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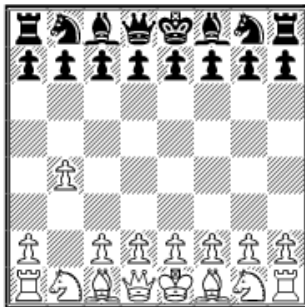
The Sokolsky, otherwise known as the Orangutan or the Polish Attack, is an independent opening whose merits are due to chess analysis not psychoanalysis. 1.b4 is sound, the refutations don't work, assessments are disputed, printed theory till now has been inadequate, White's aims are clear, and the practitioners have been world class. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and hit your opponents with the b-pawn!

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1.b4: Theory and Practice of the Sokolsky Opening

by Jerzy Konikowski and Marek Soszynski

1.b4



With his first move White indicates a concrete game plan based on active queenside play. He will have a space advantage on that side of the board, which could later facilitate operations in the center or even on the kingside. So the move could actually still lead the game in all sorts of directions.

1...e5

Generally speaking, in this opening Black seeks counterplay on the opposite wing, but he does have a range of possibilities open to him. 1...e5 is the main line. It occupies the center and at the same time attacks White's advanced pawn. 1...e5 is played almost as often as all the alternatives put together, but of course we must investigate them too.

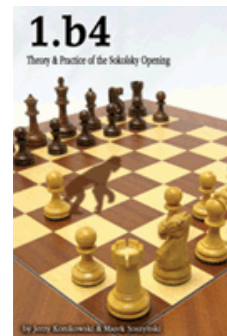
- 1...a5 Chapter 1;
- 1...c6 Chapter 2;
- 1...e6 Chapter 3;
- 1...d5 Chapter 4;
- 1...Nf6 Chapter 5;
- 1...f5 Chapter 6;
- 1...d6 2.Bb2 e5 Chapter 8.

The above are regarded as Black's best alternatives to 1...e5.

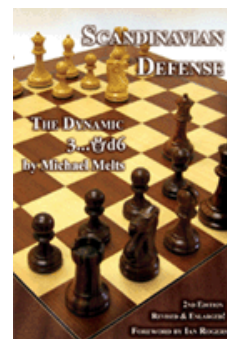
Most of the remainder may transpose to those chapters, but are otherwise weaker and/or rarer:

A) 1...a6 2.Bb2 (2.a3!?) 2...Nc6 (2...d5 3.e3 e6 4.a3 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bd6 6.d4 0-0 7.Bd3 Nbd7 8.Nbd2 Nb6 9.c4 dxc4 10.Nxc4 Nxc4 11.Bxc4 and White can prepare the advance of the e-pawn with active play) 3.a3 e5

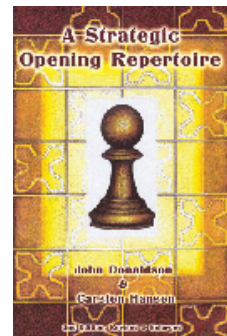
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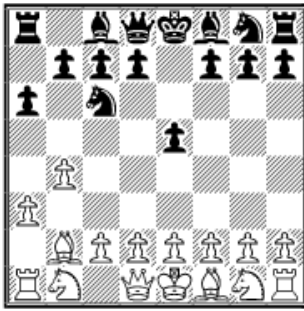
The Sokolsky Opening
by Jerzy Konikowski & Marek Soszynski



Scandinavian Defense
by Michael Melts



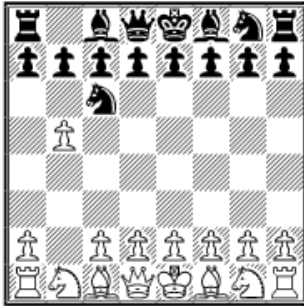
A Strategic Opening Repertoire
by John Donaldson & Carsten Hansen



1) 4.c4 d6 5.e3 Nf6 6.d4 exd4 7.exd4 d5 8.Nf3 Bg4 9.c5 Be7 10.Nbd2 0-0 11.Bd3 Bh5 12.0-0 Bg6 13.Be2 (worth considering is 13.Bxg6!? hxg6 14.Ne5 with the more active position) 13...Ne4 14.Ne5 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Nxd2 16.Qxd2 f6 17.e6 Bf5 18.Qe3 Qc8 19.Rfe1 Bxe6? (correct is 19...Qxe6!) 20.Bd3 Kf7 21.Bxh7 Rh8 22.Qd3+– Djukic-Grigorian, Budva 1967;

2) 4.e4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d5 6.exd5 Nxd5 7.Bc4 Nxc3 8.Bxc3 Bd6 9.Ne2 0-0 10.0-0 Bf5 11.Ng3 Bg6= Parra-Abarca Grau, Santiago de Chile 2004;

B) 1...Nc6 Grigorian Variation 2.b5



1) 2...Nd4 3.e3 Nf5

a) 4.Bb2 d6 5.e4 Nfh6 6.d4 f5 7.Nd2 fxe4 8.Nxe4 Nf6 9.Bd3 Nf7 10.Nf3 e6 11.0-0 Be7 12.c4 0-0 13.Qc2 h6 14.Ng3 b6 15.Rfe1+/- Haralambof-Madan, Tel Aviv 1964;

b) 4.e4 Nd4 (4...Nd6 5.Nc3 c6 6.Nf3+/-) 5.c3 Ne6 6.d4 d5 7.exd5 (7.e5!?) 7...Qxd5 8.Nf3 Nf6 9.Be2 Qd8 10.0-0 g6 11.Bc4 Bg7 12.Re1 0-0 13.Ne5 Ne8 14.Qb3 with a positional advantage to White who is already threatening to take on f7, Kopp-Poulsen, IECG 2004;

