

# The King's Indian

## According to Tigran Petrosian



IGOR YANVARJOV

PREFACE BY LEVON ARONIAN

FOREWORD BY IGOR ZAITSEV

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**2019**

**Russell Enterprises, Inc.  
Milford, CT USA**

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by Igor Yanvarjov

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ISBN: 978-1-941270-57-8 (print)  
ISBN: 978-1-941270-58-5 (eBook)

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Published by:  
Russell Enterprises, Inc.  
PO Box 3131  
Milford, CT 06460 USA

<http://www.russell-enterprises.com>  
[info@russell-enterprises.com](mailto:info@russell-enterprises.com)

Translated from the Russian by Inga Gurevich  
Proofreading and editing by Peter Kurzdorfer  
Cover design by Janel Norris

Printed in the United States of America



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## From the Author

Time flies... Like a flickering footage on film, events, generations, and eras rush by. More and more new names appear on the chess horizon. However, the achievements of the stars of the past do not fade and do not become less important. The world champions' creative work is always important, because each of them, relying on the experience of previous generations and their own talent, brought to chess something of their own, uncovered some new facets, pushing the boundaries of understanding and defining the directions of the development of the game.

The name of Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian is connected to an important stage of chess history, the significance of which remains to be seen. Historical reference: Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian (1929-1984) was the ninth world champion, having won a match against Botvinnik (+5, -2, =15) in 1963. Petrosian held this title for six years, turning away Boris Spassky's challenge (+4, -3, =17) in 1966, and released the chess crown to him three years later (+4, -6, =13). In comparison with other prominent chess players, Petrosian's legacy has received little attention. His creative work remained obscure, which is understandable. His peculiar way of thinking, his unspectacular, rational, and cautious style – all of these made it more difficult to annotate and appraise his games. Of course, no one could explain Petrosian's play better than he himself, but he died too early, having left a lot unfinished. He left behind many admirers of his talent, chess players who knew him and learned from him, as well as his great ideas, profound articles, reflections on chess, and most importantly his beautiful games. In one of his last interviews, Petrosian noted:

“Whether a player leaves his mark in the history of chess depends not only on his results, but also on his creative work. For example, for me, it does not matter whether a player was a world champion. It is most important that he leaves behind great games. Was there enough written about Nimzowitsch in his time? And now so many well-known chess players (including, for example, Larsen and me) call themselves his successors. Bronstein was not a world champion either, but his games are no worse for that.”

“Of course, it would be nice to see a book about me while I am still alive. But there is none, and I am fine with that. If I was able to create something in chess, it would be impossible to erase. The time will come, and chess analysts, historians, and researchers will put everything in order, and determine my place in chess. But if I could imagine that, say, fifty years after I die, no one would care about my chess legacy, I would be very upset right now.”

I think it is time to take stock, as the big picture is better seen from a distance. Without pretending that it is a comprehensive study, the author (to the best of his modest abilities) has tried to tell about the creative work of the ninth world champion based on his trademark opening, the King's Indian Defense.

A few words about this book itself and its genesis.

It occurred to me to write about Tigran Petrosian a long time ago, in my college years. However, I must admit that, at the time, it was a rather random choice. When the time came to choose the topic of my thesis – and, as we all know, such things always come up unexpectedly – I almost subconsciously picked Petrosian's creative work; even I do not know why. And suddenly fate gave me an unexpected gift: somehow (as luck would have it, we were both members of the Spartak Sports Club) Tigran Vartanovich learned about it, became interested, called me, and offered to collaborate!

We met in 1977, as in a Hollywood story: an eminent grandmaster, renowned ex-world champion and an ordinary, unremarkable candidate master, at the time a third-year student at the chess department of the Institute for Physical Education.

Of course, interaction with such a personality made a lasting impression. I still remember Petrosian's open and kind smile. With gratitude, I recall how he fatherly watched over me and helped me in every way. He readily agreed to become my advisor and was by no means a figurehead. As he ought to, he wrote a review of my thesis, helped find reference literature, and brought bulletins from tournaments in which he participated. In June 1979, despite malaise and a heavy workload, he came to the Institute to personally attend my thesis defense.

