

Efstratios Grivas

GRIVAS OPENING LABORATORY

VOLUME 6



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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 at 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 maxi-

imum 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.

Efstratios Grivas
Sharjah, November 2020

DESCRIPTION

In this sixth book of the series we deal with how to face the 'Queen's Gambit Declined' with a specific focus on the recently-revived 'Janowski Defence'.

There are two ways for Black to play this defence; the basic one on the 3rd move, when White scores a modest 51.6% (although with our suggested line this rises to 53.7%) and the delayed one, when the suggested system sees White score an excellent 63.0%!

Every new system creates a sensation and notable results. But slowly new ways and accurate systems are invented, which bring things back to normal!

The second line we will examine deals with how to face the 'Various Slav Systems'.

White must be careful with his choices, not to be tricked and diverted to systems that are alien to the presented repertoire.

Then we move on to the legendary 'Orthodox Defence'.

This way of treating the ancient opening is the most-played over the last 150 years. Every top player has played this classical defence, which is logical and which fights directly for central control.

By playing 2...e6, Black releases his dark-squared bishop, while obstructing his light-squared bishop. By declining White's temporary pawn sacrifice, Black erects a solid position; the pawns on d5 and e6 give him a foothold in the centre.

The opening has the reputation of being one of Black's most reliable defences to 1.d4.

In this situation, White will try to exploit the passivity of Black's light-squared bishop and Black will try to release it, trade it, or prove that, though passive, the bishop plays a useful defensive role.

An eventual ...dxc4 by Black will surrender the centre to White and he will usually not do this unless he can extract a concession.

Then we move on to examine how best to face the 'Cambridge Springs Defence', which has always been in fashion!

The defence is quite solid and it is usually recommended at club players' level, but we meet it in top-level events as well.

It is a flexible defence with many strategic assets for both sides and in general White scores an acceptable 53.2%, which is above the average but nothing too special.

This happens because it is rarely met and not much attention is paid to it by the white side in pre-game preparation.

Finally, we will examine the famous and solid 'Tartakower Defence'.

It is just 100 years since Saviely Tartakower adopted his brain-child, which

has been proved reliable over time and has created a lot of headaches for the White player.

So, there is an obligation to know how to deal with it and at least try the best that you can!

In this book you will find not only a concrete and well-structured, move-by-move presentation, but also chapters on the middlegame, the endgame, and tactics, all of which 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!

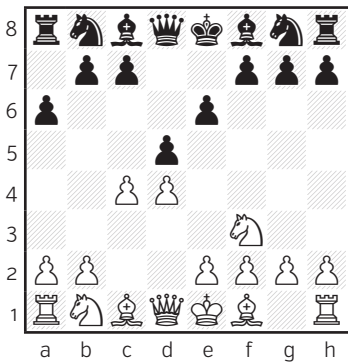
Note that the research on the games included is up to the middle of November 2020.

Efstratios Grivas
Sharjah, November 2020

PART 1.

QGD – THE JANOWSKI DEFENCE (D31)

The ‘QGD — Janowski Defence’ is characterised by the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 a6**



This, the accelerated version of the ‘QGD — Janowski Defence’ was introduced by David Janowski, Emanuel Lasker’s challenger. He regularly played it, doing well against weaker players but losing three times to C.Schlechter and once to E.Lasker, but these players were even stronger players than him.

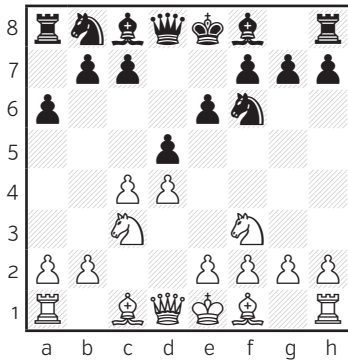
M.Carlsen has tried the opening in some games, while other top players such as B.Gelfand and A.Morozevich have given it a try as well. And it

must be noted that the general performance for White is a mere 51.6%, which is anything but impressive! At least, with our suggested line **4.♗g5**, White improves to an acceptable 53.7%, but Black should be satisfied as well!

But what is the aim of such an early push of the rook pawn? Black wants to take on c4 and play ...b5, as in the ‘Queen’s Gambit Accepted’. Of course, it is a somewhat ‘awkward’ move as it does not develop a piece early on, but instead pushes a pawn on the edge of the board. However, the move can be useful if Black wants to expand on the queenside and sometimes defend the c4-pawn.