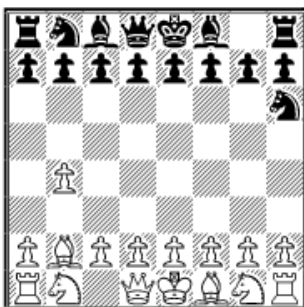
2) 2...Ne5

a) 3.d4 Ng6 4.e3 e5 5.Bb2 exd4 6.Qxd4 Nf6 7.Nd2 d5 8.Ngf3 Be7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 Ne8 11.Qa4 Be6 12.Nd4 White is more actively placed and has the plan Rf1-d1 and c2-c4, Ziese-Larsson, corr 1995;

b) 3.Bb2 d6 (3...Nc4!?) 4.e3 Nf6 5.c4 g6 6.d4 Ned7 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Qc2+/- Lien-Andersen, Oslo 2005;

3) 2...Na5 3.e4 (playable too is 3.e3 c6 4.c4 e6 5.Bb2 etc.) 3...c6 4.Nf3 cxb5 5.Bxb5 e6 6.0-0 Qb6 7.Qe2 a6 8.Bd3 Nc6 9.c3 g6 10.Na3 Qc7 11.e5 b5 12.Nc2 Bg7 13.Re1 with a positional advantage to White who can consider a2-a4 or Bd3-e4 and d2-d4, Pilczuk-Nowakowski, corr 1991;

C) 1...Nh6 The Karniewski Variation 2.Bb2



1) 2...f6

a) 3.e4 c6 4.Bc4 Na6 5.a3 (5.b5!?) 5...Nc7 6.Nc3 e6 7.Nf3 d5 8.Bb3 Be7 9.d4 0-0 10.0-0 planning Rf1-e1 or Qd1-e2 and Ra1-d1 with good prospects for White;

b) 3.c4 e6 4.b5 a6 5.a4 axb5 6.axb5 Rxa1 7.Bxa1 d5 8.e3 Nf7 9.Nf3 Be7 10.Nc3 (10.Qc2 0-0 11.Bd3 f5 12.0-0+/-) 10...0-0 11.cxd5 exd5 12.Be2 (12.Qb3!?) 12...Ne5 13.0-0 c6 14.Qc2 Nxf3+ (14...Nbd7 15.Nd4+/-) 15.Bxf3 Nd7 16.bxc6 bxc6 17.Na4 Ne5 18.Be2 and White threatens Ba1-d4 controlling the c5-square, with a small positional advantage;

c) 3.d4 transposes to Sergeeva-E.Paecht in the notes below;

2) Upon the extravagant Tuebingen Variation 2...Rg8 it is probably best to develop like so: 3.c4 d6 (3...e6 4.b5+/-) 4.e3 e5 5.Nc3 g5 6.d4 exd4 7.exd4 Bg7 8.Bd3 Nf5 9.Nge2 etc.;

D) 1...h6 2.Bb2 b6 3.e3 Bb7 4.Nf3 d6

1) 5.d4 e6 6.c4 Ne7 7.Be2 (7.Bd3!?) 7...a6 8.0-0 Nd7 9.Nbd2 g5 10.d5 e5 11.Ne1 Bg7 12.Qc2 h5 13.f4 g4 14.Ne4+/- Myslowski-Trocme, Paris 1994;

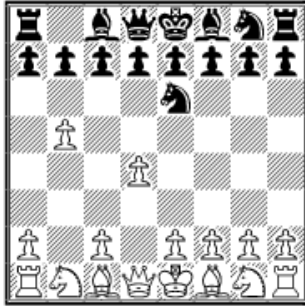
2) 5.c4 e5 6.d4 e4 7.Nfd2 Nf6 (7...f5?? 8.Qh5+/-) 8.Nc3 d5 9.cxd5 Nxd5 10.a3 Nxc3 11.Bxc3 Bd6 12.Bc4+/-;

E) 1...g6 (This move could well lead to positions in Chapter 5, which deals with 1...Nf6) 2.Bb2

1) 2...f6 3.c4 Bg7 4.e3 Nh6 5.Nf3 e5 6.d4 (6.Nc3 0-0 7.Be2 intending d2-d4 is good for White) 6...e4 7.Nfd2 f5 8.Be2 Qe7 9.Qb3 Nc6 10.b5 Nd8 11.Nc3 c6 12.a4 with a positional advantage to White, who can bring his dark-squared bishop into play on a3, Schoenwaelder-Schwarz, Dortmund 2003;

2) 2...Nf6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.c4 0-0 5.e3 transposes to Chapter 5;

F) 1...Na6 2.b5 (2.a3!?) 2...Nc5 3.d4 Ne6



1) 4.c4 c6 5.Nc3 (5.a4!?) 5...Nf6 6.e3 (not 6.e4 Qa5!?) 6...g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.0-0 d5 10.bxc6 bxc6 11.Ne5 and now 11...c5 is met by 12.Nc6 Qc7 13.cxd5 with the advantage since 13...Nxd5?? 14.Nxd5 Qxc6 15.Nxe7+ wins the queen;

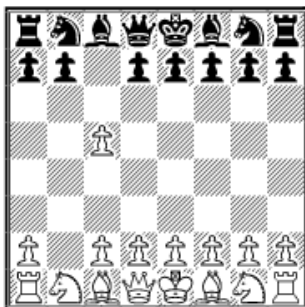
2) 4.e4 d6 5.f4 (the line 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bd3 g6 7.0-0 Bg7 8.h3 intending Bc1-e3 is also a good option) 5...c5 6.d5 Nc7 7.Bb2 Nf6 8.Nd2 e6

a) 9.dxe6 Nxe6 10.f5 Nc7 11.c4 g6 12.g4 with the better chances;

b) 9.c4 Be7 10.Ngf3 0-0 11.Bd3 Nh5 12.g3 exd5 13.cxd5 f5 14.0-0 fxe4 15.Nxe4 Nf6 16.Qb3 Nxe4 17.Bxe4 Bf5 18.Rfe1 Qd7 19.a4 Bf6=;