## The King's Indian according to Tigran Petrosian

As the greatest relic, I still keep his “review,” two typewritten pages with the autograph of the ninth world champion. In particular, he noted the independence of my conclusions and my “extraordinary talent as a researcher” that I demonstrated in the preparation of the thesis (I managed to “dig up” a game from one of his earliest tournaments, which, as it turned out, even Petrosian himself did not have). Over the next two years, we regularly met at the sessions of the newly created All-Union Petrosian school, where he taught the younger generation of Spartak players, and where the author of this book audited classes (by Petrosian’s invitation). I prepared materials and reported on the work done; Tigran Vartanovich made corrections and outlined what else needed to be done. In between classes, we often went for a walk and discussed various problems. Petrosian talked about himself remembering the past and expressing his views of the current events that took place in the chess world. I remember the welcoming, creative atmosphere during classes, the close-knit coaching staff (Alexander Nikitin, Nukhim Rashkovsky, Albert Kapengut, Nathan Silberman, and Eduard Shekhtman actively assisted the ex-world champion), as well as the nice and talented students who came from every corner of the country. The first enrollment consisted of Viktor Kuporosov, Igor Novikov, Boris Kantsler, and Irina Chelushkina. Boris Gelfand, Svetlana Matveeva, and others joined later.

For one of these sessions, I prepared a few games played by Petrosian in the 1970s. As it turned

out, they were mostly King’s Indians. “Well, this is good material. Show it to the students, it will be good for them,” suggested Petrosian. Naturally, he could not help himself, and he attended the lectures, inserting his own remarks as they went. I annotated a few more games for the next session. Then, more...

So, gradually, I accumulated about 15-20 King’s Indian games by Petrosian (effectively with his annotations). It was the unique, or, as they like to say nowadays, exclusive, material, which served as the foundation for this book.

Usually, the opinion about a chess player is formed based on his selected games, but the author decided to depart from this tradition and include almost all known games played by Petrosian that featured King’s Indian structures (including with colors reversed; there were about three hundred games total), bearing in mind Emanuel Lasker’s words that it is impossible to objectively judge a chess master’s technique until all his achievements, mistakes, and his unfinished research have been investigated and subjected to critical analysis. I think the reader will only benefit from this, which, for example, makes it possible to compare how Petrosian played the same position in various years.

Of course, some opening variations became obsolete, or rather fell out of fashion, but that is not the point. The author’s objective was, first of all, to reveal the wealth of Petrosian’s chess world and follow the development of the strategy of the King’s Indian Defense (and many other chess issues) through the prism of Petrosian’s creative work. I tried not to overuse computer analysis and not delve



*The author with the ninth world champion, Moscow, Sirenevyyi Boulevard, July 1979*

## From the Author

into theoretical intricacies, because, after all, chess is more about ideas rather than long, complicated variations. The main emphasis in the annotations was placed on the typical structures arising from this opening and highlighting the critical moments of the game. On the other hand, I tried to preserve, as much as possible, what has been written previously by other chess players, in particular by Petrosian himself. I wanted to avoid clichés and change some preconceived notions about his play, which, unfortunately, proved to be quite persistent. Also, I very much wanted to show to the reader the human being behind the events on the chessboard with all his contradictions and emotions – triumphant, doubtful, fallible. Perhaps, it would all seem old-fashioned to someone, but this book was actually conceived as a narrative about chess in “retro” style.

The work on this book revealed a significant shortcoming of modern computer databases. There are too many errors! This applies to the moves played, names (first and last) of the players, and even the names of the competitions. At this rate, in fifty years, when all media is converted to electronic form, the virtual history of chess may become very approximate and only remotely resemble the actual chess history. By the way, I must say that it is time for the leading chess software companies (primarily ChessBase and Chess Assistant) to give serious consideration not only to the quantity but also the quality of the data they generate, which is then replicated and re-used many times. For example, to develop some standards and create something like a matrix – even if it were, for starters, just for the world champions. By the way, at the moment I am creating such an electronic “database-matrix” for Petrosian’s games.

A couple of comments about the new trends in Russian chess literature.

Nowadays, it is common (and is even considered to be a sign of good taste) to badmouth the Soviet past as if the great chess school with its glorious tradition did not even exist. And many authors, afraid of being suspected of sympathizing with totalitarianism, do not spare negativity, focusing on all sorts of intrigues, scandals, and quarrels. Perhaps, this attracts readers, but I do not like it. Yes, it was a difficult time and not all of the grandmasters were defiant “fighters against the regime” then. So what? “Your epoch is not for trying. It is for living and for dying.” [*From a Russian poem by Alexander Kushnir translated by*

*Alexander Givental – translator*]. By the way, those who now boast about their “dissident” and “heroic” past sometimes mislead or greatly exaggerate.

