

Efstratios Grivas

# GRIVAS OPENING LABORATORY

VOLUME 4



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# KEY TO SYMBOLS

=	Equality or equal chances
±	White has a slight advantage
∓	Black has a slight advantage
±	White is better
∓	Black is better
+-	White has a decisive advantage
-+	Black has a decisive advantage
∞	unclear
∞	with compensation
↔	with counterplay
↑	with initiative
→	with an attack
Δ	with the idea
□	only move
N	novelty
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
+	check
#	mate



# FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

The series continuing with this book is aimed in offering a full repertoire for White based on **1.d4**.

The idea of small opening repertoire books is not new, but here the purpose and the presentation are different.

The choice of variations against each reply from Black will be mine and will be based on my long experience, having played the game for over 40 years, and also served as a professional coach for approximately 20 of those!

I hope that each book in the series will come out every two months and one to three openings will be offered in each of them.

Maybe not all of the choices will appeal to you, but you should understand that what is important is to learn them in depth, rather than looking for something astounding — this is simply an illusion.

What I mean by this is that nowadays no opening offers all that much; what you can expect is something between a tiny bit better and slightly better, if

you have done your homework! Otherwise there is no point in the Black player following it!

The recommendations are geared towards posing Black unconventional problems. Your opponents will not be able to churn out lengthy, memorised variations but will need to solve problems at the board, in positions that are somewhat different in character from those normally reached in the openings under discussion.

I have also selected the systems within the repertoire in such a way that they form a seamless whole and are also reachable by transpositions.

I have tried to describe the suggested systems in detail, giving my assessments as clearly and responsibly as possible, and have generally aimed to provide useful guidelines as well as many new ideas and moves.

Many things in chess theory, as in life, are relative and a matter of taste. Actually, there are no 'good' or 'bad' openings. There are openings that you know and understand, and openings that you do not know and do not understand.

Thus, I believe that my recommended systems will offer a lot of possibilities, new ideas and practical benefits, aspects that should not be underestimated in modern chess. Among other things, I have tried to make them ‘understandable’ to you.

This book series’ main purpose is to train and educate the reader in territory that is ‘unknown’ to him. We must not forget that this is a theory book series, where concrete reaction to the opponent’s moves is of primary importance.

General principles and plans do merit a place in this project but, in my opinion, move-by-move consideration is most significant.

Of course, it is not necessary to memorise all the variations and moves mentioned in the books — this would probably be impossible. But then, you may ask, what is the reason for someone to deal with a theory book, one that he does not need to ‘memorise’ in full?

The theory of ‘subconscious education’ will help us to answer this question. By playing through the moves and variations in the books, our subconscious processes and stores similar motifs, repeated moves and plans, and also ‘learns’ to avoid traps and unwelcome positions. Such proper ‘subconscious memorisation’ will, at the critical moment, enforce the correct choice upon us.

Many of the opening books I have read mainly focus on the general characteristics of the opening or the variation in question, and much less so on move-by-move theory.

This can lead to unresolved questions in the reader’s mind, and the danger that he will mix things up at moments when it is necessary to find one specific concrete move or sequence.

The recommended repertoire is that of a Grandmaster, without omissions or hidden secrets. On the contrary, it contains a great number of new and deeply analysed suggestions, plans, novelties, new ideas, moves, etc!

Let us not forget that the basic characteristics of the openings do not frequently undergo radical changes. On the other hand, the development of move-by-move theory is explosive.

Every chess player stands on the shoulders of those who came before him. Every generation of good chess players learns from and builds upon the experience and creativity of the previous generations.

The chess player of the year 2020 has encountered more types of positions than the chess-player of 1980 and knows the proper ways to deal with these positions.

Therefore, a chess player today would have a great advantage over a chess player (even one of equal or greater



talent) of 40 years ago, simply because he could play the opening with deeper understanding; this understanding is offered to him by the multitude of deeply-analysed variations.

On no occasion do I underestimate the necessity and value of learning the general characteristics and plans of each opening or variation. However, I do strongly believe that move-by-move theory and its (at least) subconscious absorption are necessary in order to survive in the labyrinth of the chess openings.

One question often posed by my students is whether we must simultaneously prepare two or more different systems against an opening. My personal opinion is that only professional Grandmasters can afford this luxury.