G) 1...g5 2.Bb2 (2.d4 h6 3.e4 [3.c4 Bg7 4.e3 Nf6 5.Nc3 d5 6.Nf3 0-0 7.Qb3 c6 8.Bb2+/-] 3...Bg7 4.c3 a5 5.b5 d5 6.e5 Bf5 7.Bd3 Bxd3 8.Qxd3 e6 9.Ne2 Ne7 10.0-0 Nd7 11.Ng3 followed by Ng3-h5 with the better position) 2...Nf6 3.c4 c5 4.b5 (4.bxc5!?) must be stronger) 4...a6 5.a4 axb5 6.axb5 Rxa1 7.Bxa1 Bg7 8.Nc3 0-0 9.e3 e6 10.Nge2 (10.Nf3!?) g4 11.Ne5 +/-) 10...d5 11.Ng3 d4 12.Na4 b6 13.Bd3 e5 14.0-0 Re8 15.Bf5 Nbd7 16.d3 Bb7 17.e4 Nf8 18.Bb2 Ng6 19.Bc1 Nf4 20.Ne2 Qc7 21.g3 Here Black offered up the knight 21...Kh8 22.gxf4 exf4 23.f3 Rg8 24.Kh1 Bf8 25.Rg1 Bd6 26.Qf1 Rg7 27.h4 h6 28.hxg5 hxg5 29.Qh3+ and White won easily, Welling-Haukenfrers, Richmond 2004;

H) 1...c5 The Birmingham Gambit – but don't ask us which Birmingham. 2.bxc5 (2.b5 d5 is good for Black; 2.e4 transposes to the Sicilian Wing Gambit [1.e4 c5 2.b4 etc.], as does 2.d4 cxb4 3.e4, and 2.Nf3 cxb4 3.a3 bxa3 4.e4)



1) 2...Qa5 3.Nc3 (3.Bb2!?) Sokolsky recommends 3.c4 Qxc5 4.e3 Nf6 5.Nf3 g6 6.Bb2 Bg7 7.Nc3 d6 8.d4 Qa5 9.Bd3+/-) 3...Na6 4.Bb2 Nxc5 5.e3 g6 6.Nd5 f6 7.Bc3 Nd3+ 8.Bxd3 Qxd5 9.Qf3 Qe6? (9...Qxf3!?) is required) 10.Ne2 d6 11.Bb5+ Kf7 12.Nd4 with a positionally won game, Pohl-Kohn, Ulm 1995;

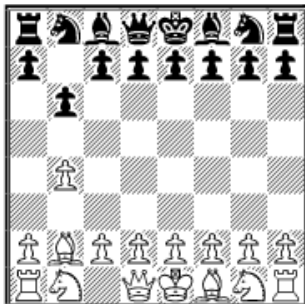
2) 2...e5 3.Bb2 (3.e3 Bxc5 4.Bb2 Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 transposes; 3.d4 exd4 4.Qxd4 d5!?) 3...Nc6

a) 4.e3 (White may play this to avoid 4.Nf3 e4!?) 4...Bxc5 transposes;

b) 4.Nf3 Bxc5 (4...e4!?) can become very complex 5.Ne5 [5.Nd4 Qf6 (5...Bxc5 6.Nb3 [6.Nxc6 Qb6!]) 6...Bf8 7.c4=) 6.e3 Bxc5 unclear] 5...Bxc5 6.e3=) 5.e3 (of course not 5.Nxe5?? Bxf2+ 6.Kxf2 Qb6+ forking king and bishop; nor 5.e4? Qb6)

- (i) 5...d6 6.Bb5 (6.d4 Qb6 7.Bc3 Bb4 8.a3 Bxc3+ 9.Nxc3 Nf6=) 6...Nge7 7.0-0 0-0 8.d4 Qb6 9.c4 with active play;
- (ii) 5...Qb6 6.Bxe5 Nxe5 7.Nxe5 Nf6 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 d6 10.Nc4 Qc6 11. d4+/-;
- (iii) 5...Qe7 6.Bb5 (6.c4!?) 6...f6 7.0-0 e4 (7...a6 8.Bc4 b5 9.Bb3 with the idea 10.d4+/-) 8.Nd4 Bxd4 9.Bxd4 Nxd4 10.exd4 Qb4 11.Nc3 Qxd4 12. Nxe4 Ne7 13.Re1 0-0 14.c3 Qe5 15.Qb3+/- Sokolsky-Topov, corr 1956;
- (iv) 5...f6 6.d4 (6.Be2 d5 7.0-0= Sveshnikov-Pantaleev, Havirov 1968) 6... exd4 (6...Qb6 7.Bc3 Bb4 8.d5Z) 7.exd4 Qb6 8.dxc5 Qxb2 9.Nbd2 Qb4 10. Bc4 Qxc5 11.Ne4! Qa5+ 12.c3+/-;

I) 1...b6 2.Bb2



1) 2...Bb7 3.e3 (not to be recommended is 3.Nf3 e6 4.g3 Nf6 5.b5 d5 6. Bg2 c6 7.a4 a6 with good play for Black) 3...Nf6 (the position after 3...d6 4.d4 e6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.c4 d5 7.c5 is better for White, Belliard-Potter, Lugano 1968) 4.Nf3 c5 5.b5 g6 6.d4 (6.c4 Bg7 7.Be2 0-0 8.0-0 d5 9.Qb3 a6 10.a4 axb5 11.axb5 Rxa1 12.Bxa1 Nbd7 13.d3 Qc7 14.Nbd2 Ra8 with more or less equal chances) 6...Bg7 7.dxc5 bxc5 8.c4 0-0 9.Be2 d5 10.0-0 a6 11.a4 Nbd7 12.Qc2 dxc4 13.Nbd2 axb5 14.axb5 Nb6 15.Nxc4 Rxa1 16.Rxa1 Nxc4 17.Bxc4 White's position is better since the black pawn on c5 appears weaker than its counterpart on b5;

