

Efstratios Grivas

GRIVAS METHOD

MIDDLEGAME STRATEGIES



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All sales or enquiries should be directed to Chess Evolution
2040 Budaors, Nyar utca 16, Magyarorszag

e-mail: info@chess-evolution.com
website: www.chess-evolution.com

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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

INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

A responsible chess trainer is ‘destined’ to analyse, prepare and teach his/her trainees the plain truth and the difficult paths to chess excellence. Well, this is easier said than done, but of course nothing is really as difficult as it sometimes appears.

When the responsible trainer knows what to do and how to do it, things get simpler and can be more easily absorbed by the trainee! And from time-to-time the responsible trainer should reveal his work and his ways of teaching.

The book that you are holding in your hands is a kind of continuation of my previous work named ‘Chess Analytics’ (English language — Russell Enterprises Inc, 2012); a work that was also translated into Italian and Spanish. The basic concept is simple but quite effective: various surveys on all aspects of the game, covering and explaining unrevealed or poorly explained ideas and paths.

In the present book by ‘Chess Evolution’, a total of 40 concepts are deeply analysed. Well, nothing really too difficult, as the modern author has at his disposal powerful databases, tablebases, analysed material, books and — by adding his knowledge — you will get what you are looking for!

Today we have shorter time-controls and there isn’t really enough time to dig into the subtleties of each ending. You have to know and to repeat knowledge; don’t be carried away by the usual myth of the ‘chess talent’. As I have repeatedly written and proved, ‘talent is the excuse of the failed’.

‘Unfortunately’, the modern chess player is entitled and forced to work more than his predecessors. The modern chess trainer also needs to prepare more delicate themes, understand them and then teach them to his students. So, there is plenty of room for everything and for everybody who is thirsty for knowledge.

Knowledge is the key word. And knowledge is absorbed sub-consciously; it is impossible to re-member everything you study. So, it is highly important to

work with good material and good trainers in order to improve towards the Chess Olympus.

Nowadays the help of the Silicon Monster (chess analysis engines) is quite valuable, as it can save an author countless hours of analysis and checking. But still the role of the qualified trainer remains important; he knows where the truth is — he knows what to keep and what to throw away...

I do not want to hold a 'high nose' and claim that everything I have written is perfect and completely sound; I always think of the surprise factor and I just try to write honestly and with responsibility.

Have a nice reading journey!

Efstratios Grivas
Athens, 2017

EDITORIAL PREFACE

For a chess book to be instructive and informative, it would help a lot if these factors are present; that the author possesses the gift, the passion and love for the game and at one point in time, he is or was a competitive chessplayer - preferably a grandmaster. And it would also be to his advantage if he has previous experience in writing, and is or was actively involved in training and conducting chess seminars and lectures.

All of these elements are wonderful of course, but more is required from the author to ensure success. He must work hard in collating pertinent chess materials to substantiate his thoughts and ideas. In order to best illustrate and appreciate the theme that he is introducing, the author needs to compile instructive games of the great masters or from average players. Even better is for the author to include those games he won and lost - as long as it pertains to the subject being tackled. As the saying goes, it is the player himself who knows best about the intricacies and turn of events that occurred in his games.

It is beneficial to provide a 'label or name' to the motifs the author is presenting, in order to help the reader recall the concept when it appears in his own actual games. Appropriate title descriptions of concepts is a good guide for readers to better understand its objective and how to achieve it. Likewise, providing a 'conclusion' at the end of each method is crucial in aiding the reader to completely discern what the author is trying to transmit and to impart.

The author becomes effective when he is not stingy in sharing his ideas. He must have a child-like attitude wherein he is very eager, proud and generous in passing on to the readers all his knowledge and understanding accumulated through many years of competing. And it would be impressive if he is also experienced in chess writing and teaching.

Most authors are focused on emphasizing the importance of knowing and understanding basic and general principles to achieve success. However, readers must be constantly reminded and enlightened that exceptions to the rules or out of the box concepts are essential as well. A good example here is the 'The Bad Bishop' perception which Efstratios propounds in his excellent book 'Grivas Method - Middlegame Strategies'.

