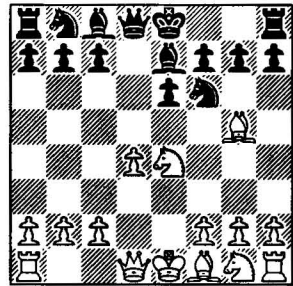


Chapter Fourteen

Classical Variation:

4 ♖g5 (4...dxe4 5 ♘xe4 ♙e7)



1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗f6 4 ♖g5
dxe4 5 ♘xe4 ♙e7

This system, called the Burn Variation, is comparable to the Rubinstein Variation (3...dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♗bd7 and 5...♗gf6) except that the opposition of White's bishop on g5 and Black's on e7 will almost inevitably lead to an exchange. 5...♗bd7 is also popular at this point, instead of 5...♙e7. The disadvantage of any ...dxe4 system is that it leaves White with space and better control of the centre. The advantage of the variation we see here is that Black will normally get the two bishops and is constantly threatening to equalise in the centre with ...c5 or ...e5. Although essentially a solid line, it tends to be more double-edged than the other two ...dxe4 systems, and thus enjoys great popularity in contemporary play.

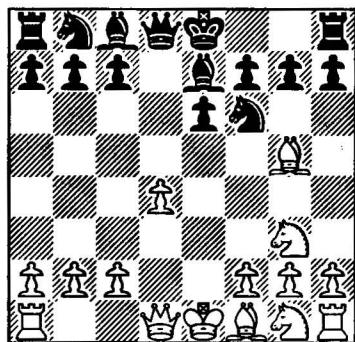
6 ♙xf6

It's remarkable that the two main (and best) recent books covering these lines, by Jacobs and Pedersen, don't mention natural alternatives at this point, nor many deviations from main lines in the moves to follow. Through

the years, White has tried a number of other approaches, some quite often:

(a) 6 ♙d3? is a mistake that was made by several top-class players in the early part of the 20th century, but not established as weak until later: 6...♘xe4 7 ♙xe7 ♘xf2!? (or 7...♗xe7! 8 ♙xe4 ♗b4+ 9 c3 ♗xb2 10 ♘e2 c6 11 0-0 ♘d7 12 ♙c2 ♗a3 13 ♗d3 ♗f6 and White lacked compensation, Leonhardt-Swidorski, Vienna 1908) 8 ♙xd8 ♘xd1 9 ♙xc7 ♘xb2 10 ♙e2 ♘a4! 11 ♙d6 Barasz-Balla, Gyor 1906, and here 11...♙d7! 12 ♗b1 ♙c6 was good;

(b) 6 ♘g3



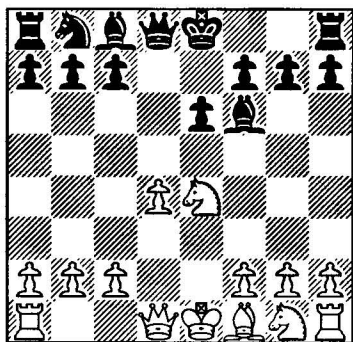
and:

(b1) After 6...0-0, 7 ♜f3 is natural and likely to be met by ...♜bd7. Instead, Djurhuus-U.Andersson, Malmö 1995 took an interesting positional course after 7 ♙d3 c5 8 dxc5 ♜bd7 9 ♙xf6 ♜xf6!? 10 ♙e2 ♜a5+ 11 c3 ♜xc5 12 ♜f3 ♙d7 13 0-0 ♜ad8 14 ♜fe1 ♙c8!? 15 ♜ad1 ♜c7 16 ♜e4 ♜d5!?=;

(b2) 6...c5 7 dxc5 (7 ♜f3 ♜bd7 8 ♙c4 0-0 9 0-0 a6! 10 dxc5 ♜xc5 11 ♜e2?! b5 12 ♙b3 ♜xb3 13 axb3 ♜c7 14 ♜fe1 ♙b7 ♗ Van Gompel-De Bock, Vlissingen 1995) 7...♜a5+ 8 ♜d2 ♜xc5 9 ♜f3 ♜bd7 10 0-0-0 b6 11 ♙e3 ♜d5 12 ♜xd5 ♜xd5= Gesos-Van den Doel, Agios Kyrikos 2000;

(c) 6 ♜xf6+ allows Black to develop quickly and achieve an equalizing central break. An older example: 6...♙xf6 7 ♙xf6 ♜xf6 8 c3 0-0 9 ♙d3 ♜c6 10 ♜f3 e5 11 dxe5 ♜xe5 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5+ 13 ♙e2 ♜xe2+ 14 ♙xe2 ♙e6 15 0-0 ♜fd8 16 ♜fd1 ♜xd1+ 17 ♙xd1 ♜d8 ♗ Thomas-Tartakower, Hastings 1945 – see also note (a) to White's seventh move.

(d) 6 ♜c3 has been tried surprisingly often. A simple solution is 6...0-0 7 ♜f3 ♜bd7 8 ♙e2 c5 9 0-0 b6 10 ♜d2 ♙b7 11 ♜ad1 ♜d5= Botvinnik-Rauzer, Odessa 1929.
6...♙xf6



There are roughly 3000 games

from this position in my database, with players of all strengths represented. Recently it has become an extremely popular opening at the highest levels. Of the leading contemporary players, Bareev and Mikhail Gurevich have employed it most consistently over the years, but Shirov, Khalifman, Korchnoi and Short have been exponents, and a number of others such as Kramnik, Dreev, Ehlvest, Psakhis and (many others) have played it from time to time.

