

Contents

Symbols 6

Foreword 7

Chapter 1 – Dynamic Chess Strategy, Revisited 9

Chapter 2 – The Beginning 35

Chapter 3 – Why Rethink Chess Strategy? 59

Chapter 4 – What is Strategy? 93

Chapter 5 – Dynamic Strategy in Attack and Defence 107

Chapter 6 – Lest We Forget the Classics 177

Chapter 7 – Black Wins After All! 185

Chapter 8 – Quiz Solutions 197

Bibliography 203

Index of Selected Games 204

Index of Players 205

Foreword

I must start by confessing that I have never written a foreword and therefore have no idea what it should contain. It was simpler before they got Stalin out of the Mausoleum, when one had to just mention the *Big Father of the Big Neighbouring Country*, or when in Romania the password was *Genius of the Carpathians* (president Ceausescu).

Neither am I going to use it to smugly congratulate you on your wise choice in reading this book, although I do believe that you will enjoy playing through the games in it, whatever your standard of play.

Within the notes and commentaries I have highlighted the **dynamic** aspects of strategy and differentiated them by means of some **immeasurable potential**, in an attempt (necessarily an optimistic one) to explain the whole jungle of a chess battle in a relatively few lines.

In the opening you need to develop in order to increase the attacking and defensive potential of your pieces. I have extended this obvious principle to cover all phases of the game.

In modern chess, setting aside home preparation, we have fewer and fewer attacking or defensive moves while more and more *neutral* ones. How do we use these moves?

Adherents of classical chess strategy will answer: 'for improving the position'. Thank you very much! This concept has all the qualities of a legal eagle's speech: archaic, superfluous, static, and irrelevant. It often comes into conflict with **principles** as well as with the need for move-to-move play.

Is it possible to get the initiative out of nothing? Moreover, is it possible to lose it without explanation?

Each move of the opponent changes the position even if it does not threaten anything. Leaving aside the computer programs, chess players' opinions differ about what 'improving the position' involves. Even more so when it comes to 'who has the initiative?' or else 'when and why did it evaporate?'

This is the twilight zone of chess strategy.

The option to choose between a good position that cannot be improved and a bad position that can be substantially improved is also quite modern. I have tried to give another view on the meaning of bad positions and quiet moves by way of the concept of **dynamic potential**. Although the terms 'dynamic' and 'potential' are used in their natural sense, the theoretical sections of this book will give the reader a better understanding of

my ideas about them. These discussions may be a little heavy-going at times, but I hope the reader will bear with me.

Combining chess philosophy with actual chess is a difficult task, both in play and in writing. I hope the reader will not only forgive any occasional mistakes but will also, in correcting them, create or improve his own, specific, strategy. I know how difficult it is to break free from dogma. Besides the personal character of some memorable games and of the ideas in various openings, all my efforts have been directed towards encouraging this.

I apologize to those to whom some explanations or repetitions seem trivial, the more so as this is not supposed to be the reader's first chess book. To put it more explicitly, this book is *not* a chess manual and is *not* recommended to children, unless they are prodigies. Of course, potential parents of chess prodigies are encouraged to read it before (or instead of) conceiving. The book was designed for players above, say, 1900 FIDE or equivalent. Exceptionally, the strength ranking could be lowered, if

compensated by patience and a general chess culture well above the average of that ranking. If you belong to this category, my book can help you reorder your knowledge to make it more efficient and tune the *aggressiveness* of your play more adequately. This book could be a crack for players between 2000 and 2350, in the process of digesting rules and crystallizing their own strategic concepts. It can certainly be useful and fun for higher-rated players.

The author cannot be charged with the sole responsibility for organizing the plot against classical strategy. Others who appear on the indictment are Ray Keene and Paul Lamford, who encouraged me to begin and gave me technical advice, Bob Wade, who was a great help in gathering material, and my old friends Father Iosif (Joseph Siroker) and Sanducu (Alex Elian), who helped me realize my aim of writing for the chess enthusiast with an inquiring mind. Aggravating circumstances for making the message even clearer can be applied to Bob (Robert Patrick Thackway) who, for this edition, took upon himself the task of rephrasing my English.

Chapter 5 – Dynamic Strategy in Attack and Defence

From the games I have given so far you may have drawn the conclusion that dynamic strategy only works in good or superior positions, and that the increase in potential of someone's pieces has only one aim – to attack.

Every chess player likes to show those games where he was attacking and where, as his analysis proves, he played more or less faultlessly, whereas even after the very first move his opponent was destined for inevitable defeat.

Why accumulate a potential energy in our pieces, if not for hounding it at a target in the opponent's position at the right time?

In the next game, the opponent played into my strength (queenless middlegame with initiative) and got crushed.

In the following two, White committed major errors during the transition from opening to middlegame and, as a result, got weak and maybe even lost positions. Both games were praised by chess commentators and considered representative of my style. On occasion, even my bad moves were given exclamation marks. I'd like to shed some light on them, in order to give a good example of objectivity and self-criticism,

two virtues which would benefit many a disappointed chess player.

Passive defence is the last thing to think about in a bad position. Improving the dynamics of the pieces, even at the price of ignoring classical principles, is the only correct path to a successful defence.

The primary aim is dynamic equilibrium; weaknesses, structure, even material, are of secondary importance.

Although a chess game is principally a subjective creation, an objective assessment of the position is always necessary in order to create a suitable plan. Why avoid a drawing variation when you are tied down to defence and your position is worse? Let your opponent worry about this.

Nevertheless, as noted by other players who have their own objectivity, some of my games look strange. Perhaps the same holds true for other players' games when I comment on them. This was one of the reasons for using my own games to illustrate dynamic strategy.