And another phenomenon (often demonstrated by young authors) is a sort of patronizing tone that recently flooded the world wide web and the pages of printed publications. Highly respected, distinguished, and, if I dare say, great chess players are unceremoniously called Misha, Tolik, or Vovik (*diminutives of Mikhail, Anatoly, and Vladimir respectively – translator*). It seems to me that this is either a lack of good manners or a false sense of creative freedom. Let me assure the reader that there is nothing like that in this book, and, of course, no “seamy side” of life.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who in any way contributed to the writing and publication of this book, and especially:

– to Levon Aronian, a representative of the “new wave” of Armenian chess players and one of the most prominent modern grandmasters, for his words of support and encouragement;

– to the well-known journalist Vladimir Barsky, who graciously agreed to take care of preparing the book for publication;

– to grandmaster Igor Zaitsev, “a man of the era,” a remarkable chess player and writer, for an excellent essay, valuable advice, and analysis;

– to my “support group,” who also served as a kind of “department of quality control,” Pavel Kolmakov, Vassily Mirokov, and Mikhail Pilchin, for showing enthusiasm and conscientious work;

– to my wife, Tamara, invaluable friend and helper, and our son Vladislav, who provided perfect solutions to technical issues.

I am excited to bring my first book for the reader to judge and hope that the future reader will be lenient towards the, alas, inevitable errors and will help correct them.

Igor Yanvarjov  
International Master

# Chapter 2

## The Sämisch Variation



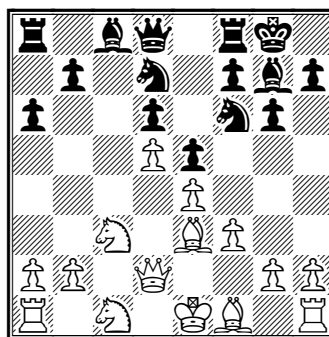
When 70 years ago the talented German grandmaster Friedrich Sämisch came up with a new structure against the King's Indian Defense, he probably could not imagine that he had laid the cornerstone of the future strategic revolution of this very popular opening, and that it was his invention that would be the most famous and sought-after.

It should be noted that, despite its rich history, the Sämisch System is still just as relevant today: the complexity of the resulting positions and their amazing strategic diversity attract the attention of scholars and players. This system was Petrosian's "first and greatest love." He often returned to it, especially after his own system stopped paying dividends.

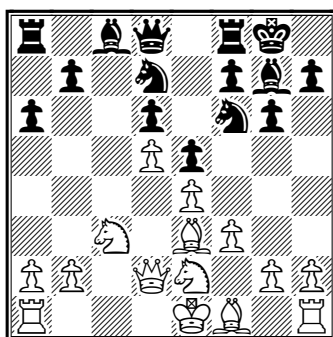
### (46) B1.1 Szabo – Petrosian

Candidates' Tournament  
Amsterdam 1956

1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♖g7 3.♗c3 d6 4.e4 ♘f6 5.f3  
0-0 6.♙e3 e5 7.♞ge2 c6 8.d5 c×d5 9.c×d5 a6  
10.♝d2 ♞bd7 11.♞c1



B1



*White to move*

At the intersection of theoretical paths, this position has been the subject of active debate for a long time. Different continuations were tested, from the ambitious 11.g4 (games 47, 50) to the overcautious 11.♞c1 (game 46) and 11.♞g3 (game 49), but every time Black found sufficient counter-chances.

In the Sämisch System, Black, fearing a direct attack, often opens the c-file, which is seemingly to the opponent's advantage. But it is not, and here is why. First, White cannot use his positional plus yet because of his lack of development. Second, and this is the fundamental difference between this system and most other King's Indian variations, instead of on the flanks, the battle takes place all over the board, and from this point of view, Black's actions are justified.

The obvious purpose of White's last move is to let out the light-square bishop, but there is also a hidden purpose: to transfer the knight to d3, overprotecting the f4-square and impeding ...b5 because of the unpleasant ♞d3-b4-c6. All of this, however, takes a long time, and Black equalizes without difficulty.

**11...♞h5 12.♞d3**

12.♞b3 had also been played. The following variation supports the prophylactic move Laszlo



## The King's Indian according to Tigran Petrosian

Szabo chose: 12...f5 13.0-0-0 ♖df6 14.♗d3 ♗d7 15.♝b1 b5 16.♞c1 b4 17.♜e2 a5 18.h3 fxe4 19.fxe4 a4 20.♞a1 b3 21.axb3 axb3 22.♜xb3 ♞a4, with a strong attack for Black (Bobotsov-Gligorić, Munich 1958).

### 12...f5 13.0-0-0 ♖b6

Highlighting the main drawback of the knight's position on d3 and trying to force b2-b3, the move that White probably should have made.