All other chess players should focus on one specific system every time, so as to specialise in it and reap maximum benefit. Only if this choice eventually proves undesirable should one change his systems. As Ernest Hemingway once wrote: 'I guess really good soldiers are really good at very little else'.

The massive development of theory in all openings has clarified that White cannot hope for anything more than a slight advantage, but in some cases even this is unattainable! My recommendations are purely based on a healthy approach.

I must clarify that I took the liberty of changing the original move-order of many games. In this way it was possible to provide clearer coverage and guidance.

Of course, the way you reach a certain position is important, but equally important is to examine how you want to proceed upon reaching it. True value comes from knowing what to keep and what to throw away.

Finally, I would like to thank my ex-students GMs Antoaneta Stefanova, Alex Ipatov, Emre Can and Ion Chirila (among others), for adopting the variations, at least from time to time!

Efstratios Grivas  
Sharjah, July 2020



# DESCRIPTION

In the fourth book of the series we will deal with 'Queen's Gambit' structures, and more specifically:

The 'Queen's Gambit Accepted', a quiet system which aims to preserve simple and equal/drawish positions (from Black's point of view!) and is played today at all levels.

Our proposed system is based on the move 4.♘a3, a system that I haven't played much (except lately!), but then the 'QGA' is a rare bird as well...

The 4.♘a3 system scores approximately 52%, when the expectation of 51.5% to 52% is the average number of White's 'superiority'.

Then we will deal with how to face the 'Ragozin Variation' of the 'QGD', an ambitious system which aims at getting lively positions and again is played today at all levels.

Our proposed approach is based on the 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♙g5 system, with which I have played a few good games over the last 30 years, but this variation is rather a 'rare bird' as well...

The proposed system scores roughly 55%, a good number compared to the average expected White 'superiority' of 51.5% to 52%.

We then continue with the 'brother' variation of the Ragozin, the 'Vienna Variation' of the 'QGD', which is also an ambitious system.

Our chosen system is based on the 6.♙g5 line, which is the main preference of the top players.

The proposed system scores a healthy 53.5%, again against the average expected score of 51.5% to 52%.

Finally, we will deal with the 'Lasker Variation' of the 'QGD', a quiet system which, as with the QGA, aims to preserve simple and equal/drawish positions (from Black's point of view!) and is still played nowadays at all levels.

The proposed system is based on the move 9.♖c1, a system that I have played in a few games over the last 25 years, but the variation is not played too much anyway.

The 9.♔c1 system scores an excellent 59%, again when 51.5% to 52% is the natural average number of white 'superiority'.

In the book you will find not only a concrete and well-structured, move-by-move presentation, but also chapters on the middlegame, endgame and tactics, those that are typical for this variation and will help you to understand it better.

The only two things you have to do are to buy the book (!) and study it!

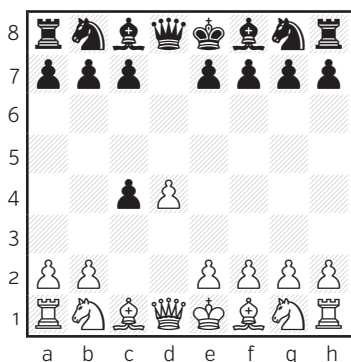
Note that the research on the games included is up to the middle of July 2020.

Efstratios Grivas  
Sharjah, July 2020

# PART 1.

## THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT ACCEPTED (D23)

The 'Queen's Gambit Accepted' (QGA) is characterised by the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4**



It is the third most popular option on Black's second move, after **2...e6** ('Queen's Gambit Declined') and **2...c6** ('Slav Defence').

This is an opening where slow and subtle manoeuvres are often necessary to complete development. White will try to exploit an advantage in space and development, while Black will defend the position and aim for queenside (mainly) counterplay.

The 'Queen's Gambit' is not considered a true gambit, in contrast to the 'King's Gambit', because the pawn is either regained, or can only be held unprofitably by Black.

Black usually allows the pawn to be recaptured, and uses the time expended to play against White's centre.

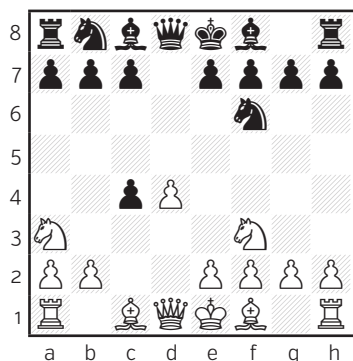
As Black's **2...dxc4** surrenders the centre, White will try to seize space in the centre and use it to launch an attack on Black's position. Black's game is not devoid of counter-chances, however.