The East European Zone, even after the loss of East Germany, presented a formidable concentration of chess strength: Hungary, Czechoslovakia,

Poland, Bulgaria and Romania. During the 1980's East Germany's players were not permitted to participate in tournaments abroad, although they were led by a former Candidate – Uhlmann. Their national team made a return and final appearance at the 1990 Olympiad in Novi Sad.

The 1982 Zonal was organized in Romania in the very picturesque spa of Herculane. The thermal baths and the mineral waters here have curative qualities known from Roman times. Ruins of Roman baths and the motto of the town, *ad aquas Herculis sacras ad mediam*, that is 'at the sacred Hercules' waters at midway' (between the Roman *castrum* and the Danube) are preserved. The tournament was organized in a hotel situated right on the shore of the river Cerna, in the middle of a fairytale landscape. The town is surrounded by mountains and is well known for its healthy air. I'd prefer to spend a holiday there than play chess, because its ionized air and the continuous murmur of the waters make me sleepy and lazy. At the end of this marathon three players safely qualified: Ribli, Sax and myself. The following game was played in the first round.

Game 13 Suba-Gyula Sax

Baile Herculane Zonal 1982
English: Keres Variation

1.c4 e5 2.g3

Elasticity should be one of the most important criteria for choosing a

move order in the opening. Non-committal moves have become more and more fashionable and losing a tempo to fianchetto a bishop is compensated for by a superior potential on its longest diagonal.

**2...c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♖xd4 d5
5.♟f3 ♟f6 6.♙g2 dxc4**

The usual move is 6...♙e7 with the threat 7...c5, and after 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.0-0 ♟c6 9.♖a4 we get a Tarrasch position with some particular features which seem to favour White, e.g.:



A) A modern treatment is to play 9...♖b6 to prevent 10.♙e3, as Patrick Wolff did against me in the Watson, Farley & Williams tournament, London 1989. After 10.♟c3 0-0 11.♖b5 the ending should, however, be preferable for White, e.g. 11...d4 12.♖xb6 axb6 13.♟b5 ♙c5 14.♞d1 ♞d8 15.♟c7! ♞a7 16.♙g5 ♙g4 17.h3 ♙f5 18.g4 ♙c2 19.♞dc1 d3 20.exd3 ♙xd3 21.♞d1 h6 22.♙xf6 gxf6 23.a3 b5 24.♞ac1 ♙b6 25.♙f1± and 1-0 after 39 moves in Smejkal-Ulibin, Moscow 1989;

B) 9...0-0 10.♙e3 ♟e4!. This is how I defended when sitting on the black side. Balashov and Hübner

played 10...♙d7 and got the worst of it. Unfortunately I picked up only half a point from these two important games; in La Valetta, Gheorghiu, who was captain, asked me to agree a draw ‘in compensation for’ his draw against Karpov. With Hübner, I just blundered in a winning position. The German super-champion spent a month, as I was told, to produce a hyper-super-extra commented game for *ChessBase Magazine*, to be envied even by Khalifman or Ftacnik.

10...♙d7 11.♘c3 ♘a5 (or 11...a6 12.♖ac1 ♘a5 13.♙c2 ♘c4 14.♙d4 ♙e6, draw! in Suba-Balashov, La Valetta ol 1980). 12.♙c2 ♖c8 13.♖ad1 ♙g4 14.♘g5 h6 15.♘h3 ♙c5 16.♙xc5 ♖xc5 17.♘f4 d4 18.h3 ♙f5 19.♙a4 ♖c4 20.♙a3 ♘c6 21.♘b5 ♙c2 22.b3 ♙xd1 23.bxc4± and 0-1 after 43 moves, Suba-Hübner, Thessaloniki ol 1984.

Back to 10.♙e3 ♘e4!:

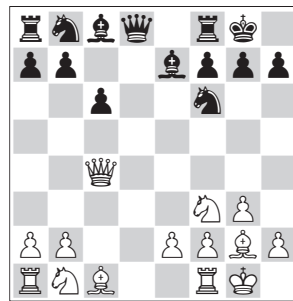
11.♘c3 ♘xc3 12.bxc3 ♙a5 13.♙b3 b6 14.♘d4 ♘xd4 15.♙xd4 ♖d8 16.♖fe1 ♙a6 17.e4 ♙c4 18.♙d1 ♙c5 19.e5 ♙xd4 and draw in Spiridonov-Suba, Bucharest 1980.



7.♙xd8+!

My exclamation mark is somehow personal and attitudinal – a choice for dynamic against static values. Later on, a fine (and concise) annotator gave this move a question mark, based on the result of a specific game and, probably, some old program analysis. Today, other programs, which are far more elastic in evaluation (i.e. not centred so strongly on material) assess it as equal. The simple recapture of the pawn should also give White an advantage by classical means, but the gambit continuation of the game is in keeping with the dynamic attitude. On top of that, Sax is a player who likes to sac a pawn or so for the initiative. Perhaps he considered me more of a skinflint and was quite surprised with this continuation. I was prepared for such an occurrence.

