

Tackling the Trompowsky & Torre Systems

**Including a Complete Answer
to the Barry-Tarzan Attack**

**Vassilios Kotronias
&
Mikhail Ivanov**



**2025
Russell Enterprises, LLC
Portsmouth, NH USA**

Tackling the Trompowsky & Torre Systems
Including a Complete Answer to the Barry-Tarzan Attack

Vassilios Kotronias & Mikhail Ivanov

ISBN: 978-1-963885-06-4 (print)

ISBN: 978-1-963885-07-1 (eBook)

© Copyright 2025

Vassilios Kotronias & Mikhail Ivanov
All Rights Reserved

No part of this book may be used, reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any manner or form whatsoever or by any means, electronic, electrostatic, magnetic tape, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the express written permission from the publisher except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

Published by:
Russell Enterprises, LLC
P.O. Box 332
Portsmouth, NH 03802 USA

<http://www.russell-enterprises.com>
info@russell-enterprises.com

Cover design by Molly Scanlon
Printed in the United States of America



Table of Contents

Introduction	6
Part I	
Trompowsky <i>QuickStarter!</i> Section	9
Part II	
Trompowsky Theoretical Section	
Chapter 1	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.h4	18
Chapter 2	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗h4 c5	28
Chapter 3	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗h4 c5 4.f3	36
Chapter 4	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.d5 ♜b6 5.♖d2	45
Chapter 5	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.d5 ♜b6 5.♗c1	60
Chapter 6	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.f3 ♜a5+ 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♖d2 c×d4 7.♖b3 ♜b6	65
Chapter 7	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.f3 ♜a5+ 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♖d2 c×d4 7.♖b3 ♜d8!?	80
Chapter 8	
Trompowsky 1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.f3 ♜a5+ 5.c3 ♘f6 6.d5 ♜b6 7.e4	91
Chapter 9	
Trompowsky 1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♖e4 3.♗f4 c5 4.f3 ♜a5+ 5.c3 ♘f6 6.d5 ♜b6 7.♗c1	100

Chapter 10

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 ♘e4 3.♗f4 c5
4.f3 ♔a5+ 5.c3 ♘f6 6.d5 e6 140

Chapter 11

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 e6 3.♘d2 c5 150

Chapter 12

Trompowsky 1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 e6 3.e4 h6 159

Part III

Torre *QuickStarter!* Section 218

Part IV

Torre Theoretical Section

Chapter 13

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7 4.♘bd2 0-0 5.e4 228

Chapter 14

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.e3 d6 6.c3 248

Chapter 15

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.e3 d6 6.♗e2 252

Chapter 16

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.e3 d6 6.♗d3 256

Chapter 17

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.e3 d6 6.♗c4 261

Chapter 18

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.c3 d6 6.e4 h6 7.♗h4 ♘h5
8.♗e2 266

Chapter 19

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 ♗g7
4.♘bd2 0-0 5.c3 d6 6.e4 h6 7.♗h4 ♘h5
8.♗c2 270

Chapter 20	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6	
3.♙g5 ♙g7 4.♘bd2 0-0 5.c3 d6	
6.e4 h6 7.♙h4 ♘h5 8.♙c4	274
Chapter 21	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♙g5 h6	285
Chapter 22	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 ♘f6	
3.♙g5 c5	292
Part V	
Barry-Tarzan Attack <i>QuickStarter!</i> Section	302
Part VI	
Barry-Tarzan Attack Theoretical Section	
Chapter 23	
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♙f4 g6 3.♘c3 d5	306
Part VII	
Tabiyas for Trompowsky, Torre and Barry-Tarzan Attack	322
Index of Variations	327
Signs and Symbols	336

Introduction

Throughout the years, I have come to the conclusion that there are basically two types of chessplayers. Those who try to force things, and those who do not. Those who like clarity and those who love keeping their options open, with calmer opening or middlegame choices.

The eternal question is which of those two approaches is better. Well, in fact I cannot answer it. I am an obstinate supporter of clarity and forcing play, but there are several times I have come to regret it. Everything is a matter of energy in both life and chess, and the better you manage your energy, the happier you will be

Having this in mind, I cannot criticize players who – when White – play the openings featured in this book. As you will see, these openings are far from meek or dull, and while they might appear to the uninitiated a bit vague, they certainly have their strategic points.