2) 2...c5 3.bxc5 bxc5 4.e3 (4.c4!?) 4...d5 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.c4
 a) 6...Nbd7 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Na3 e6 9.Bb5 a6 10.Ba4 Rb8 11.Rb1 f6 12.0-0 Be7 13.Nc4 0-0 14.d3 N7b6 15.Bb3 Nxc4 16.Bxc4 Nb6 17.Bb3 Black's weakness on c5 leaves him in the inferior position;

b) 6...e6? 7.cxd5 exd5 8.Bxf6 Qxf6 9.Nc3 d4 10.exd4 cxd4 11.Bb5+ Bd7 12.Qe2+ Be7 13.Nd5 Qd6 14.Rc1 Nc6 15.Qc4 Rd8 16.0-0 leaves Black in a difficult situation; e.g., 16...0-0 17.Bxc6 Bxc6 18.Nxe7+ Qxe7 19. Qxc6+;

J) 1...b5

1) 2.Bb2 Bb7 3.a4 (3.Nf3 a5!) 3...bxa4 4.c4 e6 5.Rxa4 Nf6 6.e3 Be7 7. Nf3 0-0 8.Be2 and after castling White can organize pressure down the a-file;

2) 2.a4 immediately is the most direct method 2...bxa4 3.Nf3 (3.c4!? Bb7 4.Rxa4+/=) 3...Bb7 4.e3 e6 5.Bb2 Nf6 6.Rxa4 Nc6 7.b5 Nb4 8.c3 Nbd5 9. Be2 Nb6 10.Ra1 c6 11.c4 cxb5 12.cxb5 Bb4 13.Qb3 Qe7 14.0-0 0-0 15. Rc1 Bd5 16.Qd1 next is Nb1-c3 with a good position since Black has a problem with his a-pawn;

3) 2.e3 a6 3.Bb2 e6 4.a4 (4.a3 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bb7 6.c4 bxc4 7.Bxc4 c5 8.bxc5 Bxc5 9.d4 Be7 10.Nbd2 0-0 11.0-0 Nc6 12.Bd3+/=) 4...Bb7 5.axb5 axb5 6.Rxa8 Bxa8 7.Nf3 Nf6 8.c3 c6 9.Be2 Be7 10.0-0 0-0 11.d3 d6 12.Nbd2 e5 13.Qb3 and after Rf1-a1 White has good prospects;

K) 1...f6

1) 2.Bb2 Nh6 (2...e5!?, transposing to Chapter 7, must be better) 3.d4 Nf7 4.e3 e6 5.b5 Be7 6.Nf3 d5 7.c4 0-0 8.Bd3 (8.Nbd2 a6 9.a4 axb5 10.axb5 Rxa1 11.Qxa1+/=) 8...dxc4 9.Bxc4 a6 10.a4 axb5 11.axb5 Rxa1 12.Bxa1 Qd6 13.0-0 Nd7 14.Qb3 Nb6 15.Bd3 Nd5 16.Qc2 f5 17.Bc4 Bd7 18.Nc3 g5 19.h3 h5 20.e4 g4 21.hxg4 hxg4 22.Ne5 with the advantage as Black's king is exposed, Sergeeva-E.Paetz, Elista 1998;

2) 2.e4 e5 3.Bc4 c6 (3...Bxb4 4.c3 Ba5 5.d4 Nc6 6.Nf3 exd4 7.0-0 with the initiative for the pawns) 4.Nc3 Bxb4 5.Bxg8 Rxg8 6.Qh5+ Kf8 7. Nge2! (nothing is gained by 7.Qxh7 Bxc3 8.dxc3 Kf7 9.Qh5+ g6 10.Qh7 + Rg7 11.Qh4 d5 12.Ne2 b6 13.0-0 Ba6 14.Re1 Nd7 with a good game for Black) 7...h6 8.0-0 Qe8 9.Qh4 d6 10.f4 with compensation for the pawn;

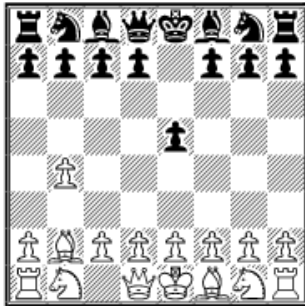
3) 2.d4 e6 3.a3 d5 4.Nf3 a5 5.b5 Nd7 6.c4 dxc4 7.e4 Nb6 8.Nbd2 c3 9. Nc4 Nxc4 10.Bxc4 Nh6 11.Qb3 and there's no doubt about White's advantage.

2.Bb2

In accord with the whole point of the opening, White develops his bishop down the long dark diagonal. The move 2.a2-a3 is far less popular and not our recommendation, likewise the immediate 2.b4-b5!?, although both

moves may lead to positions we do cover. For example, after 1.b4 e5 2.a3 d5 3.Bb2, 3...Qd6 transposes to the main line in Chapter 4A, 3...f6 to the main line in Chapter 7, and 3...e4 to the notes in the Marshall-Reshevsky game in Chapter 9.

White should avoid the bizarre 2.Ba3?! Nf6 3.b5?! A very old game continued 3...Bxa3 4.Nxa3 d5 5.c3 c6 6.e3 Qa5 7.Qb3 a6, with advantage to Black, Rabson-Pierce, Brighton CC 1880.



2...Bxb4

Exchanging the b-pawn for the e-pawn should be in White's favor since it gives him a central pawn majority and increases the scope of his dark-squared bishop. However, Black counts on a development advantage and on mobilizing his forces aggressively.

Let's look at other possibilities:

2...f6 Chapter 7;

2...d6 Chapter 8;

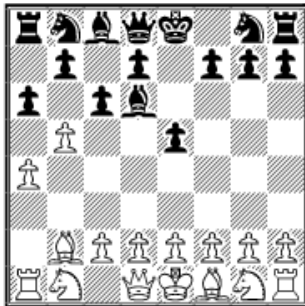
2...e4 Chapter 9.