If the white centre can be held at bay, Black will try to weaken White's central pawns to gain an advantage in the ensuing endgame by playing ...c5 and ...cxd4, at some stage, and if White responds with exd4, the result will be an isolated pawn on d4 — which can also lead to a keen middlegame battle.

If White recaptures with a piece on d4 instead, the centre will be liquidated and a fairly even game will usually ensue.

### System's X-Ray

So, after **3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♗a3** we have the system that will serve us in our proposed repertoire:



A ‘decent’ chess player might ask: What is this? Well, White avoids the well-known paths and looks for some interesting new ways to try for an advantage in the ‘QGA’.

What are White’s main play characteristics (‘desires’)? We could draw a table as follows:

1. Recapturing the c4-pawn with his knight and not with his light-squared bishop. He will then gain better control over the e5-square, and in general his knight will be quite well placed.
2. He could try to achieve the f3/e4 pawn formation which will ensure him a strong pawn centre.
3. He could place his light-squared bishop on the long diagonal (g3, ♘g2) achieving some nice ‘Catalan’ positions.
4. Of course, the familiar and modest set-up with e3 also comes to mind.

5. White must keep in mind that a queen sortie with ♙b3 (when Black has developed his light-squared bishop) might prove very helpful.

All of the above may well arm the player of the white pieces with numerous nice feelings and a misleading opinion that he can simply grab a big, secure advantage.

But, alas, no sound opening can offer more than a tiny opening advantage; otherwise it would simply be a bad opening!

Black devotees of the ‘QGA’ have to work on more ‘serious’ problems and usually pay no (or very little) attention to the line starting with 4. ♘a3.

But I have to confess that I am not fond of just ‘opening tricks’ in general, so the question is if the line is also a serious one.

In my opinion it is a very interesting set-up and it is certainly worth trying. By studying and getting the required knowledge, players of the white pieces can have a big advantage over their opponents.

But of course, as long as he remembers the various possibilities, the various patterns of pawn formations, piece placements and repeated tactics!

All these can easily form a strong weapon, which can also often prove lethal.

## Historical Approach

It seems that the 4. ♘a3 system was introduced quite late; in 1967, at least according to ChessBase — MegaBase.

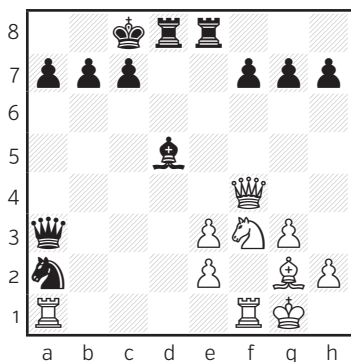
It was introduced by the great Paul Keres, but it could be hardly be called a success for White, who was just lucky enough to save the draw:

▷ **Keres Paul**

▶ **Gurgenidze Bukhuti**

**D23** Rapina 07.07.1967

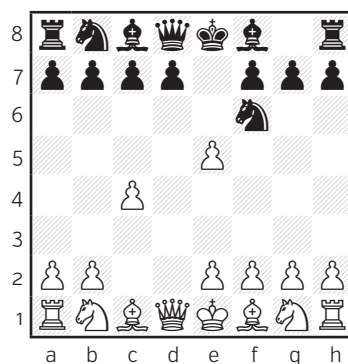
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3. ♘f3 ♘f6 4. ♘a3 e5 5. ♘xc4 e4 6. ♘g1 ♖b4+ 7. ♖d2 ♗xd4 8. ♖xb4 ♗xc4 9. ♖a3 e3 10.fxe3 ♘c6 11. ♘f3 ♖d7 12. ♗d3 ♗a4 13.g3 o-o-o 14. ♖g2 ♖e6 15. ♗c3 ♘e4 16. ♗c1 ♗a5+ 17.b4 ♘xb4 18.o-o ♘xa2 19. ♗c2 ♗xa3 20. ♗xe4 ♖d5 21. ♗f4 ♖he8



22. ♘e5 f6 23. ♘d3 ♖xg2 24. ♖xg2 ♗b3 25. ♗f5+ ♖b8 26. ♖fb1 ♗c4 27. ♗c5 ♗e4+ 28. ♖g1 ♖d5 29. ♗c6 ♗xe3+ 30. ♖h1 ♗e4+ 31. ♖g1 ½-½