A main advantage of the three d-pawn openings examined here is that the c-pawn is kept (at least initially) on c2, a fact that makes the fight less direct. This injects some more security into White's set-up. An important feature of all three of them is that the queen's bishop comes out early to put pressure on Black. Be it to g5 (Trompowsky and Torre) or f4 (Barry-Tarzan Attack) it has an annoying influence as it either pins the ♗f6 or controls the key square e5.

The title of this book expresses the authors' desire to meet these openings in a convincing manner. Although as Black you cannot hope to refute such systems, you can certainly make White's life difficult. There are recurring motifs based on the absence of the queen's bishop from the queenside which the defense has to master and use. Additionally, as this is a key piece of White's strategy, we should also try to contain and neutralize it. Especially in the Torre KID structures, my orientation has been to make it "hit thin air," and I believe this task has been accomplished very well.

I have had my share of glory and failure while facing the Trompowsky, the Torre and the Barry Attack, but I can tell readers one thing: The source of failure was underestimation, the source of glory was elaborate preparation. Playing against the likes of Shirov, Aleksandrov, Movsesian, Macieja, Hodgson and other top grandmasters made me realize that such openings deserved my respect and that I needed to improve my understanding to fight them in a satisfactory manner. My findings, as well as those of co-author GM Mikhail Ivanov, are all now at your disposal in this book, hopefully to help you both win and enjoy yourselves.

Vassilios Kotronias
Athens
June 2025

Part II

Trompowsky Theoretical Section

Chapter 1

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗g5 ♜e4 3.h4

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗g5

The Trompowsky has always been considered an unorthodox opening. White does not follow the well-known advice “Knights before bishops!” but instead goes his own quirky way, seeking to unbalance the game from the second move. The sortie of the bishop to g5 threatens to inflict permanent damage to Black’s pawn structure. The seriousness of this damage is unclear, and opinions differ about avoiding or allowing it. Either way one thing is certain: it puts us on our toes from the get-go as decisions have to be made and decisions are never easy when development has barely started!

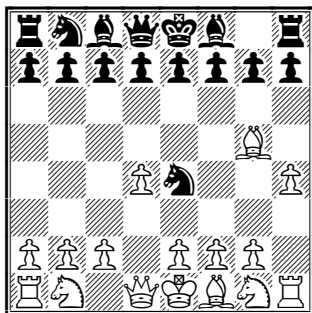
Faced with the task of building an anti-Trompowsky repertoire, we decided to offer you two systems. The first one, examined here, starts with the counter-attacking move 2...♜e4, and seeks to fight unorthodoxy with unorthodoxy. To the bishop’s rather eccentric sortie, we react by moving our

knight twice in the opening, hardly in accordance with classical rules. The more solid 2...e6 will be examined in the second section of the book.

The common point of our chosen systems is that Black wants to avoid a weakening of his pawn structure, something that 1...d5 allows. In all honesty, we do not believe that 1...d5 can be a bad move. However, we decided that having an intact pawn structure is closer to our philosophy as players and writers. In any case, we believe our choices lead to lively positions with good chances for Black and that objectively Black is not worse after choosing either system.

2...♜e4 3.h4!?

Speaking of unorthodoxy, here you have some more! We will start our journey in the realm of 2...♜e4 with this rather eccentric choice which does have some meaning, or as they say, “method in its madness.”

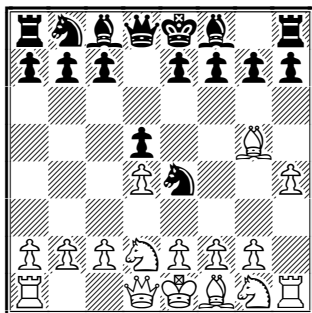


Although it appears strange at first glance, 3.h4!? can be quite dangerous against the unprepared; White wishes to maintain his bishop on g5 in order to keep the e7-pawn pinned, or profit from an opening of the h-file after ... $\text{h}4 \times \text{g}5$ h4xg5. Black now has to decide how to proceed with his development, and there are various ideas.