### 14.♜b4 ♗d7 15.♝b1 ♞c8 16.♞f2

Overly optimistic. Presumably, Szabo expected only 16...♜c4 and did not see the more dangerous knight leap to a4. Finishing the planned regrouping with 16.♞c1, White would have a fairly secure position.

### 16...♜a4! 17.♜xa4 ♗xa4

With the exchange of the c3-knight, the e4-pawn's prognosis abruptly worsens. In addition, White is now forced to move the b-pawn, weakening the king's protection.

### 18.b3 ♗d7 19.♗b6 ♝e8 20.♞d2 fxe4 21.fxe4 ♗b5 22.♜d3

The exchange on b5 would lead to the loss of the e4-pawn: 22.♗xb5? ♝xb5 23.♗g1 (23.♗e3 ♜f6) 23...♞f4 24.♞e1 ♜f6.

### 22...♜f6 23.♞b4 ♝e7

Black also has more active resources, for example, 23...a5!? 24.♗xa5 ♜xd5!. If now 25.exd5, then 25...e4!, with a strong attack along the long diagonal. However, the cold-blooded 25.♞d2! probably leaves White chances for a successful defense.

The positional move in the game gives White a break that allows Szabo to prepare exchanges and gradually make an escape.

### 24.♜b2 ♗h6 25.♗xb5 axb5 26.♞he1 ♝d7 27.h3 ♜e8

Black's knight goes to c5. During this time, White manages to return the knight to d3 and the bishop to e3, predetermining the fate of minor pieces and the draw in the game.

### 28.♜d3 ♜c7 29.♗e3 ♗xe3 30.♞xe3 ♜a6 31.♞d2 ♜c5 Draw.

#### (47) B1.2 Petrosian – Lokvenc

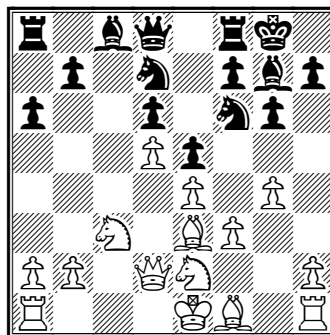
XIII Olympiad  
Munich 1958

### 1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♜c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 e5 6.♜ge2 c6 7.♗e3 0-0-0 8.d5 cxd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.♞d2 ♜bd7 11.g4

Not so much an attacking continuation as a positional one. Playing experience shows that, by planting the knight on g3, White solves the issue of

development perfectly and creates the prerequisites for squeezing the opponent's position on both flanks.

In this game, Black could not find an effective antidote to this logical plan.



### 11...♞e8?

The first of a series of passive moves that led Lokvenc to disaster. The only correct response to White's early assault is the paradoxical move 11...h5! (see games 48, 50).

### 12.♜g3 ♜f8 13.a4 ♜6d7 14.♞a3

As often happens in the Sämisch System, White's king stays in the center (the most quiet area!), while the rook goes into battle via a detour.

### 14...♞a5 15.♜b1 ♝xd2+

The decision to exchange the queens looks natural, but in fact only adds to Black's problems, because in the endgame Black has virtually no opportunities for active play.

### 16.♜xd2 ♗f6 17.♜c4 ♗e7 18.a5 ♝g7 19.g5 h5

Desperation. Here it looks like the Austrian master was already in his habitual state, extreme time pressure (remember his time trouble from the first chapter).

### 20.gxh6+ ♝h7 21.h4 ♜f6 22.h5 ♜xh5 23.♜xh5 gxh5 24.♞xh5 ♜d7 25.♞b3 ♞g8 26.♞h2 ♞b8 27.♞g2 ♞xg2 28.♗xg2 f5 29.♗h3 ♗h4+

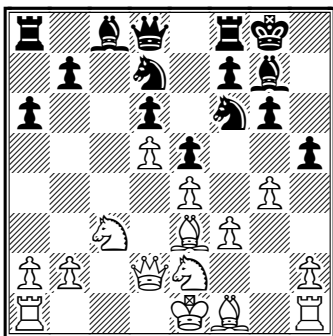
After one last check, Black's flag dropped, which spared him unnecessary anguish in a hopeless position.