Playing this move may serve well against players who know their mainlines well, as this move forces them to think independently over the board.

We must note and examine as well, the delayed version, which is characterised by the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6**



This is less impressive, at least from the statistical point of view, as the suggested line starting with 5.c5, scores an extremely satisfying 63.0%!

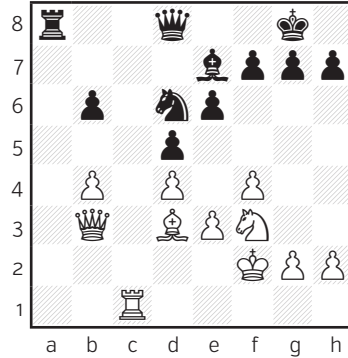
Historical Approach

Although David Janowski is considered to be the father of the defence, the idea was first played back in 1843, at least according to ChessBase — MegaBase.

- ▷ **De Saint-Amant Pierre Charles F.**
- ▶ **Staunton Howard**
- D37** Paris 1843

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♘f3 a6
5.c5 ♙e7 6.♙g5 o-o 7.e3 b6 8.b4 ♙b7
9.♙xf6 ♙xf6 10.♙d3 a5 11.a3 ♘d7
12.cxb6 cxb6 13.o-o ♖e7 14.♖b3
axb4 15.axb4 ♜fc8 16.♙b5 ♘f8
17.♜fc1 ♘g6 18.♙e2 ♚d8 19.♘b5

♙e7 20.♘e1 ♙a6 21.f4 ♘h4 22.♙f2
♘f5 23.♘f3 ♙xb5 24.♜xa8 ♜xa8
25.♙xb5 ♘d6 26.♙d3

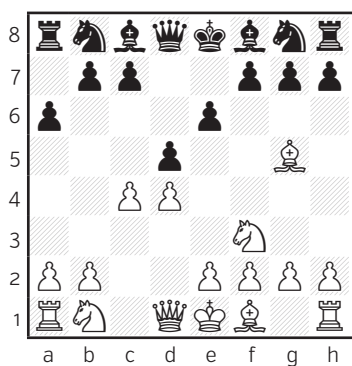


26...b5 27.♘e5 ♘c4 28.♘c6 ♚d6
29.♘xe7+ ♜xe7 30.♙xc4 dxc4
31.♖b2 ♜a4 32.♜b1 ♖a7 33.♖c2
g6 34.h4 ♖e7 35.♜h1 ♖xb4 36.♖e4
♖b2+ 37.♙g3 ♜a2 38.♜f1 b4
39.♖b7 h5 40.♙h3 c3 41.♜g1 ♖f2
42.♖b8+ ♙h7 43.♖f8 ♖xe3+ 44.g3
♜a7 45.♜a1 ♖xd4 46.♜xa7 ♖xa7
47.♖xb4 ♖g1 48.♖b7 ♙g7 49.♖e4
♖c5 50.♖e1 c2 51.♖a1+ ♙h7 52.♖c1
♖f5+ 53.♙h2 ♚d3 54.f5 ♖e2+
55.♙h3 ♚d1 56.fxg6+ fxg6 o-1

Starting Out

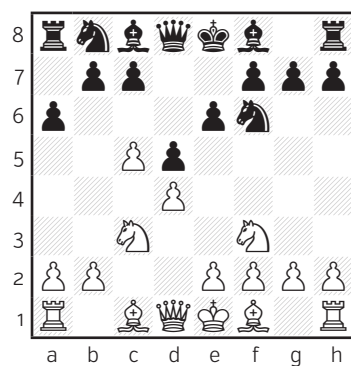
As was noted above, we will examine the defence in two parts:

1. The Accelerated Version: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 a6. Here my suggested line starts with 4.♙g5



When Black has three main replies:
4...f6, **4...Nf6** and **4...e7**.

2. The Delayed Version: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6**. Here my suggested line starts with **5.c5**

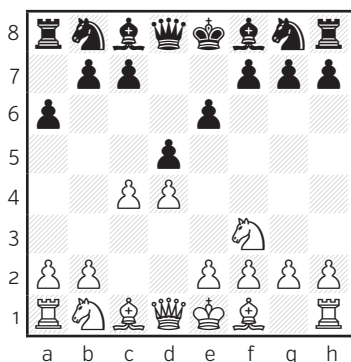


When Black has three main answers:
5...e7, **5...Nc6** and **5...b6**.