7 ♜f3

Again, others have often been seen:

(a) 7 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 8 ♜f3 0-0 (8...c5 also equalises) and now:

(a1) 9 ♜d2 is a simplifying line that offers few positive prospects, e.g., 9...♜d8 10 0-0-0 c5 11 ♜c3 b6 12 ♙b5 ♙a6!? 13 ♜c4 ♙xb5 14 ♜xb5 ♜d7 15 ♙e2 ♜ac8 ♗ ½-½ Anand-Bareev, Paris 1992;

(a2) 9 c3 ♜d7 (or 9...b6 10 g3 ♜d7 11 ♙g2 e5! 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 13 dxe5 ♜xe5+ 14 ♙e2 ♜xe2+ 15 ♙xe2 ♙a6+ ♗ was Szamoskozi-Jakab, Paks 1995) 10 ♙d3 (10 ♙e2 e5 11 dxe5 ♜xe5 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5= Capablanca-Alekhine, New York 1927) 10...e5 11 0-0 exd4 12 ♜xd4!? ♜e5 13 ♙e4 ♜d8 14 ♜c2 g6 15 ♜fd1 ½-½ Oll-Kindermann, Debrecen 1990;

(a3) 9 ♙d3 ♜c6!? (or 9...c5 10 0-0 cxd4 11 ♜xd4 ♜d8= Gashimov-Radjabov, Baku 1998) 10 c3 e5 11 dxe5 ♜xe5 12 ♜xe5 ♜xe5+ 13 ♙e2 ♜xe2+ 14 ♙xe2 ♜e8+ 15 ♙d2 ♙e6= Yurchenko-Moiseenko, Kaluga 1996;

(b) 7 c3 ♜d7 and:

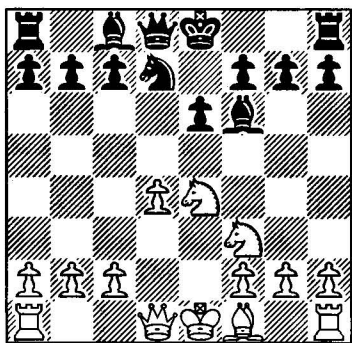
(b1) 8 f4!? 0-0 9 ♜f3 b6 10 ♙d3 ♙b7 11 0-0 c5 12 dxc5 ♜xc5 13 ♜xc5 bxc5= Boll-Dreev, Tilburg 1993;

(b2) 8 ♜c2 e5 9 dxe5?! (9 0-0-0! – Bareev, when 9...exd4 10 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 11 ♜xd4 ♙e7 12 ♜f3 0-0 looks equal)

9...♖xe5 10 f4 (Knaak gives the interesting line 10 ♖b5+ c6 11 ♖d1 ♗e7 12 ♘d6+ ♜f8 13 ♙e2 ♙e6?, which seems true, e.g., 14 b3 ♖d8 15 ♘e4 ♙f5!) 10...♘g6 11 g3 0-0 12 ♙d3 (12 ♙g2 ♖e8) 12...♗d5 and Black is slightly better: 13 a3? (13 ♘xf6+? gxf6-+ with the idea 14 0-0-0 ♗xh1 15 ♙e4 ♙f5!; 13 ♘e2!?) 13...♘xf4! 14 ♘xf6+ gxf6 15 ♙xh7+ ♜g7-+ Topalov-Bareev, Linares 1994;

(b3) 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 ♗c2 (9 ♙e2 e5 10 d5 ♙e7 and ...f5) 9...e5= 10 0-0-0 (10 d5 ♙e7 11 0-0-0 has arisen more than once and 11...f5!? is curiously untried; e.g., 12 d6! ♙xd6 13 ♘xd6 cxd6 14 ♖xd6 e4! 15 ♘d4 ♗e7 16 ♖e6 ♗g5+ 17 ♜b1 ♘b6 with satisfactory play) 10...exd4 11 ♘xd4 (11 ♘xf6+?! ♗xf6 12 ♖xd4 ♘c5 and Black is already better, Ljubojevic-Dreev, Linares 1995) 11...♙xd4!? 12 ♖xd4 ♗e7 13 h4 ♘e5 14 ♘g5 g6= Glek-Lputian, Dortmund 1992.

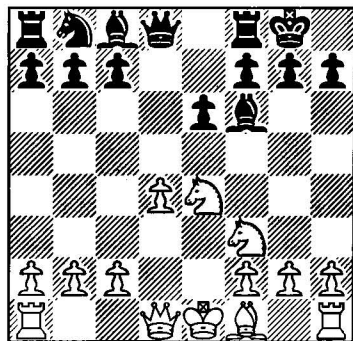
7...♘d7



I use this move as the first repertoire line because it prepares the ideas of ...e5 and ...c5 without delay. Nevertheless, 7...0-0 is flexible with respect to minor piece development and is in fact more popular.