#### (48) B1.3 Polugaevsky – Petrosian

26th USSR Championship  
Tbilisi 1959

### 1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♜c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♗e3 e5 7.d5 c6 8.♞d2 cxd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.g4 ♜bd7 11.♜ge2 h5

## The Sämisch Variation



One of the original ideas of the King's Indian Defense. Refusing to acquiesce to the role of a passive observer, Black immediately starts a fight at the critical point of attack. But is it justified? After all, moving the pawns where the opponent is attacking is generally not recommended. To quote Mikhail Tal, who played this move in the 10th game of the match against Mikhail Botvinnik (Moscow 1960):

"...patented by Gligorić. Inasmuch as the g-pawn is now under attack, White has to take some measures. Here, the following continuations have been encountered: 12.g5, 12.h3, and 12.g×h5. The last move seems to be rather new. It was used in the game Weber-Retsch, played in the 1959 East German Championship, in which, after 12...♖×h5 13.♗g3 ♗f4 14.h4 (here and in similar positions, it is unfavorable for White to accept the pawn sacrifice – 14.♗×f4 e×f4 15.♝×f4, since the activity of Black's king Bishop fully compensates for this minimal loss) White got a strong attack. It seems to me that this continuation is not dangerous for Black who, for example, can continue 14...♗f6, maintaining an excellent position.

"In the game with Gligorić in the Candidates Tournament, I played 12.h3, and on 12...♗h7 13.h4 (Herein lies Black's idea – 13.g×h5 gives nothing in view of 13...♝h4+, and on 13.0-0-0 h4, he continues ...h4 followed by ...♗g5. Gligorić played the same way against Sherwin in Portoroz and got a better position in the opening.) Gligorić did not find the best counterstroke against this innovation and after 13...h×g4 14.f×g4 ♗hf6 15.♗h3 ♗b6 16.♗g5, White had the edge. Instead of 14...♗hf6?, Black can continue either 14...♗b6 with the threats of ...♗×g4 and ...♗c4, which would force White to go into a very unclear line of play with 15.♗g3 ♗×g4 16.h5 with an attack for the pawn or, which seems to me to be even stronger, 14...♗df6! 15.g5 ♗g4 or 15...♗h5) strengthening the position on the kingside.

"And finally, in several games from the 26th USSR Championship, as in the game Szabo-Gligorić about which I have already spoken, White employed the continuation 12.g5 ♗h7 13.h4. Gurgenzidze playing against Spassky, and Petrosian against Polugaevsky, initiated play on the queenside, but here the knight's position, which is not very active, makes itself felt. Gligorić played more precisely against Szabo – 13...f6 14.g×f6 ♝×f6 15.♗g1 – but then complicated maneuvers arose, the results of which were that White was able to favorably rearrange his forces and gradually seized the initiative.

"In this position, worth serious consideration is the stereotypical sacrifice of the exchange 15...♝f4!?. White probably should accept it (if he, for example, continues 16.0-0-0 ♝×h4 17.♗g5 thinking that he will win the exchange under more favorable conditions, then there follows 17...♗h6! and Black even wins). Even after 16.♗×f4 e×f4, Black's positional pluses are easily worth the exchange. Of course, there is no forced road to victory but there are many who would like to play Black in the position which has arisen."

It should be added that almost nothing has changed since Tal wrote these lines. The original idea of the Yugoslav grandmaster has successfully passed the test of time and expanded the arsenal of modern technical resources.

### 12.g5 ♗h7 13.h4

Speaking of this variation in the present day, noteworthy is Karpov's idea from his game against Dolmatov (Dortmund 1993): 13.♝g1 f6 14.g×f6 ♝×f6 15.0-0-0 ♝f7 16.♗b1 b5 17.♗c1 ♗df8 18.♗e2, with a slight advantage for White.

### 13...b5

Subsequent practice confirmed that Tal was correct and that 13...f6 is more promising!

### 14.♗g3 ♗b6 15.♗d3

The aforementioned game Gurgenzidze-Spassky, which by the way was played in the same round, developed similarly. Gurgenzidze did not wait for Petrosian and played 15...♗c4 first, but after 16.♗×c4 b×c4 17.0-0-0 ♝b8 18.♗b1 ♗d7 19.♝c1, he found himself in an unpleasant position. On top of that, Black missed a tactical blow, 19...f6? 20.♗×h5!, and soon the outcome of this game did not leave any doubt.

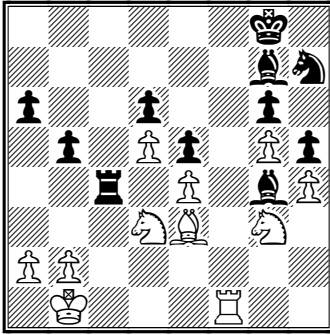
Petrosian found a more reliable plan, but was nevertheless forced to solve difficult problems.

### 15...♗d7 16.0-0-0 ♝c8 17.♗b1 ♗c4 18.♗×c4 ♝×c4

## The King's Indian according to Tigran Petrosian

Unlike Gurgenzidze, Petrosian gained the bishop pair without ruining his pawn structure, but the position is far from equal: the h7-knight and dark-square bishop are still "benched."