When all these ingredients mentioned above are present - and you augment it with spicy tidbits about great players, composers, anecdotes, recollections, puzzles, memorable events etc. - then a complete recipe for a good, yummy and worth-reading chess book is served. And this book is it.

Eugene Torre, 2017

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The above sources were my main help and guide while writing this book. I would like to thank the (rest) of the authors for their contributions to chess literature and the chance they gave to all chess players to become better. Wikipedia was quite helpful too!

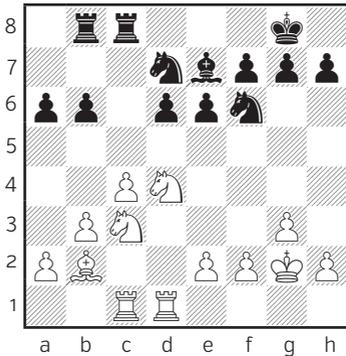
13. ♖d4 ♙xg2

13... ♗e5 14. h3 ♙xg2 15. ♙xg2 ♖b7+ 16. ♙g1 ♖ab8 17. ♖ac1 ♖fe8, as in Anelli, A-Szmetan, J Buenos Aires 1978, seems to be more accurate.

14. ♙xg2 ♖b7+

The text allows White a pleasant endgame and I feel that Black should go for something like 14... ♗e5 15. f3 ♖b7 16. ♖d2 ♖fd8 17. e4 d5 18. exd5 exd5 19. ♖e2+= Rubineti, J-Szmetan, J Quilmes 1980.

15. ♖f3! ♖xf3+ 16. ♗xf3 ♖fc8 17. ♗d4 ♖ab8 18. ♖ac1



Exchanging queens simply means that there will be less tactics on the board, which emphasises permanent weaknesses, such as the backward black d-pawn. Of course White has just a slight (but nearly permanent) advantage, and Black is fairly still in the game.

18... h6 19. e4 ♗e8!?

A passive retreat. 19... ♗e5 is more to the point.

20. f4 ♙f6 21. ♙f3 ♖b7

Logical was 21... ♙f8! when White should avoid 22. e5? dxex5 23. ♗xe6+ ♙e7=

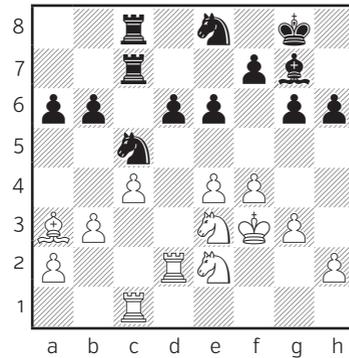
22. ♙a3! ♖bc7 23. ♗ce2!

Time for regrouping!

23... ♗c5 24. ♖d2 g6 25. ♗c2 ♙g7

26. ♗e3!

The direct 26. g4?! fails to 26... g5! =



26... f5!?

The text doesn't add anything to Black's cause. More logical was 26... b5 27. h3 h5 28. g4 hxg4+ 29. hxg4+=

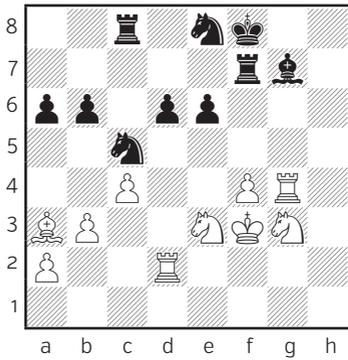
27. exf5 gxf5 28. h3! h5 29. ♖g1!

Preparing an assault on the kingside.

29... ♖f7

Another passive approach. Black needs to become active, so 29... b5 was essential: 30. g4 hxg4+ 31. hxg4 fxg4+ 32. ♖xg4 bxc4 33. bxc4+=

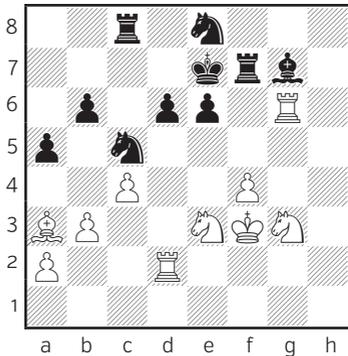
30. g4! hxg4+ 31. hxg4 fxg4+ 32. ♖xg4 ♙f8 33. ♗g3



