Thomas Engqvist

Petrosian

move by move



EVERYMAN CHESS

Petrosian: Move by Move

by Thomas Engqvist

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Petrosian: Move by Move

Tigran Petrosian was a World Chess Champion and a true legend of the game. He was nicknamed "Iron Tigran" because of his incredible defensive skills that made him a formidable opponent who was virtually impossible to defeat. Petrosian was the master of restraint, prophylaxis and prevention. He could spot and defuse threats well before they were created, suck the life out an opponent's position and then seize a vice-like grip on the game. In this book, International Master Thomas Engqvist selects and examines his favourite Petrosian games, and shows us how we can all learn and improve our chess by studying Petrosian's masterpieces.

Move by Move provides an ideal platform to study chess. By continually challenging the reader to answer probing questions throughout the book, the Move by Move format greatly encourages the learning and practising of vital skills just as much as the traditional assimilation of knowledge. Carefully selected questions and answers are designed to keep you actively involved and allow you to monitor your progress as you learn. This is an excellent way to improve your chess skills and knowledge.

- Learn from the games of a World Champion
- Important ideas absorbed by continued practice
- Utilizes an ideal approach to chess study

Thomas Engqvist is an International Master from Sweden. He has over 30 years' experience as a chess coach and teacher. He has worked with players at world championship level in both junior and correspondence chess.

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About the Author

Thomas Engqvist is an International Master from Sweden. He has over 30 years' experience as a chess coach, teacher and writer. He has recently worked with players at world championship level in both junior and correspondence chess.

Engqvist was born in 1963 and started to play chess in a club in the small town of Enkoping during the autumn of 1976. He gained the International Master title in 1993 when he was 29 years old. He earned the title after winning an IM tournament in Titograd (Podgorica) 1991 and coming third in the Swedish Championships of 1992 and 1993. He had the opportunity to become Swedish Champion by winning the last-round game in one of these championships, but failed despite obtaining a winning position. His highest FIDE rating was 2440 which was achieved in 1994.

He has been a member of one of the strongest clubs in Sweden, SK Rockaden, since 1995. He has played for the first team for nearly twenty years and helped the team to win the Swedish Team Championship on several occasions.

As a chess coach he helped Stefan Winge gain second place in the World Correspondence Chess Championship in 2012 - Winge narrowly missed out on winning the title after failing to convert a clear advantage in the crucial last game. He has been a coach at the Peng Cheng Chess Club in Senzhen, in the south of China. There he helped many players including the Chinese player Zhu Yi who was runner-up in the World Under-12 Championship in 2012.

On a creative level he managed to refute one of the former main lines in the Slav Defence, Winawer Countergambit: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 e5 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 Nf3 e4 6 Ne5 f6 7 Qa4+ Nd7 8 Ng4 Kf7!!. This happened in the game Wiedenkeller-Engqvist, Swedish Championship, Gothenburg 1990. Not long after, Kasparov started to play 4 dxe5 d4 5 Ne4 Qa5+ 6 Bd2 and this became the new main line.

His official work is as a teacher at a municipal school. He teaches Swedish as a second language and English. His formal education at university is comparative film, literature and English.

Dedication

To Jun

Foreword

The *Move by Move* format is designed to be interactive, and is based on questions asked by both teachers and students. It aims – as much as possible – to replicate chess lessons. All the way through, readers will be challenged to answer searching questions and to complete exercises, to test their skills in key aspects of the game. It's our firm belief that practising your skills like this is an excellent way to study chess.

Many thanks go to all those who have been kind enough to offer inspiration, advice and assistance in the creation of *Move by Move*. We're really excited by this series and hope that readers will share our enthusiasm.

John Emms
Everyman Chess

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Introduction

"I never treated chess as an instrument for achieving great sporting success. For me the most important thing was the inner contents of the fight, the inner state of the two opponents at the board." – Tigran Petrosian (1929-1984)

The first thing I had to ask myself, before embarking on this project, was why write another book with Tigran Petrosian's games when this has already been done? The main reason, except for the excellent and pedagogical *Move by Move* format, was to gain a clearer and updated picture of Petrosian's style and contributions to the chess world.

The most important writings in the Anglo-Saxon world about Petrosian are the six game collections written by: Peter Hugh Clarke, Vik Vasiliev, O'Kelly de Galway, Andy Soltis & Ken Smith, Eduard Shekhtman, and Raymond Keene & Julian Simpole. The first three books were written a relatively long time ago. The books by Clarke (Bell 1964) and O'Kelly (Pergamon 1965) were written five decades ago prior to Petrosian's win over the formidable Mikhail Botvinnik in 1963. The Russian book by Vasiliev was translated into English for Batsford/RHM by Michael Basman in 1974.

We had to wait until 1990 when another book was written about Petrosian, this time by Soltis & Smith who wrote *Petrosian the Powerful* (Chess Digest). However, surprisingly it didn't cover any games from 1967-1981. Of great service has been the compilation work by Shekhtman, *The Games of Tigran Petrosian*, in two volumes which covers all the available games from 1942-1983. The game collection *Petrosian vs. the Elite - 71 Victories by the Master of Manoeuvre 1946-1983*, written by Keene & Simpole in 2006, has the value that it covers some games not previously annotated in chess literature.

In 2004 Garry Kasparov published his groundbreaking *My Great Predecessors*. In volume three he opines about Petrosian's contribution to our chess heritage. Even Kasparov's painstaking analysis can in some cases be strengthened and adjusted with the help of modern software like *Rybka 4* and *Houdini*.

Some Biographical Details

If this is your first book about Petrosian some background facts are helpful before playing through the games in chronological order, so that you can trace this great player's development gradually. Petrosian was born on the 17th of June 1929 in Tbilisi, Georgia of Armenian parents. He started to play chess at the relatively late age of twelve. Many of his contemporaries like Boris Spassky, Paul Keres and Anatoly Karpov started at the early age of five, or at the age of six like Vassily Smyslov and Bobby Fischer.

Petrosian was taught the game of chess by an unknown boy in the summer of 1941 in a Pioneer's camp. It took him only a year to become one of the strongest players at the Tbilisi Pioneers' Palace. The desire had by then been awakened in him to make a deep study of the game and his first serious chess book was *Chess Praxis* by Nimzowitsch which laid the foundation for his prophylactic style.

Petrosian needed only eleven years to score his first GM-result, so evidently it didn't mean anything that he was a late starter. He became the ninth world champion in 1963, when he defeated Mikhail Botvinnik, and he kept the title until 1969 when he narrowly lost to Spassky. Between these matches he defended the highest title a chess player can achieve by beating Spassky in 1966. Except for 1965 and 1968, when he already was world champion, Petrosian played in every Candidates cycle from 1952 to 1980. No one else has come close this record.

Petrosian's Style

According to the English player and writer P.H. Clarke, in his preface to *Petrosian's Best Games of Chess*, the 9th world champion was a pragmatist. Clarke defines the meaning of that abstract word like this: "One who does what is needed to meet the requirements of a position and, on the whole, makes no attempt to impose his own wishes on it."

Petrosian didn't agree he was a pragmatic player in his *Chess Logic*, and we should respect and pay attention to what he wrote about himself. However, his definition of pragmatism was different: "A pragmatic approach in chess occurs when a chess-player for the sake of the result (win, draw) offers an incorrect sacrifice or performs other manoeuvres of analogous character, leading the opponent into error, and serving an unwarranted gain. In this case victory or draw is not the result of disclosing the truth in chess."

Of course, it's not an easy matter to decode such a great and original player. Botvinnik expressed this opinion too and wrote that it's impossible to decode Petrosian's style. Keene in his book about Petrosian, noted the following characteristics: "Petrosian's more subtle and long-range ploys, designed of course to baffle the opponent, may also end up bewildering the reader; the note of mystery to which Clarke referred, a quality shared by Nimzowitsch amongst Petrosian's intellectual forebears, and one also described by contemporaries as witchcraft."

Later Kasparov wrote: "Petrosian had a very distinctive style, the key to which even the greatest players couldn't locate". When you read such lines from such a formidable player you'll realize that Petrosian is a challenging and enigmatic player to deal with and, above all, to understand.

It's always difficult to pinpoint a chess player's style, particularly a great player who was so strong in all aspects of the game. However, Petrosian is a special case indeed; he's not the player to put an label on even though many have tried to do so. Pal Benko wrote in his biography (*My Life, Games and Compositions* , Siles Press 2003) that Petrosian played strangely. Botvinnik, sometime after the 1963 match, acknowledged he lost because he couldn't adjust to Petrosian's inexplicable style.

If you think about one of the more popular labels, that Petrosian was a careful player, it really depends on the period of the game or the game itself, as well as his opponent, tournament situation and mood. Another fundamental problem with categorizing a player is that the playing style sometimes changes during a life time.

World-renowned players who radically changed their styles are Adolf Anderssen, Wilhelm Steinitz, Alexander Alekhine and Mikhail Tal. They all changed from an attacking style to a more positional conduct of the game and this is actually a typical trait of many players. After all, we live in a dynamic reality and putting labels on players is too easy a way out, instead of grabbing the bulls by its horns and dealing with the complex reality.

We can find several games where Petrosian undoubtedly took calculated risks, especially against less strong opposition. In this collection I'm especially thinking about Games47 and 48. If we exclude Petrosian's youth, because young players normally play riskier chess, 1957 is generally regarded as a year when he played risky chess. According to Petrosian himself, he played his strongest chess in the period from 1958-1963, when he was reaching the pinnacle of his talent.

When putting a label on a specific player we actually fall in a trap because we are limiting our outlook of that specific player. This may even include such statements as when Petrosian defended himself of the accusation that he was dull: "They say I play boring chess; I could play more interesting and also lose." This statement doesn't mean he played dull chess and it's not clear what the essence of 'dull chess' means in this context. If you have a cautious and deep positional style does that imply you are a dull player?

Petrosian's playing style must be regarded as enigmatic and almost too deep to comprehend even for professionals. You can really feel that his vision of the game had philosophical depth and this is also confirmed, not only from his games, but also from his own writings in*Chess Logic*. His almost perfect intuition of how to attain maximum harmony and flexibility between his pieces may be unsurpassed to this day. One extraordinary example is Game 22, where he really showed that he was the master of harmony.

It's hard to be Petrosian's equal and emulate him since he emphasized and put so much weight on the harmonious factor alone. When you study his games in depth you feel he had his own solutions and evaluations about harmony and the principle of coordination. He had a rare philosophical outlook of how a game of chess should be played.

Petrosian was a formidable defensive player, but to be that good in the art of defence you must paradoxically be a very good attacking player. Petrosian had the reputation of being able to withstand an attack before his opponent had even thought about the attack. About this quality, which must be regarded as some kind of sixth sense, Fischer praised him by saying: "Petrosian has a knack of snuffing out such dreams twenty moves before they even enter his opponent's head!". A good example isGame 38. Of course, Petrosian can be regarded a genius in this respect, a genius in his own right. Together with Capablanca he has the reputation of being the hardest player to beat in chess history.

Petrosian and the Impact of Chess Psychology

A further aspect of the game is the impact of psychology, i.e. the consideration of the opponent and the analysis of his strengths and weaknesses. Surprisingly little in chess literature has been written about Petrosian's attitude regarding psychology. The aforementioned Fischer quotation possibly says something important about Petrosian's general state of mind.

Psychology was most probably one important part of Petrosian's overall method of dealing with his opponents and he was probably more influenced by Lasker's psychological approach than is commonly supposed. It seems he didn't ignore psychological factors to the extent that Bobby Fischer did, who famously said: "I don't believe in psychology, only in good moves." Or José Raúl Capablanca who put most emphasis on technical issues, or Akiba Rubinstein who was preoccupied with finding the best moves.

Of course, these examples may be seen as generalizations because even Fischer occasionally played psychologically. During the 1972 world championship it wasn't easy for Spassky to predict Fischer's choice of openings. If we study Petrosian's games carefully we notice how he always tried to play openings which didn't fully suit his opponents and in this way he prevented his opponents from playing on their home ground. Instructive examples are Games30 and 41, but there are many other examples too on this topic.

Another interesting aspect of psychology is that you can often observe in Petrosian's games moves without any apparent meaning, the so called art of 'doing nothing'. Maybe this is actually what Benko was referring to when he called Petrosian's playing style "strange". One of the ideas of the concept of doing nothing is that as long as the equilibrium is not disturbed, you can sometimes play the most incomprehensible move available of the reasonable options. The main motive is to confuse the opponent and thus lay the psychological foundation to out manoeuvre them.

My overall ambition has been to be as explicit as possible in my annotations when I have discovered such 'doing nothing' moments in the games of our hero. In many positions in Petrosian's games there were several playable

nothing' moments in the games of our hero. In many positions in Petrosian's games there were several playable moves and sometimes he played moves which most players would disregard automatically. In this way Petrosian's vision of the game was different, but also more profound and deeper. He sometimes considered and even played superfluous moves, ones that normally are not part of a player's vision, lying outside the box.

Of course this had a huge psychological impact on his opponents, as well as those watching, who, from time to time, had to expect the least expected move. Boris Spassky said he had great problems foreseeing Petrosian's moves in their match. Spassky also said that "It is to Petrosian's advantage that his opponents never know when he is going to play like Mikhail Tal."

Petrosian created his own reality and expressed his beliefs through his chess. He created a reality on the chessboard that was a projection of his own creative will. He was above all an expert in the art of waiting for the opponent's mistakes. Even in clearly won positions he had the ability to show patience and not to hurry. However, sometimes he waited too long, instead of forcing the play in his favour, as inGame 19.

Petrosian's Contributions

Petrosian has pointed out that he was playing according to the following programme: "Restriction of the opponent's possibilities [prophylactic play], strategic play over the entire board, the encirclement and gradual tightening of the ring around the enemy king".

Indeed, his contribution to the area of prophylactic chess was considerable. A game where he defends against an attack many moves in advance for the purpose of weakening it isGame 8. Elsewhere Game 13 is a very interesting game for the perspective of prophylaxis, but of course there are many other games where he used the device of prophylaxis since it was part of his general strategy.

Another contribution connected with Petrosian is the exchange sacrifice. However, in the case of Petrosian the exchange sacrifice was sometimes an exchange for*nothing* and that was his revolutionary idea. Sometimes he undertook a positional exchange sacrifice without obtaining anything dynamic in return. A famous game which ended in a draw is Reshevsky-Petrosian, Zurich 1953, which isn't found in this collection. In this collection you can study Games 15, 29, 35, 39, 40 and 59 if you are especially interested in his exchange sacrifices.

Quite often too Petrosian was focused on a weak complex of squares of the same colour. There are many instructive examples of this like Games4, 12, 18 and 59.

Regarding his view of chess, Petrosian said that chess was chess and must be treated according to iron logic. Another formulation by him was: "Chess is a game by its form, an art by its content and a science by the difficulty of gaining masters in it." According to Nikolai Krogius, logic received a new interpretation in Petrosian's games.

As a matter of a fact Petrosian even wrote a dissertation called*Chess Logic - Some Problems of the Logic of Chess Thought* (Yerevan 1968), where he ascertained that "a correct philosophic treatment of the nature of chess may even influence directly the practical strength."

The complication with solving a chess position is that there are several logical systems available and the chess player must be aware about these methods simultaneously. Games34 and 39 are instructive examples showing Petrosian's deep interpretation of dynamic strategy. One critical position in Game 39 compares how Petrosian actually solved a positional problem and how Capablanca hypothetically would have played. The pedagogical idea is to obtain a better understanding of the meaning of dynamic strategy, so as to be able to trace this idea in other games. This was a very important contribution by Petrosian which supplemented the theories of Steinitz. Petrosian was to a great extent walking in the footsteps of Nimzowitsch who also supplemented Steinitz's theories, but Petrosian went beyond Nimzowitsch's ideas.

Petrosian's Handling of the Pieces

One possible solution to the enigma of Petrosian's original way of playing chess may be that he handled the pieces and pawns in a different and more delicate manner compared with other players. Like Francois-André Danican Philidor, pawns were extremely sensitive and important to him, for the simple reason that they can't move backwards once they have moved forward. When you move a pawn you must be sure you don't need it in that last position anymore. One very typical game where Petrosian put great emphasis on playing brilliantly with his pawns is Game 34. Victor Korchnoi once expressed the view that against Petrosian you must be cautious with your pawns.

The pieces require another kind of treatment compared with the pawns. If the position isn't time sensitive, you can in reality move the pieces anywhere on the board because they can move backwards and in all directions when needed to. One typical example is the variation in the French Defence which was sometimes played by Petrosian: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 b6 5 a3 and now the extraordinary move 5...Bf8!. You can also answer 5 Qg4 or even 5 Nf3, which contains no threat, with 5...Bf8. The position after the blocking 4 e5 is not so time sensitive and so ...Bf8 becomes a logical possibility to maintain flexibility in the position with future pawn breaks like ...c5 and/or ...f6.

It was certainly a typical trait for Petrosian as a whole to keep maximum flexibility in his position. In general terms, if we in a random position move a bishop to g2, it can still move to an adjacent diagonal at any moment if needed to; we can play Bh3 and occupy the diagonal h3-c8, or Bf1 to control the diagonal f1-a6. The idea is to use the bishop maximally instead of just using the diagonal h1-a8 as a springboard for manoeuvring. Such small manoeuvres on the adjacent diagonals Petrosian used to the outmost.

the adjacent diagonals Petrosian used to the outmost.

Petrosian also played very skilfully with his knights. I especially recommend Games 6, 25 and 30 here. One of his most original manoeuvres on ranks and files with a major piece takes place in Game 14 where he used his queen's rook in a highly striking manner. This game is regarded as one of his best. When I played through Petrosian's games I was particularly impressed how he played with his rooks. I don't refer to mysterious rook moves à la Nimzowitsch, but rather mysterious rook moves à la Petrosian. This is an important development as he took Nimzowitsch's art of playing with rooks to an even higher level.

In this respect I'm especially impressed by Games 12, 13 and 14 which were played during 1954-1955. However, if you look at the mysterious Game 58 Petrosian didn't even move his rooks during the whole game. It's not easy to understand why he didn't play the natural and best queen's rook check at a crucial moment, but the other rook on h1 managed to be developed without being moved.

Finally, Petrosian played originally with his king in many games and this is one of his trademarks. There are many examples, but some highlights are Games 29, 30, 36, 47, 48 and 57. Some games where he showed nice touches with the queen are Games 8 and 22, while the attacking Game 24 contains a beautiful queen manoeuvre from a geometrical perspective. The reason Petrosian was so skilful with handling the pieces was because he valued flexibility very highly and this is one of the key words to think about when studying his games.

Acknowledgments

I'm truly grateful to John Emms who gave me the opportunity to write my first chess book about one of my favourite players. Without the faithful support of my beloved wife Jun the book would never have become a reality. My goal has primarily been to write a book I wanted to read myself and I hope many readers will realize the many chess insights I've discovered while studying Petrosian and which I now want to share with you, dear reader.

My good friend, the violinist and chess enthusiast Jacob Engelstoft, has suggested that I should tell you my ten favourite Petrosian games. My personal favourites in chronological order are: Games 12, 13, 22, 28, 30, 34, 39, 41, 43 and 57. Of course I'm fond of the other 50 games as well, but if I have to suggest 10 games it would be the aforementioned ones. So here is a short cut if for some worldly reason you don't have time to play through them all.

I wish you a happy and exciting adventure when you play through Petrosian's games. My recommendation is that you stop after every question, exercise and diagram because it's particularly at these moments that you can compare your own ideas with the mighty Tigran's. I can guarantee that a diligent study of Petrosian's games will increase your playing strength, enrich your play and, above all, put your opponents at a serious disadvantage if they haven't read this book. Now let us start...