19. ♖ce2 ♜e7 20. ♖c1 ♖fc8 21. ♖xc4 ♖xc4  
22. ♖c1 f5 23. ♗b6 ♜f7 24. ♖d3 fxe4 25. fxe4  
♜f3 26. ♜e3 ♗g4 27. ♖f1 ♜xe3 28. ♗xe3



Black has managed to almost equalize, and now, playing 28... ♖xe4?, he could have reactivated his bishops. Probably, Petrosian had something like this in mind when he started to play on the f-file, but after closer examination he decided that the sacrifice of a whole rook was excessive. Of course, it was hardly possible to see all of the consequences of the variation 29. ♖xe4 ♗e2 over the board. For example, 30. ♖dc5!? ♗xf1 (30... dxc5 31. d6! ♖f8 32. ♖f6+) 31. ♖xd6, or even the simple 30. ♜c2 ♗xf1 31. ♖xd6 ♗g2 32. ♖c8 would give advantage to White. As we can see, all of these variations are affected by the poor position of the knight on the edge of the board. Well, how can the dogmatist Siegbert Tarrasch not come to mind?!

28... ♖f8 29. ♖c1 ♖xc1+ 30. ♜xc1 ♜f7  
31. ♜c2 ♖d7 32. ♜c3 a5 33. ♖f2 ♗f3 34. a4

Paving the way for the king to the opponent's defenseless pawns. Later, White wins a pawn and creates a passed pawn on the b-file, which, however, has limited mobility, so Flohr's suggestion, 34. b3!? and only then a2-a4, deserved serious consideration.

34... bxa4 35. ♜c4 ♜e7 36. ♜b5 ♜d8  
37. ♜xa4 ♜c7 38. ♜xa5 ♜b7 39. ♖d3 ♗f8  
40. ♖b4 ♖b8

White's goal, to promote the b2-pawn, is extremely difficult if at all feasible. It is opposed by the opponent's pieces, which are hard to chase away from the light squares.

41. ♖c2 ♗e7 42. ♖a3 ♗d8+ 43. ♜b5 ♖a6  
44. ♖c4 ♖c7+ 45. ♜a4 ♖e8 46. b4 ♗d1+  
47. ♜a3

Black has managed to push back the opponent's king, and now he starts working towards his ultimate goal: to gain a foothold on the b5-square and severely restrict the mobility of the b-pawn.

47... ♜a6 48. ♖f1 ♜b5 49. ♖fd2 ♗c7  
50. ♗f2 ♗d8 51. ♖e3 ♗e2 52. ♖b1 ♗d3  
53. ♖c3+ ♜a6 54. ♜b3 ♖c7 55. ♖c4 ♗e7  
56. ♖b2 ♗f1 57. ♖b1 ♖b5

Petrosian has executed his plan, and after the knight exchange on the 64th move, the position becomes a dead draw. Risking nothing, Polugaevsky drags on for nearly two dozen moves and only then resigns himself to the inevitable.

58. ♖c4 ♗d3 59. ♖bd2 ♗d8 60. ♖b2 ♗e2  
61. ♗g1 ♗c7 62. ♗e3 ♗d8 63. ♖bc4 ♗d3  
64. ♖a3 ♖xa3 65. ♜xa3 ♗c7 66. ♜b3 ♜b5  
67. ♗f2 ♗e2 68. ♖b1 ♗d3 69. ♖d2 ♗e2  
70. ♜c3 ♗d8 71. ♖b1 ♗c7 72. ♗g1 ♗f1  
73. ♖d2 ♗e2 74. ♗f2 ♗d8 75. ♖b1 ♗c7  
76. ♖a3+ ♜a4 Draw.

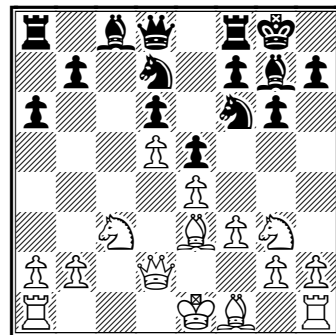
### (49) B1.4 Petrosian – Geller

41st USSR Championship  
Moscow 1973

The meaningful part of this game is limited to the short middlegame. The opening was commonplace, and play never reached the endgame. However, the game was very instructive, and, oddly enough, especially from an ideological perspective. Geller countered White's strategy on the flank with a purposeful fight for the central squares. It started on the 16th move and ended with a beautiful breakthrough on the 27th move, when Black's queenside was already gone...