33...a5

33...♗e7?! looked better and surprisingly allows Black to stay in the game: 34.♖g6 ♜f6 35.♞xf6 ♝xf6 36.b4 (36.♞ef5+!? exf5 37.♞xf5+ ♔f8 38.♞xd6 ♔f7 39.♞xg7 ♔xg7 40.♞xb6+=) 36...♞cd7 37.b5 ♞e8 (37...♞c5 38.♞e2 ♔f7 39.f5+=) 38.♞e4 ♞c5 39.♙xc5 dxc5 40.♞e2+=

34.♖g6 ♗e7?!



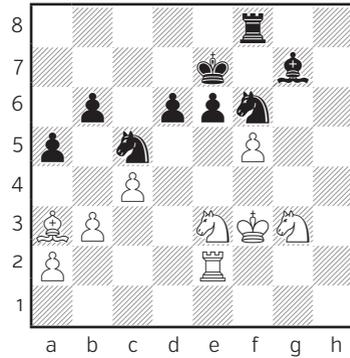
But this is really bad. Also unsatisfactory was 34...♞f6?! 35.♞xg7! ♔xg7 (35...♞xg7 36.♞xd6±) 36.♞h5+ ♔g6 37.♞xf6 ♔xf6 38.♞h2± or 34...♙c3?! 35.♞d1 (35.♞h2 ♞c7 36.f5±) 35...♗e7 36.♙xc5 dxc5 37.♞e4 ♙d4 38.f5± but good was 34...♙e5! 35.♞gf5 ♞g7! 36.fxg5 ♞xf5 37.♗e2+=

35.f5! ♞f6

35...exf5 loses to 36.♞d5+ ♔d8 37.♞xb6.

36.♞xf6 ♞xf6 37.♞e2! ♞f8?!

Although not pleasant, Black had to opt for 37...e5 38.♙xc5 bxc5 39.♞h2 a4 40.♞e4±



38.♙xc5!

Decisive, and better than 38.fxg6?! ♞xe6 39.♞ef5+ ♔d7 40.♞xe6 ♔xe6 41.♞xg7+ ♔d7 42.♞7f5±

38...bxc5

38...dxc5 39.fxg6 ♞g8+ 40.♞ef5+ ♔e8 41.e7+-

39.fxg6 ♔xe6

39...♞g8+ 40.♞ef5+ ♔e8 41.e7 ♞f6 42.♗e4+-

40.♞ef5+ ♞e4 41.♗xe4

Of course bad was 41.♞xe4? ♞xf5+ 42.♔g4 ♙e5= but 41.♞xe4+ ♙e5 42.♞e2 ♞xf5+ 43.♞xf5 ♔xf5 44.♗e3+- was also winning.

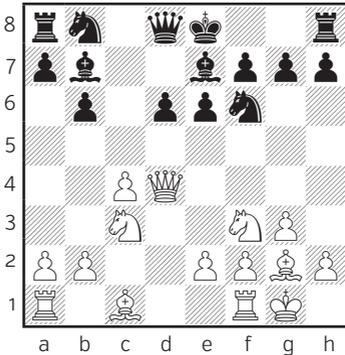
1-0

▷ Suba Mihai

▷ Nicholson John

Malaga 2001

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 c5 3.♗c3 e6 4.g3 b6
5.♙g2 ♙b7 6.o-o ♙e7 7.d4 cxd4
8.♚xd4 d6



A well-known position in the popular 'Hedgehog' set-up.

9.♙g5

In general I like White's potential set-up. Exchanges that will support the centre and avoid a future ...b5 or ...d5 advances.

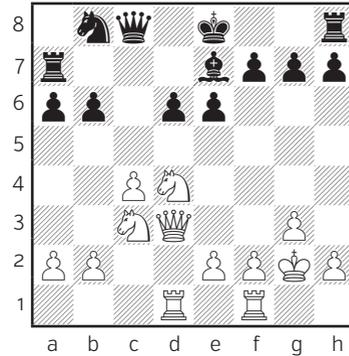
9...a6 10.♙xf6 ♙xf6 11.♚d3

11.♚f4 was chosen by M.Carlsen:
11...o-o 12.♖fd1 ♙e7 13.♘e4 ♙xe4
14.♚xe4 ♖a7 15.♘d4+= Carlsen,M-
Gashimov,V Wijk aan Zee 2012.