Thomas Engqvist,
Sweden,
April 2014

Chapter One

Early Years

From the sources I've used this is the earliest known complete game by Tigran Petrosian. Here we'll see how the 13-year-old Petrosian demonstrated his chess talent by defeating Salomon Mikhailovich Flohr (1908-1983) in a simultaneous exhibition. Salo Flohr was regarded as one of the best eight players during the 1930s. In 1937 he was even designated 'official' challenger for the world championship and Alekhine accepted his challenge in 1938. Unfortunately the match never took place because of political uncertainty.

1: T.Petrosian-S.Flohr, Tbilisi (simul) 1942

The positional player and International Master Archil Silovanovich Ebralidze (1908-1960) from Tbilisi was Petrosian's teacher for a year and a half in the Palace of Pioneers. Ebralidze, who was a faithful supporter of Nimzowitsch, Capablanca and the Caro-Kann Defence, instilled in the young Petrosian the value of the logic of strategic rules in chess.

2: T.Petrosian-A.Ebralidze, Tbilisi Championship 1945

Petrosian is by now seventeen years old and meets the previous year's winner of the Armenian Championship, Alexander Kalantar. His brother Karen Kalantar was also a competent chess player who subsequently helped Tigran to feel comfortable at his new home in Yerevan when he moved from Tbilisi.

3: A.Kalantar-T.Petrosian, Armenian Championship, Yerevan 1946

Petrosian became a master in 1947. The next year he played in two tournaments where he was placed second in both. The rest of the time he studied the games of the match tournament for the World Championship 1948. This was the tournament Mikhail Botvinnik won to became the new world champion after the former world champion, Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946), had died of a heart attack in Portugal.

4: T.Petrosian-S.Oganesian, Yerevan Championship 1948

A52

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Flohr,S**
1: Tbilisi (simul) 1942
[Thomas Engqvist]

From the sources I've used this is the earliest known complete game by Tigran Petrosian. Here we'll see how the 13-year-old Petrosian demonstrated his chess talent by defeating Salomon Mikhailovich Flohr (1908-1983) in a simultaneous exhibition. Salo Flohr was regarded as one of the best eight players during the 1930s. In 1937 he was even designated 'official' challenger for the world championship and Alekhine accepted his challenge in 1938. Unfortunately the match never took place because of political uncertainty.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 ♘g4 Flohr wants to surprise his young opponent with the Budapest Defence.

QUESTION: Why was the opening baptized the Budapest Defence?

ANSWER: There are two connections with Budapest. A game was played with the opening between Adler and Maroczy in Budapest 1896, while the Hungarian player Gyula Breyer (1893-1921) used it in a tournament in Budapest 1916.

4.e4 This central play is one of the sharpest methods of combating the Budapest. White tries to suffocate Black with a broad and solid centre, but at the same time bridges are burned.

[The main line starts with Rubinstein's 4.♗f4 and continues ♘c6 5.♘f3 ♗b4+ , after which White has to make an important decision. He can keep the gambit pawn by playing ambitiously with

A) or be happy with the pair of bishops after 6.♘bd2 ♕e7 7.a3 ♘gxe5 8.♘xe5 *(* of course, not *8.axb4?? ♘d3#)* 8...♘xe5 9.e3 ♗xd2+ 10.♕xd2 d6 11.♗e2 0-0 12.0-0;

B) 6.♘c3 ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 ♕e7 8.♕d5 .]

4...h5 This old continuation by Richard Réti (1889-1929) weakens the kingside, but keeps the knight in an aggressive position and discourages White from playing f2-f4.

[Today 4...♘xe5 5.f4 ♘ec6 (the Abonyi variation), focusing on the weakened d4-square, is a more popular continuation. The idea is to support a bishop on c5 by placing the other knight on a6. 6.♗e3! is the best to prevent Black from occupying the classical diagonal with the f8-bishop. If Black insists on preparing ...Bc5 with ♘a6 , he might encounter some slight troubles after the modest 7.a3! ♗c5 8.♕d2 . If now the extravagant ♘a5 then 9.♕c3! is strong, as ♕f6 is met by 10.e5 and after ♕b6 White continues 11.♗xc5 ♘xc5 12.b4 ♘e4 13.♕f3 ♘b3 14.♖a2 ♘bc5 15.♘d2 ♘xd2 16.♖xd2 ♘e6 17.c5 ♕c6 18.f5 with a huge advantage. This variation proves the risks involved in dancing too much with the black knights. Safer is the modern continuation starting with 6...Bb4+.]

5.h3 QUESTION: Why waste a move and help the decentralized knight to a better square?

[ANSWER: It's obviously better to develop a piece with 5.♘c3 , like in the famous positional game F.Sämisch-R.Spielmann, Copenhagen 1923]

[or to play 5.♗e2 followed by classical development.]

5...♘xe5 6.♗e3 A good prophylactic move, preventing Black from playing ...Bc5. **♘bc6 7.♘c3 ♗b4** The only way for Black to play actively with the dark-squared bishop is by exercising pressure on the diagonal a5-e1.

8.♕d2

[8.♕c2 looks more reasonable to avoid the double pin on the diagonal and defend the centre-pawn on e4.]

8...d6 9.f4 EXERCISE: How should Flohr react to the aggressive pawn move f2-f4?

♘g6?

[The idea with the placement of the queen on d2 might have been to defend the pawn on f4 after 9...♕h4+?? with 10.♗f2 , winning a piece.]

[ANSWER: However, 9...♘d7! is the correct placement. From here the knight can come to c5, pressuring the e4-pawn, which reveals one of the bridges White has burned by playing the aggressive f2-f4.]

10.♘f3 ♕e7 11.♗d3 f5? EXERCISE: What is White's best continuation to exploit Black's weakening ...f7-f5 pawn move?

[It's better to exchange the badly-placed knight on g6 with 11...♘h4 or to strive for the exchange one move earlier when the queen was still on d8.]

12.exf5?

[ANSWER: 12.♘g5! is the strongest move, exploiting the outpost on g5 from where important squares in Black's position are under White's observation. At the same time

the attacked pawn on e4 is defended comfortably. Strong moves normally have more than one idea connected with them.]

12...♘xf4 Now Black's passive knight suddenly springs to life. **13.0-0-0 ♗xc3 14.bxc3 ♘xd3+ 15.♕xd3 ♗d7?**

[The continuation 15...♗xf5 16.♕xf5 ♕xe3+ 17.♔c2 ♖f8! gives Black a comfortable position after 18.♕xh5+ ♔d7 19.♕g4+ ♕e6 20.♕xg7+ ♖f7 21.♕g4 ♕xg4 22.hxg4 ♖e8 because of White's many weak pawns. Naturally this wasn't easy for Flohr to foresee in a simultaneous exhibition.]

16.♖he1

[Stronger is the immediate 16.♗g5 ♕f7 17.♖he1+ ♔f8 18.g4 because now Black has the opportunity to castle himself out of the problems on the e-file.]

16...0-0-0?

[16...0-0 is necessary to avoid placing the rook on d8.]

17.♗g5 ♕f7 18.♗xd8 ♖xd8 19.g4 Black has lost an exchange and has no compensation whatever. **♘a5**

It's understandable that Flohr plays as actively as possible being material down, but it doesn't help against Petrosian's merciless technique.

EXERCISE: Can you suggest a simple winning continuation for White?

ANSWER: **20.♕d5** The simplest continuation is to use Morphy's method of exchanging queens when ahead on material.

[Another way of exchanging queens is 20.♘g5 ♕xc4 21.♕xc4 ♘xc4 22.♘e6 ♗xe6 23.♖xe6 ♘e5 24.gxh5 , with the threat of -- 25.♖xe5! dxe5 26.♖xd8+ ♔xd8 27.f6 .]

20...♕xd5 21.cxd5 ♖f8 22.♖e7 g6 23.fxg6 hxg4 24.g7 ♖g8 25.♖f7 Petrosian forgot to bring the rook on d1 into play.

[More convincing is 25.♘d4! with the idea of activating the rook on d1 via f1 to f8 with devastating effect.]

25...♗e8 26.♖f8 ♖xg7 27.♖xe8+ ♔d7 28.♖e3 gxf3 29.♖xf3 QUESTION: Is White winning?

ANSWER: White is winning, but it will take some time because of Black's compact position and strong knight which will soon appear on e5. Patience is a necessary quality when winning games.

♘c4 30.♖df1 ♘e5 31.♖e3 ♖h7 Black temporarily prevents White from advancing his passed h-pawn. **32.♖f4 c6 33.c4 ♔c7 34.♔b2**

[More precise is 34.c5 , undermining the support of the centralized knight. The tactical idea is cxd5? 35.cxd6+ ♔xd6 36.♖f6+ ♔e7 37.♖f5 when Black's knight is deadly pinned and lost.]

34...♔b6 35.dxc6 White can't hold the pawn on d5 forever and must exchange it for the pawn on b7. This doesn't mean anything in practice since his distant passed pawn will decide the issue.

bxc6 36.♔c3 ♔c5 37.h4 ♖b7 38.♖g3

[More exact was 38.♖h3 immediately according to the famous principle of the German Dr Siegbert Tarrasch (1862-1934), who said that the right place for the rook is behind the passed pawn.]

38...a6

[A more active try is 38...♖b1 , but of course it doesn't help in the long-term perspective after 39.♖h3 .]

39.h5 ♖h7 40.♖g5 a5 41.♖f6 ♖b7 42.h6 ♖b1 43.♖h5 ♖c1+ 44.♔d2 ♖a1 45.h7 . An aggressively-played game by Petrosian showing no respect whatever for his formidable opponent. The witty Saviely Grigoryevich Tartakower (1887-1956) once said: "In chess there is only one mistake – overestimating the opponent."

1-0

A28

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Ebralidze,A**
2: Tbilisi Championship 1945
[Thomas Engqvist]

The positional player and International Master Archil Silovanovich Ebralidze (1908-1960) from Tbilisi was Petrosian's teacher for a year and a half in the Palace of Pioneers. Ebralidze, who was a faithful supporter of Nimzowitsch, Capablanca and the Caro-Kann Defence, instilled in the young Petrosian the value of the logic of strategic rules in chess.

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.d4 A logical continuation in the English Opening is the Four Knights' Variation which gives good piece play. It was popularized by Botvinnik in the 1930s. This early central assault has, however, gone out of fashion since the correct defensive methods have been known for some time.

[Nowadays 4.g3 is played more often.]

4...e4 At one time Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946) strongly recommended this aggressive pawn push.
[However, the game M.Botvinnik-V. Nenarokov, Leningrad 1933, showed that the simplest way to equalize is 4...exd4 5.♘xd4 ♗b4 6.♗g5 h6! *(6...♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 h6* is answered by the clever *8.♗c1!* , exploiting the newly-weakened diagonal a3-f8, as in S.Flohr-G.Koltanowki, Barcelona 1935 *)* 7.♗h4 ♗xc3+ 8.bxc3 ♘e5! followed by ...Ng6 which forces White to exchange his active bishop while also preventing a strong centre being erected with f2-f3 followed by e2-e4.]
5.♘d2
[Note that 5.♘g5 is considered harmless after the trick h6! 6.♘gxe4 ♘xe4 7.♘xe4 ♕h4 and Black wins back the pawn on d4.]
5...♘xd4
[If 5...♗b4 6.e3 with a strong pawn centre, as in the game V.Ragozin-N.Riumin, Moscow 1935. *(* Here the original manoeuvre *6.♘db1!?* is perhaps too slow to be tried in a serious game. Black does best with *d5 7.♗g5 e3! 8.♗xe3 dxc4* when he is ahead in development. *)*]
6.♘dxe4 ♘xe4 QUESTION: Should White capture the knight on d4 or e4?
ANSWER: This is a tricky question because both exchanges may result in another exchange.
7.♘xe4 The advantage with this move is that it gives opportunities for an advantage in space because of the strong pawn on c4 controlling the central square d5.
[7.♕xd4 , on the contrary, helps Black to equalize the situation in the centre with ♘xc3 8.♕xc3 d5 , with the idea of ...d4 when White's chances of having an advantage in space have been destroyed. White's only hope of any advantage is the pressure generated by his active queen on c3, pointing towards g7. V.Ragozin-V. Mikenas, USSR 1942, continued 9.e3 ♗e6 10.♗d2 ♗e7 . If White now tries to win a pawn with 11.cxd5 ♕xd5 12.♕xc7 *(* or *12.♕xg7 0-0-0* and the advantage in development is worth at least a pawn *)* 12...♗f6 13.♗b4 ♖c8 Black has enough compensation for the pawn with his superior piece play.]
7...♘e6
[It is better to exchange pieces with 7...♗b4+ 8.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 9.♕xd2 and then continue like M.Botvinnik-S.Flohr, 5th matchgame, Moscow/Leningrad 1933, with ♘e6 10.g3 0-0 11.♗g2 d6 12.0-0 ♗d7 13.♘c3 ♗c6 14.♘d5 a5! and the position is even. Black has no weaknesses and obtains counterplay by continuing ...Nc5 and ...Re8, putting pressure on the central squares.]
8.g3 ♘c5?! EXERCISE: How should White handle the tension between the knights?
[Black had a second possibility for the simplifying 8...♗b4+ , as in the aforementioned game Botvinnik-Flohr.]
9.♗g2?!
[ANSWER: The important retreat 9.♘c3! avoids further exchanges which are only in Black's favour.]
9...♘xe4 10.♗xe4 ♗b4+ 11.♗d2 ♕e7 Now Black has an easy game. **12.♗g2 ♖b8!?** An original move.
[More prudent is 12...0-0]
[or first the exchange 12...♗xd2+ 13.♕xd2 and then 0-0 .]
13.0-0 ♗xd2
[The immediate 13...0-0 helps White avoid another minor piece exchange with 14.♕a4 . The main idea is that the b8-rook is trapped in the variation ♗xd2? *(14...♗c5;* or *14...a5* is necessary *)* 15.♕xa7 ♕xe2 16.b3!! . It turns out that White doesn't need to take the rook immediately and can make a useful move, protecting the important c4-pawn. The rook will not run away and Black has too few pieces to create any tactical complications.]
14.♕xd2 ♕e5 A strong centralized position for Black's queen, but his play looks too slow. White has already established contact between his rooks and is ahead in development.
EXERCISE: Can you suggest a continuation to exploit the factor of time?
15.♖fd1 A reasonable developing move.
[ANSWER: However, more critical is to strive for an opening of the position in the spirit of the American genius Paul Charles Morphy's (1837-1884) ideas and play 15.c5! . White, who is ahead in time, doesn't mind ♕xc5? *(* comparatively best is *15...b6 16.cxb6 axb6 17.f4* followed by placing the rooks on the half-open files with positional pressure on the black position *)* 16.♖ac1 ♕e5 17.f4 ♕e6 18.♔h1 and he controls the game. Not only is 19 Rxc7 threatened, but also 19 Qd4 with simultaneous threats against g7 and a7.]

15...0-0 EXERCISE: Can you think of a continuation dealing with the strong queen on e5?
ANSWER: **16.♕d4** Centralized pieces have a tendency to be exchanged as Nimzowitsch used to say. Now the position becomes very simplified.
[A serious alternative is the development of the other rook with 16.♖ac1 followed by a rook lift to c3. On the third rank the rook has opportunities like Re3, harassing the black queen, and it may also provoke some weakening pawn moves on the queenside.]
16...♕xd4 17.♖xd4 ♖e8 Black is now close to equality having a position with no weaknesses whatsoever. **18.e3 d6 19.♖c1 b6** A minority attack with c4-c5 is thereby promptly stopped. **20.♗c6** The weakness on c6 is of no significance in this position. **♖e5 21.♖d5** Petrosian's fundamental idea is to exchange all Black's active and centralized pieces and be left with the more active ones. **♖e7** Black wants to play ...Bd7, but then there may arise some weaknesses on the light squares.
[21...♗h3]
[or 21...♔f8 were more active possibilities.]
22.♖d4 ♔f8 23.♔f1 ♗d7
[23...♖e5 is an active and good move.]
24.♗xd7 ♖xd7 25.b3 Petrosian consolidates his pawn chain on the queenside and plays in his customary unhurried style. It's extraordinary that he manages to win this game against the solid, albeit passive style of Ebralidze.
♖e7 26.♔e2 a5 27.a4 This move prevents any pawn break on the queenside for both players. It seems to invite Black to play for the manoeuvre ...Kf8-e8-d7-c6 and at an appropriate moment break through via ...Kc6-c5-b4, pressuring the b3-pawn. White can, however, always prevent such ideas with a timely Rd5 and Black must also watch out for the break c4-c5 when his king is positioned on d7.
♖be8 28.♖cd1 f6 29.♖d5 ♔f7 30.h4 ♖e4 31.♖1d3 g6 32.♖d1 h5 33.♔f3 f5
Of course Petrosian couldn't win this game if Ebralidze didn't try to do so himself. It's interesting that Petrosian gives Black the possibility to weaken White's pawn chain and change the pawn structure. If Petrosian had played a rook move instead they would most probably have agreed to a draw. Playing chess is a lot about psychology. It's a game between humans rather than just principles.
34.♔e2 f4 Ebralidze was a very correct player who had his convictions about how chess ought to be played. He wouldn't just move the rooks to and fro and split the point. It wasn't about the score, it's rather about exploring the inexhaustible possibilities of a chess position.
35.gxf4 ♖xf4 36.♖5d4 ♖ee4?
[It's better to keep both rooks by playing 36...♖f5 . Now White actually obtains serious positional pressure.]
37.♖xe4 ♖xe4 QUESTION: Is the rook ending advantageous for White?
ANSWER: White's rook is actually better than the black rook, but after the game continuation...
38.♖h1? ...it's Black's rook which has the opportunity to be the better rook.
[The strongest move 38.f4 keeps the rook as active as possible. The main idea is to follow up with Kf3, e3-e4, Rg1-g5 and break with f4-f5 when the black pawn on h5 will fall. One possible variation is ♔f6 39.♖d5 ♖e6 40.♔f3 c6 41.♖g5 ♖e7 42.e4 ♖g7 43.f5 gxf5 44.♖xf5+ ♔g6 45.♔f4 ♖d7 46.♖g5+ ♔h6 47.♖g8 and White should win.]
38...♔f6?
[Black had an immediate draw with the active 38...♖g4! 39.♔f1 ♖e4! when White can't improve his position any further. This is a very instructive variation proving how important it is to find the most active position for the rook in rook endings.]
39.f3 ♖e6 40.♖g1?
[More precise is 40.f4 and if c6 White prevents Black's plan of 41...d5 by playing 41.♖d1 , followed by Kf3, e3-e4, Rg1-g5 and so forth. It's important not to give Black any chance of counterplay connected with the pawn break ...d5.]
40...♖e5?!
[40...c6! is the last chance to mount some kind of resistance. If 41.f4 *(* or if *41.♖d1 g5!)* , then 41...d5! .]
41.f4 ♖f5 Black realizes he can't allow the rook to reach the fifth rank. **42.♔f3 ♖c5 43.e4 c6?!**
[If Black waits with 43...♔f7 , White wins by transferring the rook to d5 and provoking ... c6. A few illustrative variations are 44.♔e3! ♔f6 45.♖d1 ♔e6 46.♖d5 and now:
A) 46...c6 47.♖d1 d5 48.♖g1 dxc4 49.bxc4 ♖xc4 50.♖xg6+ is winning.;

B) . Passive defence doesn't work after 46...♔f6 47.♔d4 ♔e6 48.e5! dxe5+ *(* here *48...♖c6 49.exd6 ♖xd6 50.♔e4* also wins *)* 49.fxe5 ♖c6 50.♖d8 and White should win.;
C) 46...--]

44.♔e3 ♔f7 45.♔d4 ♔f6 46.♖g2 d5
[If instead 46...♔f7 47.e5 dxe5+ 48.fxe5 ♔g7 49.♖f2 and Black's rook doesn't have any influence anymore on the battle.]