3...c5

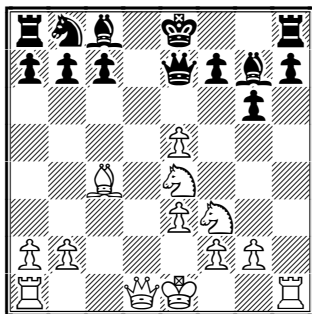
Black resorts to the good old recipe of central action in reply to wing activity.

There is of course nothing wrong with the solid reaction 3...d5, preparing to play ...c7-c5 next move and freeing the $\text{d}8$. It should lead to a good game for Black. After 4. $\text{d}2$ Black has a variety of interesting ways to proceed.



The rare move 4...f6!? is the one we like most, exploiting the bishop's position to increase our central control. Alternatively:

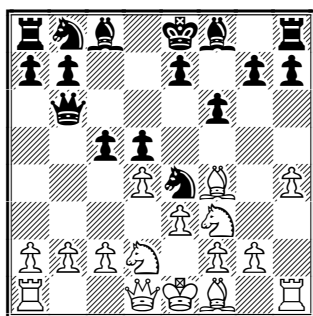
(a) You will find several games in the database with the more double-edged 4... $\text{d}4 \times \text{g}5$ 5.hxg5 e5!? 6.dxe5 (6.g6?! fxg6 7.dxe5 $\text{d}c6$ 8. $\text{d}gf3$ $\text{e}7 \neq$ is better for Black) 6... $\text{e}7 \times \text{g}5$ 7. $\text{d}gf3$, yet although the computer shows "zeroes" we thought that maybe this is the type of position White wants to get. There could follow 7... $\text{e}7$ (7... $\text{e}6$?! 8.e3 $\text{d}e7$! 9.c4 dxc4 10. $\text{d}xc4$ 0-0 11. $\text{b}3$ $\text{d}c6$ 12. $\text{d}d3$ $\text{d}f5$ 13. $\text{d}xf5$ $\text{e}xf5$ 14. $\text{e}xb7$ $\text{d}xe5$ 15. $\text{d}xe5$ $\text{e}xe5 \infty$ is another possibility) 8.e3 g6 9.c4 dxc4 10. $\text{d}xc4$ $\text{d}g7$ 11. $\text{d}e4$



11...♖c6! (11...♜b4+? 12.♗fd2 ♕xe5? 13.♗g5+- is a variation demonstrating what can happen if Black neglects development.)
12.♜b3! ♗xe5 13.♗xe5 ♕xe5
14.♗xf7+! ♖f8 15.♗c4 a5∞ with complicated play.

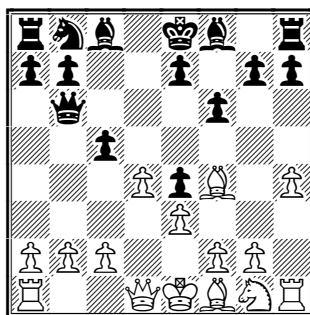
(b) If, on the other hand, Black is content with calm, peaceful play, then 4...♗f5 5.e3 c5 6.c3 cxd4 7.exd4 h6= will do.

Let us return to 4...f6!?: 5.♗xe4 (5.♗f4 should be answered by 5...c5 as well. After 6.e3 ♜b6 7.♗gf3



Black has the fine idea 7...cxd4 8.exd4 e5! 9.♗e3 ♗xd2 with balanced play, e.g., 10.♗xd2! [10.♜xd2?? e4 11.♗g1 ♜xb2-+; 10.♗xd2?! e4 11.♗g1 ♗c6+] 10...exd4 11.♗f4 ♗f5 12.♗xb8! ♜xb8 13.♗d3 ♗xd3 14.cxd3 ♗b4 15.0-0 ♗xd2 16.♜xd2 0-0 17.♞ae1 ♞be8 18.♞xe8 ♞xe8 19.g3= and Black's extra pawn will not be enough to win the game) 5...dxe4 6.♗f4 c5! (6...♗c6 7.e3 ♗f5, as played in Simonovic-Kairbekova, Chess.com INT 2021, is anti-

positional. White gets a better position with the logical 8.♗b5±) 7.e3 ♜b6.