Other moves are relatively unpopular:

A) 2...Bd6

1) 3.c4 c6 (White gains a tempo on the main lines after 3...Bxb4 4.Bxe5) 4.e3 (4.c5 Bc7 5.Nf3 Qe7 6.Na3!?) 4...Nf6 5.a3 Qe7 6.Nc3 Bc7 7.Be2 d6 8.Nf3 Bg4 9.h3 Bh5 10.d4 e4 11.Nd2 Bxe2 12.Qxe2 Nbd7 13.0-0 0-0 with more or less equal chances, Melich-Shiber, Ceske Budejovice 1995;

2) 3.b5 c6 4.a4 a6



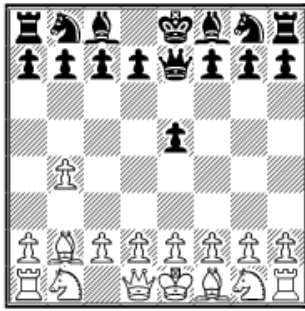
a) 5.e3 axb5 6.axb5 Rxa1 7.Bxa1 Nf6 8.c4 0-0 9.Nf3 Re8 10.Nc3 Bc7 11.Be2 d5 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.d4 e4 14.Nd2 Ba5 15.0-0 Bxc3 16.Bxc3 Qc7 17.Qa1 b6 18.Rc1 Be6 19.Bb4 White's clear positional advantage consists in his possession of the c-file and the bishop-pair, Grecescu-Ibinceanu, Timisoara 1999;

b) Worth considering is 5.c4!? axb5 6.axb5 Rxa1 7.Bxa1 cxb5 8.cxb5 and Black's d6-bishop interferes with his own queenside development;

3) 3.e3 Qe7 4.b5 Nf6 5.c4 b6 6.Nf3 c5 7.Qc2 (7.Be2!?) 7...e4 8.Bxf6 gxf6 9.Ng1 (looking more active is 9.Nh4!? Qe6 10.Nc3 Bb7 11.d3 f5 12.dxe4 fxe4 13.Rd1 Be5 14.Nd5 a6 15.a4 etc.) 9...Bb7 10.Ne2 a6 11.Nbc3 axb5 12.cxb5 Be5 13.g3 Ra5 14.a4 d5 with good play, Goutioudi-Papadouraki, Greece 2002;

4) 3.Nf3 f6 4.b5 b6 5.e3 c6 6.c4 c5 7.Be2 (7.Nh4!) 7...a6 8.a4 g5 9.Nc3 Bb7 10.0-0 e4 11.Ne1 (11.Nxg5!?) 11...Ne7 12.d4 (12.f3!? opening the f-file, looks strong) 12...Nf5 13.d5 (13.dxc5!) 13...Qe7 14.Bh5+ with a won position, Skaug-Martinsen, Fredrikstad 2003;

B) 2...Qe7



1) 3.c4 g6 (3...Qxb4 4.Bxe5 d6 5.Bc3 Qxc4 6.e3w) 4.b5 Bg7 5.e3 Nf6 6. Nc3 c6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.d4 e4 9.Nd2 d5 10.a4 Rd8 11.Ba3! (Katalymov-I. Zaitsev, Odessa 1972 continued 11.a5 Nbd7 12.a6 c5 13.Ba3 Qe8 14. dxc5 d4 15.axb7 Bxb7 16.exd4 e3 17.Nb3 exf2+ 18.Kxf2 Ne5 19.Qe2 Nfg4+ 20.Kg1 Rxd4 21.Nxd4 Rd8 22.Nc2 Bf3 23.Qe1 Bh6 24.Nd5 Bxd5 25.cxd5 Rxd5 26.h3 Ne3 27.Nxe3 Nf3+ 28.Kf2 Nxe1 29.Nxd5 Qe5 30. Rxe1 Qf5+ 31.Kg1 Qxd5 32.Kh2 and White went on to win, but there is no need to follow such a complex, risky line of play) 11...Qe8 12.Qc2 Nbd7 13.Be2 with an obvious queenside space advantage;

2) 3.a3 g6 (3...f5 4.e4+/-) 4.d4 (4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 d6 6.fxe5 dxe5 7.e4 Nf6 8. Bb5+ c6 9.Bd3 0-0 10.0-0+/-) 4...Bg7 5.dxe5 (after 5.d5 d6 6.e3 f5 7.c4 Nd7 8.Nd2 Ngf6 9.Be2 0-0 10.Ngf3 h6 11.Qb3 Kh7 Black has good prospects on the kingside, De Cat-Andersen, Germany 1989) 5...Bxe5 6. Nc3 d6 7.Nf3 Nf6 8.Nxe5 dxe5 9.e4 0-0 10.Bd3 Be6 11.0-0 Nc6 12.Qd2 Nh5 13.Ne2 preparing f2-f4 with active kingside play;

C) 2...d5 3.Bxe5 (3.b5 Bd6 [3...f6, Chapter 7A] 4.e3 Nf6 5.c4 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nc3 Be6 8.Nf3 Nd7=) 3...Nc6 (there's no point in playing 3...f6? 4.Bb2 Nc6 5.b5 Ne5 6.d4 Nf7 7.e3 Bf5 8.Nf3 Bg4 9.Be2 Bb4+ 10.Nc3 Ne7 11.0-0 0-0 12.a3 Bd6 13.h3 Bf5 14.a4 Black has no compensation for the pawn, Fedotova-Aytav, Eskisehir 2004) 4.Bb2 Nxb4 5.a3 Nc6 (5... Na6 6.e3 c6 [6...Nf6 7.Nf3 Bd6 8.c4 0-0 9.Nc3 c6 10.Be2 dxc4 11.Bxc4 b5 12.Be2 Bg4 13.h3 Bh5 14.0-0 Qd7 15.d4 Rfe8 16.a4+/-] 7.c4 Nc7 8. Nf3 Nf6 9.Nc3 Be7 10.cxd5 Ncxd5 11.Be2 0-0 12.0-0 Be6 13.Qc2 White has slightly better chances due to the possibility of erecting a pawn center with d2-d4 and e3-e4) 6.e3 Nf6 7.Nf3



1) 7...Bg4 8.Be2 Bd6 9.d3 0-0 10.Nbd2 b5 11.c4 (11.0-0 a5! with active play) 11...bxc4 12.dxc4 Rb8 13.Bxf6 Qxf6 14.cxd5 Ne5 15.0-0 Qh6 16. g3!? (or 16.h3 Bxh3 17.gxh3 Qxh3 18.Ng5 Nf3+ 19.Ndxg3 Qg4+ 20.Kh1 Qh5+ with perpetual check) 16...Qh5 17.Re1+/-;