This has turned out to be a solid position for Black. Here's a mini-

repertoire of critical ideas:



(a) 8 c3 ♘d7 9 ♗c2 (9 ♙d3 e5) 9...e5 transposes to 7 c3;

(b) 8 ♗d3 (to target h7 and play 0-0-0 quickly) 8...♘d7 9 0-0-0 b6 10 h4 ♙b7 11 ♘fg5 (11 ♘eg5 g6 12 ♗e3 h6 13 ♘e4 ♙g7 14 ♙d3 c5!, or here M.Gurevich's 12...c5!? 13 dxc5 ♗e7) 11...♙xe4!? 12 ♗xe4 ♙xg5+ 13 hxg5 ♗xg5+ 14 ♜b1 ♘f6 15 ♗c6 Milos-Shirov, Las Vegas 1999, when White had only limited compensation for the pawn;

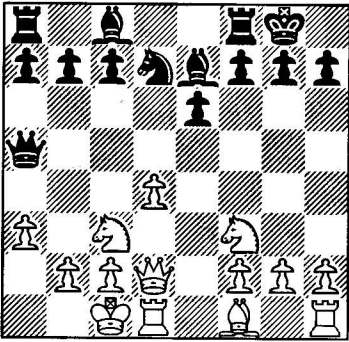
(c) 8 ♙c4; as Pedersen points out, many of the top players think that this is the drawback to 7...0-0, because that move doesn't contribute towards stopping the d5 break (as ...b6 does) or enforce ...c5, (as ...♘d7 does). But I have grown fonder of 7...0-0 since I realised that Black can now switch plans by 8...♘c6!? 9 c3 e5 Then the only challenging move is 10 d5, when both moves of Black's moves are valid:

(c1) 10...♘a5 11 ♙d3 b6 12 h4, and Jacobs suggests 12...♘b7! intending ...♘d6, e.g., 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♗c2 g6 15 h5 ♘c5=;

(c2) 10...♘e7!? 11 ♘xf6+ gxf6 has done reasonably well for Black, the current main line going 12 ♘h4 ♘g6 13 ♗h5 ♗d7! (intending ...♗g4) 14 h3

♖a4! 15 b3 ♖a5 16 0-0 Shirov-V.Akopian, Kallithea 2002; and here Shirov suggests 16...♗g7 17 b4 ♖a3 18 ♖b3 a5 with complications;

(d) 8 ♖d2 is the most common move, when 8...♗d7 transposes to our 7...♗d7 main line, or Black can play 8...♕e7 9 0-0-0. In the latter case, 9...♖d5!? (9...♗d7 again transposes to 7...♗d7 8 ♖d2 0-0 9 0-0-0 ♕e7 below) 10 ♗c3 ♖a5 is independent: 11 a3!? (11 ♗e5 ♖b4 12 ♗c4 ♕xc3 13 ♗xa5 ♕xd2+ 14 ♖xd2 b6 15 ♗c4 ♖b7= was the game Ehlvest-Khalifman, Japfa 2000) 11...♗d7 and:



(d1) 12 ♕c4 c6 13 ♖he1 b5 14 ♖b3 Landa-Baklan, Halkidiki 2002; and Baklan suggests 14...b4 15 ♗a2 ♖b8 16 ♗b1 ♖d8 'with counterplay';

(d2) 12 ♗b1 ♖b6 (or 12...c6!? – Knaak; both sides have numerous options here) 13 ♖e3 ♗f6 14 ♗e5 Ponomarev-Ivanchuk, and here Knaak suggests the simple 14...♗d5! 15 ♖f3 (15 ♗xd5 exd5 frees Black's bishops) 15...♗xc3+ 16 ♖xc3 c5, which should be fine for Black, e.g., 17 dxc5 (17 ♕e2 cxd4 18 ♖xd4 ♕c5=) 17...♖xc5 18 ♖xc5 ♕xc5 19 f3! (19 f4 b6 20 ♖b5 ♖b7) 19...a6! 20 ♕e2 b5 21 ♗d7 ♕xd7 22 ♖xd7 ♖fd8 23 ♖hd1 ♖b6=.

I have dwelled upon 7...0-0 because it is a good alternative for anyone

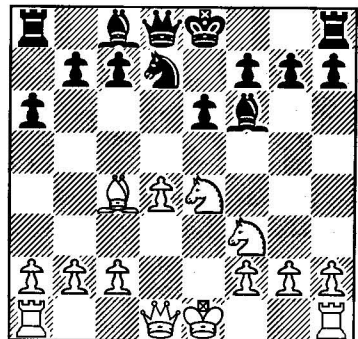
who mistrusts something in the 7...♗d7 lines.

8 ♖d2

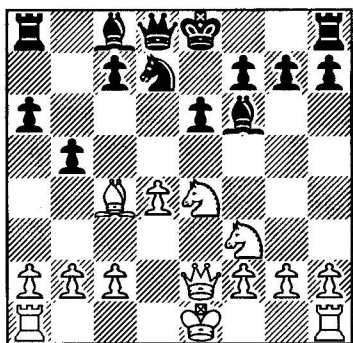
A very important choice. 8 ♖d2 is perhaps the best move since it leaves Black few ways to exploit his early ...♗d7 and usually merges with a line that could arise after 7...0-0. There are many other moves, however, several of them leading to highly critical play:

(a) 8 ♖e2!? 0-0 9 0-0-0 b6 10 h4!? ♖b7 11 h5 c5! (breaking up the centre based upon a tactic) 12 h6 g6 13 dxc5?! (13 ♗xf6+ ♖xf6 14 ♖h3 cxd4 15 ♗xd4=) 13...♕xe4 14 ♖xe4 ♗xc5 15 ♖b4 (15 ♖xd8 ♗xe4) 15...♖c7 16 ♕e2 J.Polgar-Bareev, Cannes 2001, and Black launched an attack aided by the opposite-coloured bishops: 16...b5! 17 ♗b1 a5! 18 ♖g4 ♗a4 19 ♗d4 ♖fc8 20 ♖d2?! (already there is no good defence, but better was 20 c3 b4 21 ♖b5 bxc3! 22 ♕xa4 ♖ab8) 20...♗xb2! 21 ♗xb5 ♖ab8! 22 ♗c1 (22 ♗xc7 ♗d3+) 22...♖e5-+;