1. c4 g6 2. d4 ♗g7 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4. e4 d6 5. f3  
0-0 6. ♗e3 e5 7. ♖ge2 c6 8. ♜d2 ♖bd7 9. d5  
cxd5 10. cxd5 a6 11. ♖g3

A peculiar maneuver sometimes employed by Petrosian in the Sämisch System (see games 58, 60). The king's knight is on its way to the more promising d2- and e3-squares.



## The Sämisch Variation

**11...b5 12.♙e2 h5**

A typical technique that we have already seen in the first chapter. Black seeks to expand the front line on the kingside, for example, 13.0-0 h4 14.♘h1 ♘h5 (also possible is 14...♘h7 with the idea ...♙f6-g5) 15.♙f2 ♘b6, and if 16.b3, then 16...♙f4!

**13.♙g5 ♗b6 14.♙f1 ♘h7 15.♙e7**

Gaining time to regroup his pieces.

**15...♞e8 16.♙h4 f5 17.♙f2 ♗d8 18.exf5 gxf5 19.♙e3 ♗f6 20.0-0**

Petrosian waited for a long time to castle queenside and only now revealed his true intentions.

**20...♗g6 21.♗h1 ♙d6 22.a4!**

The signal for attack. White begins the thorough destruction of the queenside. Geller, confident that his central strategy is correct, calmly brings in the reserves.

**22...f4 23.♙c2 ♙f5 24.♙b4 bxa4!?**

A subtle decision in Geller's style, a deep strategist and clever tactician. Weaker is 24...a5?! because of 25.♙c6 bxa4 (25...b4) 26.♙b5!, with a significant advantage for White (indicated by Efim Geller).

**25.♞xa4 ♙g5 26.♞xa6**

Not the strongest. Much more dangerous for Black was 26.h4! (Geller), for example, 26...♙f7 27.♞a6 ♞a6 28.♙a6, and 28...e4 is bad because of 29.♗xf4 exf3 30.gxf3 ♙xd5 31.♙xd5 ♞xe2 32.♞g1!

**26...♞xa6 27.♙a6 e4!?**

The climax of the game. Black, using the potential accumulated in the center, carries out the long-planned surge. Further events unfold at a rapid pace, sharply contrasting with the unhurried maneuvers of the previous stage of the game.

**28.♗xf4 exf3 29.gxf3**

No better was 29.♙xf3 because of 29...♙d3 30.♞a1 ♞a8! 31.♙e2 (or 31.♗xd6 ♙xf3 32.gxf3 ♗f5) 31...♙xe2 32.♙xe2 ♙ge4 with counterplay.

**29...♞xe2! 30.♙xe2 ♙d3**

Draw, because of the possible variation: 30...♙d3 31.♞g1 ♙xe2 32.♞xg5 ♙xf3+ 33.♗xf3 ♗xg5, etc.

**(50) B1.5 Petrosian – Geller**

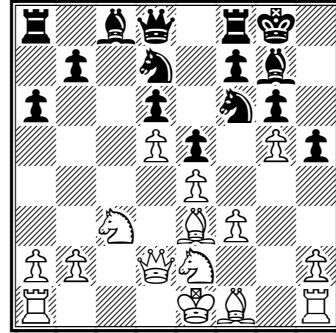
44th USSR Championship

Moscow 1976

**1.c4 g6 2.e4 ♙g7 3.d4 d6 4.♙c3 ♙f6 5.f3 0-0 6.♙e3 e5 7.♙ge2 c6 8.♗d2 ♙bd7 9.d5 cxd5 10.cxd5 a6**

The opponents continue the theoretical discussion that they had started three years earlier. In this game, Petrosian chooses the most principled path, pushing the pawn to g4 on the 11th move. Geller demonstrates one of his developments.

**11.g4 h5 12.g5**



**12...♙e8**

Geller avoids the standard 12...♘h7 (B1.3). On the one hand, the e8-knight has better prospects, but, on the other, now the white pawn on g5 is safe.

**13.h4 b5 14.♞c1 ♞b8**

Planning to seize space by pushing the b-pawn if the opportunity arises.

**15.♙g3 ♙c5 16.♙ce2 f6 17.♙g2 fxg5 18.hxg5 ♙d7!**

This is Black's idea! The knight on c5 occupies a magnificent position, ruining White's play on the c-file. Exchanging it for the bishop (even with a pawn to boot) is disadvantageous for White, as this would create "holes" on the dark squares in his camp, while the other black knight would rush to d6.

**19.b3 ♞c8 20.♞h4 b4**

Threatening to harass the white king after ...♙b5 and providing the knight with the c5-square.