7.♙xc4 ♙e7 8.0-0 0-0 and now:



A) 9.e4 ♘a6 10.♘c3 ♙a5 (10...♘c5 11.♖d1 ♙e6 12.♙e2 ♙b6 13.♙e3 ♙a6 14.♙xa6 ♘xa6 15.♘d4 ♙d7 16.e5 ♘g4 17.♙f4 ♖ad8 18.♘f3 ♙c8 19.h3 ♘h6 20.♙e3 ♙c5 21.♙g5 ♖xd1+

22.♙xd1 ♘f5 23.g4 h6 24.♙c1 ♘e7 25.♘a4 ♙b6± and draw after 31 moves in Kortchnoi-I.Sokolov, Sarajevo 1998) 11.♙f4 ♙e6 12.♙e2 ♙ad8 13.h3 ♘c5 14.♘g5 h6 15.♘xe6 ♘xe6 16.♙e3 ♘d4 17.♙d1 ♘f5 18.♙d2 ♙b6 19.♘a4 ♙d4 20.♙a5 ♙xd1 21.♙fxd1 ♙d4 22.b3 ♙d8 23.♙c3 ♙xd1+ 24.♙xd1 ♘e7 25.♘c5 ♙b6 26.♘xb7+— and 1-0 after 32 moves in Sher-Willemsen, Biel 1990;

Also worthy of consideration are:

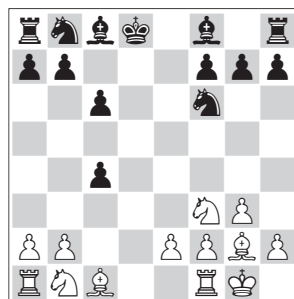
B) 9.♙c2 ♘a6 10.a3 ♙a5 11.♘c3 ♙h5 12.♙f4 (12.b4 ♘c7 13.♙b2 a5 14.bxa5 ♙xa5 15.h4 ♙c5 16.a4 ♘cd5 17.♙b3 ♙e8 18.♙ac1 ♙a5 19.♙fd1 ♙f8 20.♘xd5 ♘xd5 21.♙d2 ♙c5 22.♘g5 ♙xe2 23.♙xd5 cxd5 24.♙c3 ♙xb2 25.♙xa5 f6 26.♙xc5 and 1-0 in Lalic-Baburin, Bunratty 2001) 12...♘c5 13.♙fe1 ♙h3 14.♙xh3 ♙xh3 15.♘g5 ♙h5 16.♙g2 h6 17.♘f3 ♘e6 18.♙d2 ♙fd8 19.h3 c5 20.♘e4 ♙d5 21.♘xf6+ ♙xf6 22.♙c3 ♙xc3 23.♙xc3 ♙d6 and 0-1 after 58 moves in Larsen-Hübner, Tilburg 1981, and:

C) 9.♙e3 ♙e6 10.♙c2 ♘a6 11.♘c3 ♘b4 12.♙c1 ♘bd5 13.♙d1 ♙a5 14.♘d4 ♘xc3 15.bxc3 ♙d5 16.♘f5 ♙a3 17.♙c2 ♙xg2 18.♙xg2 ♙e5 19.♙d4 ♙e4+ 20.♙xe4 ♘xe4 21.♙xg7 ♙fe8 22.f3± and 1-0 after 47 moves in M.Raicevic-Delanoy, Kecskemet 1989.

7...♙xd8 8.0-0?!

But I forgot my preparation! – which was 8.♘bd2 ♙b4 (or 8...♘bd7 9.♘xc4 ♙b4+ 10.♙d2 ♙xd2+

11.♘fxd2 ♘b6 12.♘a5 ♙e8 13.♙c1 ♘bd5 14.a3 ♙c7 15.e3 ♙d7 16.0-0 ♙ad8 17.♘db3 ♙c8 18.♘d4 a6 19.♙fd1 ♘e7 20.b4± and 1-0 after 33 moves in Davies-Estremera Panos, Saint Vincent 2000) 9.0-0 c3 10.bxc3 ♙xc3 11.♙b1 with interesting compensation for the pawn.



8...♘bd7

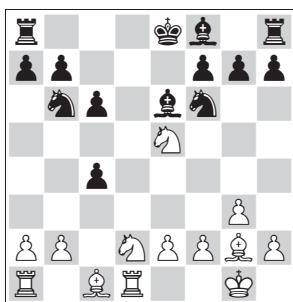
Black decides to protect his pawn. It is the best thing he can do in this position. Two excellent games speak for our cause, to the detriment of materialism and computer-like calculation, after 8...♙b4:

A) 9.♘bd2 ♙e6 10.♘g5 c3 11.♘xe6+ fxe6 12.bxc3 ♙xc3 13.♙b1 ♙xd2 14.♙xd2 ♙c8 15.♙b3 ♘bd7 16.g4 ♘c5 17.♙h3 ♘xg4 18.♙c1 ♘d7 19.♙g3 ♘h6 20.e4 ♘g8 21.♙xg7 ♘gf6 22.♙h3 ♙e8 23.f3 ♙c7 24.♙g5 ♙g8 25.♙xf6 ♙xg7+ 26.♙xg7 ♙g8 27.♙xe6 ♙xg7+ 28.♙f2 ♘e5 29.♙c3 ♙d6 30.♙f5 c5 31.f4 ♘c6 32.e5+ ♙d5 33.♙e3+— and 1-0 after 39 moves, Carlier-Van Gisbergen, Dieren 1990;

B) 9.♘a3 ♙xa3 10.bxa3 ♙e8 11.♙d1+ ♙e7 12.♘e5 c3 13.♙e3 ♘a6 14.♙ac1 ♙e6 15.♙xc3 ♘d5

16. ♖xd5 ♗xd5 17. ♖b1 ♖eb8
 18. ♗f4 g5 19. ♗xg5+ f6 20. ♗h4!
 ♜c7 21. ♜g4 ♜e8 22. e4 ♗xa2
 23. ♖b2 ♗e6 24. ♜xf6 ♜xf6
 25. ♖f3+– and 1-0 after 49 moves
 in Fauland-Hübner, Haifa European
 Team Championship 1989.