(b) 8 ♕c4 is by far the most important option to 8 ♖d2 because White wants to support d5 in some variations, especially after ...c5. Now 8...0-0 transposes to certain passive 7...0-0 lines that are unappealing. But Black has the alternative 8...a6!:



A dynamic and ambitious idea on which M.Gurevich has taken out a patent. Black wants to develop his bishop aggressively even at the cost of some looseness: Play normally continues 9 ♖e2 (9 a4 0-0 10 ♗d2 b6 11 0-0-0 b5! – McDonald; 9 0-0 b5 10 ♙d3 ♙b7=, e.g., 11 c3 ♙e7!? 12 a4 0-0! 13 axb5 axb5 14 ♜xa8 ♞xa8 15 ♙xb5 ♙xe4 16 ♙xd7 ♞d8 17 ♙b5 c5♣; the key in these lines is to stay dynamic) 9...b5 (9...0-0 is safer: 10 0-0-0 b5 11 ♙b3 ♙b7 12 d5 exd5 13 ♙xd5 c6 14 ♙b3 ♞c7 15 ♞he1 Lutz-Dizdar, Frohnleiten 2002; and here 15...c5 is similar to our main line, e.g., 16 ♙d5 ♙xd5 17 ♞xd5 ♙e7=; no better was 15 ♙d6 ♙c5= Anand-Radjabov, Dubai (rapid) 2002)



Now there's a significant division:

(b1) 10 ♙d3 ♙b7 11 ♙xf6+ ♞xf6 12 ♙e4 ♙xe4 13 ♞xe4 0-0 14 0-0 ♞e7 15 a4 ♙b6 16 axb5 axb5 17 ♞c6 b4 ½-½ Timman-M.Gurevich, Wijk aan Zee 2002; Black can soon play ...♞d6;

(b2) 10 ♙b3 0-0 11 0-0-0 (11 0-0 c5 12 dxc5 ♙b7 13 ♞fd1 ♙xe4 14 ♞xe4 ♙xc5= Van den Doel-Komarov, Clermont-Ferrand 2003; 11 ♞d1 ♙b7 12 0-0 c5 13 c3 ½-½ Milos-Bareev, Shenyang 2000) 11...♙b7 12 d5!? exd5 13 ♙xd5 c6 14 ♙b3 ♞c7 15 ♞he1 c5 16 ♙d5 ♙xd5 17 ♞xd5 ♙e7 18 ♙b1 Van

den Doel-Mullon, Clermont-Ferrand 2003; and Black might have kept up some pressure by 18...♞fe8!;

(b3) 10 ♙d5!? ♞b8 11 0-0-0 0-0 (11...♞b6!?) 12 ♙c6! ♞b6 13 d5 exd5 14 ♙xd5 c6 15 ♙b3 c5! (15...a5!? 16 c3 a4 17 ♙c2 ♞c7±) 16 ♙d5 (16 ♙xc5? ♙xb2+! and 17 ♙xb2 ♞f6+ or 17 ♙b1 ♙f6 18 ♙xd7 ♙xd7 19 ♙e5 ♙xe5 20 ♞xe5 ♞c8♣ Goloshchapov-M.Gurevich, Wijk aan Zee 2001) 16...♞c7 17 ♞he1 ♙d8! (with the idea ...♙f6) 18 ♙eg5 (18 ♞e3 c4 19 ♙fg5 ♙xg5 20 ♞xg5 ♙f6 21 g3 ½-½ Shirov-M.Gurevich, New Delhi 2001) 18...♙xg5+ 19 ♙xg5 ♙f6 20 ♞e5?! ½-½ Svidler-M.Gurevich, Esbjerg 2000; in fact, 20...♞xe5 21 ♞xe5 ♙xd5 22 ♞exd5 ♙b7 23 ♞xc5 ♙xg2! is quite appealing. When the world's leading players make no progress against a variation, it's a good indication that Black's play is sound;

(c) The natural 8 ♙d3 can be answered with 8...c5!, when 9 dxc5 (9 ♙d6+? ♙e7 will actually win material for Black; 9 ♙xf6+ ♞xf6 10 0-0 cxd4 11 ♞e1 0-0 12 ♙xd4 ♞d8 with an easy game, Kindermann-Nikolaczuk, Dortmund 1986) 9...♙xc5! was Alekhine's idea in 1927! If 10 ♙xc5 (10 ♙xf6+ ♞xf6 11 0-0?! ♞xb2♣ Yates-Alekhine, Kecskemet 1927), 10...♞a5+ 11 c3 ♞xc5 frees Black's game and keeps the two bishops;

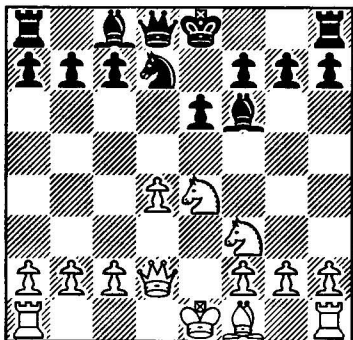
(d) 8 ♙xf6+ is tame:

(d1) 8...♙xf6 9 ♙b5+ (9 ♙e5 0-0 10 ♙d3 c5! 11 dxc5 ♞a5+ 12 c3 ♞xc5 13 ♞e2 b6= Standke-Krueger, Germany 1995) 9...♙d7 10 ♙xd7+ ♞xd7 11 ♞e2 0-0 12 0-0 ♞fd8= Efimov-M.Gurevich, Saint Vincent 2003;

(d2) 8...♞xf6 9 ♞d2 (trying to anticipate and perhaps clamp down on ...c5 and ...e5; 9 ♙c4 0-0 10 ♞e2 a6!? 11 0-0-0 b5 12 ♙d3 ♙b7=; 9 ♙d3 c5

10 0-0 cxd4 11 ♜e1 ♗c5 12 ♖b5+ ♗d7
13 ♗xd7+ ½-½ Sigurjonsson-Pach-
man, Munich 1979) 9...c5! (9...0-0 10
♗e3!) 10 0-0-0 cxd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 12
♜xd4 e5 13 ♜d2 f6=.

We return to the main line after 8
♗d2:



8...0-0

In my database this main line position, also arising from 7...0-0 8 ♗d2 ♗d7, has scored 51% for Black with only a miniscule edge in performance rating for White. It continues to offer reasonably active play while keeping risks to a minimum.

It's definitely worth it to briefly compare a couple of the older moves in this position, one of which difficult yet instructive, the other of which is doing well again:

(a) 8...♗e7, to retain the bishop pair, has had a poor reputation ever since Fischer-Benko, Curacao 1962, but Benko's recent notes illustrate how even a passive-looking and underdeveloped position can be playable when one has the bishop pair: 9 0-0-0 ♗f6 10 ♗d3 0-0 11 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 12 ♗f4 c5 (queried, but Black needs activity) 13 dxc5 ♗a5 14 ♗c4 ♗e7 15 h4 ♗xc5 16 ♗e4 f5 17 ♗e2 b5! 18 ♗g5 (18 ♗xb5 ♜b8 19 ♗c4 ♗f6 20 ♗b3 a5 is unclear – Benko) 18...♗f6! 19

♗xe6!? (19 ♗h5 h6 20 ♗g6 hxg5 21 hxg5 ♗xb2+ 22 ♗xb2 ♗b4+ 23 ♗c1 ♗f4+ 24 ♜d2 ♗d4 25 ♗h7+ ♗f7 is given as unclear by Benko) 19...♗xe6? (19...♗xb2+! 20 ♗xb2 ♗b4+ 21 ♗c1 ♗a3+ 22 ♗d2 ♗a5+ with perpetual check – Benko) 20 ♗xe6+ ♗h8 21 ♗b1 ♗xf2 22 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 23 ♗xf5±, a game Fischer went on to win after further mistakes by Black. But the opening was not to blame;

(b) 8...b6 is another old move, quite popular in the early days of the French Defence. It scored overwhelmingly for White up to about 1985, but has served Black well since and remains a viable alternative to 8...0-0:

(b1) 9 ♖b5 0-0 10 ♗c6 ♜b8 11 0-0-0 ♗b7 12 ♗xb7 (12 d5!? ♗c5 13 ♗f4 ♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 ♗xc6 15 dxc6 ♗c8 16 ♗e5 ♗a6 17 ♗b1 ♗xe5 18 ♗xe5 ♗c4=) 12...♜xb7 13 d5 ♗c5 14 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 15 ♜he1 ♜d8 16 ♗e3 ♜bb8 17 dxe6 ♗xe6= Balcerak-Atalik, Cappelle la Grande 2003;

(b2) 9 0-0-0 ♗b7 10 ♗f4 (10 ♗d3 ♗e7 11 ♗f4 ♗f6 12 h4 ♗xe4 13 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 ♗d5 15 ♜he1 (15 ♗xd5 exd5 16 ♜he1 f6=) 15...♗xe4 16 ♜xe4 Solovjov-Grishina, St Petersburg 2001; and best was 16...♜d8! 17 c4 c6 18 ♗e5 ♜c8=) 10...♗e7!? 11 ♗c4 0-0-0!? (11...0-0!)=) 12 ♜he1 ♗f8 13 g3 ♗g6 14 ♗e3± Vallejo Pons-Korchnoi, Biel 2002.

9 0-0-0

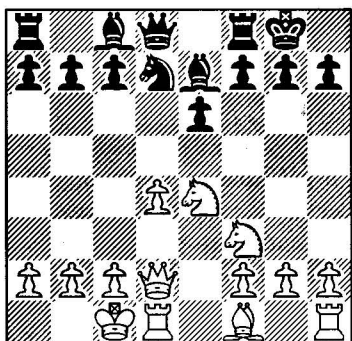
9 ♗c3, similar to Kasparov's idea 9 0-0-0 ♗e7 10 ♗c3, hasn't been tried as far as I know. Again Black can break up the centre, e.g., 9...c5! 10 ♗xf6+ (10 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 11 ♗xc5 b6 12 ♗c6 ♜b8 13 ♗a4 ♗b7 14 ♜d1 ♗xf3 15 gxf3 ♗d5?) 10...♗xf6 11 0-0-0 ♜d8 12 ♗d3 b6 (12...cxd4 is also playable) 13 ♗e4 ♜b8 14 ♜he1 ♗b7 (14...h6=) 15 ♗xb7 ♜xb7=.