**21.♗f2 a5 22.♗g1 ♞c7 23.♞f1**

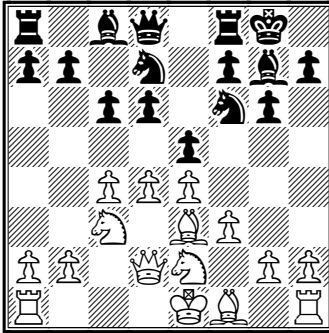
The opponents maneuver, probing each other's weaknesses and improving the position of their pieces. In the next few moves, White exchanges his bad bishop for Black's good one, while Black doubles his rooks on the f-file and looks for a way to use his queen.

**23...♙c8 24.♙h3 ♙xh3 25.♞xh3 ♗c8 26.♗g2 ♞cf7 27.♞h4 ♗a6**

Black has thoroughly dug in on the kingside and has already started to hone in on the weak squares along the f1-a6 diagonal. In this situation, playing for a win would have been rather risky for both opponents. Draw.

## The King's Indian according to Tigran Petrosian

B2



White to move

White is at a crossroads. All four games where this position arose had different continuations. In game 51, White chose 9.b3. Stoltz made an attempt at a frontal attack via 9.0-0-0 in game 52. In the remaining two games, the continuations 9.♞d1 and 9.d5, which are the main theoretical lines, ended in draws after brief struggles.

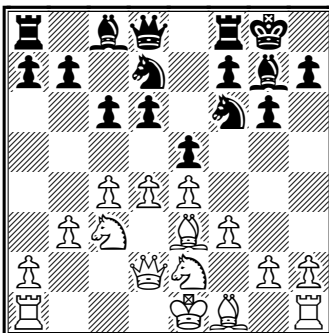
### (51) B2.1 Platz – Petrosian

Maróczy Memorial

Budapest 1952

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 g6 3.♟c3 ♞g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 e5 6.♟ge2 ♟bd7 7.♞e3 0-0 8.♞d2 c6 9.b3

Before making this move in the King's Indian Defense, it is important, as the saying goes, to "measure twice..." Petrosian learned this the hard way in the memorable encounter with Borisenko (see. Game 89), where such a liberty almost cost him a point.



9...a6 10.g3

A dubious move. White wants to activate the immobile kingside, which by itself is a good idea.

But this is the most difficult problem in the Sämisch System. No wonder that Platz's unpretentious structure collapses like a house of cards. If White really wanted to fianchetto his bishop, he should have played 10.♞d1, impeding 10...b5 in view of 11.d5.

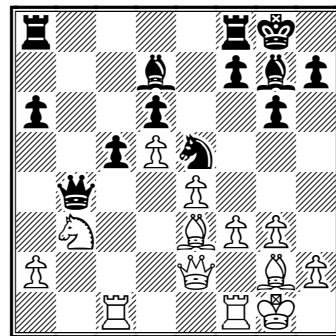
10...b5 11.♞g2 b×c4 12.b×c4 e×d4

From this moment on, Petrosian plays concrete forcing moves, not allowing his opponent to make a single independent move.

13.♟×d4 ♟e5 14.♞e2 ♞a5 15.♞c1 c5 16.♟b3 ♞b4 17.0-0

A little trick. Now, if Black takes the pawn, 17...♞×c4, then after 18.♞fd1 White's position will be more or less playable. But Petrosian is relentless.

17...♞e6! 18.♟d5 ♟×d5 19.c×d5 ♞d7



An interesting position. Even though it is his move and the black pieces are far away, White is absolutely helpless and cannot avoid material losses.

20.♞fd1

If the rook retreats to other squares, the same move would be decisive, with a subsequent knight fork on d3.

20...♞b5 21.♞d2

If 21.♞c2, then 21...c4.

21...♞×d2 22.♞×d2

No better is 22.♟×d2 because of 22...♞e2 23.♞e1 ♟d3. In case of 22.♞×d2, Black has a nice choice between 22...♞e2 and 22...♟d3.

22...♟c4 23.♞×c4

White sacrifices the exchange to avoid the variation 23.♞e2 ♟×e3 24.♞×e3 c4 25.♟d2 ♞d4.

23...♞×c4 24.♟a5 ♞b5 25.♟b7

No more than a simple psychological distraction, which Black simply ignores, advancing the c-pawn towards the queening square.

25...c4 26.♟×d6 c3 27.♞c2 ♞a4 28.♞c1 c2 29.f4 ♞b2 30.♞e1 ♟c3 31.♞c1 ♞ab8 White resigned.