47.e5+ ♔f7 48.♖g5 . This game proved that Petrosian already was a strong player. He gained second place in the Tbilisi Championship behind the famous study composer Ghenrikh Moiseyevich Kasparyan (1910-1995).

1-0

A53

□ **Kalantar,A**
■ **Petrosian,T**
3: Armenian Championship, Yerevan 1946
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian is by now seventeen years old and meets the previous year's winner of the Armenian Championship, Alexander Kalantar. His brother Karen Kalantar was also a competent chess player who subsequently helped Tigran to feel comfortable at his new home in Yerevan when he moved from Tbilisi.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 d6 3.♘c3 e5 This opening system was introduced and popularized by Soviet masters like Boleslavsky, Bronstein and Geller. **4.e4**
[G.Fridstein-T.Petrosian in the same tournament continued 4.♘f3 ♘bd7 5.♗g5 ♗e7 6.e3 0-0 7.♗e2 c6 8.0-0 ♕c7 9.♕c2 ♖e8 10.♖ac1 ♘f8 11.h3 ♘g6 12.♘h4 h6 13.♘xg6 hxg5 14.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 15.dxe5 ♕xe5 16.♕d2 g4 17.hxg4 ♘xg4 18.♗xg4 ♗xg4 19.f3 and here the players agreed to a draw in an equal position.]
[The central exchange 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 gives Black full compensation for his inability to castle because of the weakness of the c4-pawn according to Kotov and Yudovich in The Soviet School of Chess. Black will create a safe haven for the king, castling artificially with ...c6 and ...Kc7. However, an interesting continuation for White is 6.♘f3 ♘bd7 *(* or *6...♘fd7 7.g4!?)* 7.♖g1!? followed by g4.]

4...exd4 5.♕xd4 ♘c6 6.♕d2 g6 7.g3 ♗g7 8.♗g2 0-0 9.♘ge2 EXERCISE: How may Black play for the initiative?
ANSWER: **♘e5! 10.b3 ♗h3!** Black uses a tactical trick to exchange the light-squared bishops thereby creating light-squared weaknesses in White's camp.
[10...♗g4 , targeting f3, is a shot in the air after 11.♕e3 .]

11.0-0 ♖e8 12.f3 ♗xg2 13.♔xg2 ♘fd7 14.♗a3?! The bishop is misplaced here only biting on granite.
[Normal is 14.♗b2 , opposing and neutralizing Black's fianchettoed bishop.]

14...a5! 15.♖ad1
[If White is impatient and plays 15.f4 , Black's knights can jump to b4 and c5 in succession after ♘c6 .]

15...a4! A useful idea to remember in this type of King's Indian position to activate the queen's rook. **16.♕c1**
[The tactical idea is 16.♘xa4? ♘xc4 and White's position collapses.]

16...axb3 17.axb3 EXERCISE: Should Black play 17...Bh6 or 17...Qc8? Justify your answer!
ANSWER: **♕c8!** This solves the problem with the passive queen which may be developed to the long diagonal eyeing the white king on g2 after ...b6 and ...Qb7.
[A worse move is 17...♗h6?! 18.♕xh6 ♖xa3 19.♖b1 ♘c5 20.♘d4 with no significant gains for Black and, besides, why exchange the bishop on g7 for the inactive one on a3?]

18.♘a4?! An eviscerated move blockading the a-file and planning c4-c5.
[The knight was well placed on c3 controlling d5, so more appropriate was centralization with 18.♘d4 , solving the problem of the passive knight on e2.]

18...b6 19.♘ec3 ♕b7 20.♘b5 EXERCISE (calculation): White has placed all his minor pieces on the queenside. How can Black exploit this distribution of those minor pieces?
ANSWER: **f5!** The right moment for this natural pawn break,
[but it requires calculation: 20...f5 21.♗xd6! fxe4! this intermediate move is the key one to foresee; *(* after *21...cxd6?! 22.♘xd6 ♕c6 23.♘xe8* the position is roughly equal *)*
22.♘xc7 exf3+ 23.♔g1 f2+ 24.♖xf2 *(* after *24.♔xf2? ♗h6!* Black wins material *)*
24...♘f3+ 25.♔g2! *(25.♔f1? ♗d4!)*
25...♘g5+ 26.♖d5 ♘e4 27.♘xa8 ♕xa8

and Black's position is to be preferred. In the game a weaker move was played.]

21.exf5? EXERCISE (combination alert): What did White overlook?

ANSWER: **♘xf3!** Kalantar must have overlooked this tactical shot. **22.♖d5** The only move to avoid immediate loss.

[22.♖xf3 ♖e2+ is disastrous.]

22...♘fe5 23.♔h3 ♘f6 24.♖dd1 ♘eg4 25.♘d4 It's too late for centralization when Black's attack is already in full swing. **♘e3 26.♖f3 ♘fg4!** Black's two 'leapers' and queen are a deadly combination when attacking the king. **27.♖d3** EXERCISE: How did Petrosian crown his efforts?

ANSWER: **♕xf3!**

[White resigned when he saw 27...♕xf3! 28.♘xf3 ♘f2+ 29.♔h4 ♗f6+ 30.♘g5 ♘g2# . Petrosian won the Armenian Championship in 1946 with eight wins and two draws, beating his most dangerous opponent Kasparyan in their individual game. However, it should be mentioned that the republic champion Kasparyan never felt that Petrosian was a rival because of his great sympathy for him, even though it was obvious he lost the title because Petrosian was the stronger player.

The Armenian Championships of 1947 and 1948 gave Petrosian joint victory with Kasparyan before he moved on to meet tougher opponents in Moscow. Kasparyan then continued to win the Armenian Championship during the periods 1949-1951 and 1954-1956.]

0-1

D46

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Oganesian,S**
4: Yerevan Championship 1948
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian became a master in 1947. The next year he played in two tournaments where he was placed second in both. The rest of the time he studied the games of the match tournament for the World Championship 1948. This was the tournament Mikhail Botvinnik won to became the new world champion after the former world champion, Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946), had died of a heart attack in Portugal.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 The main position of the Semi-Slav has arisen. **6.♗d3 ♗e7?!** QUESTION: Are there any disadvantages with this slightly passive development of the dark-squared bishop?

ANSWER: When White shuts in his bishop behind his pawns it's of no use to place the bishop on the passive square e7. It doesn't control the basic small centre consisting of the four squares in the middle of the board: e4, d4, e5 and d5. It's also a bit inflexible because the bishop may have been more useful on d6 or b4.

[6...♗b4 is seen in Game 14.]

[More popular is the Meran System 6...dxc4 7.♗xc4 b5 . After the main move 8.♗d3 Black can choose between the classical a6 , *(* Wade's *8...♗b7;* and Lundin's *8...b4 .)*]

7.0-0 0-0 8.b3 There are two ideas connected with this move. Firstly, White wants to be able to recapture on c4 with the b-pawn and, secondly, he may want to develop his bishop to b2. The first idea is the more important one, keeping options for e3-e4 and the development of the bishop along the diagonal c1-h6.

♖e8?! It's more logical to develop the minor pieces before deciding on the right locations for the major pieces.

[V.Korchnoi-T.Petrosian, 3rd matchgame, Velden 1980, came up with the more natural 8...b6 9.♗b2 ♗b7 10.♕e2 ♕c7 11.♖ac1 ♖ad8 12.cxd5 exd5 13.a3 ♕b8 14.♖fd1 ♗d6 15.b4 ♖fe8 16.♕c2 with an even position.]

9.♗b2 ♗d6 Black would have saved a move if he'd played the bishop to d6 already on his sixth move. **10.e4**

[A further build-up with 10.♕c2 ♕e7 11.♖ae1 , as in A.Bisguier-M.Ljuca, Sombor 1974, is also good. The pawn break e3-e4 is actually stronger in force when White's position is fully developed.]

10...dxe4

[10...dxc4 followed by 11...e5 is another option.]

11.♘xe4 ♘xe4 12.♗xe4 ♘f6 13.♗c2 b6 EXERCISE: Are you familiar with the soundest plan in history?

ANSWER: **14.♘e5** According to the second world champion, Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941), in his famous Lasker's Manual of Chess, Louis Charles de la Bourdonnais (1795-1840) is the father of the soundest plan in the history of chess: "To combat every developed

unit of the enemy in the centre with a force at least equal to it and to follow the enemy after having thrown him back in the centre, with a well-supported advance post in the heart of his position."
Here e5 is certainly an advance post for the knight, harassing the black position.
♗b7 15.♕f3 ♕c7 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a good square for the white queen before Black plays ...c5?
ANSWER: **16.♕h3** This is the most natural square for the queen. It is not in the way of its own pieces and the queen is putting pressure on the h7-pawn. **g6** It is not necessary to weaken the kingside immediately.
[Indeed, it is better to attack the centre with 16...c5 , opening up the long diagonal.]
17.♖ae1 White is now fully mobilized and the transition phase from the opening to the middlegame begins. The transition phases are normally the most difficult to handle during a chess game, with extra time and effort needed during them.
♗f8 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a good plan for White?
ANSWER: **18.♗c1!** Petrosian's plan is obviously the exchange of the dark-squared bishops and then to try exploiting the weakened dark squares in Black's position. The downside is that White may have problems with his undefended central d4-pawn, but that's not easy to exploit when it comes to concrete moves.
c5
[18...♖ad8 , putting pressure on d4, isn't playable as it allows the annoying pin 19.♗g5 .]
19.♗f4 ♗d6 20.dxc5 The problem with the d4-pawn is solved. **♕xc5 21.♘d3**
White consistently plays for the exchange of the dark-squared bishops. **♕c7 22.♕h4**
Interestingly Petrosian isn't in any hurry to exchange the bishops. First he improves his position if only slightly. **♘h5 23.♗xd6 ♕xd6 24.♖e5**
[The exchange has taken place and White immediately exploit the dark squares while threatening the decisive tactical sequence 24.♖e5 -- 25.♖xh5 gxh5 26.♕g5+ ♔f8 27.♘e5 .]
24...♕e7 QUESTION: Can we now sacrifice on h5?
25.♕g4
[ANSWER: No! The aggressive 25.♖xh5? gxh5 26.♕xh5 f5 followed by ...Be4 or ... Rad8 only benefits Black.]
25...♘f6 26.♕e2 ♘d7 27.♖e3 ♖ad8 28.f4 ♘c5 29.♘e5 White has a well centralized position, but objectively speaking the position is balanced. Black can be particularly happy with his strong rook on the d-file which controls vital dark squares like d4 and d2 in the white position, possible future entry points.
f5!? This move weakens the dark squares further, but tries to obtain a grip on e4.
[More logical seems 29...♖d4 followed by doubling on the d-file. If 30.♕f2 ♖ed8 White has the surprising 31.f5! , leading to the following variations:
A) 31...gxf5 32.♗xf5 exf5 33.♘c6 ♕f6 34.♘xd8 ♖xd8 35.♕xf5 ♕xf5 36.♖xf5 with a roughly equal position.;
B) 31...♖d2 32.fxg6 ♖xf2 *(* if *32...hxg6 33.♖e2)* 33.gxh7+ ♔g7 34.♖g3+ ♔f6 35.♘g4+ ♔g7 36.♘e5+ and it's a draw by perpetual checks.
These complicated variations may be a clue why Black played as he did.;
C) 31...--]
30.b4 ♘e4 31.♗xe4 After the exchange of knight for a bishop Black can no longer cover the dark squares with a minor piece. **♗xe4**
32.♕b2
[32.♖xe4? destroys Black's pawn position, but still leads to a worse position after fxe4 33.♘c6 ♕g7 34.♘xd8 ♕d4+ 35.♕f2 e3 36.♕e2 ♖xd8 37.♖e1 ♕xf4 38.♕xe3 ♕xc4 39.♕xe6+ ♕xe6 40.♖xe6 ♖d3 since Black has the more active rook.]
32...♕d6 33.♖e2
[Black has enough counterplay after 33.♘g4 fxg4 34.♖xe4 ♕d2 to compensate for his worse structure.]
33...♕d4+ 34.♕xd4 ♖xd4 35.♖c1
This position is a good example to prove that the first official world champion Wilhelm Steinitz's (1836-1900) idea of White's queenside majority as a strong asset is not the case when Black is in full control of the only open central file. This was something which Alekhine was the first to point out in his annotations to the game F.Yates-A.Alekhine, Hague 1921: "I am anxious to state that one of the most notorious prejudices of modern theory lies in the fact that this majority is in itself considered an advantage without any reference to whatever pawns or, more especially, pieces are concerned."
♖ed8 36.♔f2 ♖d2? This loses time and is a positional mistake. It is in White's interest that

Black strives for a rook exchange because Black's rook is more active than the one on e2.

[Instead, Black should activate his king immediately with 36...♔g7 37.g3 ♔f6 and after 38.♖c3 create a weakness in White's camp by playing g5 . Play might go 39.♖a3 gxf4 40.gxf4 a5 41.bxa5 bxa5 42.♖xa5 ♗h1 when White's f4-pawn falls.]

37.g3 ♔f8 38.♔e3 ♖xe2+?

[Black has better saving chances by keeping his rook with 38...♖2d4 .]

39.♔xe2 ♔e7 EXERCISE (planning): Why is White better in this position when he has rook and knight versus rook and bishop when normally this is the worse piece constellation? Also, suggest a good plan for him!

ANSWER: White is better because Black's bishop has no targets and can't control the dark squares. It would be ideal for White to exchange rooks to accentuate this advantage and make it easier to activate the king to the central squares. Best is therefore:

40.♖d1! ♖xd1 Black is forced to agree to the exchange and now he can only sit and wait.

41.♔xd1 a6 42.♔d2 ♔d6 43.♔e3 ♗g2 44.♔d4 White is already winning. The next goal is to reach the e5-square with the king when Black can resign. **b5 45.c5+ ♔e7 46.a3 ♗d5 47.h4 ♗g2** EXERCISE: White has optimized his pawn position and now wants to decide the game as quickly as possible. How does he do that?

ANSWER: **48.c6! ♔d6 49.♘f7+ ♔xc6 50.♔e5** This ideal type of won ending might have been Petrosian's dream already when he played 18 Bc1. Petrosian had two spiritual fathers: Aaron Nimzowitsch (1886-1935), and the third world champion José Raúl Capablanca (1888-1942). The latter was particularly good at transforming a game of chess to a technical won ending.

♗d5 51.♘g5 ♔d7 52.♔f6!

[It's stronger to conquer the dark squares than to take the pawn immediately with 52.♘xh7 .]

52...♗b3 53.♘xh7 ♔d6 54.♘f8 ♗c4 55.♘xg6 . A fine game showing how to exploit a complex weak squares. Compare this with Game 12 where Petrosian used the same strategy.

1-0

Chapter Two

The Move to Moscow

In the autumn of 1949 Petrosian moved to Moscow. "He was dressed in a light coat, summer shoes and had a few chess books under his arm - these were all he owned." In the 17th USSR Championship he won four games, lost eight and drew seven. Those games were invaluable lessons for his shining future since he met giants like Bronstein, Smyslov, Geller, Taimanov and others.

In an amazingly short time Tigran managed to develop from a promising master into one of the Candidates for the world championship. Here he plays one of the tail-enders, the very experienced grandmaster Grigory Yakovlevich Levenfish (1889-1961), who was 60 years old at the time. He was famous for his deep knowledge of rook endings which also was his favourite ending. He wrote the famous work *Rook Endings* together with Vasily Vasiliyevich Smyslov (1921-2010), which was published in 1957.

5: G.Levenfish-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Moscow 1949

The original and strong combinative player Vladimir Pavlovich Simagin (1919-1968) was a careful analyst with as deep a theoretical knowledge as it was diversified. He became an International Master in 1949 and Grandmaster in 1962. They played each other on 17 serious occasions and Petrosian won ten, lost one and drew the rest. Here is the first game Petrosian won.

6: V.Simagin-T.Petrosian, Moscow Championship 1950

According to *Chessmetrics.com*, Ioganess G. Veltmander (1921-) was no.79 in the world on the May 1951 rating list. His highest rating was 2553 on the April 1951 rating list.

7: I.Veltmander-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Sverdlovsk 1951

Petrosian shared second place in the 1951 USSR Championship with Geller. Here he plays the tailender Evgeny Mihajlovich Terpugov (1917-). According to *Chessmetrics.com*, his world rank at best was 109th in 1952 and his estimated strength around 2400.

8: E.Terpugov-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

The Interzonal tournament in 1952 took place both in Stockholm and in the fashionable resort of Saltsjöbaden outside Stockholm. It was won by the 40-year old Alexander Alexandrovich Kotov (1913-1981) with the incredible score of 16½/20.

Petrosian's goal was to get in the top five so as to qualify for the Candidates. He managed to win seven games, lost none and drew thirteen games, thereby sharing second place together with Taimanov. In the thirteenth round Petrosian met the Hungarian player Gideon Barcza (1911-1986), who subsequently became a grandmaster in 1954.

9: T.Petrosian-G.Barcza, Stockholm-Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952

In the fifteenth round Petrosian played the Hungarian Grandmaster Laszlo Szabo (1917-1998), who also had a good tournament and qualified for the Candidates by sharing fifth place.

10: L.Szabo-T.Petrosian, Stockholm-Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952

The Swedish player Gösta Stoltz (1904-1963), who became a grandmaster in 1954, had a complicated way of playing with a pronounced tactical disposition.

11: G.Stoltz-T.Petrosian, Bucharest 1953

The 40-year-old professional grandmaster Hermann Pilnik (1914-1981) surprisingly became a candidate after sharing seventh place in the 1955 Interzonal tournament in Gothenburg. It's astonishing how simple it looks as Petrosian outmanoeuvres him with a focus on the dark squares.

12: H.Pilnik-T.Petrosian, Argentina vs.USSR, Buenos Aires 1954

"He was an unsurpassed master of manoeuvring, and while still young he received the nickname of the 'boa-constrictor', for his ability gradually to 'suffocate' his opponent. I remember how he staggered me by his victory over Bisguier in 1954, when contrary to all the 'rules', throughout the entire game he left his king in the centre (which would never even have occurred to me!) and unhurriedly seized space, until his opponent resigned." -

(which would never even have occurred to me!) and unhurriedly seized space, until his opponent resigned." - Svetozar Gligoric.

13: T.Petrosian-A.Bisguier, USSR vs. USA, New York 1954

Many chess players have problems activating and sometimes even forget to develop the queen's rook on a1. It is a common mistake to try to attack before all the pieces are developed and this includes the major piece on a1. Look how Petrosian deals with the problematic rook on a1. Here he plays the grandmaster and concert pianist Mark Yevgenyevich Taimanov (1926-) in the 12th round of the USSR Championship.

14: T.Petrosian-M.Taimanov, USSR Championship, Moscow 1955

The Argentine player Carlos Enrique Guimard (1913-1998) is most famous for his variation in the French Defence, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nc6 4 Ngf3 Nf6 5 e5 Nd7, which he played in the 1940s. He became a grandmaster in 1960.

