖f1 when Black has no defence against ♖ef3.



29 ♖h8+! ♗eg8

29...♖xh8 30 ♖h6+ is the end.

30 fxе6 ♗c7 31 ♖f1 1-0

That concludes our coverage of 4...c6. In my view the games and supporting analysis indicate that White has every reason to feel happy here.

Our next game once again sees

Karen Movsziszian in control of the black pieces, but in this particular encounter he favours a different set-up involving a quick ...a6.

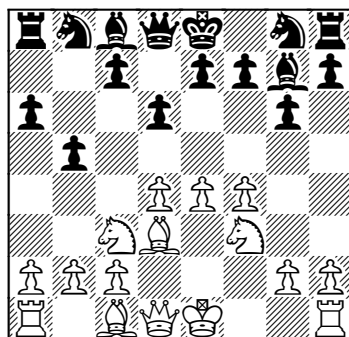
Game 15

**J. Fernandez Garcia-
K.Movsziszian
Mislata 2001**

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♖g7 3 ♗c3 d6 4 f4 a6

This move introduces a dynamic counterattacking system based on the moves ...b5, ...♖b7, ...♗d7, and ...c5. Its greatest exponent is the creative Swedish Grandmaster Tiger Hillarp Persson, who has played it for many years and wrote a book on the system.

5 ♗f3 b5 6 ♖d3



6 ♖e3 is possible, but I consider it more accurate to develop the light-squared bishop first. Indeed, in the main game we will see the queen's bishop being left on c1 for quite some time.

6...♗d7