2) 7...Bd6 8.c4 0-0

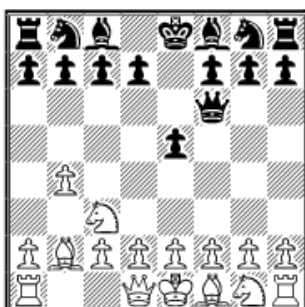
a) 9.cxd5 Nxd5 10.Bc4 Be6 11.Qc2 Re8 12.0-0 a6 13.d4 Nf6 14.Bxe6 Rxe6 15.Nbd2 Re8 16.Rac1 Qe7 17.Nc4 Rad8 18.Qb3+/- Trokenheim-Pfaumann, corr 1991;

b) 9.Nc3 Be6 10.cxd5 Nxd5 11.Be2 Qd7 12.0-0 Rad8 with equality;

3) 7...a6 8.c4 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Bg4 10.d4 (10.Qb3!) 10...Be7 11.Nc3 0-0 12.0-0 Na7 13.h3 Bh5 14.Rc1 c6 15.Be2 Nb5 16.Qb3 Rb8 17.Na4 Qd5 18. Qxd5 Nxd5 19.Nc5 Nf6 20.g4 Bg6 21.Ne5 Rfd8 22.Nxg6 (White disregards the tactical blow 22.Nxa6 bxa6 23.Nxc6 perhaps because it could get messy after 23...Bxa3!?) 22...hxg6 23.a4 Nc7 24.Rc2 Bxc5 25. Rxc5 Rd5 26.Rfc1 Re8 27.Bf3 White has the bishop-pair, reached a better endgame, and went on to win, Lippmann-Schwabe, Bad Homburg 2005;

4) 7...Be7 8.c4 Bg4! = Yudovich BCO2;

D) 2...Qf6 3.Nc3



1) 3...c6

a) 4.b5 d5 5.e3 Bc5 6.Rb1 Nh6 7.h3 0-0 8.Nf3 a6 9.bxc6 bxc6 10.Rg1 (10.Nxd5! cxd5 11.Bxe5 Qe7 12.Bxb8+/-) 10...Bf5 11.g4 Be4 12.Nxe4 dxe4 13.Nxe5+/- Menzel-Palmowski, Rheinhausen 1998;

b) 4.Ne4 Qg6 5.Ng3 Bxb4 6.Bxe5 d6 7.Bb2 Nf6 8.Rb1 Ba5 9.Nf3 0-0 10.e3 Ne4 11.Nxe4 Qxe4 12.Bd3 Qd5 13.0-0 Bg4=;

2) 3...Bxb4 4.Nd5 Qd6 5.Nxb4 Qxb4 6.Bxe5 Nf6 (6...f6 7.Bxc7 d6 8.c3 Qc5 9.Bxb8 Rxb8 10.Qb3+/-) 7.Bxc7 (7.Bxf6 gxf6 8.g3 Nc6 9.Bg2+/-) 7...d6 8.Bxb8 (8.c3 Qc5 9.Bxb8 Rxb8 10.Nf3 0-0 11.e3+/-) 8...Rxb8 9.e3 0-0 10.Nf3 Be6 11.Be2 and White is a pawn up;

E) 2...b6

1) 3.a3 d6 (3...Nc6 4.e3 d6 5.c4 a5 6.Nc3 axb4 7.axb4 Rxa1 8.Bxa1 Nxb4?? 9.Qa4+ Bd7 10.Qxb4+— Gouliaros Antoniadis-Skoulikas, Greece 2002) 4.c4 Nf6 5.e3 Bb7 6.Nf3 Be7 7.d4 e4 (7...exd4 8.Nxd4 Nbd7 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 a5 11.Nc3 Ne5 12.f4 Ng6 13.Bf3+/-) 8.Nfd2 0-0 9.Nc3 Re8 10.Qc2 Bf8 11.Be2 with the plan of 0-0, Ra1-e1 and f2-f3 with central activity;

2) 3.Bxe5 Nc6 4.Bb2 Nxb4 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.e3 Bb7 7.c4 Be7 8.a3 Nc6 9.d4 0-0 10.Bd3 d5 11.Nbd2 Na5 12.cxd5 Nxd5 13.0-0 c5 with mutual chances, although Black should be wary of where White's bishops are pointing;

3) 3.b5 d6

a) 4.e4 Bb7 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.d3 Be7 7.Nf3 0-0 8.Be2 a6 9.a4 axb5 10.axb5 Rxa1 11.Qxa1 Nbd7 12.0-0 Nc5=;

b) 4.c4 Bb7 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.d3 Be7 7.e4 a6 8.a4 axb5 9.axb5 Rxa1 10.Qxa1 Nbd7 11.Nf3 Ne5 12.Be2 Nh5 13.g3 0-0 14.0-0 f5 with counterplay;

F) 2...Nc6 3.b5 Nd4 4.e3

1) 4...Nf5 5.Bxe5 d6 (5...d5 6.Nf3 Nf6 7.c4 dxc4 8.Bxc4 g6 9.Qb3 Qe7 10.0-0 Bd7 11.d4 Bg7 12.Bxc7+— Poschmann-Solovay, California 1994) 6.Bb2 Nf6 7.Nf3 Be6 8.Be2 Be7 9.0-0 0-0 10.d3 d5 11.c4 c6 12.a4 Re8 13.Nbd2 Qc7 14.Rc1 with an extra pawn in a superior position, Schippers-Kuipers, Netherlands 2002;