9. ♖d1 ♖e8 10. ♜bd2 ♜b6
 11. ♜e5 ♗e6



12. ♜xc6! ♗d5

Black should be consistent and accept the sacrifice: 12...bxc6 13. ♗xc6+ ♜fd7 14. ♗xa8 ♜xa8, although White can maintain the initiative. My colleagues, who had not been following the game from the beginning, were teasing me as usual, saying that they did not understand my combinations and claiming that I was lost... but all agreed that Black had to get castled! 15. b3 c3 16. ♜e4 c2 17. ♜d6+ ♜d8 18. ♖d2 ♗xd6 19. ♖xd6 ♜c7 20. ♖d2 ♗f5 21. f3±.

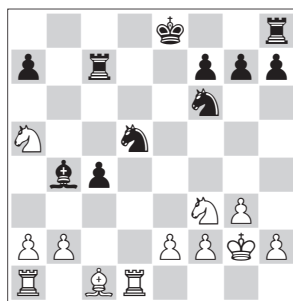
13. ♜a5 ♗xg2 14. ♜xg2 ♖c8

Black succeeds in simultaneously protecting both pawns, as 15. ♜xb7? ♖c7 16. ♜a5 ♗b4 loses a piece. But this is not for long.

15. ♜f3 ♜bd5 16. ♜xb7!

The criminal makes his getaway.

16... ♖c7 17. ♜a5 ♗b4



Hoping for 18. ♗d2? c3!.

18. e4! ♜b6 19. ♗f4 ♖c8
 20. ♜b7

Returning to the scene of the crime!

20... ♜xe4

I shall not attach any sign to this move, because it was not prompted by greediness; there is no other defence against 21. ♗d6. Anyway, White was a pawn up with a better position. Needless to say, the kibitzers who had arrived late still claimed 20...0-0 as the best defence.

21. a3 ♗e7 22. ♖e1 f5 23. ♜d4

Black resigned in view of 23...g6 24. f3 ♜f6 25. ♜d6+.

Long before becoming an example of dynamic strategy applied to defence (and shortly before it was actually played), the next game against Sznapik was meant as an illustration of an anti-dogmatic attitude. The reader is invited to recall the well-known Petrosian-Fischer game from the Portoroz Interzonal 1958, a game annotated in detail by Fischer in his monumental *My 60 Memorable Games*. Bobby says that against 7.d4

he intended 7...e5, persuading the reader that White had lost a tempo. However 7...e5 has a worse reputation than the usual 7...a6 or 7...♖b8, and Petrosian would certainly have played 7.d4 if any non-disreputed clairvoyant had told him about Fischer's intentions. After all, Black can practically force that variation by changing the move order: 6...e5 and then, after the presumable 7.d4, play 7...♘c6. About the move 8.d4 Fischer only said: 'Reckoning he can afford this loss of time in view of Black's misplaced king's knight.'

Had the game been somebody else's against somebody else, Fischer might have become enthusiastic and said that 7.d3 followed by 8.d4! is an idea beyond hypermodernism. To put it simply, it is a dynamic attitude. Mixing up controversies within chess comments is quite usual, and Fischer himself could not hold back his human feelings. Fortunately, he was extremely objective about chess positions and very scrupulous about moves; this saved him from overdoing it (except perhaps in commenting his game against Botvinnik).

Back to mere mortals. I can remember a game of mine against Donchev from the Prague Zonal Tournament in 1985. My opponent, who had a horrible position out of the opening, reproached me during the 'post mortem' analysis: 'You played a Maroczy a tempo down!' He put the emphasis on 'Maroczy' as if it were the sharpest and the best of all open-

ings for Black. When your set-up lacks space and the possible breakthroughs result in unhealthy structures, does it matter very much whether you are a tempo up?

The following game was chosen as representative of my style in a Dutch book: *64 Chess Portraits*. The author was known more as a journalist and photographer rather than a strong chess player. His source of inspiration, I guess, was a Hungarian chess magazine, which published the game with ample and generous commentary. The two reporters were so impressed by the result that they even penalized my opponent's best move in the game with a question mark, while at the same time crowning my desperate and sometimes forced efforts in defence with too many exclamation marks.

In a chess game the winner is the player who makes the last mistake but one.
Tartakower.

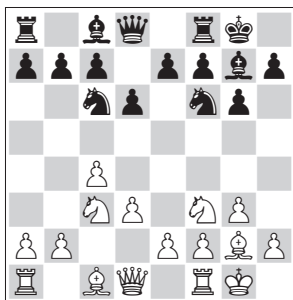
Game 14 Suba-Aleksander Sznapi

Baile Herculane Zonal 1982

English: Closed Variation

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.g3 ♙g7
4.♙g2 0-0 5.♘f3 d6 6.0-0
♘c6 7.d3

I have had several clashes with Sznapi in the King's Indian and I always succeeded in outsmarting his preparation. This time, the switch to a quiet English was meant as a surprise.



7...e5

Aleksander is happy with a Closed English, which is very similar to the Closed Sicilian (with colours reversed) although, using the extra tempo, White can play more aggressively. Against the expected 7...d5 I intended 8.d4! e5 9.d5 d7 10.e4, as in the above-mentioned game Petrosian-Fischer, where Black did not find the best answer (10...c5) and got the worst of it, but still managed to draw after 67 moves.

8.♖b1 a5

Better is 8...h6 9.b4 a6 10.a4 ♕e6 11.b5 axb5 12.axb5 ♘e7 13.♕b2 ♖b8 14.♗c2 ♘d7 15.♘d2 f5 16.♘d5 g5 17.♘xe7+ ♗xe7 18.♙a1 ♘f6 19.♙a7 ♕c8 20.♕a3 ♗f7 21.c5 d5 22.c6 ♖e8 23.b6 bxc6 24.♙xc7 and 1-0 after 33 moves in Suba-Comas Fabrego, Castellar del Valles 1995.