## Starting Out

The system proposed against the ‘Queen’s Gambit Accepted’ commences with the moves 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3. ♘f3 ♘f6 4. ♘a3



From here Black can choose between:

A. What we will call ‘Various Lines’, and these are: 4...c6, 4... ♖f5, 4... ♖g4, 4...c3, 4... ♗d5, 4...g6, 4...a6 and 4... ♘c6, and;

B. What we will call ‘Main Lines’, and these are: 4... ♖e6, 4...e5, 4...e6 and 4...c5.





# CHAPTER 1.

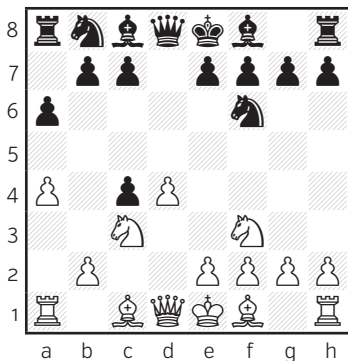
## VARIOUS LINES

### 1.1 – 3...a6

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3 a6

Before we dive into the main menu, we should be aware of an early 3...a6. After

4.a4 ♘f6 5.♘c3

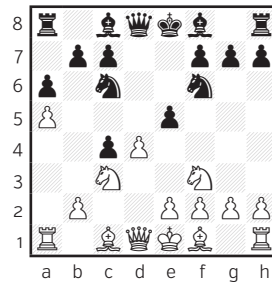


If White doesn't wish to enter the following positions, he can opt for 5.e3 e6 6.♙xc4 c5 7.o-o ♘c6 8.♚e2! (8.♘c3?! ♙e7 9.♚e2 cxd4 10.♗d1 e5=) 8...♙e7 9.♗d1± Aronian, L-Morozevich, A Moscow 2006. But this of course is another big chapter...

Now we have reached the starting point of the analysis:

a) 5...♘c6 6.a5 (the point of White's play, not allowing ...♘a5. But the a5-pawn will soon be lost...)

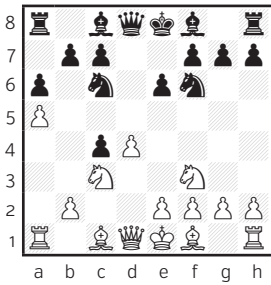
a1) 6...e5?!



7.d5 ♘d4 8.♘xd4 exd4 9.♚xd4 ♙b4 10.♙g5 o-o 11.♙xf6 ♚xf6 12.♚xf6 gxf6 13.e3± Genov, P-Ermenkov, E Elenite 1993.

a2) 6...♙g4 7.d5 ♙xf3 (7...♘a7 8.♘e5 ♘b5 9.♘xg4 ♘xg4 10.e4 ♘e5 11.f4 ♘d3+ 12.♙xd3 cxd3 13.♚xd3± Guliev, S-Mirzoev, A Baku 1997) 8.gxf3 ♘b8 (8...♘e5 9.f4 ♘ed7 10.e4± Mamedyarov, S-Alekseenko, K Moscow 2019) 9.e4 e5 10.♙xc4 ♙d6 11.♚b3± Saric, A-Deris, A Zagreb 2014.