2) 4...Ne6 5.Bxe5 d6 (5...Bd6?! 6.Bxd6 cxd6 7.c4 Nf6 8.Nc3 0-0 9.Be2 b6 10.d4 Bb7 11.d5 Nc7 12.Nf3 a6 13.a4 axb5 14.axb5 Qe7 15.0-0 Black has no compensation for the pawn deficit and is losing, Behle-Brennecke, Bergisch Gladbach 2002) 6.Bb2 Bd7 7.Nf3 Ng5?! (if 7...Nf6!? 8.d4) 8.Nxg5 Qxg5 9.Qf3 c6 10.a4 Nf6 11.Qg3 Qxg3 12.hxg3 cxb5 13.Bxb5 Bxb5 14.axb5 a6 15.Nc3 Be7 16.Ke2 Kd7 17.bxa6 bxa6 18.Ra2 with a won ending, Djakov-Paiva, Dos Hermanas 2004;

G) 2...Nf6 avoids the complications of the KMG (see below) then 3.Bxe5 (3.b5 Bc5 sets the trap: 4.Bxe5? [4.e3] 4...Bxf2+ 5.Kxf2 Ng4+/-) 3...Bxb4 etc. transposes to the main line of 2...Bxb4 3.Bxe5 Nf6;

H) 2...c5 Wolferts Gambit 3.bxc5 Bxc5 (3...Nc6 transposes to 1.b4 c5 2.bxc5 e5 3.Bb2 Nc6 above) 4.Bxe5 f6 5.Bg3 (5.Bb2? Qb6+—) 5...Ne7 6.e3 0-0 7.d4 Bb6 8.Bd3 d5 9.Ne2+/-.

3.Bxe5

Best, as indicated by practice.

3.f4 leads to the Kucharkowski-Meybohm Gambit (KMG), which after the best reply 3...d6! favors Black. (In any case, Black can sidestep the KMG if he wishes by 1.b4 e5 2.Bb2 Nf6!? when White has little better than to transpose back to the main line with 3.Bxe5, and so on, since 3.a3 d6 loses a tempo compared to lines and sub-variations in Chapter 5.):



A) 4.fxg5 dxe5 5.Bxe5 Nf6 6.Nf3

1) 6...0-0 7.Nc3 Ng4 8.Bf4 Nc6 with a good game;

2) 6...Nc6 7.Bb2 0-0 8.e3 Ng4 (8...Bg4 9.Be2 Ne4 10.Bd3 Qe7 11.0-0 Ng5=/+ Jensen-Gilde, Sottrum 2005) 9.Nc3 Re8 10.Bb5 Qe7 11.Bd3 Qc5 12.0-0 Nxe3 13.dxe3 Rxe3 14.Na4 Rxd3+ 15.Nxc5 Bxc5+ 16.Kh1 Rxd1 17.Raxd1 f6 18.Rfe1 Kf7 19.Nd4 Nxd4 20.Bxd4 Bd6 21.Bf2 b5 Black has reached a superior endgame and went on to win, Gretencord-Keller,

DESC 2004;

B) After 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.fxe5 dxe5 6.Nxe5 Nxe5 7.Bxe5 Nf6 8.e3 0-0 Black has a developmental plus.

3...Nf6 4.Nf3

A normal, developmental move.

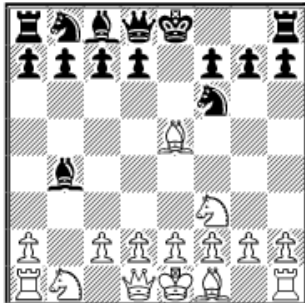
4.c4 Chapter 10. A vigorous move, and the most popular;

4.c3 is also Chapter 10;

4.e3 normally transposes to the other lines we consider;

4.Bb2 also normally transposes;

If 4.Nc3, 4...Ba5 or 4...c6 avoids any 5.Bxf6 Qxf6 6.Nd5 trickery.



4...Nc6

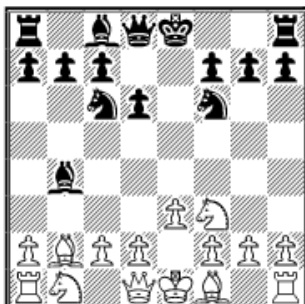
Developing with tempo. Other moves:

A) 4...0-0, Chapter 11;

B) 4...d6 5.Bb2

1) 5...0-0 6.e3 c5 (6...Bg4 7.Be2 c6 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.c4 Re8 10.d3 Qe7 11.Nc3 d5=) 7.Be2 Nc6 8.0-0 Bg4 9.c4 d5 10.cxd5 (10.h3 Bxf3 11.Bxf3 dxc4 12.a3 Ba5 13.Qa4 Qd6 14.Bxc6 Bc7 with a sharp position, Ljubojevic-COMP Leonardo Maestro, Zürich 1988) 10...Nxd5 11.Qc2 Qe7 12.a3 Ba5 13.Rc1 b6 14.Nc3 Nxc3 15.dxc3 Rad8 16.Rd1 Rxd1+ 17.Rxd1 Rd8 18.Rxd8+ Qxd8 19.c4 Bh5 20.Bd3 (or 20.Qe4) White has slightly better prospects as his bishops are better than Black's;

2) 5...Nc6 6.e3



a) 6...Bf5 7.Be2 Qe7 8.0-0 d5 (8...0-0!?) 9.c4 dxc4 10.Bxc4 0-0 11.Nc3 Rad8 12.d4 Ba3 13.Bxa3 Qxa3 14.Rc1 Rfe8 15.Qb3 Qxb3 16.Bxb3 Na5 17.Bc2 Bxc2 18.Rxc2 Nc6 19.Rb1 Rb8 20.Kf1 Kf8 21.Rcb2 with considerable queenside pressure, Dutschak-Klenk, Germany 1989;

b) 6...Bg4 7.Be2 0-0 8.a3 Ba5 9.0-0 Nd7 10.d4 d5 11.c4 Ne7 12.h3 Bh5 13.Qb3 c6 14.Bc3 Bxc3? (14...Rb8) 15.Nxc3 dxc4 16.Qxc4 (16.Qxb7!?) 16...Nb6 17.Qc5 Ned5 18.Nxd5 Qxd5 19.Rfc1 Qxc5 20.Rxc5 Bxf3 21.Bxf3 f5 22.g3 Nd7 23.Rc2 Nf6 24.Rb1 Rab8 25.Rcb2 and Black loses a pawn without compensation, Wessel-Nehmdahl, Kiel 1992;

c) 6...0-0 7.a3 Ba5 8.c4 Bg4 9.Be2 Be6 10.0-0 d5 11.Qc2 dxc4 12.Ng5 g6 13.Nxe6 fxe6 14.Bxc4 Qd6 15.d4 a6 16.Nc3 b5 17.Be2 Rad8 18.Bf3 Ne7 19.Ne2 Nfd5 20.Ng3 Nf6 21.Rad1 Bb6 22.e4 with a clear positional advantage, Lueders-Krueger, Freudenstadt 1996;