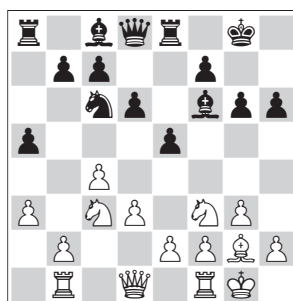
9.a3 ♖e8

Black is a bit confused about the principles of this opening and plays a mixture of the Smyslov System and some of his own ideas. 9...h6 is the right preparation for ...♖e8 and ...♘d4, e.g.: 9...h6 10.b4 axb4 11.axb4 ♕e6 12.b5 ♘e7

13.♗b3 ♗c8 14.♕a3 ♖e8 15.b6 c5 16.♘b5 ♖d8 17.♘c7 ♖b8 18.♕b2 (18.♘xe6 is a bit better for White, according to Marin) 18...♕h3 19.♙a1 ♕xg2 20.♗xg2 ♘h5 21.♘d2 f5 22.f3 ♘f6 23.♘b1 h5 24.♘c3 f4 25.gxf4 exf4 26.♘e4± and a draw after 49 moves in Suba-Nisipeanu, Sovata 1998.

Interesting is 9...♘d4 10.♕g5 h6 11.♕xf6 ♕xf6 12.♘d2 c6 13.e3 ♘e6 14.b4 axb4 15.axb4 ♕d7 16.♙a1 ♕e7 17.♙a4 f5 18.♗c2 ♙xa4 19.♘xa4 ♗g7 20.♖e1 h5 21.c5 dxc5 22.bxc5 ♗c7 23.♖b1 ♙a8 24.♘c4 ♘xc5 25.♘xc5 and 1-0 after 35 moves in Suba-Camarena Gimenez, Alicante 2001.

10.♕g5!? h6 11.♕xf6 ♕xf6



12.♘d2

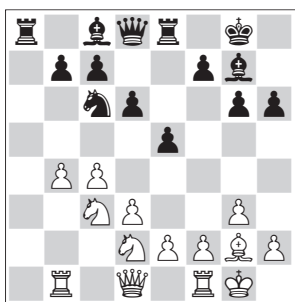
This move was granted a '!', but I don't understand it and today would prefer 12.b4.

12...♕g7 13.b4?

This ought to be prepared by 13.♗c1, or by 13.e3 followed by 14.♗c2, e.g. 13.♗c1 ♘d4 14.e3 ♘f5 15.b4 axb4 16.axb4 c6 17.b5 ♗c7 18.♗b2 ♕e6 19.bxc6 bxc6 20.♗b6 ♙a8 21.♗xc7 ♖xc7

22. ♖b6 ♘e7 23. ♖fb1 d5 24. ♘a4 ♖a7 25. ♘c5 ♖a2 26. ♘xe6 fxe6 27. ♘b3 ♖f8 28. ♖f1 ♖b2 29. ♖b7 ♖f7 30. ♘c5 ♖xb7 31. ♘xb7 ♖f8 32. ♘c5±. As played it allows Black an unexpected bid for freedom.

13...axb4 14.axb4



14...e4!

This tactical strike unbelievably received a question mark! To restore the truth I must admit that it completely shifts the dynamic balance in Black's favour. It frees the condemned bishop on g7, opens the e-file and creates a weak pawn on d3 and a strong square for Black's pieces on d4. Furthermore, the potential of the rook on the a-file is improved. These disastrous consequences were inflicted to my position by an answer to a careless move. To my credit I understood in a flash that Black now stands much better and I made the right decision: to obstruct his play as much as possible, in other words, to 'hang on in'. I cannot deny that I still maintained a guilty hope that his usual time pressure would trick Alexander towards the end.

15.b5!

Either knight capture on e4 loses a piece after 15...f5. This intermediate move is best, as it delays the knight's jump to d4 by two moves, but there is no real medicine to cure the damage to my structure.

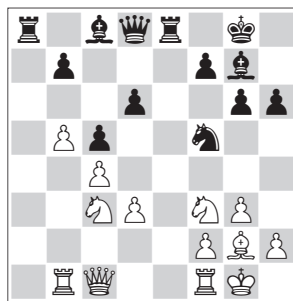
15...♘e7

Worse is 15...exd3 16.bxc6 ♖xc3 17.cxb7 ♖xb7 18.exd3 ♖xg2 19.♔xg2.

16.♖c1 exd3 17.exd3 ♘f5

18.♘f3 c5?

18...c6 would have been better. Here I join with the commentators in criticizing this move for leaving d5 *en prise*. But White is still in trouble.



19.♔h1!

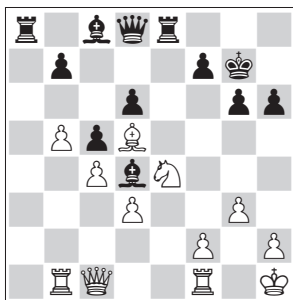
This preventive move is also preparing a counterattack and was not appreciated by the commentators. They did not realize I was on the defence.

19...♘d4 20.♘xd4 ♖xd4

21.♖d5

The natural 21.♘d5 had no purpose and would have allowed Black's rooks to invade the 7th rank. The actual move threatens 22.♖xh6 ♖xc3 23.♖xg6+.

21...♔g7 22.♘e4



22...f5?

A casual defence to the threat of ♖f4, which loses the biggest part of Black's advantage by limiting the bishop on c8. This relieves White from his worries about a possible ♗h3. I was determined to meet 22...g5 by 23.f4! (this is why White needs the king on h1), forcing Black to play 23...f5 or be crushed, but 22...♞e5 or 22...♚e7 could pose White further problems.