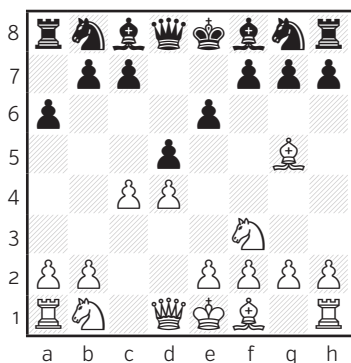
An important note: although the Janowski Defence is registered in Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings (ECO) under the classification D31, the lines examined here are shown as D30, D31, D37 and (rarely, by transpositions) D56.

CHAPTER 1. THE ACCELERATED VERSION

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 a6



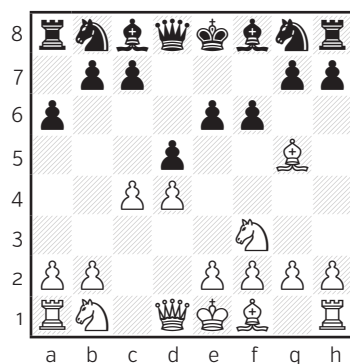
As has been noted already, this is the Accelerated Version of the 'Janowski Defence': Here my suggested line starts by 4.♙g5



When Black has three main answers: 4...f6, 4...♗f6 and 4...♙e7.

1.1. 4...f6

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 a6 4.♙g5 f6



Whatever the engines say, this move should be criticised by any book on opening fundamentals. It weakens the a2-g8 diagonal, takes away an important square from the g8-knight, and also creates a target on e6.

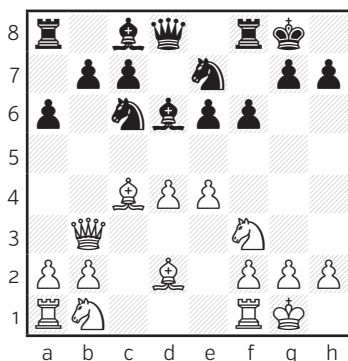
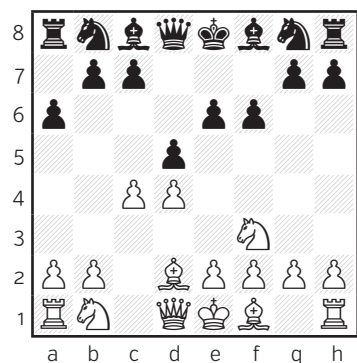
5.♙d2

The most logical. White has also tried some good alternatives:

a) 5.♙f4 dxc4 6.a4 (6.e4 b5 7.a4 c6 8.♙e2 ♗b4+ 9.♙d2 ♙xd2+ 10.♗bx-d2±) 6...♗c6 7.♗c3 ♗a5 8.e3 ♙b4 9.♗d2 c5 10.♗xc4 cxd4 11.exd4 ♗e7

12. ♖d3± Kociscak,J-Kraus,T Blansko 2019.

b) 5. ♖h4 dxc4 6.a4 ♖b4+ 7. ♘c3 ♗e7 8.e3± Lin,Y-Zhu,Y Shanghai 2018.



Hammer,J-Carlsen,M Stavanger 2015. White stands better — see the analysed game in the Middlegame Strategy chapter.

5...dxc4

5...c6 leads to an alternative Black setup: 6. ♖c2 f5 7. ♖g5 ♖a5+ 8. ♗bd2 h6 9. ♖f4 ♗f6 10.g3 ♗e4 11. ♖g2 ♗d7 12.o-o± Nikolaidis,I-Bousios,H Athens 1997.

6.e3 ♗c6

Black cannot hold onto his c4-pawn: 6...b5 7.a4 ♖b7 (7...b4 8. ♖xc4 ♗c6 9.a5 ♖d6 10.e4 ♖e7 11.o-o± Krstulovic,A-Spitzl,V Warsaw 2018) 8.axb5 (8.b3!?) 8...axb5 9. ♗xa8 ♖xa8 10.b3±