11...♖a7 12.♖ad1 ♙e7 13.♘d4

Another idea is 13.♘e4 o-o
14.♚e3 ♙a8 15.♖d2 ♖d7 16.♖fd1+=
Korchnoi,V-Atlas,V Ptuj 1995.

13...♙xg2 14.♙xg2 ♚c8



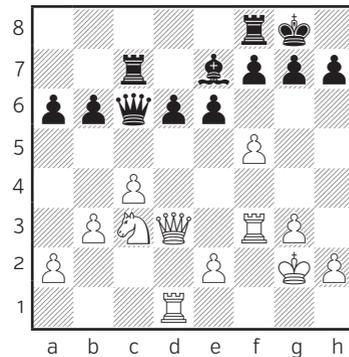
15.f4

A quite interesting idea, aiming at weakening e6 or gaining the d5-square.

15...♗c6

15...♖c7?! fails to 16.f5! e5 (16...♗c6
17.♗xc6 ♖xc6 18.fxe6 fxe6 19.♗e4±)
17.♗b3 ♖xc4 18.♗d5 ♙d8 19.f6≙
Nikolic,P-Ribli,Z Novi Sad 1982.

16.♖f3 o-o 17.♗xc6 ♚xc6 18.f5 ♖c7
19.b3



19...♖b7

Worse is 19...♖d8?! 20.fxe6 fxe6
21.♚e3 d5 22.cxd5 exd5 23.b4! (23.
♚d3?! d4 24.♗e4 b5∞ Freisler,P-

Panchenko,A Berlin 1991) 23...♖cd7
24.♘xd5±

20.a4

White must stop ...b5.

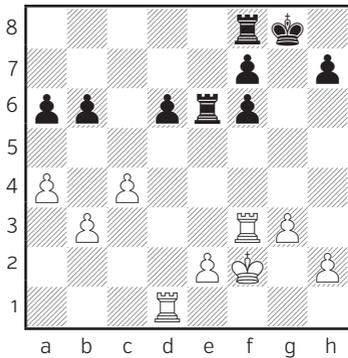
20...♖bb8 21.♙e3 ♖be8?

A faulty tactical 'solution'. The alternative was 21...♙d7 22.h4+=

22.fxe6 ♗f6 23.♙e4

White gets the advantage anyway, but he should seriously consider here: 23.exf7+ ♖xf7 24.♙f4± or 23.♘d5 ♖xe6 24.♙xb6 ♖xe2+ 25.♖f2 ♖xf2+ 26.♙xf2±

23...♙xe4 24.♘xe4 ♖xe6 25.♘xf6+ gxf6 26.♙f2



White has much the better ending, as Black is full of weak pawns.

**26...♖fe8 27.♖d2 ♙f8 28.♖fd3 ♙e7
29.♖d5! ♖g8 30.a5**

Creating a further weakness!

30...♖b8 31.♖2d3 ♖e5

Black couldn't stand the passive 31...bxa5 32.♖xa5 ♖a8±

32.♖xd6 ♖xa5 33.♖d7+ ♙e6?!

Black doesn't like passivity, but sometimes it is the only solution. Black had to opt for 33...♙f8 34.♖d8+ (34.♖a7 ♙g7 35.♖dd7 ♖f8 36.♖db7±) 34...♖xd8 35.♖xd8+ ♙e7 36.♖b8 ♖f5+ 37.♙e3 b5 38.♖b7+ ♙e8 39.♖a7±

34.♖a7

Even better was 34.g4! ♖c5 35.♖3d6+ ♙e5 36.♙f3+-

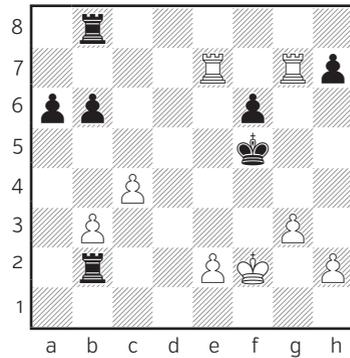
34...♖a2?!