23.♗d2 ♖a2 24.♗b3 ♖f6

24...♞ee2 or 24...♚f6 are good alternatives. Dubious is 24...♗xf2 25.♞b2 ♞e2 26.♞xe2 ♞xe2 27.♗f3 b6 28.♗d2.

25.♚d1

White regroups his forces and prevents 25...♞ee2 by the fork 26.♗c1.

25...♚e7

25...b6! was essential. Now the initiative passes to White.

26.♖e1 ♚xe1+ 27.♚xe1 ♞xe1+ 28.♞e1 f4

The threat was 29.♞e8. In order to free his bishop Black must lose a tempo and concede the square e4.

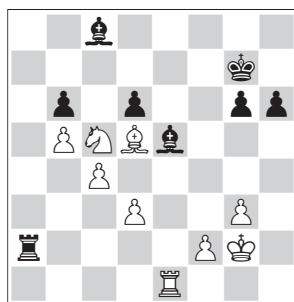
29.♗g2 fxg3 30.hxg3 ♗e5

Equally bad is 30...♞b2 31.♗a5 ♗d4 32.♞e7+ or 30...♞a3 31.♗d2

♞xd3 32.♗e4 but 30...b6 should lead to a draw after 31.♞e8 ♗f5 32.♞b8 ♞b2 33.♞xb6 ♞xb3 34.♞b7+ ♗h8 35.b6 ♞b2 36.♞b8+ ♗h7 37.b7 ♗d4 38.♞d8.

Trying to prevent 31.♞e8 by 30...♗f8 also runs into trouble after 31.♗e6.

31.♗xc5 b6



32.♗e6+

Objectively one pawn is not enough here, due to the unavoidable opposite-coloured bishops. The best try was 32.♗e4 ♞b2 (better than 32...♗f5 33.c5!) 33.♗f3 ♗f5 34.♗e3 ♗xe4 35.♗xe4 ♗c3 36.♞d1±.

32...♗xe6 33.♗xe6 ♗d4 34.♗d5! ♞xf2+ 35.♗h3 ♞d2

Of course not 35...♗e5 36.c5!+-.

36.♞e7+ ♗f6 37.♞e6+ ♗g5?

Right into the trap. In acute time trouble Black makes the last mistake of the game. Better was 37...♗f5 38.g4+ ♗g5 39.♗e4 ♗f6 40.♞xd6 ♞h2+ 41.♗xh2 ♗e5+ 42.♗g2 ♗xd6=.

38.♗e4 ♗f6 39.♞xd6

The b-pawn is going as well, so Black resigned.

My model for the game below was Smejkal-Timman. Unfortunately, at the time I was unaware of the really impressive performance by Uhlmann against Kortchnoi. See both games in the notes to move 12. Having analysed the former game in a hurry with my old friend IM Sergiu Grünberg, who was my second at the time, I asked him why White does not play 12.♖e4 instead of 12.♖a4. I must admit that it was a 'prepared error'. Shame! As an excuse I can say that the Interzonals were exhausting tournaments. We were too tired. I can only agree with Seirawan's saying: 'One must not only be good to win – one must also be lucky.'

Game 15 Suba-Jan Timman

Las Palmas Interzonal 1982

English: Reverse Dragon

1.c4 e5 2.g3 ♘f6 3.♖g2 d5
4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.♗c3 ♗b6
6.♗f3 ♗c6



7.d3

If White wishes to play the variation with a3, it is better to play it after 7.0-0 ♖e7. Now 8.a3 0-0 9.b4 ♖e6 10.♖b1 f6 was seen in the 1989 Candidates' matches.



analysis diagram

Karpov continued 11.d3 against Hjartarson, while Portisch tried to improve against Timman with 11.♗e4. Although both games were won by White, a definite conclusion has yet to be drawn. In the New York Open 1989 I employed Portisch's 11.♗e4?! against Thorsteins and after 11...♖a2 12.♖b2 ♖d5 13.♗c5 e4! 14.♗e1 ♗c4 15.♖b1 ♖xc5 16.bxc5 b6, Black was at least equal. Some variations are just lucky – I won that game too!

Against Patrick Wolff (Park Hall-Preston 1989) I preferred 11.d3 and after 11...♗d4!? 12.♖b2 ♗xf3+ 13.♖xf3 c6 14.♗e4 ♖d5 15.♖c3! ♖c8 16.♖a1 White was able to prepare a minority attack on the queenside. The position after 11.d3 deserves to be assessed as preferable for White.

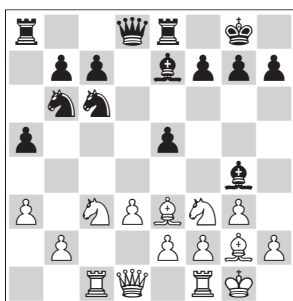
Another good example for my recommended order is 7.0-0 ♖e7

8.a3 0-0 9.b4 ♖e8 10.♞b1 ♕f8
 11.d3 a5 12.b5 ♘d4 13.♙b2 ♖g4
 14.♘d2 ♜c8 15.♞e1 a4 16.♜c1
 ♙d7 17.♘f3 c5 18.bxc6 ♙xc6
 19.♘xd4 exd4 20.♙xc6 bxc6
 21.♘e4 c5 22.♜c2 ♜d8 23.♙c1
 c4 24.dxc4 f5 25.♙g5 ♜c7 26.c5
 ♘c8 27.♙f4 ♜c6 28.♘g5 ♜d5
 29.♞ed1 h6 30.♘f3 ♜xc5
 31.♜a2+ ♔h7 32.♘xd4 ♜xa3
 33.♜xa3 ♙xa3 34.♘b5 ♙f8
 35.♘c7 ♘a7 36.♘xa8 ♞xa8
 37.♙d6 ♘c6 38.♙xf8 ♞xf8
 39.♞d6 and 1-0 in Portisch-
 Kortchnoi, Wijk aan Zee 1990.

