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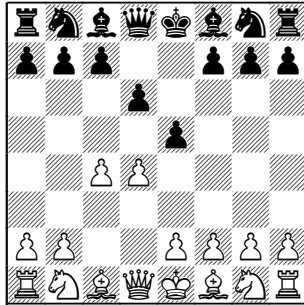
PREFACE

In this book, in the one volume, I have analyzed two original, and in fact quite distinct, opening schemes: **1.d4 d6 2.c4 e5** and **1.d4 d6 2.♟f3 ♘g4**. They are encountered in practice quite frequently (there are more than a thousand games with each in the database), but strangely enough the first of these schemes does not have an established official name. The second variation has been referred to by various names – sometimes the Tartakower-Wade system, or the Hodgson variation. Both systems can be characterized by White's first move, Black's response, and the somewhat disdainful attitude shown towards them by the chess theoreticians.

I believe that it is typical of both systems that Black is trying to bring about a highly concrete struggle, in which the opponent is forced to make important decisions on practically every move. It quickly becomes clear that White does not have a very wide range of plans that are really dangerous for Black. You should not infer from this last statement that I have found the “secret of eternal youth”, or the panacea that will radically solve the problem of playing with the black pieces in chess. (Nevertheless, I hope that the book will make this problem easier to cope with...). The fact is that with 1.d4 d6 Black “shortens his defensive perimeter” and reduces White's scope for surprising him with some original set-up. In order to try to obtain an advantage in the opening, White has to dig deeper rather than wider. Black should not remain idle however. In four to five of the most principled variations it should be enough for him to set up a solid defensive line and he will have a reliable defence, not only against 1.d4, but also against 1.♟f3 and 1.c4; for example: 1.♟f3 d6 2.d4 ♘g4, or 1.c4 d6 2.♟f3 e5 3.d4 e4 etc. That is why this book has been entitled “A Universal Weapon”.

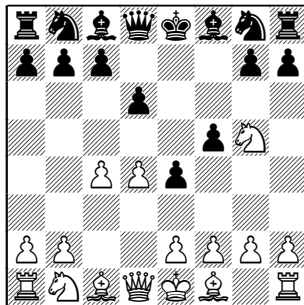
I should mention that in this monograph, after 1.d4 d6, I have not dealt with the move 2.e4 – then after 2...♟f6 3.♟c3 e5, we enter the realm of the contemporary Philidor Defence, to which my previous book was devoted. As an author I should be delighted if you read that book as well, but if the Pirc-Ufimtsev Defence is a part of your opening repertoire then you can manage without the Modern Philidor Defence.

So, the first six chapters of my book are devoted to the **1.d4 d6 2.c4 e5!**? System.



The move 2...e5 is really very direct, since Black forces his opponent to clarify the situation in the centre immediately. White has numerous possibilities now. He can exchange on e5, advance his centre-pawn, protect it with another pawn or the knight, or ignore altogether the threat of capturing on d4. However, the point is that White has to make up his mind right at this moment and cannot postpone his decision even for one move. This is very different from the King's Indian Defence, for example, where White practically knows in advance Black's first five moves (♟f6 , g6 , ♙g7 , d6 , 0-0) and the opposing forces might not come into direct conflict for some time.

It is very interesting to consider how the game develops in the basic theoretical variation **3.♘f3 e4 4.♘g5 f5**.

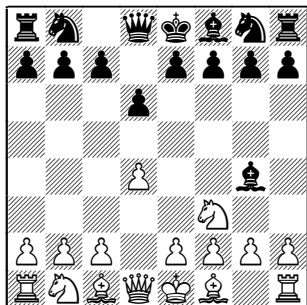


A critical situation has arisen right away. White will try to destroy his opponent's centre and exploit the weakening of his opponent's king, or else Black will manage to fortify his e4-pawn, complete the development of his pieces and begin playing for a win thanks to his space advantage. There can be no compromise!

I also want to mention that the endgame after 3.dxe5 dxe5 4.♙xd8+

♠xd8 should not be considered as an invitation to a draw. Except for the queens, all the pieces are still on the board, and Black has excellent chances of seizing the initiative if White plays imprecisely even for a moment.

In the **1.d4 d6 2.♘f3 ♗g4** system (Chapters 7-10), the game generally develops quietly, as a positional struggle, with the emphasis on strategy.



Black intends to compromise his opponent's pawn-structure and obtain a non-standard position in which a less experienced opponent might easily go astray and make strategic errors. If White avoids the doubling of his pawns on f3, for example with 3.e4 or 3.♖bd2, then Black plays in the spirit of the "French Defence Deferred" (with a bishop on g4, instead of on c8): e7-e6, ♗e7, advancing later with d6-d5 and, in response to e4-e5, organizing the standard undermining pawn-breaks c7-c5 and f7-f6.

Finally, in the eleventh and last chapter of the book, we analyze various possibilities for White on his second move, among them some developing moves such as 2.g3 and 2.♗g5, as well as some other, somewhat bizarre, possibilities. I have tried to suggest the most resolute and concrete replies for Black against them. I hope that this "universal weapon" will be a valuable addition to your opening repertoire, as it has become for many grandmasters, masters and even ordinary chess enthusiasts.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere thanks to International Master Maria Fominykh and to the editor of this book International Master Sergiy Soloviov, for their great help with this work.

*Vladimir Barsky
Moscow, December 2010*