8.♗xb8!? (The ♗f4 would turn out to be a liability after 8.♜h5+ g6 9.♜xc5 ♜xc5 10.dxc5 e5 11.♗g3 ♗d7=) 8...♜b4+! (8...♞xb8 9.♜h5+ g6 10.♜xc5 ♜xc5 11.dxc5 e6 is tenable, with a tiny plus for White. The text secures a draw.) 9.c3 ♜xb2 10.♗g3 ♜xc3+ 11.♞e2 ♜b2+ 12.♞e1 ♜c3+=

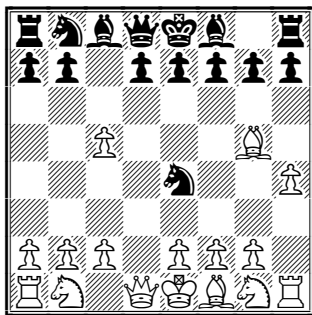
Back to **3...c5**.

We are now in our main line which is a reaction more typical for Benoni/KID players.

4.d5

White picks up the gauntlet and advances in the center, but at the same time he weakens himself along the a1-h8 diagonal.

Alternatively, 4.dxc5 is a logical reply, leading to a semi-open type of game with mutual chances. I (VK) recommend the following interesting idea.



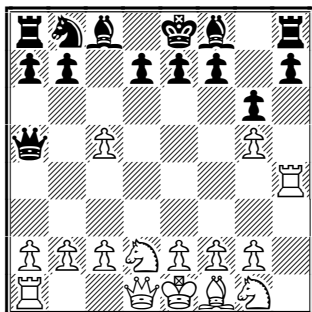
4...d5! An excellent response, grabbing control of the center by making use of a tactical nuance.

This looks slightly superior to 4...♖a5+!? 5.♗d2 ♜xg5 6.hxg5 g6!, a continuation that has given Black relative success. It has to be remarked here that it is important for the second player to fix the enemy pawn on g5 while furthering his development. Besides, the pawn on c5 will not run away unless White is prepared to resort to extreme measures to hold on to it, thereby weakening his position.

Playing 6...♖xc5?! instead would be weaker as it allows White to obtain strong attacking chances with the pawn sacrifice 7.g6!↑. A recent game continued 7...fxg6 8.e3 ♜c6 9.♗gf3 e6?! (9...g5!?) 10.♗d3± and White's advantage was already considerable in Fier-Mikhalsky, Chess.com INT 2022.

After 6...g6!, White should probably play 7.c3!, threatening b2-b4 while putting a stumbling block to the activity of the black bishop, soon to be developed on the long dark diagonal. Instead,

the following rook maneuver can hardly be recommended: 7.♖h4!?



This can be described as an imaginative and bold attempt to hold on to the extra pawn. However, boldness is not always a guarantee of success in chess and the same goes for imagination. 7...♜c6 8.♖c4!?

It is not too late to accept that it is faulty to stubbornly hold on to the pawn and continue with 8.c3. After 8...♖xc5 9.♗gf3 ♗g7 10.e3 0-0≠/ = Black has only a tiny plus.

8...♗e5 9.b4?! This makes matters even worse.

9.♖c3! ♗g7± is the lesser evil for White, although Black has excellent compensation. After 10.♗b3 (10.a3? ♜c6±), 10...♖b4 11.a3 ♖h4 12.♖d2? (12.g3! ♖h1 13.♗f3 ♜xf3+ 14.♖xf3 ♗xb2 15.♖b1 ♗g7 16.♖d5 0-0 17.♖d3± was better, keeping Black's advantage to a minimum) 12...♜c4! 13.♖xc4 ♖xc4 14.0-0-0 15.♗f3 b6 16.e3 ♖e6 17.♗fd4 ♖g4 18.cxb6 ♖xg5 19.bxa7 ♖xa7 20.f4 ♖f6 21.g4 h6 22.c3 ♖b6-+, Black had