34...♖f5+ 35.♙e3 ♖e5+ 36.♙d2 a5 37.♖ad7±, was the only chance.

35.♖e3+!

Winning material.

**35...♙f5 36.♖xf7 ♙g6 37.♖ee7 ♖b2
38.♖g7+ ♙f5**



39.♙f3!

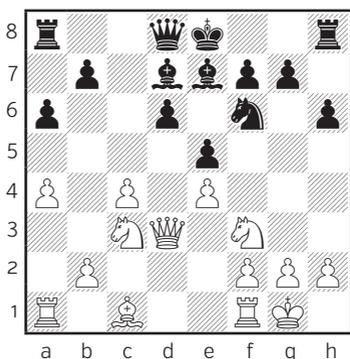
And a mating net is created!

39...♖xb3+ 40.e3 h5 41.h3 1-0

▷ **Tiviakov Sergei**
 ▶ **Anand Viswanathan**
 Baden Baden 2012

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♙b5+ ♘d7 4.d4
 cxd4 5.♚xd4 a6 6.♙xd7+ ♙xd7 7.c4
 e5 8.♚d3 h6 9.♘c3 ♘f6 10.o-o ♙e7
 11.a4

Also possible is 11.♖d1 ♖c8 12.b3
 ♜c6 13.a4 o-o 14.♙a3+= Fressinet,L-
 Kolbus,D Germany 2007.



11...b6

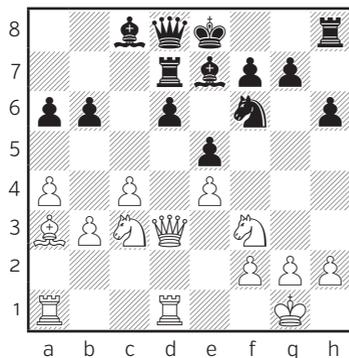
A highly dubious choice according to S.Tiviakov.

12.b3 ♖a7

Another try is 12...♙c6 13.♙a3 ♖a7
 14.♘d5 ♘xd5 15.cxd5 ♙d7 16.♘d2 b5
 17.axb5 ♙xb5 18.♘c4+= Gdanski,J-
 Koch,J Arnhem 1987.

13.♖d1 ♙c8 14.♙a3 ♖d7

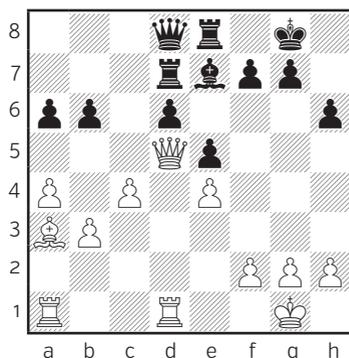
A backward pawn position — typical of the ‘Sicilian Defence’ — is on the board. But this is quite unpleasant for Black, and while he is in no immediate danger, nor does he have any active prospects.



15.♘d2

White is heading his knight to d5 (♘d2-f1-e3); typical of such pawn structures.

15...o-o 16.♘f1 ♙b7 17.♘e3 ♖e8
 18.♘cd5 ♘xd5 19.♘xd5 ♙xd5
 20.♚xd5



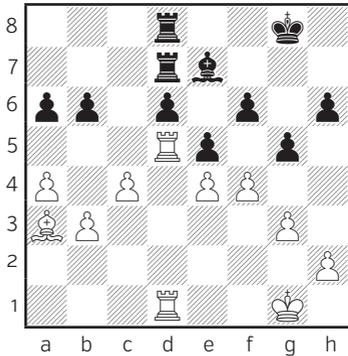
White has exchanged many pieces, but the ones left are all quite useful to him, so he holds a nice advantage.

20...♚a8 21.♚xa8 ♖xa8 22.♖d5 f6
 23.♖ad1 ♖ad8 24.g3!

Another typical idea in such positions. White cannot win by just pressing one weakness; Black will defend it. He needs to create further weak-

nesses in other part of the board and start moving his pieces around them. This is what we call the 'Rule of the Two Weaknesses'!