a3) 6...e6

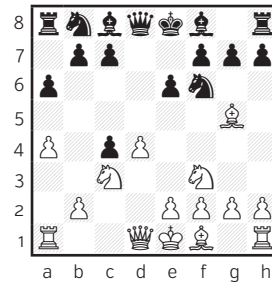


7.e3 (White can try to be more active by 7.e4!?  $\text{♙} \text{b4}$  8.  $\text{♙} \text{g5}$  h6 9.  $\text{♙} \text{xf6}$   $\text{♚} \text{xf6}$  10.  $\text{♙} \text{xc4}$  [10.e5  $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  11.  $\text{♙} \text{xc4}$  o-o 12.  $\text{♚} \text{e2}$   $\text{♜} \text{xa5}$  13.  $\text{♙} \text{d3}$   $\text{♙} \text{d7}$  14.  $\text{♚} \text{e4}$  g6 15.  $\text{♚} \text{f4}$   $\text{♞} \text{g7}$  16. o-o  $\text{♙} \text{xc3}$  17.  $\text{bxc3}$   $\text{♙} \text{b5}$  18.  $\text{♙} \text{xb5}$   $\text{axb5}$  19.  $\text{♞} \text{ab1}$   $\text{c6}$  Garcia, A-Ibragimov, I Groningen 1994] 10...o-o 11.o-o [White will lose the a5-pawn, but hopes to use his superiority in the centre] 11... $\text{♞} \text{d8}$  [11...  $\text{♙} \text{xa5}$  12.  $\text{♜} \text{e2}$   $\text{♙} \text{b6}$  13. e5  $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  14.  $\text{♚} \text{d3}$   $\text{♜} \text{b4}$  15.  $\text{♚} \text{e4}$   $\text{♙} \text{d7}$  16.  $\text{♞} \text{a3}$   $\text{♙} \text{c6}$  17.  $\text{♚} \text{g4}$  Autenrieth, M-Hertneck, G Germany 1985] 12.e5± Thorfinnsson, B-Postny, E Budapest 2003) 7...  $\text{♙} \text{b4}$  8.  $\text{♙} \text{xc4}$  o-o (8...  $\text{♙} \text{xa5}$  9.o-o  $\text{♙} \text{xc3}$  10.  $\text{bxc3}$  Claes, J-Laruelle, L Tessengerlo 2003) 9.o-o (Obviously White will lose the a5-pawn, but he will try to create an initiative in the centre and on the kingside. The truth is that Black can preserve a balanced position, but still, the positions to come are quite interesting)

**a31)** 9...  $\text{♙} \text{xa5}$  10.  $\text{♚} \text{e2}$  (10.d5  $\text{exd5}$  11.  $\text{♜} \text{xd5}$   $\text{♜} \text{xd5}$  12.  $\text{♙} \text{xd5}$   $\text{♙} \text{b6}$  13.  $\text{♚} \text{b3}$   $\text{♚} \text{f6}$  14.  $\text{♞} \text{a4}$  h6 15.  $\text{♞} \text{f4}$   $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  16.  $\text{♜} \text{h4}$  Benito Alba, E-Hermida Rivero, E Calvia 2003) 10...  $\text{♙} \text{b6}$  11.  $\text{♞} \text{d1}$   $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  12.e4± Burillo Rodriguez, C-Villuendas Valero, A Spain 2011.

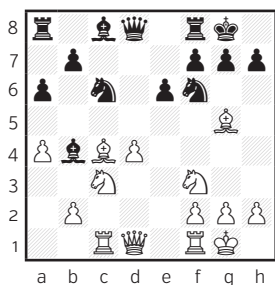
**a32)** 9...  $\text{♜} \text{xa5}$  10.  $\text{♙} \text{d3}$  c5 11.  $\text{dxc5}$   $\text{♜} \text{c6}$  (11...  $\text{♙} \text{xc5}$  12.  $\text{♚} \text{c2}$   $\text{♙} \text{e7}$  13.  $\text{♙} \text{d2}$   $\text{♜} \text{c6}$  14.  $\text{♜} \text{e4}$ ±) 12.  $\text{♚} \text{c2}$  (12.  $\text{♜} \text{e4}$   $\text{♜} \text{xe4}$  13.  $\text{♙} \text{xe4}$   $\text{♚} \text{xd1}$  14.  $\text{♞} \text{xd1}$   $\text{♙} \text{xc5}$  15.  $\text{♙} \text{d2}$ ±, or 12.  $\text{♜} \text{a4}$  e5 13. e4  $\text{♙} \text{g4}$  14.  $\text{♙} \text{e3}$   $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  Galeev, S-Ponfilenok, V Kazan 2007) 12...h6 13.  $\text{♜} \text{e4}$  (13.  $\text{♜} \text{a4}$   $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  14. e4 e5 15. h3  $\text{♙} \text{e6}$  16.  $\text{♙} \text{e3}$   $\text{♞} \text{ac8}$  17.  $\text{♙} \text{c4}$   $\text{♞} \text{cd8}$  18.  $\text{♙} \text{xe6}$   $\text{♚} \text{xe6}$  19.  $\text{♞} \text{fd1}$   $\text{♙} \text{a5}$  ½-½ Dzanev, G-Todorov, K Ruse 2017) 13...  $\text{♜} \text{xe4}$  14.  $\text{♙} \text{xe4}$   $\text{♚} \text{e7}$  15.  $\text{♜} \text{d4}$  =