9 0-0-0 introduces the main position for this chapter. Black has a choice:

14.1 9...♙e7

14.2 9...b6

14.1 9...♙e7



9...♙e7 has been a favourite weapon of Bareev's for years. Black courageously retains his two bishops at the cost of time. This does strengthen the support for ...c5 and makes way for ...♘f6; but White also gains in that the time spent makes it more likely that a kingside attack will yield results. Thus this may be seen as a somewhat riskier and more ambitious strategy than developing move 9...b6 of the next section. Although it occasionally suffers a tactical reverse, the two bishops often have their say and Black actually has an excellent performance rating with 9...♙e7.

10 ♙c4

I make this the main line because of its importance rather than its frequency of use. Black's problem now is that the move ...c5 is generally answered by d5. In fact, a complete solution to 10 ♙c4 could be taken as a general sign of the system's worth.

Nevertheless, of the alternatives that follow, 10 ♙d3 and 10 ♚c3 are particularly important to take into account:

(a) 10 ♚f4!? c5!? 11 dxc5 ♚a5 12 ♘b1 ♘xc5=;

(b) 10 ♘b1 b6!? (or 10...c5 11 dxc5 ♚c7) 11 ♙c4 ♘f6 12 ♘xf6+ ♙xf6 13 ♚e3 (13 d5 b5 14 ♙b3 c5! and now 15 dxe6 c4 or 15 dxc6 ♚b6=) 13...♙b7 14 ♚he1 ♚e7 15 g4!? ♚ad8 16 ♘e5 c5= Stefansson-Bareev, Yerevan 1996;

(c) 10 ♙d3 is a solid move that aims for an attack that Black musn't underestimate:

(c1) 10...b6 11 ♘eg5! h6?! (11...♘f6 is solid and natural) 12 ♙h7+ ♘h8 13 ♙e4!! hxg5 (13...♙xg5! 14 ♘xg5 ♚b8 and 15 ♘f3 ♘f6 16 ♙d3 ♙b7= or 15 h4 ♘f6= – Polgar) 14 g4! (14 ♙xa8 g4 and ...♙g5 if the knight moves) 14...♚b8 15 h4 g6 (I doubt that there's a sufficient defence, e.g., 15...gxh4 16 g5 f5 17 ♚f4! looks very strong) 16 hxg5+ ♘g7 17 ♚f4! ♙b7 18 ♚h7+! ♘h7 19 ♚h2+ ♘g8 20 ♚h1 ♙xg5+ 21 ♘xg5 ♙xg5+ 22 f4 ♚xf4+ 23 ♚xf4 ♙xe4 24 ♚xe4 1-0 J.Polgar-Berkes, Budapest 2003. A superb game, whatever its theoretical significance;

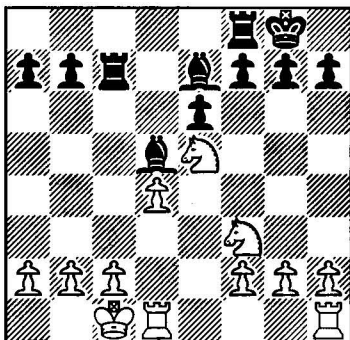
(c2) 10...c5! 11 dxc5 ♚c7 12 ♚e2 (12 ♚he1 ♘xc5 13 ♘xc5 ♙xc5=) 12...b6!? (12...♘xc5=) 13 c6!? ♚xc6 (13...♘b8!) 14 ♘eg5 ♙xg5+ 15 ♘xg5 ♘f6= Fressinet-Radjabov, Halkidiki 2002. Another critical sequence here would be 11 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 12 dxc5 ♚d5 13 ♘b1 ♚xc5 14 h4 a5!? intending ...a4 and/or ...b5;

(d) 10 ♚c3!? is Kasparov's invention, designed to meet Bareev's favourite 9...♙e7 when the two met in Sarajevo 2000. It tries to clamp down on both ...c5 and ...e5. Although this poses serious problems, Black has a couple of ideas that seem satisfactory.

For example, since White has no threats, a move like 10...a5 is plausible, with ideas of expansion on the queenside as well as ...♗b6-d5. Othewise:

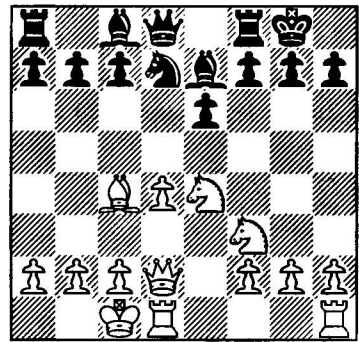
(d1) 10...♗f6 was Bareev's response: 11 ♘xf6+ ♙xf6 12 ♙d3 ♗d6 13 ♖b1 ♙d8 14 h4 a5 15 ♗e1! (preventing ...♗b4 from forcing the exchange of queens) 15...♙d7?! (risky but playable seems 15...c5 16 dxc5 ♗xc5, when and 17 ♗e4 ♗b4! saves the day while 17 ♘g5 h6 18 ♘e4 ♗e5 19 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 20 g4! ♙d7 holds, even if it must favour White) 16 ♘g5 h6 17 ♙h7+ ♖f8 18 ♘e4 ♗e7 19 ♘xf6 ♗xf6 20 ♙e4 and White was distinctly better;