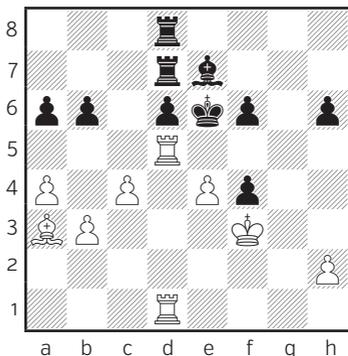
24...g5 25.f4



25...gxf4?

Black's last not only doesn't solve any of his problems, but it opens up the g-file for White. Black's serious lack of space and mobility means that he cannot switch from one side to the next as quickly as his opponent. Had he left it to White to exchange, then it would have been the f-file opened, and it would be far easier to keep control of both.

26.gxf4 ♖f7 27.♙f2 exf4 28.♙f3 ♔e6



29.♙c1!

The bishop will attack both d6 and h6 from the excellent f4-square.

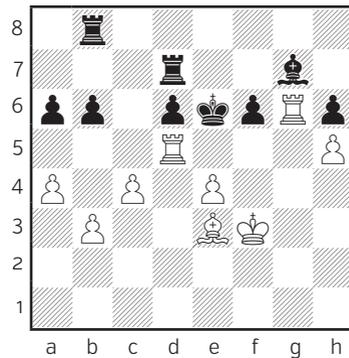
29...♖c8 30.♙xf4 ♙f8 31.h4!

Another excellent and typical idea. Targets must be fixed, so will h6! Also, a strong outpost will be created on g6.

31...♖c6 32.h5 ♖b7 33.♙e3 ♖b8
34.♙d4 ♖c7 35.♖g1 ♙g7 36.♖g6 ♖f7
37.♙e3

And White wins material...

37...♖d7?



Missing a shot that White also missed with the time-control approaching.

38.♖f5?!

The spectacular 38.e5! would have won on the spot, but fortunately for the Dutch GM, this does not squander the win: 38...♙f7 (38...dxe5 39.♖xd7 ♙xd7 40.♖xg7+-) 39.exf6 ♙f8 (39...♙xf6? 40.♖f5!) 40.♙xh6 and the end is near.

38...♖f7 39.♙g4 ♙f8 40.♙xh6
♙xh6 41.♖xh6 ♖g7+ 42.♙f4!

42. ♖g6? would be a blunder: 42... ♙xg6+ 43. hxg6 ♖g8 44. ♕h5 ♗h8+ 45. ♕g4 ♖g8=

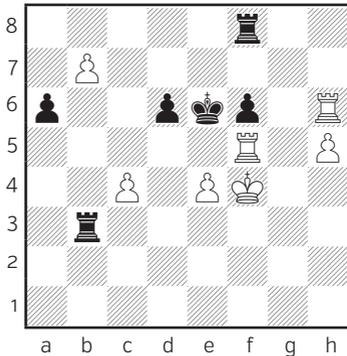
42... ♖f8 43. a5!

Opening up further weaknesses to overwhelm Black's pieces.

43... ♖g1

43... bxa5 is no help: 44. e5! dxe5+ 45. ♖xe5+! ♕f7 46. ♖f5! ♕e6 47. ♖xa5 ♖a8 48. ♖e5+ ♕f7 49. ♖f5+-

44. axb6 ♖b1 45. b7 ♖xb3



46. e5! dxe5+ 47. ♖xe5+ ♕d6 48. ♖f5 ♕e6 49. ♖h7 ♖d8 50. ♖d5!

Black resigned due to 50... ♖xd5 51. cxd5+ ♕xd5 52. ♕f5 ♕c6 53. h6.

1-0

CONCLUSION

Selective exchanges help the pressure against a backward pawn. Its possessor should certainly try to avoid them.

DOMINATION

Chess is a game of domination. From our very first moves we try to dominate the opponent, the development, the centre, the pieces' placement and so on.

We try to get better positions than our opponent and in the end to cash in the full point by precise, dominating play.

Complete domination means that we can nearly do what we like and that our opponent is helpless, no matter how hard he is trying!

Well, that's too good to be realised in every game, but from time-to-time we might be able to achieve complete domination!