**b)** 5...e6 6.  $\text{♙} \text{g5}$



**b1)** 6...c6 7.a5 c5 (7...  $\text{♜} \text{bd7}$  8.e3 b5 9.  $\text{axb6}$   $\text{♜} \text{xb6}$  10.  $\text{♜} \text{e5}$ ± Girya, O-Zhukova, N St Petersburg 2018) 8.d5  $\text{♙} \text{e7}$  9.e4 (9.  $\text{♙} \text{xf6}$   $\text{♙} \text{xf6}$  10.e4  $\text{♙} \text{xc3}$ + 11.  $\text{bxc3}$   $\text{exd5}$  12.  $\text{♚} \text{xd5}$ ± Arkell, K-Juergens, P Copenhagen 1994) 9... $\text{exd5}$  (9...o-o? 10.d6!  $\text{♙} \text{xd6}$  11.e5+- Rogozenco, D-Tran, M Moscow 2018; 9...  $\text{♜} \text{xd5}$  10.  $\text{♜} \text{xd5}$   $\text{exd5}$  11.  $\text{♚} \text{xd5}$ ±) 10.  $\text{exd5}$  o-o 11.  $\text{♙} \text{xc4}$ ± Melkumyan, H-Ragger, M Austria 2016.

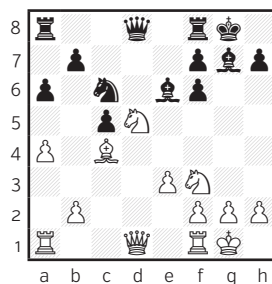
**b2)** 6...  $\text{♙} \text{b4}$  7.e3 c5 8.  $\text{♙} \text{xc4}$   $\text{cxd4}$  9.  $\text{exd4}$   $\text{♜} \text{c6}$  10.o-o o-o 11.  $\text{♞} \text{c1}$



11... e7 (11... xc3?! 12. xc3 a5 13. d3 h6 14. h4 c6 15. e5± Deng,Y-Wang,Z Xingtai 2018; 11... b8 12. d3 [12.d5! a5 13. a2±] 12... e7 13. f4 d6 14. e5 c7 15. e4 xe4 16. xe4 d7 17. b4 f6 18. h5 fe5 19. xh7+ 1-0 Krasteva,B-Arauco Celestino,A Porto Carras 2018) 12. e1 (12. xf6?! xf6 13. d5 exd5 14. xd5 b6 15. b3 xb3 16. xb3 g4± Polarczyk,P-Nasuta,G Lublin 2007) 12...h6 (12... d7 13. d5!? [13. d2 b4 14. e5 c6∞ Quinn,M-Magem Badals,J Escaldes 1998] 13... xd5 14. xd5 xg5 [14...exd5 15. xd5 e6 16. xd8 xd8 17. xe6 fe6 18. xd8 axd8 19. xe6±] 15. xg5 xg5 16. b6 ad8 17. xd7 e7 18. xf8 xd1 19. exd1 xf8 20. xa6 bxa6 21. xc6±) 13. f4 xd7 14. d5± Kasparov,G-Nogueiras Santiago,J Belfort 1988.

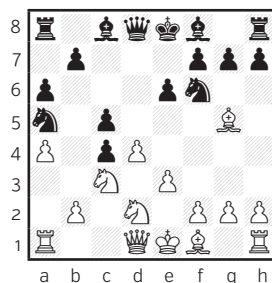
**b3)** 6...c5 7. xf6 (7.e3 cxd4 8.exd4 c6 9. xc4 e7 10.0-0 0-0 11. e1± Wang,H-Volokitin,A Calimanesti Caciulata 2016) 7...gxf6 (7... xf6 8.d5 exd5 9. xd5 d8 10.e3 c6 11. xc4 d6 12.0-0 0-0 13.h3 e8 14. c2± Khalifman,A-Ivanov,S

St Petersburg 1998) 8.d5 exd5 9. xd5 g7 10.e3 c6 11. xc4 e6 12.0-0 0-0



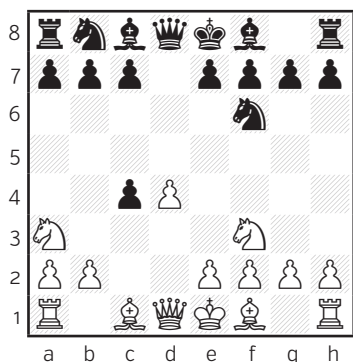
13. c1! a5 (13... xd5 14. d1 d4 15. xd4 xc4 16. f3±) 14. d1± Jakovenko,D-Lysyj,I Kazan 2014.