(d2) Even with the queen on c3, 10...c5! looks good. The most interesting line in that case would be 11 ♙b5 (recommended by McDonald; 11 dxc5 ♗c7 is fine for Black; 11 d5 exd5 12 ♙xd5 ♗c7? plans ...♗b6 followed by ...♙e6) 11...♗c7!. This introduces the kind of long-term positional pawn sacrifice that is common these days. Here even the exchange of queens leaves Black's bishop pair worth more than the pawn in a continuation like 12 ♙xd7 ♙xd7 13 ♘xc5 (13 dxc5 ♙c6 14 ♘d6 b6?) 13...♙c6 14 ♘d3 ♙ac8! 15 ♘de5 ♙d5 16 ♗xc7 ♙xc7



17 a3 (17 ♖b1 ♙fc8 18 ♙d2 f6 19 ♘d3 g5!, restricting the knights and preparing the simple minority attack with ...b5-b4, ...a5-a4) 17...♙b3 18 ♙d2 ♙fc8 19 c3 b5 20 ♘d3 a5 with a powerful minority attack, for example, 21 ♖b1 b4 22 axb4 axb4 23 ♘xb4 ♙xb4 24 cxb4 ♙a8! and wins, since ...♙ca7 follows.

Returning to 10 ♙c4:



10...a6!?

An aggressive move resembling several other lines in this chapter, but retaining the two bishops.

(a) 10...♗f6 11 ♘xf6 12 ♙he1 favours White due to his space and better development. This sort of position is hardly that bad, however, because White's major break with d5 would tend to free both of Black's bishops. In Yermolinsky-Bareev, Lucerne 1997, the play became sharp instead after 12...♙b8!? 13 ♘e5 b5! 14 ♙d3! (14 ♘c6 ♗d6 15 ♘xb8 bxc4 threatens ...c5) 14...♙b6!? (14...♙b7) 15 ♗e3 and White was still somewhat better;

(b) An alternative is 10...c5, which is double-edged yet holding up well:

(b1) 11 dxc5 ♗c7 12 ♙he1 ♘xc5 13 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 14 ♙d3 ♙f6 15 ♗e2 g6 16 h4 ♙d8 17 ♙b5 ♙xb2+ ½-½ Almasi-Dizdar, Makarska Tucepi 1995;

(b2) 11 d5!? exd5 12 ♙xd5 ♗c7

with the idea ... c6 – Timman; one would think that White's centralised pieces and control of d5 were vital, but the two bishops seem to hold their own.

(b3) the widely-recommended move is 11 b5 !, but 11... c7 ! 12 xd7 xd7 looks fine, e.g. 13 xc5 c6 14 d3 ac8 ! 15 de5 d5 with compensation, or 13 dxc5 ?! c6 with the idea 14 d6 b6 !;

(b4) 11 he1 cxd4 12 xd4 (12 xd4 b6 13 b3 xd4 14 xd4 ! d7 15 e5 c6 16 xc6 bxc6 17 c3 c5 18 dd1 c4 =) 12... b6 13 b3 d7 14 f4 a5 15 g3 !? (this is probably too ambitious, but 15 a3 a4 16 a2 a5 ! covers a lot of key squares) 15... a4 16 xe6 fxe6 17 xe6 xe6 18 xd8 xd8 (I like Black's bishop pair) 19 d6 d5 (McDonald analyses 19... xa2 !?, which seems very good for Black after 20 b3 axb3 21 cxb3 h6 , e.g., 22 xb7 g5 + 23 d1 a3 -+) 20 e8 Fressinet-Radjabov, Pamplona 2001, and here Radjabov gives 20... c7 with advantage.

11 b3

11 he1 b5 12 d3 b7 equalises easily, e.g., 13 b1 d5 ! (13... c5 =) 14 f4 c5 .

11... a5 !

Suddenly changing plans based upon the bishop's position. Black threatens ... a4 . Also good enough is 11... c6 : 12 f4 b5 13 h4 (13 e5 c7) 13... a7 14 eg5 f6 = Khalifman-Bareev, Belgrade 1993.

12 c4

Alternatives are 12 a3 a4 13 a2 f6 , and 12 a4 b6 !?, targeting a4 .

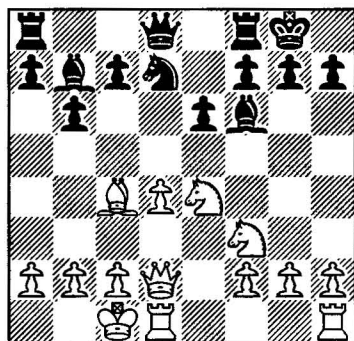
12... c6 13 b1 c7 14 h4 !? $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$

Anand-Bareev, Wijk aan Zee 2003. Here 14... b5 15 d3 b7 could follow, when Black is well enough developed to resist any attack.

14.2 9... b6 10 c4

10 f4 b7 11 h4 c5 12 b5 !? cxd4 13 xd7 xe4 14 xe4 xd7 15 g4 (15 xd4 a4 16 b1 fd8 17 c3 ac8 ?) 15... g6 16 g5 g7 17 h5 fd8 18 hxg6 hxg6 19 h4 d5 Gallagher-Eliet, Clermont-Ferrand 2003, and White seems to lack any compensation whatsoever.

10... b7 !?



Black should certainly consider Dreev's slow move 10... c6 to stabilise the centre and prevent d5 . Then if White tries to eliminate Black's bishop pair by 11 d6 c7 12 xc8 fxc8 , he has only encouraged Black to attack on the queenside. Better is 11 xf6 + xf6 12 he1 h6 13 e3 b7 with ... c5 shortly.

11 d5 !?