Domination is the dream of every chess player. He would love to be able to play simultaneously in every part of the board and simply be better everywhere. This might happen sometimes; no counterplay by our opponent — nothing to fear.

Dominated factors can be met in every stage of the game, even pawnless endgames! We will start with some studies of the famous chess composer Genrikh Kasparian, but firstly I feel that we should know a bit more about him.

Genrikh Kasparian (27 February 1910 in Tbilisi — 27 December 1995 in Yerevan) is considered to have been one of the greatest composers of chess endgame studies.

Outside Armenia, he is better known by the Russian version of his name

Genrikh Moiseyevich Kasparyan or Kasparian.

Genrikh Kasparyan became a national master in 1936 and an international master in 1950. He was awarded the titles of International Judge of Chess Compositions in 1956 and International Grandmaster of Chess Composition in 1972, the first composer to receive this title from FIDE.

Genrikh Kasparyan was also an active chess player, winning the Armenian championship ten times (from 1934 to 1956, including two ties with future World Champion Tigran Petrosian) and the Tiflis championship three times (1931, 1937, and 1945).

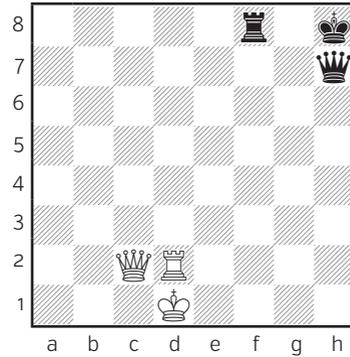
He reached the USSR Championship finals four times (1931, 1937, 1947 and 1952), but never finished higher than tenth place.

Genrikh Kasparyan is best known for his compositions. He started with chess problems, mainly three-movers, but soon discovered that his best field was in endgame studies.

He wrote several books and collections and composed about 600 studies, many on the theme of domination, winning 57 first prizes. He won the USSR Composing Championship several times.

Study 1 Kasparyan Genrikh

1967 ○



The material is so limited and most players would think that the draw is near. But here the side to move dominates the game and it is White's turn!

1. ♔b2+!

Nothing else works. 1. ♔c3+? fails to impress after 1... ♔g7! 2. ♔h3+ ♔h7! (2... ♔g8? 3. ♔g2+-) 3. ♔c3+ ♔g7 4. ♔h2+ ♔g8 5. ♔c4+ ♔f7!= The main concept of the queen's movement is to co-operate with her rook in certain variations.

1... ♔g7

1... ♔g8 loses to 2. ♔g2+ ♔f7 3. ♔b7+.

2. ♔h2+ ♔g8 3. ♔a2+!

White's queen operates harmoniously from the 2nd rank!

3... ♔f7

3... ♔f7 4. ♔g2+- is a sad story...

4. ♔g2+! ♔g7 5. ♔d5+ ♔f7

Again 5... ♔f7 loses to 6. ♔g2.

6. ♖g2+ ♔h7 7. ♕e4!
and White mates!

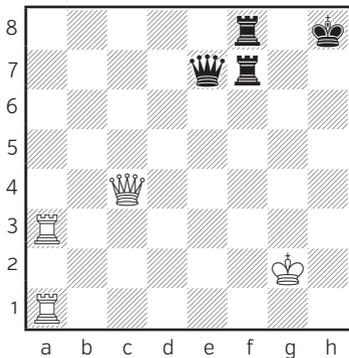
7... ♔h8
7... ♔h6 8. ♕e3+ ; 7... ♕f5 8. ♕h4+.

8. ♕e5+ ♔h7 9. ♕h2+ ♕h5+
10. ♕xh5# 1-0

Study 2

Kasparian Genrikh

1968 ○



Adding an extra rook for both sides makes the right to the first move even more important; domination is in sight...

1. ♖h3+!

1. ♖h1+? offers nothing after 1... ♖h7
2. ♖xh7+ (2. ♕d4+ ♔g8 3. ♖g3+ ♖g7=)
2... ♕xh7! (2... ♔xh7? 3. ♖h3+ ♔g6
4. ♕d3+ ♖f5 5. ♖g3+ ♔f6 6. ♕a6+!+-)
3. ♖h3 ♖f2+! 4. ♔g3 ♖f3+=

1... ♖h7

1... ♔g8 loses to 2. ♖g1! and next moving the king to the h-file!