7...♙e7 8.0-0 9.a3 a5

After my game with Mestel (see move 12) this plan completely disappeared from practice at high level. Better is 9...♙e6 10.b4 a5 11.b5 ♘d4 12.♘d2 a4 13.♙xb7 ♞a5 14.♞b1 ♜e8 15.♘f3? ♘xb5 16.♘xb5 ♞xb5 17.♜c2 ♞c5 18.♜b2 ♜b8 19.♙e4 f5 and 0-1 after 47 moves in Dorfman-Guseinov, Soviet Union 1984.

10.♙e3 ♞e8 11.♞c1 ♖g4



12.♘e4?

This move helps Black to realize his plan.

A) Theory was 12.♘a4 with the possible continuation 12...♘d5 13.♙c5 (interesting is 13.♞xc6 ♙xf3 14.♙xf3 bxc6 15.♜c2 ♘xe3 16.fxe3 ♙g5 17.♙xc6 ♙xe3+ 18.♔g2 ♞e7 19.♞f3 ♙d4 20.e3 ♙a7 21.♙xa8 ♜xa8 22.e4 h5 23.♜c4 ♜c8 and drawn after 38 moves in I.Ivanov-Torre, New York 1989) 13...♙f6 14.h3 (in those days the theory of this variation was rudimentary and even top players mistook bad for good and vice versa: 14.♜b3 ♞b8 15.♘d2 ♙e6 16.♜b5 ♘d4 17.♙xd4 exd4 18.♘c5 c6 19.♜a4 ♙g4 20.♘de4 ♙e5 21.f4 ♙f6 (21...b5 22.♜b3 a4 23.♜a2 ♙d6) 22.♞f2 ♘e3 23.♘b3 ♙e6 24.♘bc5 ♙g4 (24...b5!) 25.♙f3, but Smejkal was a big fighter – he kept playing for a win in a clearly worse position and succeeded: 1-0 after 85 moves in Smejkal-Timman, Moscow 1981) 14...♙e6 15.♔h2 (another alternative is 15.♞e1! g6 16.e4 ♘b6 17.d4 exd4 18.e5 ♙e7 19.♙xd4 ♘c4 20.♞e2 ♙d5 21.♙c5 ♙xc5 22.♘xc5 ♙xf3 23.♙xf3 ♘d4 24.♙xb7 ♘xe5 and drawn in Glek-Kaidanov, Kuibyshev 1981) 15...♜d7?! 16.♜c2 g6?! (16...♞ad8) 17.♞fd1 b6? 18.e4! ♘de7 19.d4!± and 1-0 after 58 moves in Uhlmann-Kortchnoi, Moscow 1971.

B) Petrosian's move 12.♘d2 is even less convincing, although Petrosian attached an '!' here. Why this move is strong is still a mystery to me. As Fischer remarked in one commentary, 'Petrosian likes to play

cat and mouse until his opponent goes wrong', and the exclamation mark was perhaps addressed to Petrosian himself, simply because the move suited his style, e.g. 12...♖d7 13.♞e1 ♞a6 14.♙xb6 cxb6 15.♞a4 ♙g5 16.e3 h5 17.♘de4 ♙d8 18.d4 exd4 19.exd4 ♞a8 20.h3 ♙f5 21.d5 ♘a7 22.h4 ♞xa4 23.♘xa4 ♙xe4 24.♙xe4 ♘b5 25.♙d3 ♞xe1+ 26.♞xe1 ♘d6 and a draw after 41 moves in Petrosian-Psakhis, Moscow USSR Championship 1983.

C) Most precise, as I discovered after this game, is 12.♞e1! ♙f8 13.♘a4 (or 13.♘d2 ♞b8 14.♘b3 ♞a8 15.♘b5 a4 16.♘c5 ♙xc5 17.♞xc5 ♙d7 18.d4 exd4 19.♙f4 ♞e7 20.♞c1 ♞ac8 21.♙xc7 ♞g5 22.♙xb6 ♞xb5 23.♙xd4 ♞cd8 24.♞c5 ♞a6 25.♞g5 ♙h3 26.♞xg7+ ♙f8 27.♞xh7 ♙xg2?? 28.♙f6! and 1-0 in Adorjan-Wirthensohn, Biel 1983) 13...♘xa4 14.♞xa4 ♙d7 15.♞b3 ♞e6 16.♘g5 ♞f6 17.♞xb7 ♞b8 18.♞a6 ♘d4 19.♞xa5 ♘b3 20.♞xe5 ♘xc1 21.♞xc1+- and 1-0 after 38 moves in Suba-Mestel, Beer-Sheva 1984.



12...♘d4! 13.♙xd4 exd4 14.♞e1?!

Too late. This overprotection of e2 misses the opportunity to simplify the position and ease the defence. It is difficult to realize, when playing White, that one is on the defence after the first inaccuracy already. But 14.♞d2 is even worse, for example: 14...c6 15.♞c2 a4 16.♞f4 ♙c8 17.♞d2 ♙e6 18.♘c5 ♙xc5 19.♞xc5 ♘d7 20.♞cc1 ♞b6 21.♞b4 ♙g4 22.♘xd4? ♙xe2 23.♞fe1 ♞xb4 24.axb4 ♙xd3 25.♘xc6 bxc6 26.♙xc6 ♙f5+- and 0-1 after 41 moves in Sunye Neto-Torre, Rio de Janeiro Interzonal 1979;

The best defence is 14.♘c5 ♙c8 15.♘a4 c6 16.♞e1 ♘xa4 17.♞xa4 ♙f6 18.h4! with a position which, though a bit worse, is defensible.