15: T.Petrosian-C.Guimard, Gothenburg Interzonal 1955

Eduard Yefimovich Gufeld (1936-2002) is famous for writing more than 100 chess books, mainly on openings. An excellent book is *Chess: The Search for Mona Lisa* (2001), where he argues that the Elo list reflects the sporting component, but ignores the art and science of the game. He suggests that these subjective features ought to be quantifiable. Artistic and scientific criteria could be: "1) novelty of ideas, and 2) strength of opposition and accuracy of play." With three criteria, instead of one criterion emphasising the sportsman's superiority, the Elo rating would take into consideration important aspects like new ideas that enhance the development of chess and beautiful games that provide aesthetic enjoyment.

Gufeld's own 'Mona Lisa' was his win with the King's Indian Defence against Vladimir Bagirov (1936-2000) in Kirovobad, 1973. This was the game from a lifetime he had the most pleasure with, where, to use his own words, he was a "genius of one evening". Gufeld was a pleasant opponent for Petrosian with whom he had a murderous statistic. They played in the period of 1956-1972 and according to Gufeld in the aforementioned book, Petrosian won six games and drew three. However, I only managed to find eight games in the *Mega Database 2013*.

Here is their first recorded meeting from the Semi-final, which was convincingly won by Petrosian with ten wins and nine draws.

16: E.Gufeld-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship Semi-final, Tbilisi 1956

Petrosian played on board 6 in this event, scoring three wins and two draws. Here he plays the Czech player Jan Sefc (1924-), who was a reasonable good player with a highest rating of 2525 according to *Chessmetrics.com*. In 1956 it gave him place no.127 according to the world rankings.

17: J.Sefc-T.Petrosian, European Team Championship, Vienna 1957

E68

□ **Levenfish,G**
■ **Petrosian,T**
5: USSR Championship, Moscow 1949
[Thomas Engqvist]

In the autumn of 1949 Petrosian moved to Moscow. "He was dressed in a light coat, summer shoes and had a few chess books under his arm – these were all he owned." In the 17th USSR Championship he won four games, lost eight and drew seven. Those games were invaluable lessons for his shining future since he met giants like Bronstein, Smyslov, Geller, Taimanov and others.
In an amazingly short time Tigran managed to develop from a promising master into one of the Candidates for the world championship. Here he plays one of the tail-enders, the very experienced grandmaster Grigory Yakovlevich Levenfish (1889-1961), who was 60 years old at the time. He was famous for his deep knowledge of rook endings which also was his favourite ending. He wrote the famous work Rook Endings together with Vasily Vasiliyevich Smyslov (1921-2010), which was published in 1957.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.g3
The advantage of this set-up is that it reduces the attacking chances against the white king.
0-0 5.♗g2 d6 The King's Indian was popularized by Bronstein and Boleslavsky in the 1940s and 1950s. The Candidates tournament in Zurich 1953 was the epitome for the King's Indian revolution where 25% of games were played with this opening. Later on Fischer and Kasparov helped to consolidate this exciting, energy-demanding and dynamic opening.
6.♘f3 ♘bd7 The classical set-up against the solid fianchetto variation has been used by such players as Kasparov, Bronstein, Najdorf and Geller.
[The more active knight move 6...♘c6 was popular in the 1960s when Black wanted to provoke d4-d5 in analogy with the Alekhine's Defence. The main variation is The main variation is 7.0-0 a6 8.h3 ♖b8 followed by ...b5 with sharp play.]
7.0-0 e5 8.e4 ♖e8 A typical move in the King's Indian to provoke White into blockading d4-d5. Black would then step back with the rook to f8 and play for the ...f7-f5 break.
[The most common variation nowadays is 8...c6 9.h3 ♕b6 .]
9.♖e1
[Two rounds later S.Furman-T.Petrosian continued 9.♗e3 ♘g4 10.♗g5 f6 11.♗c1 ♘h6 12.h3 ♘f7 13.♗e3 ♘f8 14.♕d2 ♘e6 15.d5 . By subtly manoeuvring Black had managed to provoke White from releasing the tension in the centre. If White didn't play the immediate d4-d5, Black would on his next turn play ...c5 and force the d4-pawn to make a decision under worse circumstances because of the possible knight jump to d4. The game continued ♘eg5 16.♘xg5 ♘xg5 17.f4 exf4 18.gxf4 ♘f7 by when Black had equalized.]
9...a5 10.h3 exd4 11.♘xd4 ♘c5 12.♕c2
EXERCISE: Where would you like to move the knight on f6 in this position?
ANSWER: **♘g4** A clever tactical move which threats the centralized knight on d4 without allowing White harmonious development with Be3 and Rad1.
[12...♘fxe4? wins a pawn, but the price is high. After 13.♘xe4 ♗xd4 14.♗g5 ♕d7 15.♘f6+ Black must give up his King's Indian bishop with ♗xf6 16.♗xf6 and now it's White who is in charge of the long dark-square diagonal. A piece of advice: never give away your dark-squared bishop unless you are sure what you obtain in return is worth more than the King's Indian bishop.]
[Another set-up is 12...c6 followed by 13... Nfd7.]
13.♘cb5 Levenfish was normally strong in theory, but now it seems that his tactical inclination tempted him to make a move which mirrors Petrosian's move.
EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): After 13 Ncb5 what is Black's best continuation?
[More logical is to put pressure on the important c5-knight with 13.♘b3 when Black faces an important decision. Either he chooses the quiet ♘xb3 which obviously has the disadvantage that the pawn on c4 will be defended as in G. Stahlberg-S.Reshevsky, Zurich 1953, *(* or the sharper *13...♘e5!? 14.♘xc5 dxc5* , which is more in the spirit of the King's Indian Defence, as in I.Lipnitsky-I. Boleslavsky, USSR Championship 1952. *)*]
ANSWER: **13...♘e5** Petrosian's style was sometimes very reminiscent of the great Capablanca when he steered away from complications and played natural moves.
[The strong tactical player Levenfish

probably calculated 13...♘xf2!? and then:
A) 14.♕xf2? ♘d3 15.♕e2 ♘xe1 16.♕xe1 c6 and White loses material.;
B) 14.♔xf2 c6 15.♗f4 cxb5 16.♘xb5 ♕b6 *(* or *16...♘e6 17.♗e3)* 17.♔f1 followed by Rad1 with mutual chances.;
C) 14.--]

14.♖d1 c6 15.♘a3

[A more testing move in the spirit of Levenfish's earlier play is to play 15.♗e3! , with the idea to answer cxb5 *(* Petrosian would probably play *15...♗f8* , forcing the decentralizing *16.♘a3* and then at least Black's King's Indian bishop has turned out to be an Old Indian bishop *)* , with 16.♘xb5 followed by Nxd6.]

15...♕c7

[The white rook is absent from e1 so 15...♕e7 seems more active.]

16.♗e3 ♘ed7 Petrosian cleverly transposes to a normal set-up of the King's Indian where the knight on a3 is misplaced. **17.♘b1 a4 18.♘c3 ♘e5 19.♘ce2 ♕a5 20.♖ac1** QUESTION: How can Black make progress? ANSWER: **a3!** This secures the b4-square for a black knight to control important squares on d3 and d5 while putting pressure on the a2-pawn. The a3-pawn might also give the fianchettoed bishop an outpost on b2 and, above all, lay the foundation for marvellous variations which wouldn't be possible without this pawn. This is what happens if you give Black too much freedom to do what he wants. **21.b3 ♘a6 22.♖d2 ♘b4 23.♕b1** EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): How can Black exploit his more active position? Warning: this is a difficult one!

d5?

[ANSWER: Extraordinary complications would arise from 23...c5! 24.♘c2 *(* if *24.♘b5 d5!* with the point *25.exd5?? ♗f5* and Black is winning; when Black manages to activate all his minor pieces in this fashion there are normally one or several tactical motifs inherent in the position, and in such positions you need to think: if you seek, you will find *)* 24...♗xh3! 25.♗xh3 ♘xa2! 26.♕xa2 ♘f3+ 27.♔g2 ♘xd2 28.b4 cxb4 29.♗xd2 ♗b2 30.♗xb4 ♕e5 by now with an equal position.
These variations give you a picture of how difficult it is to play an opening like the King's Indian. I suggest you check the variations with your computer to see how rich the King's Indian really is in its play, rather than that I show you a lot of meaningless variations.]

24.cxd5 cxd5 25.exd5? The confounded knight on e2 ought to have moved back to c3 where it belongs, thereby putting pressure on the centre. **♘xd5** Black can be happy having two centralized knights in the centre. **26.b4 ♘xb4 27.♘b3** White wants to unsettle the black queen, but his position is not easy when it comes to concrete variations.
EXERCISE: Where to place the queen?
♕b5? The wrong square.

[ANSWER: 27...♕a6 is objectively better with a balanced game and may even have led to a draw by repetition after 28.♘c5 ♕a5 29.♘b3 .]

28.♘ed4! ♕a4 29.♘c5 ♕a5 30.♘xb7?

[Better is 30.♘e4! , giving White two strong centralized knights with strong positional pressure on the black position. Particularly the knight on b4 is a problem for Black as he has no pawn to support it. If the other knight supports it with ♘ec6 then the variation 31.♖c5 ♕a4 32.♘b5 is problematic.]

30...♗xb7 31.♗xb7

[The tricky 31.♘b3 ♕b5 32.♖c5 ♕a6 33.♖a5 ♕f6 34.♗xb7 doesn't change the state of affairs. The long and relatively forced variation ♖ab8 35.♗d4 ♖xb7 36.♗xe5 ♖xe5 37.♖a8+ ♗f8 38.♖dd8 ♖e2 39.♖xf8+ ♔g7 40.♖g8+ ♔h6 41.♕c1+ g5 42.f4 ♕b6+ 43.♕c5 ♕xc5+ 44.♘xc5 ♖b5 45.fxg5+ ♔h5 wins for Black.]

31...♖ab8 32.♘b3 ♕b5 33.♗g2 EXERCISE: How should Black decide the game? ANSWER: **♘c4!**

[Better than 33...♘xa2 34.♕xa2 ♕xb3 35.♕xb3 ♖xb3 36.♗d5 which isn't so convincing.]

34.♖xc4

[The variations 34.♖e2 ♘xe3 35.♖xe3 ♖xe3 36.fxe3 ♕e2 or]
[and 34.♗f1 ♘xd2 also win easily for Black.]

34...♕xc4 35.♗f1 ♕c3 36.♗f4 ♗e5 37.♗xe5 ♖xe5 38.♕d1 ♘xa2! . The knight on b3 was certainly a unfortunate piece in this game and the knight on b4 was really something. Petrosian's debut in the final of the USSR Championship resulted in 16th place out of the 20 participants. However, the most important lesson he obtained for the future was the importance of continuous meetings with grandmasters and masters.

0-1

E24

□ **Simagin,V**
■ **Petrosian,T**
6: Moscow Championship 1950
[Thomas Engqvist]

The original and strong combinative player Vladimir Pavlovich Simagin (1919-1968) was a careful analyst with as deep a theoretical knowledge as it was diversified. He became an International Master in 1949 and Grandmaster in 1962. They played each other on 17 serious occasions and Petrosian won ten, lost one and drew the rest. Here is the first game Petrosian won.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 The Nimzo-Indian Defence is a solid opening, hindering White's expansion in the centre with e2-e4 and at the same time keeping Black's own pawn centre flexible.

4.a3 The Sämisch variation baptized after the German Grandmaster Fritz Sämisch (1896-1975) is a sharp method of securing the two bishops and obtaining many chances in the centre. However, the price is to waste a tempo and at the same time make a rather useless move. The pawn is better placed on a2 where it might secure an outpost for a knight on b3 in some positions. The most historically famous game is F.Sämisch-E. Grünfeld, Karlsbad 1929, which Sämisch won in enterprising style.

[During the 1950s the Sämisch was actually regarded as one of the most dangerous weapons, but nowadays it's not so popular. More popular is the traditional 4.♕c2]

[or the more quiet 4.e3 (Rubinstein's variation), although this has the disadvantage that it allows the ultra-solid Hübner variation: c5 5.♘f3 ♘c6 6.♗d3 ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 d6 .]

4...♗xc3+ 5.bxc3 ♘c6!? This very difficult treatment of the Sämisch was popular at the time. Among its practitioners were players like Smyslov and Keres. Black wants to put pressure on the weak pawn on c4 immediately with the plan ...b6, ...Ba6 and ...Na5. This plan is risky since Black will lose time and White can use this time to build a strong centre and create conditions for a dangerous attack on the kingside.

[A relatively modern game in the Sämisch would continue 5...0-0 (or 5...c5 immediately) 6.e3 c5 7.♗d3 ♘c6 8.♘e2 b6 9.e4 ♘e8 10.0-0 ♗a6 11.f4 f5 (Black has to stop White from playing f4-f5) 12.♘g3 . This is one of the tabiya positions in this variation. A.Yusupov-A.Karpov, Linares 1993, continued g6 13.♗e3 cxd4 14.cxd4 d5 15.cxd5 ♗xd3 16.♕xd3 fxe4 17.♕xe4 *(or 17.♘xe4 ♕xd5)* 17...♕xd5 18.♕xd5 exd5 19.♖ac1 ♖c8 20.f5 ♘d6 21.fxg6 hxg6 22.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 with an equal game.]

6.f3

[More aggressive than the set-up beginning with 6.e3 followed by 7 Bd3 and 8 Ne2.]

6...b6 7.e4 ♗a6 8.♗g5

[A.Kotov-P.Keres, Budapest 1950, continued more energetically with 8.e5 ♘g8 9.♘h3 ♘a5 10.♕a4 ♘e7 11.♗d3 0-0 12.♗g5 h6 13.♗h4 d5 14.♗b1 , with complications.]

8...♘a5 9.e5

[Y.Geller-V.Smyslov, USSR Championship 1949, continued, after transposition, with 9.♕a4 h6 10.♗h4 ♕c8 11.♘h3 and now Smyslov should have continued ♕b7 , threatening ...Nxe4. This is one of the points of playing 9...h6, luring the bishop to h4. If White continues with 12.♗d3 Black has the strong move ♕c6 .]

9...h6 10.♗h4 g5 11.♗f2 ♘h5 It's unusual to place both knights on the rim, but it actually also happened in M.Filip-T.Petrosian, Yerevan 1965. The differences between these games is that in this game Petrosian played very actively with his knights, whereas against Filip he manoeuvred the knights back to g7 and b7, but won that game too after deciding the issue with one of his knights.

12.h4 QUESTION: Can Black fight for the initiative?
ANSWER: **f5!** The best way to fight for the initiative.

[Petrosian didn't want to act as defender after the relatively forced variation 12...♗xc4 13.hxg5 ♕xg5 14.♘h3 ♕g6 15.g4 ♗xf1 16.♔xf1 *(of course, not 16.gxh5? ♕g2 17.♖xf1 ♕xh3* and White loses another pawn *)* 16...♘g7 17.♘f4 , where White has enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn. The black knight on g7 is a very bad piece indeed and it's easy to understand why Petrosian didn't want to enter this position.]

13.exf6? This move only helps Black to find a good location for his queen.

[Kotov and Yudovich wrote in The Soviet School of Chess that White has to continue

13.hxg5 ♕xg5 and now:
A) 14.♘h3 ♕g6 15.g4 which retains good play. The triad of the Hungarian analysts, Barcza, Alfödy and Kapu, continued the analysis of this position in Die Weltmeister des Schackspiels with fxg4
A1) 16.fxg4 , but overlooked the obvious ♕e4+ .;
A2) . Better is 16.♗d3 ♕f7 17.fxg4 ♘f4 18.♗e4 *(or 18.♘xf4 ♕xf4 19.♗g6+ ♔d8)* 18...0-0-0 19.♗h4 d5 with sharp play.;
A3) 16.--;
B) 14.g4 fxg4 15.fxg4 ♘f4 16.♘h3 ♘xh3 17.♖xh3 ♖g8 18.♕f3 ♖b8 19.♗e3 ♕xg4 20.♕xg4 ♖xg4 21.♖xh6 with an equal position.;
C) 14.--]

13...♕xf6 14.c5
[14.hxg5 hxg5 15.g4 has no effect any more since the rook is defended, so Black continues ♘f4 .]

14...♗xf1 15.♔xf1 EXERCISE: What is Black's best move?
ANSWER: **g4!** The active queen and the king's knight on the rim make this pawn break possible.
[15...g4 16.fxg4?? isn't playable because of ♘g3+ , forking the king and the rook. White will now not be able to develop his king's rook for a very long time.]

16.♕d3 White threats 17 fxg4 since the g3-square is now defended by the queen.
QUESTION: How should Black deal with this?
ANSWER: **0-0!** A radical solution to Black's problems. He prevents the capture on g4 because of the mate on f2 and at the same time he solves all his development problems. What more can you ask for with only one move available? Petrosian normally always had the right timing for when and when not to castle.

17.♖e1 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a continuation for Black over the next two moves?
ANSWER: **♘f4 18.♕c2 ♘c4!** Both rim knights have now incredibly established themselves on the fifth rank and are controlling important squares really deep in White's territory. It's not common to see two knights on the edge become centralized like this. Petrosian knew how to use all squares available, even distant ones like a5 and h5 when manoeuvring his pieces. Indeed, this position with the knights controlling the squares e2, d2, e3 and d3 deserves a diagram.

19.g3
[A beautiful variation demonstrating the strength of the dancing knights is the following variation given by Kotov and Yudovich: 19.fxg4 ♘d3 20.♖e2 ♘e3+ 21.♖xe3 ♕xf2+ 22.♕xf2 ♖xf2# .]
[They think that White could continue his resistance by playing 19.♗g3 , but after the rim move ♘h5! 20.♗f2 ♖ab8 it's only a matter of time until White has to resign. He is practically a rook down with that trapped rook on h1.]

19...♕f5! 20.♖c1
[20.♕xf5 ♘d2# is another example of the triumphing knights.]

20...♕d3+
[20...♘d3 also wins.]

21.♕xd3 ♘xd3 22.♖d1 ♘db2!
Black's 'leapers' ride roughshod over White's position. **23.♖a1 gxf3** Here White should really have resigned. The rest of the game is not for sensitive souls. **24.♘h3 bxc5 25.♔g1 ♘d3 26.♔h2 ♖ab8 27.♖a2 ♖b3 28.dxc5 e5 29.g4 e4 30.g5 e3 31.gxh6 exf2 32.♘xf2 ♘xf2 33.♖xf2 ♔h7 34.♖d1 ♖f7 35.c6 d6 36.♖d3 ♖b2 37.♔g3 ♖xf2 38.♔xf2 ♘e5 39.♖d4 ♘xc6 40.♖a4 ♔xh6** . What struck me most with this marvellous game is how well Petrosian handled the pair of knights which was in the spirit of the Russian Grandmaster Chigorin. Petrosian refuted the well-known maxim of Tarrasch who was of the opinion that a knight on the rim is always bad. He's right from a static perspective, but if you look at things dynamically, even corners can be used as a springboard for a manoeuvre deep into enemy territory. Chess is full of such exceptions to the classical theories and Petrosian was particularly keen at refuting superficial theories in his games while creating his own sense of piece harmony. This game is a really instructive example of his dynamic strategic style.