**b4)** 6...c6 7.e3 (7.e4 a5 8. c2 e7 9. d1 h6 10. xf6 xf6 11.e5 e7 12.d5 0-0∞ Mamedyarov,S-Anand,V Kolkata 2018) 7... a5 8. d2 (8. e5 c5 9. xc4 cxd4 10. xd4 xd4 11.exd4 xc4 12. xc4 e7 13. f4 d7 14. d5 c8 15.dxe6 xc4 16.exd7+ xd7 17.0-0-0+ c6 18. e5 d8 19. xd8 xd8 20. b3 c5 21. d4 f5 22. f3 b6 23. xb6 xb6 24. e1 c5 25. d2 d5 26. xd5+ xd5+ 27. c3 c5+ 28. d2 d5+ 29. c3 ½-½ Topalov,V-Ding,L Abidjan 2019) 8...c5



9.dxc5 (9. ♖xf6 ♔xf6 10.d5 ♔g6  
11. ♔f3 exd5 12. ♘xd5 ♖d6 13.h3  
o-o 14. ♘xc4 ♘xc4 15. ♖xc4 ♖f5  
16. ♘c3 ♖e5 17.o-o ½-½ Bruzon Ba-  
tista,L-Liang,A Saint Louis 2018)  
9... ♖xc5 10. ♖xc4 ♖d7 (10... ♘xc4  
11. ♘xc4 ♔xd1+ 12. ♔xd1±) 11.o-o±/=  
Bu,X-Vallejo Pons,F China 2018.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3. ♘f3 ♘f6 4. ♘a3

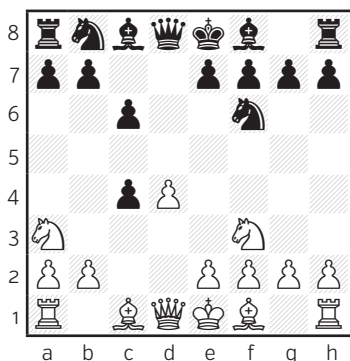


Here is the starting position of the ‘Various Lines’ Chapter. As has already been mentioned, Black can opt for 4...c6, 4... ♖f5, 4... ♖g4, 4...c3, 4... ♔d5, 4...g6, 4...a6 and 4... ♘c6.

## 1.2 – 4...c6

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3. ♘f3 ♘f6 4. ♘a3 c6

Not really advisable, as Black transposes to an unfavourable ‘Slav Defence’ — compare, for example, with the line 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. ♘f3 ♘f6 4. ♘bd2 dxc4 5. ♘xc4.



5. ♘xc4 e6 6.g3

Possible is 6.e3 c5 7. ♖e2 ♘c6 8.o-o cxd4 9.exd4 ♖e7 10. ♖f4± Habershon,P-Price,A Llandudno 2017, but the text is the principal continuation.

6...b5

6... ♖b4+ 7. ♖d2 ♖xd2+ 8. ♔xd2± Fahnenschmidt,G-Bebersdorf,C Biel 1979, is an excellent ‘Catalan’ version for White, while 6...c5 is simply a tempo down on the 4...c5 line: 7. ♖g2 ♘c6 8.o-o cxd4 9. ♖f4 (9.a3 ♖e7 10.b4 ♘d5 11. ♖b2 ♘c3 12. ♖xc3 dxc3 13. ♔c1± Gagunashvili,M-Grachev,B Moscow 2006) 9... ♖e7 10. ♘ce5 (10. ♘fe5 ♘d5 11. ♘xc6 bxc6 12. ♔xd4 o-o 13. ♔fd1± Mareco,S-Quintiliano Pinto,R Sao Paulo 2015) 10... ♖d7 11. ♘xd4 ♘d5 12. ♘f5± Murillo Tsijli,A-Alfaro Rojas,A San Jose 2010.

7. ♘ce5 ♖b7 8. ♖g2 ♖e7

Playable is 8... ♘bd7 9.o-o ♖e7 (10. ♔b3 o-o 11. ♔d1, looks better) 10. ♖g5± Smirnov,V-Sharevich,A