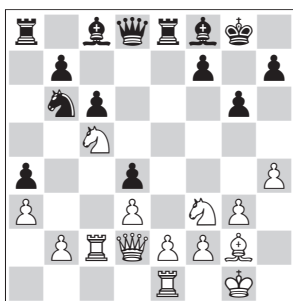
14...a4 15.♞c2 c6 16.♘c5 ♙c8 17.♞d2



I finally understood that I was on the defence. My plan was to place one rook on c2 to protect e2 from a less passive position, and the other rook on b1, intending to open the b-file. Whether my plan was enough to

hold – I believed not, and this gave me the freedom to bluff.

17...♗f8 18.♖c2 g6 19.h4



This move gains space on the kingside and possibly some time as well; Black, who already controls the position, would not let me play h4-h5. Is it right to mix psychology with strategy? I think it is, especially when on the defence. The player on the defence has far more psychological weapons at his disposal than the attacker. The latter has a definite preference for security, realization of the advantage, and so forth. For you, dear reader, I shall unmask two of these weapons which have a considerable chance of success:

A) When the opponent has a strong attack on the king, his blood pressure is getting higher and you can ‘blackmail’ him with lost endings. This can cause him to deviate from the right path – it is unlikely that he will abandon the idea of mate so easily.

B) The second one is complementary to the first. When your opponent has a strategic advantage and virtually controls the board, or

when he attacks something that cannot be defended by reasonable means, then the ‘threat’ or ‘blackmail’ with non-existent attacks on the king may induce a mistake. As you can see, in both cases a static principle is opposed by a dynamic one and the psychological factor speculated upon is *inertia*, the difficulty in fluently switching from one to the other.

19...h6?!

Q.E.D. (Quite Easy to Defeat!) I had no intention whatsoever of playing h4-h5, weakening my dark squares even further. I just needed a square for the king’s knight!

20.♖b1 ♗g7



21.b3!

This move was heavily criticized in the chess press, because it weakens the queenside. I shall retain the exclamation mark even if a computer chess engine finds a forced win for Black. The queenside is weak anyway, and indefensible against the march of the majority. In the centre the backward e-pawn is an embarrassment. I apologize to the commentators for my choice to breathe

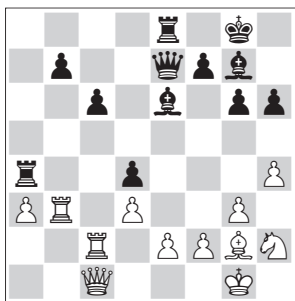
instead of waiting for a slow but sure death.

21...♖e7! 22.♘h2!

The biggest danger for White is a black knight's tour to c3, so this move controls d5. The move h4 begins to justify itself.

**22...axb3 23.♖xb3 ♘a4
24.♘xa4 ♖xa4 25.♖c1 ♙e6?**

The winner's euphoria. Better is 25...♖a7 26.♘f3? (this is the program's choice; White can play a bit better, I think: 26.♖b4 ♙e6 27.♖cb2 ♖ea8 28.a4 ♙c8 29.♖c2 and he is still alive) 26...♙e6 27.♖b4 ♖ea8+-.



26.♖xb7! ♖xb7 27.♙xc6

The funny geometrical attack shows some potential accumulated by the white pieces and hounded at the disharmony in Black's camp.

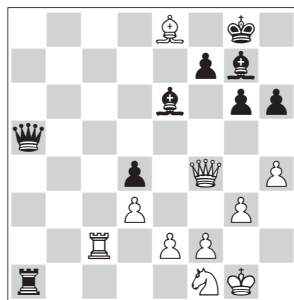
**27...♖a7 28.♙xe8 ♖xa3
29.♘f1**

Trying to exploit White's material advantage in this position is about as rewarding as the labour of Sisyphus; anyway, 29.♖f4 was more natural.

29...♖a1 30.♖f4 ♖a5?

Timman is not recognizable. Black could force a draw, or, to be more

precise, he could force White to look for a draw. The position is not lacking poison, so Black had to avoid the trap 30...♙h3? 31.♙h2! ♙xf1 32.♖c7 with a winning advantage. The best is 30...♖a8!, e.g. 31.♙c6 ♖c8 32.g4 ♙b3 33.♖c5 ♙f8 34.♙d5 ♖d7 (not worth considering is 34...♙xc5 35.♖xf7+ ♙h8 36.♖f6+ =) 35.♙xb3 ♙xc5 36.f3 ♖b1 37.♙c4 ♖b4 38.♘d2 ♙f8 39.♘e4 ♖e7 40.g5 with an easy-to-hold position.



31.♙xf7+!

This is more serious than the first sac, and the rest is silence.

**31...♙xf7 32.♖c8+ ♙f8
33.♖d6 ♖a3 34.♖xf8+ ♙g7
35.♖xa3 ♖xa3 36.♖d8 ♖a2
37.♖xd4 ♖xe2 38.♘e3 ♙e6
39.♖e4 ♖e1+ 40.♘f1 ♖xe4
41.dxe4 ♙f6 42.f4 g5
43.hxg5+ hxg5 44.♙f2 1-0**

Ray Keene published this game in *The Times*, suggesting that it was representative of my opportunist style. It was a lucky game, which I am not very proud of, although waiting for luck is also a science. Just sitting with folded arms won't help.