0-1

E32

□ **Veltmander,I**
■ **Petrosian,T**
7: USSR Championship, Sverdlovsk 1951
[Thomas Engqvist]

According to Chessmetrics.com, Ioganess G. Veltmander (1921-) was no.79 in the world on the May 1951 rating list. His highest rating was 2553 on the April 1951 rating list.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2
One of the best ways of dealing with the Nimzo-Indian Defence is the Classical variation, but it entails the loss of tempo since the queen was already well placed on d1, protecting the centre-pawn on d4 which has now become unprotected. The main idea, except controlling the central square e4, is the desire to avoid doubled pawns on the c-file.
0-0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 White has conquered the pair of bishops, but has lost time with 5 a3 and placed the queen in an awkward position where it may be harassed later on.
b6 7.♘f3
[Today continuations like 7.♗g5 ♗b7 8.f3 *(* or *8.♘h3* are considered more critical. *)*]
7...♗b7 8.g3 This continuation aims to secure the kingside and neutralize the bishop on b7.
[Other common continuations from this position are 8.b4]
[and 8.e3 .]
8...a5 Now White has to reckon with the possibility that Black will play ...a4 at an appropriate moment, making this pawn just as strong as the ones on b2 and a3 together. This explains White's next move.
[Immediate centralization by 8...♘e4 9.♕c2 f5 is logical. After 10.♗g2 White has the tactical threat of playing the knight to g5 or d2. Black can handle it conveniently with the instructive move ♘f6!
, which manoeuvres his pieces by using the e4 point as a pivot to change places between the knight and the bishop. The game G.Lisitsin-I.Kan, Moscow 1935, continued 11.b4 ♗e4 12.♕c3 a5 13.b5 d6 14.0-0 ♕e8 where Black played according to a light-square strategy and wanted to place his queen on a light square to increase his dominance of that colour. After 15.a4 ♘bd7 the game was equal. White's best was now to play 16.♗a3 with the idea to play for the pawn break c4-c5.]
9.b3 d6 10.♗g2 ♘bd7 11.0-0 ♕e8
Typical of his style, Petrosian waits as long as possible to play the typical move ...Ne4. The psychological point is that White always has to be prepared for this move as well as other ideas when he's contemplating his next move.
12.♗b2 ♘e4 According to Petrosian, this was the right moment for the natural centralization. Chess is about timing as Fischer used to say.
13.♕c2 f5 14.♖ad1 ♘df6 15.♘e1
White is ready for 16 f3, 17 Nd3, 18 Nf4 and 19 d5 if he would have his say.
EXERCISE: What is Black's most active idea to hinder this plan?
ANSWER: The knight on f6 is superfluous since it can't move to e4, but there is another square available:
♘g4! A clever move.
[It hinders 15...♘g4 16.f3? *(* if instead *16.h3 ♘gf6 17.♘d3* White has problems playing f2-f3 because of the weakness on g3 made by the move h2-h3, so he has to put up with the strong centralized knight on e4, possibly for the whole game *)* , because of the family fork 16...♘e3]
16.♗c1 White prepares for 17 f3 again. **♕h5**
Now White must be thinking about not getting mated on h2. This is very disturbing for him and he's forced to play a weakening move.
17.h3 ♘gf6 The knight is now secured on e4 because of the weakness on g3. This is a useful idea to remember: namely that you shouldn't move the h-pawn if you want to be able to harass a knight from e4. The Trompowsky opening arising after 1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5 Ne4 is a good illustration of this. If now the original 3 h4!? then the g3-square is weakened.
18.♘d3 c5 19.dxc5
[After 19.♘f4 ♕f7 White can't play the pawn to d5.]
19...bxc5 Black is the structural winner after the exchange of the b6-pawn for White's d4-pawn, and the more compact pawn centre is the reward. The isolated a-pawn is of minor importance, especially in the middlegame.
EXERCISE: What can White do to improve his position?
ANSWER: Even the king can be used as an active piece in the middlegame.
20.♔h2!
[At the same time White is testing if Black is happy with a draw after the sequence 20.♔h2 ♘g4+ 21.♔g1 ♘gf6 . He's also preparing to drive away the knight from the centre with 21 f3. An interesting situation

indeed.]
20...e5 21.f3 ♘g5 22.♘f2 EXERCISE: What is the best way to defend the d6-pawn?
ANSWER: The best approach is to leave the a-pawn to its fate and play the developing move: **♖ad8! 23.♗d2** QUESTION: Aren't we worried about the a5-pawn?
[White doesn't have time to fix the pawn on a5 with 23.a4 because of ♘e6 with the central threat 24...Nd4.]
ANSWER: **23...a4!** This positional pawn sacrifice creates doubled a-pawns in White's position and is the best solution. In this middlegame position White's extra pawn means nothing. More important factors are the coordination between Black's pieces and his strong central control.
24.bxa4 ♘e6 25.♖b1 ♘d4 26.♕d1 ♕f7 27.e3 ♘e6 28.♕c2 f4 29.exf4
[29.gxf4 exf4 30.♘e4 is the alternative.]
29...exf4 30.g4 ♘d4 31.♕d3?
[A safer square for the queen is 31.♕d1 , even though Black takes over the game with ♗a6 32.♗c3 d5! .]
31...♗a6 Question: Should Black take the exchange or ignore it? **32.♖b5** EXERCISE: Should Black accept the sacrifice of the exchange or just ignore it?
[The defensive 32.♖fc1 is met by d5 and Black controls the whole board.]
ANSWER: Best is to improve the other knight's position.
32...♘d7! This will be followed by ...Ne5. The material gain is of less importance compared with optimizing the position of the black pieces.
[Playable is to cash in the exchange with 32...♗xb5 33.cxb5 , if it's followed up with an invasion of the major pieces along the seventh rank as in the variation ♖de8 34.b6 ♖e2 35.a5 ♕a2 .]
[However, 32...♘xb5? is, of course, a mistake after 33.cxb5 ♗b7 34.a5 when it's obvious that White's two passed pawns offer more than enough compensation for the exchange.]
33.♖e1 ♘e5 34.♖xe5 Otherwise the c4-pawn falls. **♗xb5**
[34...dxe5 is equally good.]
35.axb5
[After 35.♖h5 g6 36.axb5 gxh5 37.a4 hxg4 38.hxg4 *(* or *38.♘xg4 ♕g6)* 38...d5 Black should win.]
35...dxe5 With the threat of 36...Nxb5. **36.♕c3 ♖a8 37.♗f1 ♖a4 38.♘e4 ♖fa8 39.♗c1 ♕a7 40.h4 ♖xa3** Two exchanges up, Black can make it easy for himself and decide the game quickly by giving back some material. The really good thing about being ahead on material is that you can always give it back when you want to.
41.♗xa3 ♕xa3 42.♕xa3 ♖xa3 43.♘xc5 ♘xf3+
0-1

A43

□ **Terpugov,E**
■ **Petrosian,T**
8: USSR Championship, Moscow 1951
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian shared second place in the 1951 USSR Championship with Geller. Here he plays the tailender Evgeny Mihajlovich Terpugov (1917-). According to Chessmetrics.com, his world rank at best was 109th in 1952 and his estimated strength around 2400.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 c5 3.d5 b5 4.♗g5 ♕b6
[With present day information, 4...♗b7 probably has to be regarded as the most precise move in this position.]
5.♘c3
[V.Eingorn-M.Nedobora, Pamplona 1991, continued 5.♗xf6 ♕xf6 6.c3 ♕f5!? following the principle of the French Master and pedagogue Eugene Alexandrovich Znosko-Borovsky (1884-1954), that if you are behind in development you should combat your opponent with your existing forces. By the way, the same idea lies behind the ingenious 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3 Qd6. After 6...Qf5!? Eingorn continued 7.♘a3! a6 8.♘c2 ♗b7 9.♘e3 ♕f6 10.g3 with a slight advantage because of his strongly supported pawn on d5.]
5...h6?! Unnecessarily giving the opponent an extra move.
[5...b4 is more accurate since White wants to exchange on f6 anyway.]
6.♗xf6 Using the fact that Black cannot play 6...Qxf6 because of 7 Nxb5. 6...gxf6 is, of course, fully playable and may even have been the best recapture objectively.
exf6 Lasker has pointed out that Black must always be aware of the weakness on f5 in this kind of pawn structure, which is reminiscent of 5...exf6 in the Caro-Kann Defence (1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nf6 5 Nxf6+ exf6). EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation):

What is White's best move? I'll give you a clue: is it possible to exploit the half-open e-file or/and the tactical weakness on b5?

7.e4

[ANSWER: The imaginative 7.♕d3! is the critical move, accentuating the tactical weakness on b5 and the half-open e-file:

A) 7...b4 8.♕e4+ ♔d8 *(* not *8...♗e7? 9.d6 ♕xd6 10.♖d1!* and wins: for instance, *♕c6 11.♘d5 ♕d6 12.♘xe7 ♕xe7 13.♕xa8)* 9.♘d1! , exploiting the outpost on c4 with the manoeuvre Ne3-c4 is the critical test of Black's early recapture with the e-pawn.;

B) . If 7...c4 8.♕e4+ ♔d8 9.e3 .;

C) . Likewise, 7...a6 8.♕e4+ ♔d8 9.e3 gives White a clear advantage because of his more harmonious position, better development, strong centre and possibilities to open up the position on the queenside with a2-a4.;

D) 7...--]

7...a6

[The impatient 7...b4 helps White with the manoeuvre 8.♘a4! followed by the set-up b2-b3 and Na4-b2-c4. *(8.♘b1!?* with the idea Nbd2-c4 is playable too. *)*]

8.a4 bxa4 White doesn't mind Black's three pawn islands versus his one,

[but the problem for Black is that 8...b4 is strongly answered by 9.a5 , and if ♕c7 then 10.♘a4! with the idea of ♕xa5 11.d6 with a clear advantage because of the lack of coordination in Black's position.]

9.♘xa4 ♕c7 10.♗e2 d6 11.0-0 ♗e7 12.♘d2 ♘d7 EXERCISE (planning): Can you suggest a general plan for White?

ANSWER: **13.♗g4!?** An interesting idea, planning the placement of the bishop on the weak square f5. Remember Lasker's observation.

[13.f4]

[or 13.♘c4 in either order are also good moves to keep a steady advantage for White. In such a situation White has some possibilities of placing a knight on f5 which is even more dangerous there than a bishop.]

13...0-0 14.♖a3 White is using the famous device of the rook lift where he plans the transfer of the queen's rook to the kingside in only two moves. The rook lift saves a lot of time.

♖b8 15.♖g3 ♔h8 16.♗f5 QUESTION: White is clearly planning to attack Black's kingside with an activation of his queen. What can Black do about this?

ANSWER: **♕d8!** A good prophylactic move which anticipates White's forthcoming attack. It's striking how often the queen is best placed on its original square. **17.♕g4 ♖g8 18.♕h5 ♕e8!** This is also very often a good square for the queen. **19.b3 ♗f8**

This is almost a Steinitzesque position. Only the knight on d7 is missing from the last rank.

20.♕e2?!

[White overlooked 20.♘c4! with the idea of g6 21.♘xd6 ♕e7 22.♘xf7+ ♕xf7 23.♗xg6 ♕e7 24.♖d1 , with a clear advantage.]

20...g6 21.♗h3?!

[21.♗g4 is better to have the queen defended and make it more difficult for Black to play the liberating ...f5.]

21...f5 22.f4?!

[22.♕f3 ♘e5 *(* after *22...fxe4 23.♗xd7 ♗xd7 24.♘xe4* White threatens both Nf6 and Nxd6 followed by Qf6+ *)* 23.♕e3 is better, thereby still keeping a slight edge.]

22...♘f6?!

[After 22...♗g7 Black is perfectly all right.]

23.♖e1?!

[It's better to defend the central pawn with the knight on the rim. After 23.♘c3 fxe4 24.♗xc8 ♕xc8 25.♘cxe4 ♘xd5 26.c4 f5 27.cxd5 fxe4 28.♕xe4 ♕f5 29.♕xf5 gxf5 30.♖d3 White has the more comfortable position.]

23...fxe4 24.♗xc8?

[And now correct is 24.♘xe4 ♕xe4 25.♕xe4 ♘xe4 26.♖xe4 with an equal position.]

24...♕xc8 25.♘xe4 EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Is it playable for Black to take the pawn on d5? If so, what are the consequences? If you don't take on d5, what do you play instead?

ANSWER: **♘xe4** This is probably the best move in a practical game of chess and it is also consistent with Petrosian's style.

[Why enter complications with 25...♘xd5 which you are not sure about? Nimzowitsch, who influenced Petrosian a lot, wrote that it's better to play a positional continuation leading to a slight advantage than to try a complicated variation which perhaps leads to an advantage. Anyway, this is for practical chess. If you are interested, like Alekhine was, in looking for the truth in chess, I recommend you play through the following variations in your head.

26.♕d2 ♕f5 27.♖d3 and now:
A) 27...♘xf4? 28.♖xd6! ♗xd6 29.♘xd6 ♕g4 30.♘xc5 and White's active knights secure enough compensation for the exchange sacrifice.;
B) 27...♘b4! 28.♖xd6 ♗xd6 29.♘xd6 ♕xc2 30.♘xf7+ ♔h7! 31.♖e7 ♖g7 32.♘g5+ ♔h8 *(* or *32...hxg5 33.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 34.♕d7+* with a draw – check this for yourself! *)* 33.♘f7+ ♔g8! 34.♘xh6+ ♔f8 with a slight advantage for Black. In this position both White's knights are located on the rim.;
C) 27...--]

26.♕xe4 ♗g7 The bishop seems to be shooting at empty squares, but it is still very useful. Firstly, it can be located on the outpost at d4 with domination of the knight at a4. Secondly, it'll be impossible for the knight to reach the excellent c4-square from where it would put pressure on the weak d6-pawn. Thirdly, except controlling b2, it's also handy that a1 is under Black's control. In some cases a rook might move to a1, putting pressure on the a6-pawn, but then White has to solve the problems with the a4-knight first.

27.♖d3
[It useless to defend the f4-pawn with 27.♖f3 . After ♖b4 28.♕e2 c4! Black has the clearly preferable position.]

27...♖b4 28.♕f3
[28.c4 leads to a quick defeat after ♕b7 29.♕f3 ♗d4+ 30.♔f1 ♖b8 because of the weakness on b3. If now 31.♖b1?? then ♖xa4 , using the pin on the b-file.]

28...c4! The decisive pawn break. **29.♖d2 cxb3 30.cxb3 ♕f5**
[30...♖e8 , not losing control of the central file, is even stronger.]

31.g3 EXERCISE: How should Black proceed?
ANSWER: It's a well-known principle from the Russian school that if you don't know what to do you, activate your worst-positioned piece. 31...Rgb8 is therefore the logical move. The rook on g8 is really situated on a bad square. However, the game continued with the inferior:

g5?! 32.♕d3?
[White should as a last resource activate his own worst-placed piece with 32.♘b2 , and if ♖gb8 play 33.♘c4 ♖xb3 34.♕e4 *(* not *34.♘xd6? ♕g6)* 34...♕xe4 35.♖xe4 ♗f8 36.♖a2 with some small drawing chances, although of course his position is difficult after ♖d3 . Now, though, it's just a piece of cake for Petrosian.]

32...♕xd3 33.♖xd3 gxf4 34.♖e7 fxg3 35.hxg3 ♖gb8 36.♖xf7 ♖xb3 37.♖xb3 ♖xb3 38.♔g2 ♖b4 39.♖f4 ♗d4 . The knight at a4 was a very sad piece indeed. The lesson to be drawn from this game, from White's point of view, is the importance of activating the worst-located piece, particularly when there's nothing more useful to do.
0-1

C00

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Barcza,G**
9: Stockholm-Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Interzonal tournament in 1952 took place both in Stockholm and in the fashionable resort of Saltsjöbaden outside Stockholm. It was won by the 40-year old Alexander Alexandrovich Kotov (1913-1981) with the incredible score of 16½/20.
Petrosian's goal was to get in the top five so as to qualify for the Candidates. He managed to win seven games, lost none and drew thirteen games, thereby sharing second place together with Taimanov. In the thirteenth round Petrosian met the Hungarian player Gideon Barcza (1911-1986), who subsequently became a grandmaster in 1954.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d3 e6 4.♘bd2 d5 5.g3 Introducing the King's Indian Attack or the King's Indian Reversed. This method of the coiled spring was successfully employed by great masters like Leonid Zakharovich Stein (1934-1973) and Fischer in the 1960s. In effect White is playing the King's Indian with an extra tempo.
This opening scheme has the practical advantage that it concentrates on the broad sweep of chess ideas, rather than working on long and detailed sequences of play. There are also the additional psychological advantages of surprise value and that some players may be confused by a familiar position which is in fact subtly different because of White's extra tempo.

♘f6
[Another scheme of development which makes the kingside safer is 5...g6 followed by ...Bg7 and ...Nge7.]

6.♗g2 ♗e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.♖e1 EXERCISE: Should Black play 8...b6 or 8...b5? Explain

your reasoning!
b6?! ANSWER: This is too passive. In this kind of position where White has the edge on the kingside and Black on the queenside, it's vital to play as actively as possible and open lines, diagonals and, if possible, create outposts for the knights.
[More active is 8...b5 with the idea of 9.e5 ♘d7 . Black doesn't need to fear 10.a4?! because of the early line-opening with bxa4 . His attack on the queenside will develop faster than White's attack on the kingside after 11.♖xa4 a5 followed by ...Nb6 and ...a4.]
9.e5 ♘e8?! Too passive. The knight is only working as half a machine on the last rank.
[More active was 9...♘d7 , controlling six squares instead of four and putting pressure on the enemy pawn at e5.]
10.♘f1 ♔h8 11.♗f4 Petrosian plays in the spirit of Nimzowitsch and overprotects the most important strategical point in White's position, the pawn on e5. This pawn secures White a space advantage and attacking chances on the kingside.
f5 EXERCISE: What is best? To capture en passant with 12 exf6 or play 12 h4?
ANSWER: **12.h4!** A useful move preventing Black from grabbing space with ...g5. Sometimes it's good to move the h-pawn one or two steps, sometimes it's bad. Indeed, it's important to make a detailed analysis of the position to found out when the exception is the rule.
[12.exf6 ♗xf6 13.c3 is playable and it's a matter of taste how you want to play. In principle though, mainly because of the super pawn on e5, you can understand why Petrosian stuck to the main continuation. However, knowledge, understanding and skills are necessary abilities to play such blocked centre positions with success.]
12...♘c7 EXERCISE: Petrosian now moved the knight on f1. Which square is the most reliable one for it?
ANSWER: **13.♘1d2!** The knight does nothing useful on h2 or e3 because of the influence of the f5-pawn, so it was definitely best to go back to d2. Such moves are sometimes difficult to find. It's important always to adapt to the new situation arising on the board after every move and half-move.
How did Petrosian find such moves? One method may be that he was just trying to improve the worst-placed piece. The other minor pieces' placement could hardly be improved and the best placements for the major pieces are for the moment not yet decided.
♗b7
[Petrosian gives 13...d4? 14.♘c4 ♘d5 15.♗g5 b5? 16.♘d6 ♘xe5 17.♘xe5 ♕xd6 18.♗xd5 followed by 19 Bxe7 with a won position.]
14.c3 b5?! QUESTION: What was wrong with Black going ...b5?
[This move should have been replaced with the central thrust 14...d4 , as has been suggested by Ragozin. The main idea is to transfer the knight to d5.]
ANSWER: Korchnoi once said: "Against Petrosian, as against no one else, it was dangerous to advance your pawns..."
15.♘b3! The white knight is targeting c5 which was weakened by Black's last move. White is planning to increase the pressure with Bg5 or Be3. **a5 16.♗g5 ♘a6 17.d4 c4**
[Petrosian has analysed the pawn exchange 17...cxd4 18.cxd4 as advantageous for White because of the idea of transferring the b3-knight to d3 via c1. From d3 it controls the important squares c5 and f4.]
[Ragozin's suggestion 17...h6 is rebuffed by 18.♗xe7 ♕xe7 19.h5 followed by Nh4 with a clear advantage to White.]
18.♘c1 The knight is heading for f4 via e2, putting pressure on the other weakness on e6.
♘c7 Barcza plays passively in this game.
[More active is 18...b4 .]
19.♘e2 ♔g8 It's difficult to understand the purpose of Barcza's king moves in this game. It seems he's just waiting whereas Petrosian improves his position move by move.
20.♘f4 ♕e8
[20...♖b8 is more purposeful than the move played.]
21.♗xe7 ♕xe7 22.♘g5 g6?
[Black needed to secure his pawn chain with 22...♕d7 and now White can exploit the situation.]
23.a4! ♗a6? EXERCISE (combination alert): White to move and win by force!
[Better is 23...b4 , but Black nevertheless has a tough situation after the forced sequence 24.♘gxe6! ♘xe6 25.♘xd5 ♕f7 26.♘f6+ ♔g7 27.d5 ♘xe5 28.dxe6 ♕xf6 29.♗xb7 with a clear advantage to White.]
ANSWER: Black's pawn chain collapses like a house of cards after White's next move:

24.♘fxe6!
[Also 24.♘gxe6! ♘xe6 25.♗xd5 ♘cd8 26.♗xa8 ♘xf4 27.axb5 ♗xb5 28.gxf4 is winning.]
24...♘xe6 25.♗xd5 ♖ad8 26.♗xe6+ ♔g7 27.axb5 ♗xb5 28.d5 f4 29.♕g4 h6 30.♘h3 . An impressive game by Petrosian, exploiting Black's weak square at c5 and the weakness of the pawn at e6, the base of the black pawn chain.
1-0

B93

□ **Szabo,L**
■ **Petrosian,T**
10: Stockholm-Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952
[Thomas Engqvist]

In the fifteenth round Petrosian played the Hungarian Grandmaster Laszlo Szabo (1917-1998), who also had a good tournament and qualified for the Candidates by sharing fifth place.
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.f4
[Against 6.♗g5 e6 7.f4 Petrosian answered with the ultra-sharp Polugaevsky Variation b5 , *(* the Poisoned Pawn Variation *7...♕b6;* and the solid *7...♗e7* . *)*]
6...♕c7 Petrosian plays flexibly and keeps White in the dark over whether he will place his e-pawn on e6 or e5. **7.♗e2**
[J.Durao-T.Petrosian, Sochi 1977, continued 7.♗d3 g6 8.0-0 ♗g7 9.♘f3 ♗g4 10.♕e1 ♗xf3 11.♖xf3 ♘bd7 12.♔h1 e6 13.♗d2 ♘b6 14.♖d1 ♘fd7 15.♗f1 ♖d8 16.♕h4 h6 17.e5 dxe5 18.♘e4 0-0 19.♖c3 ♕b8 20.f5? too aggressive; *(20.♖g3* is the last chance to keep the game in a dynamic balance *)* 20...exf5 21.♗xh6 fxe4 22.♖h3 .
EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Can you give two different defensive methods for dealing with White's attack?
ANSWER: ♘f6 *(* another defence is *22...f5 23.♗xg7 ♔xg7 24.♕h7+ ♔f6* when Black is winning *)* 23.♗xg7 ♘h5! . Petrosian's active defence with the knight on the rim is impressive, blocking any invasion on the h-file even though that isn't dangerous, as is also proved by the variation 22...f5. This is true prophylactic chess in combination with a counterattack down the d-file. Play concluded 24.♖xd8 ♖xd8 25.♗f6 ♖d1 26.♕f2 ♘d5 27.♗g5 ♘hf4 28.♗xf4 exf4 29.♔g1 ♘e3 30.♖xe3 fxe3 31.♕xe3 ♕e5 32.♔f2 ♕f5+ 0-1.]
7...e5 8.♘f3 ♗e6
[Another set-up is 8...♗e7 followed by ...0-0 placing the light-squared bishop on b7 after ...b5.]
9.f5!? An aggressive move typical of the style of Szabo. The disadvantage is that it releases the tension from the centre so it may be easier for Black to play ...d5 at a later stage.
♗c4 10.♗g5 ♘bd7 11.♘d2 QUESTION: How should Black handle the threat to the bishop?
♗xe2
[ANSWER: There is an interesting continuation with 11...d5 12.♘xd5 ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♗c5! with good play for the pawn. This continuation might very well have been chosen by a player like Tal.]
[Less convincing though is 11...b5 12.♗xc4 bxc4 13.♕e2 ♖c8 14.0-0-0 ♗e7 15.g4 , leading to a comfortable edge for White.]
12.♕xe2 ♖c8 13.a3 Too passive.
[Petrosian's more active suggestion 13.♗xf6 ♘xf6 14.0-0-0 , followed by Nf1-e3 with the idea to place the knight on d5, looks better and is the logical course.]
13...♕b6 14.0-0-0? Too risky.
EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Can you calculate the consequences of the exchange sacrifice on c3 and make a judgement? Is it correct or not?
[Safer continuations are either 14.♘b3]
[or 14.♖b1 .]
ANSWER: It's without any doubt correct to sacrifice the exchange. Only a three-move calculation and a correct judgement are required before executing the sacrifice.
14...♖xc3! 15.bxc3 d5 16.♘b1 The only move to defend the broken queenside. Petrosian wrote in his annotations that "the weakness of the white pawns and the insecure position of the white king give [Black] sufficient counterplay."
♘xe4
[16...dxe4 was Petrosian's original intention, but he changed his mind. After Black has completed his development he has enough compensation because of White's bad knight and destroyed pawn position on the queenside.]
17.♖xd5 EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Can you work out the most precise continuation for Black?

♘xg5?!

[ANSWER: 17...♕xb1+! is the most precise move with the forced continuation 18.♔xb1 ♘xc3+ 19.♔b2 ♘xe2 20.♖e1 *(* after *20.♖hd1? ♘d4* with the idea of *21.c3? f6* Black is winning because of the threat of ... Nb6 *)* 20...♗e7! , but this move was overlooked by Petrosian in his calculations. If 21.♗xe7 ♘f4 22.♖dxe5 ♘xe5 23.♖xe5 ♔d7 the game is about equal.]

18.h4

[More exact is 18.♖hd1! . After ♗c5 we have the following variations:

A) 19.♖xe5+ ♘xe5 20.♕xe5+ ♘e6 21.fxe6 0-0 22.exf7+ ♖xf7 23.♕d5 leads to an equal position.;

B) 19.♖1d3! 0-0 20.♖xd7 e4 21.♖3d5 e3 22.♖e5 keeps a slight edge for White. *(22.--)*;

C) 19.--]

18...♗c5?

[Best is 18...♗e7! 19.♖hd1 *(* after *19.hxg5 ♗xg5+ 20.♘d2 ♕c7* Black's queen is on the right square, controlling all the important points *)* 19...♘f6 20.♖xe5 ♘ge4 21.♖xe4 ♘xe4 22.♕xe4 . In his calculations Petrosian thought White had obtained a winning position, but this isn't the case if Black continues ♕c7 23.♖e1 h5! . Black's rook will evidently use the device of the rook lift and develop via h6!]

19.hxg5

[Petrosian may have hoped for the seemingly dangerous 19.♖xe5+ ♘xe5 20.♕xe5+ ♔d7 21.hxg5 when Black secures a clear advantage after ♗e3+ 22.♘d2 ♖e8 23.♕g3 ♕c6 .]

19...♗e3+ 20.♘d2 ♗xg5 21.♕d3

[Alternatively, 21.♕c4 ♕c6 22.♕xc6 bxc6 23.♖a5 ♔e7 24.♔d1 ♖d8 25.♔e2 ♗xd2 26.♔xd2]

[and 21.♖h3 f6 22.♕h5+ ♔e7 23.♕g4 are also strong continuations where Black's compensation is highly questionable. In the former variation Black has pawn weaknesses on the queenside and in the latter ...Qb4+ will make White's pawns straight on the queenside.]

21...♕c7 22.♔d1?

[Critical is 22.♖e1 f6 23.♖d6 followed by Re6 and Qd5 when White controls the situation with his strong centralized forces.]

22...♗xd2 Of course the knight centralization with 23 Ne4 shouldn't be allowed. **23.♔xd2 f6** This secures the point on e5 and Black's knight is free to move.

[The immediate 23...♘b6? is a serious error after 24.♖xe5+ ♕xe5 25.♖e1 ♕xe1+ 26.♔xe1 0-0 27.♕e4 and White is winning. Black's knight and queenside pawns are not stable in this position.]

24.♔c1 ♘b6 25.♖d6

[In his annotations Petrosian had most respect for the variation 25.♖d1 ♘xd5 26.♕xd5 ♕c8 27.♕d6 with the threat of transferring the rook to c5. That said, Black can defend successfully with ♖f8 28.♖d5 ♔f7 and keep a clear advantage because of his extra pawn and better structure.]

25...0-0 26.♖d1

[26.♖h4 with the idea of 27 Rb4 is easily parried by a5 .]

26...♕c5 27.♖d8 ♕xa3+ 28.♔b1

EXERCISE: What is the strongest continuation for Black?

h5? The idea is to separate White's kingside pawns and also prepare the attacking move ... Na4. This move was actually given an exclam by Petrosian, but it is not correct.

[ANSWER: Correct is instead 28...h6! with the idea of ...Na4.]

29.♖xf8+

[29.♖h1! is the move which gives Black trouble. The main idea if Black tries to checkmate White with ♘a4? is to checkmate Black with 30.♕d5+ followed by mate next move.]

29...♕xf8 30.♕e4?

[30.♖h1! is still the most troublesome move for Black who has a weak pawn on h5.]

30...♕e7 31.♕b4 ♕c7 32.♕d6?

[It's necessary to keep the queens on the board with 32.♕h4 . After ♘c4 White can defend with 33.♔c1 and after ♘d6 34.♕xh5 ♕xc3! 35.♕f3! ♕xf3 *(* or *35...♕a1+ 36.♔d2 ♕d4+* with an equal position *)* 36.gxf3 ♘xf5 37.♖d7 b5 38.♔d2 the game is drawn.]

32...♕xd6 33.♖xd6 ♘c4 White's pawns are weak on f5 and g2. **34.♖d7**

[Passive defence with 34.♖d3 prevents the knight intrusion to e3, but allows ♔h7 followed by ...g6 with good winning chances for Black.]

34...b5 35.♖a7 ♘e3 36.♖xa6 ♘xg2 37.♔c1

[The alternative continuation 37.♖b6 h4 38.♖xb5 h3 39.♔a2 e4 40.c4 e3 41.c5 e2 42.♖b1 e1♕ 43.♖xe1 ♘xe1 44.c6 h2 wins easily for Black.]

37...h4 38.♔d2 h3 39.♖a1 ♘h4 40.c4

bxc4 41.♖h1
[41.♔c3 ♘xf5 simply transposes, since White also loses after 42.♔xc4 ♘g3 43.♔d5 h2 44.c4 h1♕+ 45.♖xh1 ♘xh1 46.c5 ♘g3 47.c6 ♘f5 .]
41...♘xf5 42.♔c3 ♘d6 43.♖xh3 ♔f7 44.♖h7 f5 45.♔b4 f4 46.♔c5 EXERCISE: What is the simplest win for Black?
ANSWER: **f3! 47.♖h1**
[After 47.♔xd6 f2 48.♖h1 e4 49.♖f1 e3 50.♔d5 ♔g8 51.♔xc4 e2 one of the pawns will be rewarded with a crown.]
47...e4 . It was this victory which assured Petrosian his qualification to the Candidates tournament.
0-1

E86

□ **Stoltz,G**
■ **Petrosian,T**
11: Bucharest 1953
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Swedish player Gösta Stoltz (1904-1963), who became a grandmaster in 1954, had a complicated way of playing with a pronounced tactical disposition.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 d6 3.♘c3 g6 Petrosian shared with many other Soviet Grandmasters an increased interest in this dynamic opening during the 1950s and following decades.
4.e4 ♗g7 5.f3 This move identifies the Sämisch Variation which is characterised by consolidation of the central squares e4 and d4. **e5 6.♘ge2**
[6.dxe5 dxe5 7.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 8.♗e3 ♗e6 9.0-0-0+ ♘fd7 was played in A.Yusupov-F. Nijboer, Groningen 1992, but if there should be any point of playing like this, it's vital to control the d4-square with the preparatory move 10.b3 , so as to be able to answer ♘c6 with 11.♘ge2 and the c4-pawn is not hanging.]
6...0-0 7.♗e3
[An interesting line was played in G. Timoshchenko-J.Yrjölä, Helsinki 1986: 7.♗g5 ♘c6 8.d5 ♘d4 9.♘xd4 exd4 10.♕xd4 h6 11.♗xf6 ♗xf6 12.♕d2 with maybe a slight advantage for White, although the position is not so easy to fathom because of the weak dark squares in White's position.]
7...♘bd7 8.♕d2 c6 9.0-0-0 a6 10.♗h6
QUESTION: Should Black play 10...b5 immediately or play 10...Bxh6 first and then 11...b5?
[10.♔b1 is the main move, but you can understand Stoltz's concerns and desire to exchange the bishops. Twenty years ago it was proved that Black can create strong pressure on the dark squares in White's camp and even sacrifice a central pawn for this purpose, especially if the middlegame phase is maintained. The continuation is b5 11.♘c1 exd4! (the right moment to release the tension in the centre considering the passive knight on c1) 12.♗xd4 and now:
A) 12...♖e8 13.♗xf6 *(* the normal *13.♘b3* is answered by *♗f8!* bolstering the d6-pawn *)* 13...♕xf6! 14.♕xd6 ♕xd6 15.♖xd6 ♘e5 and in the middlegame without queens Black has good enough coordination to compensate for the pawn minus, as was proved in the game A. Shirov-G.Kasparov, Dortmund 1992.;
B) 12...b4 13.♘a4 c5 14.♗xf6 ♗xf6 15.♕xd6 ♗e7 16.♕g3 ♗h4 17.♕h3 ♗e7 18.♕g3 ♗h4 19.♕h3 and a draw was agreed in V.Kramnik-G.Kasparov, Linares 1993.;
C) 12...--]
10...b5
[ANSWER: Current practice has shown that it's better to decentralize White's queen with 10...♗xh6! 11.♕xh6 and then continue with b5 , since the queen is needed on d2 to defend the queenside.]
11.♗xg7 ♔xg7 12.g4 ♕a5 13.♘g3?
Stoltz was famous for his attacking skill, but this is too aggressive.
EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): How should Black continue?
[The defensive move 13.a3 is the required course.]
13...exd4?
[ANSWER: White's queenside looks fairly safe after 13...b4 14.♘b1 ♕xa2 15.♕xb4 exd4 16.♕xd6 c5 17.h4 ♖b8 18.♖d2 when his queen is located irritatingly deep in Black's position. From this point of view it's understandable that Petrosian didn't feel reluctant to steer into this position. Objectively speaking though, Black seems to be on top after ♘e8! *(* if *18...♕b3 19.♕f4)* 19.♕e7 *(* or *19.♕f4 ♖b6* with ideas like ... Rf6 and ...Nd6 *)* 19...♕b3 20.♗d3 ♘ef6 .]
14.♕xd4 b4 15.♘b1 ♕g5+ 16.♕d2
[It's better to activate the knight with 16.♘d2 and after ♕e5 *(* the other option is *16...♕c5*

, which forces the exchange of queens immediately after *17.♘b3 ♕xd4 18.♘xd4* when Black is okay after *♘e5* followed by ... c6-c5 *)* , an amusing variation may arise: 17.♘b3 ♘e8 18.f4 ♕xd4 19.♘xd4 ♘b8 and Black's pieces are all gathered on the back rank, except the king. The position should be nearly equal.]

16...♕xd2+ 17.♖xd2

[17.♘xd2 looks to be a better try to solve the problem with the passive knight.]

17...♘e8 18.f4 ♘c5 19.♗e2 a5 20.♗d1 ♖a7 21.h3 ♖e7 22.♗c2 a4 23.b3 QUESTION: Should Black capture with 22...axb3 or play 22...a3?

axb3 This is more direct since it creates a weakness on b3. The eternal black knight on c5 is already attacking it and Black can improve his position further with a timely ...f5 in conjunction with ...Re3, putting lateral pressure on b3.

[ANSWER: 23...a3 is definitely an interesting move, but Petrosian chose to capture.]

24.axb3 f5 25.gxf5 gxf5 26.♖g2

[26.exf5 is good too. The idea is ♖e3 27.♖g2 ♔f7 *(* not *27...♘xb3+?? 28.♔b2* and Black loses material *)* 28.♘f1 ♖f3 when Black wins back the pawn.]

26...fxe4! 27.♘xe4+

[27.♘f5+? ♔f6 28.♘xe7 ♔xe7 leads to a strategically won position for Black. White's pieces are too passive and Black has an active game with pressure on f4 in conjunction with ...d5.]

27...♔h8 28.♘xc5 dxc5 29.♖g5 ♖xf4 30.♖hg1? You can understand Stoltz's desire to activate his pieces,

[but restoration of material was necessary with 30.♖xc5 ♘f6 31.♘d2 to keep the game balanced.]

30...♖g7 31.♘d2 ♗xh3 32.♗xh7?

[32.♘e4 is the last chance to keep some drawing chances alive. One possible line is ♗f5 33.♘xc5 ♖xg5 34.♖xg5 ♘d6 35.♗xf5 ♘xf5 36.♘d3 ♖f3 37.♘e5! ♖f1+ 38.♔d2 ♘d4 39.♖g3 and White is still alive.]

32...♖xg5 33.♖xg5 ♔xh7 34.♖h5+ ♔g6 35.♖xh3 ♘d6 36.♖e3 ♔f6 37.♖f3 ♔e5 38.♖e3+

[38.♖xf4 ♔xf4 leads to a winning knight ending. Botvinnik used to say that knight endings are like pawn endings.]

38...♔f6 39.♖f3 ♔f5 Petrosian didn't want to activate White's knight unnecessarily by capturing on f3. It's better to activate your own position than help your opponent.

40.♖h3 ♔e5 41.♔c2 ♘f5 42.♔d3 ♖g4 43.♖f3 ♖d4+ 44.♔e2 ♖d8 45.♖h3 ♘d4+ 46.♔e3 ♘f5+ 47.♔e2 ♔f4 48.♖f3+ ♔g4 49.♖d3 ♘d4+ 50.♔f2 ♖f8+ 51.♔e1 ♖e8+ 52.♔f2 ♔f4 Zugzwang. **53.♔f1 ♖e3 54.♖xe3 ♔xe3 55.♔e1 ♔d3** . All the white pawns will fall, so White resigned.

0-1

B59

□ **Pilnik,H**
■ **Petrosian,T**
12: Argentina vs.USSR, Buenos Aires 1954
[Thomas Engqvist]

The 40-year-old professional grandmaster Hermann Pilnik (1914-1981) surprisingly became a candidate after sharing seventh place in the 1955 Interzonal tournament in Gothenburg. It's astonishing how simple it looks as Petrosian outmanoeuvres him with a focus on the dark squares.

1.e4 c5 Like many other Soviets during his time, Petrosian was attracted by the counterchances inherent in the Sicilian Defence. **2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗e2 e5** QUESTION: Is it positionally correct to weaken the d5-square and the d6-pawn in this fashion?
ANSWER: Opocensky's or Boleslavsky's Variation seems to weaken the d5-square and the d6-pawn, but it's not so simple to exploit these weaknesses because of the many dynamic possibilities inherent in the position. Interestingly Capablanca didn't play the Sicilian in so many games because in his opinion "Black's game is full of holes".

[Other solid alternatives are 6...e6 , the Scheveningen Variation]
[and 6...g6 , the Dragon Variation.]