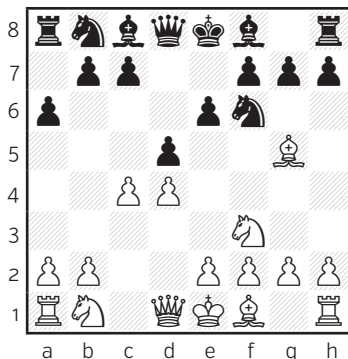
7. ♖xc4 ♖d6 8.e4

8. ♗c3!? can also be played: 8... ♗ge7 9.o-o o-o 10. ♗e4±

8... ♗ge7 9.o-o o-o 10. ♖b3

1.2. 4... ♗f6

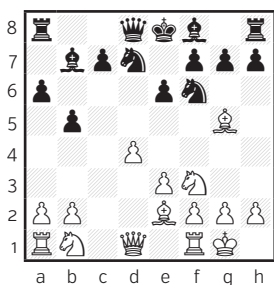
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. ♗f3 a6 4. ♖g5 ♗f6



Black is ready to go for some 'QGD' or 'QGA' main lines by transposition, trying to 'hook' White on unfamiliar ground.

5.e3 ♖e7

5...♖bd7 6.♗c3 ♕e7 7.a4, transposes to the ‘Orthodox Defence’ or to the ‘Tartakower Defence’. 5...dxc4 leads to a good version of the ‘QGA’ for White, as his dark-squared bishop is already developed: 6.♗xc4 b5 (6...c5 7.o-o b5 8.♗d3 ♗b7 9.a4 b4 10.♗bd2 ♖bd7 11.♗e4 ♖c8 12.♗xb7 ♖xb7 13.♗c4± Svane,R-Bartel,M Warsaw 2016) 7.♗e2 ♗b7 (7...c5 8.a4 [8.o-o ♗b7 9.dxc5 ♖xd1 10.♖xd1 ♗xc5 11.a4 bxa4 12.♗xf6 gxf6 13.♖xa4 ♗d7 14.♗bd2 ♗b6 15.♖aa1 ♗b4 16.♗d4 o-o 17.♗f3 ♗xf3 18.♗2xf3± Bonin,J-Nestorovic,N New York 2020] 8... b4 9.♗bd2±) 8.o-o ♗bd7



9.a4 b4 (9...c6 10.♗bd2 ♖b6 11.♖b3 h6 12.♗h4 ♗e7 13.♗e5 ♗xe5 14.dxe5 ♗d7 15.♗xe7 ♗xe7 16.f4± [16.♖ac1 ♖hd8 17.f4 ♗c5 18.♖b4 a5 19.♗c4 axb4 20.♗xb6 ♗xa4 21.♗xa8 ♗xa8 22.♖fd1± Abramov,I-Khanin,S Ekaterinburg 2019]) 10.♗bd2 c5 11.♗b3 ♖c8 12.♖c1 h6 13.♗xf6 ♖xf6 14.♗a5± Kveinys,A-Sveshnikov,E Tallinn 2017.

6.♗bd2

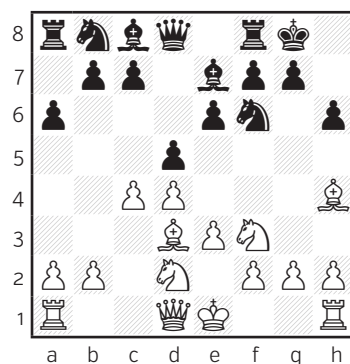
A nice move which intends to capture on c4 with the knight, fully controlling the e5-square. 6.♗c3 h6

7.♗h4 o-o Laznicka,V-Kraemer,M Germany 2016, is a bit awkward, as White cannot easily go for the suggested line in the ‘Orthodox Defence’: 8.a4 ♗c6!

6...o-o 7.♗d3

7.♖c2 ♗bd7 8.♖c1 dxc4 9.♗xc4± Stoczek,J-Schnider,G Germany 2018, looks playable as well.

7...h6 8.♗h4



8...dxc4

Black’s main options are three-fold:

a) 8...♗g4 9.♗g3 ♗d6 10.♗xd6 ♖xd6 11.o-o (11.e4 dxe4 12.♗xe4 ♖b4+ 13.♖d2 ♖xd2+ 14.♗fxd2 ♗c6 15.h3 ♗f6 16.♗xf6+ gxf6∞ Gospodar,T-Saim,S Mamaia 2017) 11...♗c6 12.h3 ♗f6 13.a3±

b) 8...c5 9.dxc5 (9.cxd5 exd5 10.dxc5 [10.♗xf6? ♗xf6 11.♖c1 c4 12.♗b1 ♗c6∓ Olivares Cortes,L-Espinoza Maldini,A Valparaiso 2015] 10...♗xc5 11.o-o±) 9...♗xc5 10.o-o ♗c6 11.♖c1±