2. ♕c3+!

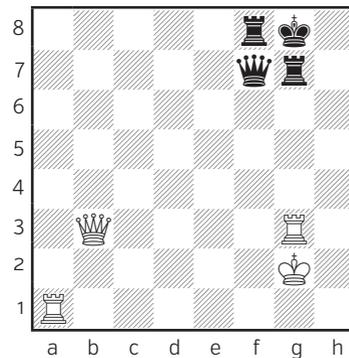
As in the previous study, the queen should co-operate with her rook on the same rank, so wrong would be 2. ♕d4+? ♔g8=

2... ♔g8

2... ♕g7+ loses to 3. ♕xg7+ ♔xg7
4. ♖a7+.

3. ♖g3+ ♖g7 4. ♕b3+! ♕f7

If 4... ♖ff7, then 5. ♖a8+ ♔h7
6. ♕b1+-



5. ♖a7! ♕xb3

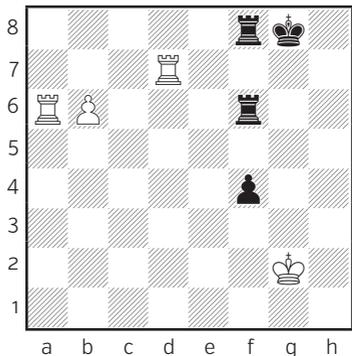
Nothing is changed by 5... ♖xg3+
6. ♕xg3+-

6. ♖g7+ ♔h8 7. ♖h7+ ♔g8

8. ♖ag7# 1-0

Of course domination is easier when material is increased.

Study 3
Kasparian Genrikh
 1938 ○



Here the 7th rank domination by the white rooks is rather important. The white king is more flexible and this factor leads to the win.

1. ♖aa7!

Full domination!

1...f3+ 2. ♔f2!

White must be careful, as wrong would be 2. ♔f1? ♖h6! 3. b7 f2 4. ♖g7+ ♔h8 5. ♖f7 ♖h1+! 6. ♔g2 f1 ♖+ 7. ♖xf1 ♖hxf1 8. b8 ♖ ♖xb8 9. ♔xf1=

2... ♖g6

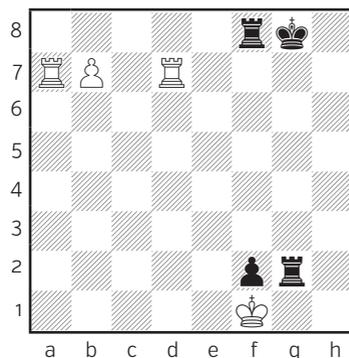
2... ♖h6 now loses to 3. b7! (3. ♖g7+? ♔h8 4. b7 ♖h2+ 5. ♔e3 ♖e2+ 6. ♔d3 ♖d8+=) 3... ♖h2+ 4. ♔g3! (4. ♔e3? ♖b2! 5. ♖a8 f2=) 4...f2 (4... ♖g2+ 5. ♔h3 f2 6. b8 ♖ f1 ♖ 7. ♖b3+ ♔h8 8. ♖h7#; 4... ♖b2 5. ♖a8) 5. ♖g7+ ♔h8 6. ♖f7!+-

3. b7 ♖g2+ 4. ♔f1!

Precise! Again 4. ♔e3? doesn't help: 4... ♖e2+ 5. ♔d3 ♖b2 6. ♖g7+ ♔h8 7. ♖h7+ ♔g8.

4...f2

After 4... ♖b2 White wins by 5. ♖a8 ♖b1+ 6. ♔f2 ♖b2+ 7. ♔g3! f2 8. ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 9. ♔g2 ♔e8 10. ♖c7.



5. ♖f7!!

Not only the only winning but also the only not losing move!

5... ♖b8 6. ♖a8!

6. ♖c7 ♖f8!

6... ♔xf7 7. ♖xb8 ♖g1+ 8. ♔xf2 ♖b1

And now the usual endgame trick:

9. ♖h8! ♖xb7 10. ♖h7+ ♔e6 11. ♖xb7

1-0