7.♘b3

[The alternatives are worth investigating a little bit in detail: 7.♘xc6 (Louma's continuation) bxc6 has the advantage that the c-file is blocked, but it's still a questionable variation, mainly because Black's centre is improved. The newly-opened b-file isn't such a bad asset either, even though it's further away from the centre. It may actually help Black generate some weaknesses in the white queenside in the near future by provoking b2-b3.]

[7.♘f3 is also harmless if answered by h6! when White is prevented from increasing his control over the d5-square by exchanging his bishop for knight with Bg5 and a timely Bxf6. This was played in G. Stoltz-I.Boleslavsky, Groningen 1946.]
[7.♘f5 is unfavourable, due to the reply ♗xf5 8.exf5 d5 and Black has a strong centre.]

7...♗e7 8.0-0

[QUESTION: What happens after 8.♗g5 ? ANSWER: When the white knight isn't on f3 defending the bishop, the typical combination ♘xe4! is strong. The following variations are possible:

A) 9.♗xe7 ♘xc3 10.♗xd8 ♘xd1 11.♖xd1 ♔xd8 12.♖xd6+ ♔c7 when Black's position is preferable because the centre pawn on e5 is stronger than the White wing pawn on c2. It's logical to place the king on the same side as White's pawn majority, but it's playable to go to the other side too.;

B) 9.♘xe4 ♗xg5 10.♘xd6+ *(10.♘xg5? ♕xg5 11.♕xd6 ♕xg2 12.0-0-0 ♕g5+ 13.♖d2 ♕e7* and White loses a pawn for nothing *)* 10...♔e7 11.♘xc8+ ♖xc8 with an equal position.;

C) 9.--]

8...0-0 9.♗e3

[Again 9.♗g5 is questionable in view of ♘xe4! : 10.♘xe4 *(10.♗xe7? ♘xc3 11.♗xd8 ♘xd1 12.♗c7 ♘xb2* and White doesn't have enough compensation *)* 10...♗xg5 11.♘xd6 ♕e7 12.♗f3 ♖d8 13.♘xc8 ♖axc8 14.♕e2 f5 and Black can't complain.]

9...♗e6 10.♗f3

[Levenfish's suggestion 10.f4 activates White's king's rook, but is strongly answered by the central counter punch d5! 11.exd5 *(11.f5?!* is also good for Black after *d4 12.fxe6 fxe6!)* 11...♘xd5 12.♘xd5 ♕xd5 13.f5 ♕e4! and Black has equalized.]

10...a5

[Petrosian wasn't interested in exchanging his knight on c6 for the one on b3 with 10...♘a5 11.♘xa5 ♕xa5 , but it would have given Black a comfortable position. After 12.♕d2 Black can develop calmly with ♖fc8 and needn't fear 13.♘d5? *(* .Boleslavsky-M. Euwe, Zurich 1953, continued *13.♖fd1 ♕b4 14.♖ab1 h6!* with future ideas like ...Nh7 to get rid of the bad bishop with ...Bg5 or the knight manoeuvre ...Nd7 and ...Nc5 *)*
13...♕xd2 14.♘xe7+ ♔f8 15.♗xd2 due to the in-between move ♖xc2!
. If White tries to catch the rook by trapping it with 16.♗c3 ♔xe7 17.♗d1 , Black wins two pawns with continuing pressure on White's position after the exchange sacrifice ♖xc3 followed by 18...Nxe4.]

11.♘d5

[The standard reply 11.a4 is answered by ♘b4 with pressure on the c2-pawn.]

11...♗xd5 Normally it's okay to exchange on d5 when Black's pawn is still on b7 so that the c6-square remains protected. **12.exd5 ♘b8**

[12...♘b4 is also playable with the idea of manoeuvring the knight to c5 via a6.]

13.a4 This prevents Black from playing ...a4 once and for all,

[but in the game H.Pilnik-V.Smyslov, Amsterdam Candidates 1956, it was postponed for a while. The continuation was 13.♕d3 ♘fd7 *(* the idea is to answer *13...a4* with *14.♘d2* when the harmony in White's position remains intact *)* 14.♗g4 ♕c7 15.a4 ♘b6 16.♘d2 ♘8d7 and White has a small symbolic advantage because of his pair of bishops.]

13...♘bd7 14.♗e2 The bishop looks more useful on the diagonal f1-a6 where it can manoeuvre to d3 or be placed on the outpost on b5 depending on circumstances.

♘b6 Putting pressure on d5 and force White to move his c-pawn. **15.c4** White's bishop has become worse since it's hemmed in by two of its own pawns in the centre. **♘bd7**

Mission is accomplished so Petrosian manoeuvres back to d7. **16.♘d2 ♘e8**

17.♔h1 EXERCISE: White's move looks a little bit passive and his idea is not entirely clear. How should Black best exploit it to carry out his own plans?

[Levenfish recommended instead activity on the queenside with 17.♖b1 followed by b4 and, indeed, after ♗g5 18.♗xg5 ♕xg5 19.b4 axb4 20.♖xb4 ♘c5 21.♘b3!
, with the idea to liquidate the strong knight on c5, the position is equal.]

ANSWER: **17...♗g5!** Following Botvinnik's famous advice that you should try to exchange bishops when you play for control of a complex of weak squares. In this case the dark squares are clearly weak on b4 and c5, so White's dark-squared bishop should be exchanged to secure those squares for the black pieces.

18.♗xg5 ♕xg5 The weaknesses on the dark

squares c5, b4, d4 and f4 in White's position have been further accentuated after the trade of bishops. **19.♖a3** A clever and unconventional way of developing the rook via the a-file. The main idea is to place the rook in front of its own pawns and in this way secure a file without using a pawn break or a pawn exchange. A useful device to remember and emulate.

♕e7

[The more active figuration 19...♘ef6 20.♖g3 ♕f4 21.♖f3 ♕d4 shows an alternative way of exploiting the weakened dark squares in White's position. Here we clearly see the benefits of exchanging the dark-squared bishops. With the text move Petrosian showed he's not in any hurry to exploit those weak squares. The long-term weaknesses cannot really be repaired he seems to have reasoned.]

20.♖h3 EXERCISE (planning): How did Black continue? Warning: this is difficult!

ANSWER: **♘ef6** The idea is to improve the harmony in Black's position and to play ...Nc5 followed by ...Nfd7. Petrosian was an excellent player with his knights, perhaps inspired by the first really great Russian player Chigorin, who treated them like a pair of bishops. He placed the knights on different colours for the purpose of increasing the harmony between them.

[I think many would have chosen 20...f5 followed by ...Nef6 according to Philidor's and Kmoch's principles of the pawn phalanx or the pawn duo.

QUESTION: Why didn't Petrosian play like this?

ANSWER: Maybe he wanted White to be able to attack only on the dark squares. If White attacked the pawn on e5, Black knew the odds were on his side because of his strong control of the dark squares. This is also a good example of Petrosian's ambition not to play actively, but rather to paralyze his opponent's intentions of finding targets.]

[20...♘c5 looks reasonable, but after 21.♘b3 White has a target and can play for an exchange of the strong knight. The variation ♘xa4 22.♕a1 ♘c5 23.♘xa5! followed by b2-b4 was probably not to Petrosian's liking.]

21.♗d3 g6 Securing the kingside before playing the knight to c5.

[EXERCISE (combination alert/calculation): What would happen if 21...♘c5 was played? Analyze the consequences.

ANSWER: 22.♗xh7+ ♘xh7 23.♕h5 and White is winning after f6 24.♕xh7+ ♔f7 25.♘f3 ♖h8 26.♘g5+! fxg5 27.♖f3+ .]

22.♖e1 ♕d8 23.b3 ♔g7 Also the king is activated thanks to Black's dark-square control. **24.♘f1 ♘c5** Interestingly Petrosian played two, not strictly necessary prophylactic moves in 22...Qd8 and 23...Kg7, before embarking on this natural move. It was one of his trademarks to withhold natural moves. Most chess players find and play these natural moves, but the difference is that Petrosian didn't fall for this temptation. Instead, he searched for other more useful moves to strengthen his position and kept the natural moves, which his opponents were expecting, in reserve.

25.♗c2 ♘fd7 26.♕d2 QUESTION: How should Black defend against the dangerous threat to his king?

ANSWER: **♖h8!?** This is the cold-blooded Petrosian in a nutshell, acting like a crocodile waiting for his victim. He wants to provoke and excite his opponent to go for an attack and then wait for a suitable moment to strike himself. What is also noteworthy is that Petrosian is very cautious with pawn moves in this game. In this aspect he's paradoxical at times, especially if you compare with Game 34 where he played Spassky.

[Black could have played what mere mortals would have played: 26...h5 27.♘g3 ♖h8 with a fine position. Why didn't he do that? This is one of the keys to understanding what player we are dealing with when we try to decode Petrosian. It seems there are several personalities in Petrosian's mind. Both one who is cautious with pawns and one who plays like Philidor.]

27.♘g3

[After 27.♕h6+ ♔g8 28.♘g3 ♕f8 29.♕e3 f5 White has four pieces in the attack, but he can't obtain any advantage after either: 30.♘xf5 *(or 30.♗xf5 gxf5 31.♕g5+ ♕g7 32.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 33.♘xf5+ ♔f6 34.♘xd6 ♖af8)* 30...gxf5 31.♗xf5 ♕xf5 32.♖g3+ ♔f7 33.♖f3 ♕xf3 34.♕xf3+ ♔e7 followed by ... Kd8 and ...Kc7 with good play for the sacrificed material.]

27...h5 28.♘e2 ♘f6

[Petrosian kept a restrained attitude regarding his pawns in this game, avoiding plausible natural moves like 28...h4]

[or 28...f5 .]
29.♘g1 ♖e8 30.♖he3 Neither the black rook or the white rook has any function anymore to fulfil on the h-file. **♘g4 31.♖3e2 ♕b6 32.f3 ♘f6 33.♖e3 ♘cd7 34.♘e2 h4 35.♘g1 ♖h8 36.♘h3 ♖ae8 37.♕c3 ♕b4 38.♕xb4** This only serves to increase Black's dark-square control.
[More logical is therefore 38.♕a1 .]
38...axb4 39.♘f2 ♘c5 40.♔g1 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a move for Black?
ANSWER: **♖eg8!?** One of those mysterious moves by Petrosian which is impossible to comprehend. Playing for the pawn break ...g5-g4 looks reasonable if White is forced to put another pawn on a light square with h2-h3, but White always has the possibility to place the bishop on f5 when Black plays ...g6-g5.
41.g4? Apparently the extraordinary rook move affected Pilnik, but it must have been a bluff to play for ...g5-g4. In reality it seems more like a psychological move from Petrosian, with the main purpose of confusing the opponent and it was successful because Pilnik defended against a threat that never existed.
hxg3 42.hxg3 ♘h5 43.♘h1 f5 44.♖3e2 ♖h7 45.♖h2 ♖gh8 46.♖h3 ♘f6 47.♖xh7+ ♘xh7 48.♘f2
[48.f4 , preventing the black knight from reaching g5, doesn't help after e4 and later on ...g6-g5 with a huge advantage for Black.]
48...♘g5 49.♔g2?? EXERCISE (combination alert): Black to move and win!
[49.♗d1 is necessary with the intention of ♘xb3 50.f4 .]
ANSWER: **49...♖h2+** . An incredible game, impossible to emulate, showing Petrosian's extraordinary skill of how to seize control of a complex of weak, dark squares. Moves like 20...Nef6, 25...Rh8 and 40...Rdg8 are necessary to understand to be able to build up a picture of how Petrosian's brain might have been working. We can see his characteristic enigmatic play in several games. Just look, indeed, at the next one.
0-1

A36

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Bisguier,T**
13: USSR vs. USA, New York 1954
[Thomas Engqvist]

"He was an unsurpassed master of manoeuvring, and while still young he received the nickname of the 'boa-constrictor', for his ability gradually to 'suffocate' his opponent. I remember how he staggered me by his victory over Bisguier in 1954, when contrary to all the 'rules', throughout the entire game he left his king in the centre (which would never even have occurred to me!) and unhurriedly seized space, until his opponent resigned." – Svetozar Gligoric.
1.c4 c5 2.g3 ♘c6 3.♗g2 g6 4.♘c3 ♗g7 5.d3 d6 6.♖b1 QUESTION: What is the idea behind this rook move?
ANSWER: White prepares to play a2-a3 followed by b2-b4, generating play on the queenside. He wants to put pressure both on the b-file and the long light-square diagonal so another plan, on top of opening the b-file, is to increase the scope of the bishop on g2 by playing b2-b4-b5 and a2-a4-a5-a6.
h5 Black breaks the symmetry and wants to disturb White's plan on the queenside by creating his own targets on the kingside. The disadvantage with this plan is that the dark square on g5 will become weak and a potential outpost for a white knight or bishop.
EXERCISE: How can Black's plan of playing ... h5-h4 and maybe ...h4-h3 be prevented? Explain the pros and cons to your suggestions.
7.h3 A standard reaction to be able to answer 7...h4 with 8 g4.
[ANSWER: 7.h4 blockades the enemy h-pawn, but it helps Black with an outpost station for a knight or bishop on g4.]
[Instead, 7.♘f3 is playable, but has the disadvantage of temporarily blocking the long-range bishop on g2, so the knight must soon move again to improve the harmony within White's position. The most common reaction in practice is the played move.]
7...♗d7 8.e3 This seemingly slow move is preparation for a defence of the knight on c3 with Nge2. Now the bishop is shut in on c1, but it doesn't really matter because there aren't any convenient square anyway.
♕c8 Black's whole set-up is aimed at stopping White from castling early by putting

pressure on the pawn on h3. Still it's questionable if it's worth so much firepower just to stop White from castling when the position is a closed one. How is Black to exploit the fact that the king is unable to castle?

9.♘ge2 ♘h6

[Black doesn't want to block the bishop on g7 with 9...♘f6 and plans to bring the knight to f5.]

10.a3 Now, when the knight on c3 is defended by its colleague on e2, White can continue with the original plan of expanding on the queen's wing.

♘e5

[Alatortsev has suggested 10...0-0 as a better move with the possible continuation 11.b4 ♖b8 , and if now 12.♘d5 then cxb4 13.axb4 b5! with counterplay.]

11.f4

[Interesting is 11.b4 with the idea of ♗c6 12.e4 and only then 13 f4. The text is, though, typical of Petrosian who often dispensed with natural moves when there were other viable options.]

11...♗c6

[More clever is 11...♘c6 , answering 12.b4 with ♘f5 , putting pressure on e3 and g3. In this position the white f-pawn would stand better on f2.]

12.e4 ♘d7 EXERCISE: How should White continue?

ANSWER: Petrosian played, according to his style, a very surprising move: **13.♘d5!**

The idea is to prevent Black from castling and provoke a weakness in Black's pawn position. I think this move is one component of understanding the key with which Petrosian was playing. He valued harmony very highly, in this case between the knights, and managed in the process to make the black pawn formation weaker. At the same time he kept the positional threat of b2-b4 in the air according to Nimzowitsch's device that a threat is stronger than its execution.

[Petrosian achieves a lot with just one move and this is the true sign of mastery. I guess most players would suggest the more natural and direct 13.b4 followed by castling, just playing normal and simple chess. Petrosian didn't belong to this category of players and that is why we want to study his games to see if we can open some magical doors.]

13...e6

[With his clever thirteenth move Petrosian also gave his opponent the chance of making a positional error with 13...♗xd5?! 14.cxd5 , after which White would have the bonus of the pair of bishops and a strong centre pawn on d5.]

14.♘e3 White's harmony has increased as a consequence of his knights, which complement each other by controlling different colours of the board. Black's pawn chain e7-d6-c5 has thus been weakened and d6 might be a future square in White's possession. All these small plusses were gained with only one brilliant move: 13 Nd5!. Such key moves are the foundation of how to win games.

f5 15.♕c2!? This slow move reminds us of what Botvinnik said about Petrosian's games, that they were almost in slow motion. If the threat really is stronger than the execution, how then would Bisguier react to the coming b2-b4 Petrosian seems to have reasoned. Petrosian's great strength was his patience. He is just waiting for an impatient and weakening pawn move from Black, which would make White's position stronger.

[However, from an objective perspective, we must admit that the normal and active move was 15.b4 .]

15...b6

[Alatortsev's idea 15...♖b8 16.b4 cxb4 17.axb4 b5 gives White a very good game after 18.♗b2 ♗xb2 19.♕xb2 0-0 and now both 20.♖c1 *(* and *20.♘d4* are good. *)*]

[15...a5 may have been what Petrosian was anticipating with his quiet waiting move. We don't know exactly how Petrosian would have reacted to this, so we can only analyse some logical options:

A) 16.b4 axb4 17.axb4 cxb4 18.d4 *(* of course not *18.♖xb4? ♘c5)* , and now both 18...♘f6 *(* and *18...e5* lead to an even game. *)*;

B) 16.♗d2 a4 17.♗c3 confronts the bishop on g7.;

C) 16.b3 and if Black plays aggressively with a4 17.b4 cxb4 18.axb4 a3 19.♕a2 , it only results in a weakness on a3.;

D) 16.--]

16.b4 White prepares to place the bishop on the long diagonal, confronting the g7-bishop.

♘f7 EXERCISE: What do you suggest for White? Warning: this is extremely difficult! I

assure you that it's almost impossible to find the move Petrosian played.
ANSWER: Petrosian played an extraordinary rook move: **17.♖g1!?** One comprehensive idea with this move is to place the king's rook in the right place if Black comes up with ...h5-h4. It is a very deep and mysterious rook move indeed, in the spirit of the prophylactic ideas originating from Nimzowitsch, but on a higher level. This is how Petrosian played chess. The number one thing was to prevent his opponents from realizing their plans. Only when this job was done would he pay attention to his own active plans.

[How did Petrosian find such deep moves? One method might have been the method of exclusion. If you look at what would happen after normal continuations like 17.♗b2 ♗xb2 18.♕xb2 h4 we can clearly see that the white rook does belong on the odd square g1.]

[The normal-looking move 17.0-0 would be answered by h4 18.g4 fxg4 19.hxg4? *(19.♘xg4)* 19...h3 20.♗f3 g5 when Black would be on top with the central square e5 secured for three of his minor pieces.]

17...♘f6 18.♗b2 ♔f8

[Alatortsev's recommendation 18...♕c7 , intending ...0-0-0 (or even ...0-0) looks normal, but neither player seemed to play normal chess in this particular game. Arthur Bisguier (1929-) was probably too affected by his opponent's original style.]

19.♖d1 The queen's rook has no important function anymore on b1. It's interesting to study Petrosian's games just to see how he played with his rooks. These pieces are the true prophylactic pieces.
♕d7 It seems Bisguier lost track of the position. Now he's just threatening the cheap trick 20...Ba4, winning the exchange. White wants to take space with b4-b5 anyway and now gets that move for free.

[19...a6 to prevent White from seizing space was more appropriate.]

20.b5 ♗b7 EXERCISE: Can you see how White increases his advantage?
ANSWER: Yes, that is right! Just break through in the centre.
21.e5! ♘e8 22.d4! All the white pieces controlling the centre now see their potential energy released. **♗xg2** QUESTION: Should White capture the bishop with the knight or the rook?
ANSWER: It's certainly best to take the bishop with the knight.
23.♘xg2 The plan is to place the knight on h4 with strong pressure on the g6-pawn which is a clearly defined structural weakness. **♖c8?!** This move in conjunction with the 25th is the wrong path for Black and helps White decide the game faster.

[23...a6 is a better move.]