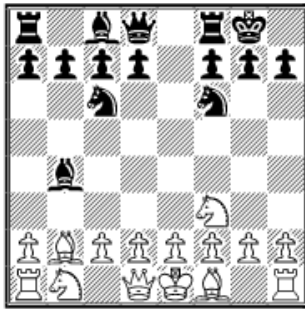
C) 4...d5

1) 5.e3 c5 (if 5...Bd6 White can consider 6.Bg3!? with the idea 7.Bh4; 5...0-0 transposes to Chapter 11) 6.c3 Ba5 7.Bb5+ Nbd7 8.0-0 a6 9.Bxd7 + Bxd7 10.d3 Bc7 11.Qb3 Bc6 12.Nbd2 b5 13.d4 c4 14.Bxc7 Qxc7 15.Qa3 Qe7 16.Qxe7+ Kxe7 17.Ne5 Be8 18.Rfe1 Ne4 19.Nxe4 dxe4 20.f3 f6 21.Ng4 with approximate equality, Althoff-P.Wolff, Kaufungen 2003;

2) 5.c3 Be7 6.Bxf6 Bxf6 7.d4 0-0 8.e3 Bf5 9.Bd3 Qd7 10.0-0 Nc6 11.Qc2 Ne7 12.Nbd2 c5 13.Bxf5 (also possible is 13.dxc5!? Bxd3 14.Qxd3 Rac8 15.Ne4 Qf5 16.Nxf6+ Qxf6 17.Qd4 Qc6 18.Rab1 Rc7 19.Rfd1 White threatens c3-c4 with excellent chances) 13...Nxf5 14.dxc5 Rac8 15.Rad1 (Bosboom-Van Blitterswijk, Wijk aan Zee 2000, continued 15.Nd4 Nh4 16.g3 Ng6 17.N2b3 Be7 and Black had achieved equality) 15...Nh4 16.Nxh4 Bxh4 17.Nb3 Qe6 18.Rd3 Rfd8 19.Rfd1 Be7 20.Qd2 Bxc5 21.Rxd5 Rxd5 22.Qxd5 Qxd5 23.Rxd5 Bb6 24.Rd7 Rxc3 25.Rxb7 h6 26.

Rd7 with an extra pawn.

5.Bb2 0-0



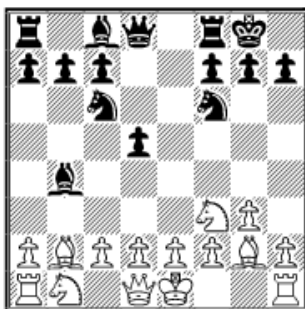
5...d5 will transpose to lines considered in Chapter 11.

6.g3

This fianchetto is as yet very rare, but we think that is unjustified as it gives White entirely reasonable chances.

Hugely more popular are 6.c4 (transposing to lines in Chapter 10) and 6.e3 (examined in Chapter 11).

6...d5 7.Bg2



7...Re8

7...Be6 8.0-0 Be7 9.d3 Qd7 10.Re1 Rad8 11.Nbd2 Rfe8 12.Rb1 b6 13.c3 a5 14.Qc2 h6 15.Nb3 Bf5 16.Nbd4 Nxd4 17.Nxd4 Bh7 Viloría-Gomez, Barranquilla 1999. A complex position has arisen. White went on to win by exploiting positional errors.

8.0-0 Bd6

A) 8...Bf5 9.e3=;

B) Hollas-Hestad, Trondheim 2004, went 8...Bg4 9.a3 Be7 10.d3 Qd7 11.Nbd2 Bh3 12.c4 Bxg2 13.Kxg2 Red8 14.Qb3 d4 15.Rad1 Ng4 16.h3 Nge5 17.Ne1 f5 18.f4 Ng6 (or 18...Na5 19.Qc2 Nec6 20.Nef3 with the idea of Rf1-e1, e2-e3 opening up the center with active play) 19.Ndf3 Bf6 20.Nc2 Re8 21.Rfe1 Re7 22.e4 and White has achieved a clear plus.

9.d3 Ne5 10.Nbd2 Bg4 11.Rb1 Rb8 12.h3 Nxf3+

Weak is 12...Bh5? 13.Nxe5 Bxe5 14.Bxe5 Rxe5 15.g4 Bg6 16.f4 winning a piece.

13.Nxf3 Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Be5 15.Bxe5 Rxe5 16.Qc1 Qe7 17.c4 dxc4 18.Qxc4 c5 19.Rfd1 b6 20.a4

White has a small positional advantage. He can plan to force through a4-a5 and d3-d4 to break up Black's queenside pawn structure. Note how the white bishop controls several important squares in the opponent's position.

Summary: We hope that the Introduction familiarizes you with the subject matter of our work, which comprises eleven main chapters of analysis. Our aim has been to cover the main tactical and strategic plans after 1.b4 so that, after full and careful study, you will be able to advance the b-pawn with confidence in your own games, having made an informed choice from among White's options. However, we must highlight a key aspect. It's hard for White to achieve an early plus after 1. b4; often White won't gain an advantage until the middlegame or even the endgame. That's why it's so important to examine the illustrative games for typical plans and maneuvers resulting from this opening. In particular the relevant games of Sokolsky and Katalymov – real virtuosos of 1.b4 – ought to be known and understood.

We can't promise no errors in our analyses. If you spot mistakes or omissions, please direct them to us through the publisher. You will at least have shown evidence of independent thinking – similar to the independent thinking required to play 1.b4!

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