An ambitious move, and the only try for a serious advantage. Others allow Black to consolidate:

(a) 11 he1 d5 !? (Probably okay, but 11... xe4 ! 12 xe4 c6 would be safe and solid; ... b5 , ... a5 , and ... b6 could follow) 12 d3 (12 xd5 exd5 13 g3 Vallejo Pons-Radjabov, Leon 2001; 13... g6 = 14 e5 xe5 15 dxe5 g7 16 xd5 g5 + 17 b1 ad8 =; 12 d3 c6 13 b3 xb3 14 xb3 c7 =) 12... c5 !? 13 c4 b7 !? (or 13... c6 , when 14 eg5 h6 ! looks fine

and otherwise the bishop is slightly better placed) 14 dxc5 bxc5 15 ♜xf6+ and White got a small but lasting edge after 15...♞xf6?! in Hübner-Short, Novi Sad 1990; but there seems nothing wrong with the active 15...♜xf6! intending ...♖xf3 or ...♞b6, e.g., 16 ♜e5 (16 ♞f4 ♞a5; 16 ♜g5 ♞c7) 16...♞e7 17 g4!? ♞fd8 18 ♞c2 g6 19 g5 (19 f4 ♞d4!) 19...♜d7=;

(b) 11 ♞f4 ♖d5 (11...♞e7!?) 12 ♖d3 ♖e7!? (12...c5! with the idea 13 c4 ♖c6 14 dxc5 bxc5?) 13 c4 ♖b7 14 g4!? ♜f6 15 ♜xf6+ ♖xf6 16 ♖e4 ♖xe4 17 ♞xe4 ♞e7 18 h4 ♞b4! 19 ♞c2 ♞d6 20 ♞e4 ♞b4= Bologan-M.Gurevich, Bel-fort 1998.

11...b5!?

Also satisfactory is 11...e5 (Hübner) 12 g4!? (12 ♞he1 a6! =) 12...a6 13 g5 ♖e7 – McDonald.

12 ♖b3

12 dxe6? bxc4?; 12 ♖xb5 exd5 13 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 14 ♞he1 c5.

12...c5!

The '!' is partly for ingenuity. Safer options are 12...♜b6 13 ♜xf6+ ♞xf6 14 dxe6 fxe6= and 12...exd5 13 ♖xd5 c6 14 ♖b3 c5 15 ♖d5 (15 ♞xd7 ♖xe4 16 ♞xb5 ♞c7) 15...♞b8 unclear – M.Gurevich; compare the game.

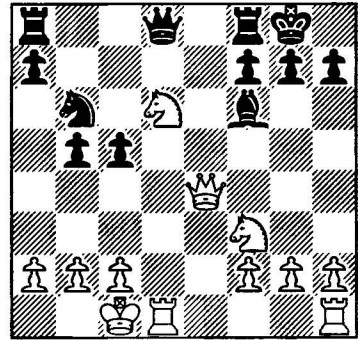
13 ♜d6!

White loses after 13 dxe6? ♖xe4 14 exf7+ ♖h8 15 ♞xd7 ♞xd7 16 ♞xd7 c4 and lacks enough compensation after 13 ♜xf6+?! ♜xf6 14 dxe6 ♖xf3 15 exf7+ ♖h8 16 ♞xd8 ♞axd8 17 ♞xd8 ♞xd8 18 gxf3 c4.

13...♖xd5 14 ♖xd5 exd5 15 ♞xd5 ♜b6! 16 ♞e4

16 ♞xc5? ♜a4 is awful, as is 16 ♞c6? ♖xb2+ 17 ♖xb2 ♞f6+. But a serious alternative is 16 ♞f5!? as played in Almasi-Tukmakov, Pula 2001. Because of the number of earlier paths to equality, I'm not going to

analyse this deeply but I think that it's equal. Here's one line of many: 16...g6 (16...♜a4 also seems fine, e.g., 17 ♜e5 ♞e7 18 ♞he1 ♞ad8! 19 ♜c6 ♞xd6 20 ♞xd6 ♖xb2+ 21 ♖b1 ♞xd6?) 17 ♞f4 and now easiest was 17...♜a4! 18 c3 (18 ♜c4 bxc4 19 ♞xd8 ♖xb2+ 20 ♖b1 ♞axd8 21 ♞xc4 ♞b8=) 18...♖g7 19 ♞he1 (19 ♜e5 ♞c7) 19...♞a5=.



16...♜a4

16...♞d7!? is also fully equal. After 16...♜a4, Van den Doel-M.Gurevich, Hoogeveen 1999 went 17 ♜e5 ♞b6?! (17...♞a5! 18 f4 c4 19 ♖b1 ♜xb2! 20 ♖xb2 ♞b4+=) 18 ♞d5 (18 ♜dxf7? ♞e6-+) 18...♞ad8 19 f4! (19 ♜exf7? ♖xb2+ 20 ♖d2 ♞a5+ -+) 19...c4 20 ♖b1 ♞c7 21 ♞he1 (21 ♜xb5 ♞xd5 22 ♜xc7 ♞xd1+ 23 ♞xd1 ♞b8) with a small edge for White.

In this chapter we have seen just about every possible type of idea stemming from the 4...dxe4 and 6...♖xf6 system. There are a lot of options for Black at almost every move, so this can be a particularly flexible and practical system. Both sides can steer away from tactical play if they wish, so one should be willing to play somewhat quieter positions than are produced, for example, by the Winawer Variation.