[If Black plays the normal 23...♔g8 24.♘h4 ♔h7? *(* better is *24...g5* , but White keeps a nagging edge with *25.fxg5 ♘xg5 26.dxc5 bxc5 27.♘f4* with pressure on the weak dark-square spots *)* , White breaks through with 25.g4 followed by Nxg6. Now we understand that the tremendously deep move 17 Rg1 even prevented Black from finding a safe haven for the king on the kingside.]

24.♘h4 ♖h6 A very awkward defence, but what can Black do? In a bad position there are only bad options. **25.♘f3 d5?!**
QUESTION: Can White exploit Black's activity in the centre?
ANSWER: He can.
26.dxc5 ♖xc5

[After 26...bxc5 27.cxd5 exd5 28.a4 White has a positionally won game.]

27.a4! Exploiting the newly-created weakness on the diagonal a3-f8, which White can utilize very quickly. **♔g8 28.♗a3 ♖c8** EXERCISE: Petrosian moved his queen, but to which square?
ANSWER: **29.♕a2** This X-radiation along the classical diagonal towards the black king is very disturbing for Black whose king isn't left alone on its home square g8. **♘c7 30.♘c3** White's knights are well centralized, controlling all the squares in the middle of the board. **g5 31.h4!?** A typical move by Petrosian who's in no hurry to open up the game even when it's in his favour.

[The obvious continuation 31.cxd5 exd5 32.♘xd5 ♘xd5 33.♖xd5 ♖c2 34.♕xc2 ♕xd5 35.♕c8+ leads to a clearly won position. Maybe he didn't want to allow the very slight counterplay that Black might have obtained with 31...Rg6. Such decisions prove that Petrosian preferred manoeuvring as long as possible instead of playing concrete chess where precise calculation was necessary.]

31...g4 32.♘d4 ♗xe5 Black is running out of active moves and gets desperate.

[Bisguier is tired of defending passively with

32...♘e8 because after the flashy 33.♘xf5 *(33.cxd5 ♘xe5 34.fxe5 ♖xc3 35.♗b2 ♖e3+ 36.♔f2 ♖xe5 37.♘xe6 ♖e4 38.♗xg7 ♘xg7 39.♘g5* also wins *)* 33...exf5 34.♘xd5 ♖e6 35.c5! with the immediate threat of 36 Nf6+, Black must play ♗xe5 36.fxe5 bxc5 *(* or *36...♖xe5+ 37.♔f2* and White wins *)* 37.♘f6+ ♘xf6 38.♖xd7 ♖xe5+ 39.♔f2 ♘xd7 40.♗b2 ♖e4 41.♖e1 and after the exchange of rooks, the pawns on the queenside decide.]

33.fxe5 ♘xe5 34.cxd5 ♘xd5 35.♘xd5 exd5 36.♖g2! Raymond Keene has written that Petrosian's unusual play with the rooks on the second rank reminds of how the Arabic players played with the rooks around 10th Century.

♖c4 37.♖e2 White has managed to undertake artificial castling in a vertical manner. Instead of Kg1 and Rf1, we have the unusual Ke1 and Re2. **♖xd4 38.♖xe5 ♖e6 39.♖xd4 ♖xe5+ 40.♔f2 ♔h7 41.♕d2 ♕e6 42.♗b2 ♕h6 43.♕xh6+ ♔xh6 44.♖f4 ♖e4 45.♖xe4 dxe4 46.♗e5** . The lesson from this game is to think twice before castling. Maybe there are other unconventional methods to use the rooks and protect the king? The manoeuvre Rg1-g2-e2-e5 teaches us this.
It is also important sometimes to keep the threat rather than to execute it, because doing so opens up more possibilities and puts more psychological pressure on the opponent who has to defend against more threats, both real and imaginary ones.

1-0

D46

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Taimanov,M**
14: USSR Championship, Moscow 1955
[Thomas Engqvist]

Many chess players have problems activating and sometimes even forget to develop the queen's rook on a1. It is a common mistake to try to attack before all the pieces are developed and this includes the major piece on a1. Look how Petrosian deals with the problematic rook on a1. Here he plays the grandmaster and concert pianist Mark Yevgenyevich Taimanov (1926-) in the 12th round of the USSR Championship.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 c6 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 ♗b4 The Romi variation, named after the Italian master Massimiliano Romi (1893–1979).

[More common nowadays is to play the Meran System with 6...dxc4 7.♗xc4 b5 8.♗d3 a6 followed by ...c6-c5, liberating the light-squared bishop from c8 to b7 to bear down on the kingside and the central squares. This variation became popular after Rubinstein and Tartakower adopted it during the Meran tournament of 1924. The variation with 8...a6 was revived when Viswanathan Anand managed to beat Vladimir Kramnik with it in two decisive games in the world championship match of 2008.]

[6...♗d6 is also playable, but rightly considered more passive.]

7.0-0

[The game M.Taimanov-M.Botvinnik during the same tournament (round 15), continued 7.a3 ♗a5 *(7...♗xc3+ 8.bxc3* was played in M.Euwe-A.Alekhine, the third game of the 1937 world championship; Black managed to draw but had a tough time to secure a half point *)* 8.0-0 0-0 9.♕c2 a6 10.♗d2 ♗c7 11.♖ad1 ♕e7 12.cxd5 exd5 13.♖fe1 ♕d8 14.e4 dxe4 15.♘xe4 with advantage to White.]

7...0-0 8.♕c2

[After 8.♗d2 ♖e8? .
EXERCISE (combination alert): White has a small combination. Can you discover it?
ANSWER: 9.♘xd5! winning a pawn is a famous trap in this variation. It actually happened in the game M.Vidmar-F.Marshall, Carlsbad 1911. If ♘xd5 10.cxd5 ♗xd2 11.dxc6 ♗a5 12.cxd7 ♗xd7 13.♘e5 White is a pawn up in combination with a good centre.]

8...♗d6? Now Black is a tempo down compared with playing this move immediately at move six.

[Petrosian recommends in his annotations an old plan of Chigorin's, with the correct move order 8...dxc4 9.♗xc4 , and only now ♗d6 with the idea of ...e6-e5, liberating the bishop at c8.]

[8...♕e7 is also stronger.]

9.b3! A typical idea in this structure to keep the strong centre pawns intact on d4 and c4.

dxc4

[A fully playable continuation is 9...e5!? 10.cxd5 cxd5 11.♘b5 ♗b8 12.dxe5 ♘xe5 13.♘xe5 ♗xe5 14.♗b2 ♗xb2 15.♕xb2 , leading to a pawn structure with an

isolated pawn on d5.
However, on this occasion White has managed to exchange Black's two most active minor pieces. Although comparative practice has shown that White's position is the more comfortable, it's not easy to score the full point as this type of set-up has proven to be a rather hard nut to crack. The most famous historic examples are the games S.Flohr-J.Capablanca, Moscow 1935, and S.Flohr-J.Capablanca, Nottingham 1936, which proved the reliability of Black's position.]

10.bxc4 e5 11.♗b2 ♖e8 QUESTION: How does White use the initiative he obtained from the opening?

ANSWER: The most effective way to use the initiative is to create a weakness in the black king's position.

12.♘e4! Played with the idea of clearing the pieces on the long dark-square diagonal for the white bishop and exchanging the knight on f6 will force Black to weaken his kingside.

[12.♘g5 is an interesting option too]

[but the purpose of playing the routine move 12.♖ad1 is not altogether clear.]

12...♘xe4 13.♗xe4 White is using the fact that Black cannot defend h7 with the knight on d7 because of the pressure against the e5-pawn. Black is forced to make a pawn move on the kingside and thus weaken his king's position.

QUESTION: How should Black defend his h7-pawn?

h6 ANSWER: The question whether to play 13...h6 or 13...g6 is often one of the most difficult questions to answer in chess and sometimes it's almost like solving a philosophical problem. 13...h6 surely weakens the white squares and 13...g6 surely weakens the dark squares and this problem gives Black a dilemma. To paraphrase with inspiration from Shakespeare's Hamlet: to play ...h6 or not to play ...h6, that is the question.

[In the tournament bulletin Novotelnov remarked that 13...h6 was forced and 13...g6 clearly weak. Petrosian didn't agree with this and said that after the latter move it would be easier for Black to defend after 14.♖ad1 *(* O'Kelly suggested instead *14.c5 ♗c7 15.♖ad1 ♕e7 16.♖fe1* with a great advantage*;* while Barcza suggested *14.♗d3 ♕e7 15.c5 ♗c7 16.♗c4* , but Black should be okay after *e4 17.♘d2 ♘f6)* 14...♕e7 15.♖fe1 f5 , and now 16.dxe5 is not good in view of ♗b4 .]

14.♖ad1 exd4 White is ahead in development and don't mind opening of the position.

[The useful 14...♕e7 would have kept the tension in the centre a little bit longer. If 15.♖fe1 then ♗b4 16.♖e2 ♘f6 17.dxe5 ♘xe4 18.♕xe4 ♗e6 with compensation for the pawn.]

15.♗h7+

[15.♖xd4 is also good since ♘f6 can be answered by 16.c5! ♘xe4 17.cxd6 ♗f5 18.d7 ♖e6 19.♖fd1 with a clear advantage because of the strong passed pawn.]

15...♔h8 16.♖xd4 ♗c5?

[Other, superior continuations are: 16...♕e7 17.♖fd1 *(* O'Kelly's suggestion *17.♖e4 ♕f8 18.♖h4 ♘e5 19.♘g5* with a winning attack is actually a mistake after *♕e7!* when Black takes over *)* 17...♗c7 18.♖e4 ♕f8 19.♖h4 *(19.♗a3* is, of course, answered by *c5)* 19...♘e5 20.♗e4 and White keeps positional pressure on Black's position.]

[16...♕c7 17.♖fd1 ♗e7 18.♖f4 ♘f6 is relatively solid.]

[16...♘f6? 17.c5 ♘xh7 18.♖xd6 ♕e7 19.♖xh6 f5 20.h4! ♔g8 21.♖g6 and White wins.]

[16...♗e7? loses material after 17.♘e5 ♖f8 18.♘xd7 ♗xd7 19.♖fd1 .]

17.♖f4 This doesn't only threat the pawn on f7, it also prevents Black from playing the knight to f6. **♕e7** It's hard to improve on Black's defence from now on.

[After 17...f6 18.♖d1 all White's pieces are active]

[or 17...♘f6 18.♖d1 ♕e7 19.♗xf6 gxf6 20.♖h4 and Black has problems with both the h6-pawn and the f5-square.]

18.♖e4! ♕f8

[O'Kelly analyses 18...♕d8 19.♖h4 ♘f6 20.♖d1 ♕e7 21.♘e5! with the idea of -- 22.♖xh6 gxh6 23.♘d7 ♗xd7 24.♖xd7 ♕xd7 25.♗xf6# , but also the pretty 23 Rd7! wins.]

19.♖h4! f6 This pawn triangle of black pawns is Petrosian's creation rather than Taimanov's. Now it's only a matter of time of exploiting the weak square on g6.

[However, 19...♘f6 loses immediately to 20.♖xh6!]

[and lateral defence of h6 with 19...♖e6 doesn't work after 20.♘g5 ♖d6 21.♘e4 ♖e6 22.♗f5 .]

20.♗g6 ♖e7 EXERCISE: What is the most

effective continuation?
ANSWER: **21.♖h5!** The a1-rook has managed to climb up the board like a staircase all the way to h5 from a1 via the squares d1, d4, f4, e4 and h4. This is a truly remarkable journey for a queen's rook. Only a strategical magician like Petrosian was able to undertake such an intricate and unusual manoeuvre. The idea with the last rook move is to prevent Black from playing ...Ne5 while preparing the decisive manoeuvre Nh4, entering the weak square at g6.
♗d6 22.♖d1 ♗e5
[22...♗c7 keeps the options to place other pieces on e5, but it doesn't solve Black's problems after 23.♗a3 c5 24.♘h4 ♖e5 *(* or *24...♘e5 25.f4)* 25.♖xe5 ♘xe5 26.f4 .]
23.♗a3 c5 24.♘h4 . This remarkable game Petrosian regarded as one of his best.
1-0

D37

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Guimard,C**
15: Gothenburg Interzonal 1955
[Thomas Engqvist]

1.c4
[The Argentine player Carlos Enrique Guimard (1913-1998) is most famous for his variation in the French Defence, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 ♘c6 4.♘gf3 ♘f6 5.e5 ♘d7 , which he played in the 1940s. He became a grandmaster in 1960.]
1...♘f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.d4 d5 4.♘f3 ♗e7 5.e3 Theoretically speaking, with the black pawn still on its original square, this is regarded as a passive continuation. If Black aims for ...c7-c5 at an appropriate moment, he will equalize the position. Petrosian's preoccupation was probably to create tension.
[The bishop on c1 will not be so easy to exchange for Black compared with the main continuation arising after 5.♗g5 .]
5...0-0 6.♗d3 It seems Petrosian plays the game in a rather light-hearted way giving away tempi, but it's deceptive as we will soon see. **dxc4 7.♗xc4 c5 8.0-0 a6**
Black already has an easy game and can't complain about the opening. He has obtained a Queen's Gambit Accepted with an extra move.
9.a4 The best practical choice, not allowing Black to play ...b7-b5 to free his game. Of course White is eternally weaken his b4-square, but on the other hand a knight placed on that square can sometimes be outside of play.
♘c6 10.b3 White has to deal with the development of the queenside bishop sooner or later since he ignored to do this on move five.
[The natural continuation 10.♕e2 cxd4 11.♖d1 doesn't work because of e5 , keeping a healthy extra pawn for Black.]
10...cxd4 11.exd4 Contrary to the style of Karpov, Petrosian didn't mind playing with an isolani from time to time. **♘b4** This prevents the thematic thrust d4-d5 once and for all, but weakens the e5-square which can now be occupied by the white knight. The soundest plan in history, do you remember?
12.♘e5 ♗d7 13.♗b2 ♗c6 14.♕d2 ♘bd5
EXERCISE: Is it good to exchange the knight on e5 for the bishop on c6?
[Clarke recommends in his annotations to the game 14...♖c8 before manoeuvring the queenside knight to d5.]
15.♘xc6! ANSWER: Generally speaking, Black has nothing to fear when White exchanges his strongest minor piece and at the same time strengthens Black's hold on d5. Superficially it seems Petrosian wasn't so interested in going for the optimal decisions in this game. However, if we look more carefully at the position, we notice that White's minor pieces are not engaged in any attack on the black king which is the customary practice in such structures.
[An aggressive move like 15.f4 would not yield White much after ♗b4 when Black can exchange several minor pieces.]
15...bxc6 16.♘a2! A fine knight move, avoiding further exchanges while increasing the harmony in White's position. White obviously plans the manoeuvre Nc1-d3 when the knight will have a perfect location, eyeing the outpost squares e5 and c5.
♕b8
[A more forced variation is 16...♘e4 17.♕c2 ♘d6 18.♗d3 h6 with the idea of 19.♕xc6 ♕b8 and Black wins back the pawn.]
17.♘c1 ♗b4
[After the game Petrosian suggested 17...♗d6 18.g3 e5! , but White would keep a solid slight advantage with 19.dxe5 ♗xe5 20.♖e1 ♗xb2 21.♕xb2 with the idea of Nd3, having two pawn islands versus Black's three.]

18.♕c2 ♗d6 QUESTION: Should White play 19 h3 or 19 g3?
ANSWER: **19.g3** This is the correct move limiting the scope of the battery on the diagonal b8-h2. 19 g3 also takes away a square from the knight on d5 and Black can't really exploit the holes on f3 and h3 in this position.
[19.h3 is playable, but unnecessarily gives Black's pieces more room for manoeuvring.]
19...♖d8 20.♕e2
[20.♘d3 results in an exchange after ♘b4 21.♘xb4 ♕xb4 and one which White naturally wants to avoid it with an isolated d4-pawn.]
20...♘b4 Black temporarily locks in the knight on c1.
[20...a5 gives White the chance to activate the passive knight with 21.♘d3 ♘b4 22.♘e5 .]
21.♖d1 ♘fd5 22.♕e4 ♗e7 23.♘e2 ♗f6
EXERCISE (planning): Can you suggest a plan to activate the white knight?
ANSWER: **24.♔g2!** The main idea is to improve the bad knight's position on e2 by manoeuvring via g1-f3-e5. **a5**
[Petrosian recommended 24...♖c8 followed by ...c6-c5 to avoid the following complications and secure a comfortable equalization.]
25.♘g1 ♕b7 26.♘f3 ♖ab8 27.♖ac1 h6
[If Black wants to move a pawn on the kingside then 27...g6 looks more logical.]
28.♔g1 A good prophylactic move. The king stands better on g1 than on g2 in this position. **♘b6**
[More active was 28...♘a2 29.♖c2 c5 30.♗a1 ♘ab4 31.♖cd2 cxd4 and Black has nothing to fear with the strong point on d5.]
29.♗e2
[29.♗f1 is the obvious move. Petrosian is certainly one of the most difficult players to emulate.]
29...♘6d5 30.♘d2 With the idea of reaching the outpost on c4 to put pressure on the pawn on a5. **♗g5**
[Clarke suggests the safer 30...♗e7 and, indeed, after the tactical sequence 31.♘c4 ♘a2 32.♘xa5 ♕b6 33.♘xc6 ♘xc1 34.♖xc1 ♕xb3 Black is fine.]
31.♖c5 ♗e7 EXERCISE: Is it possible to capture the pawn on a5 immediately?
[A safer alternative is 31...♖a8 32.♘c4 ♘a6! *(* worse is *32...♕c7 33.♕e5!* according to Clarke; Black loses the pawn on a5 *)* 33.♖xa5 ♕xb3 with an even position.]
ANSWER: Guimard thought it was incorrect to take the pawn on a5. The rook looks offside on a5, but it's perfectly playable as Petrosian proved.
32.♖xa5! ♘a2 With the immediate threat of ... Nac3. **33.♗d3 g6 34.♕f3 ♕c7?!**
[More exact is 34...♗b4 35.♖a6 *(* or *35.♖c5 ♘ac3 36.♖a1 ♘xa4 37.♖xa4 ♗xd2* with an even game *)* 35...♗xd2 36.♖xd2 ♕c7 followed by ...Nab4.]
35.♖c5 ♗xc5 36.dxc5 ♘ab4
[Best is to muddy the waters with 36...♘dc3 37.♖a1 ♕e7 .]
37.♗c4 f5 Black doesn't want to allow White to play Ne4, but the price is high with the new weaknesses on e6 and e5.
[37...♕e7 38.♘e4 e5 is a better try.]
38.♖e1 ♕e7 39.♕e2 ♖e8 40.♘f3 ♔h7
41.♕e5 The sealed move. **♕c7 42.♕e2 ♕e7**
43.h4! ♘f6
[If 43...♕xc5 44.h5 g5 45.♘d4 and e6 falls with an overwhelming position.]
44.♗xe6 ♘e4 45.♘d4 ♖bd8
[Better was 45...♕f6 , even though White controls the whole board after 46.a5! .]
46.h5! Black's position collapses. **♖xd4**
47.hxg6+ ♔xg6 48.♗xf5+! ♔xf5 49.♕h5+ ♔e6 50.♕g4+
[50.♗xd4 ♔d7 51.f3 is more precise.]
50...♔d5 51.♕f5+ ♕e5 52.♕d7+ ♔xc5
53.♖c1+ ♘c3 54.♖xc3+ ♔b6 55.a5+!
Petrosian's attack is very beautifully conducted when he uses both rim pawns. The pawns are always important attacking units when attacking the king.
♔xa5
[Even after the superior 55...♕xa5 56.♕xd4+ c5 57.♕d6+ ♘c6 58.♖c1! ♖e1+ 59.♔h2 ♖xc1 60.♗xc1 White wins.]
56.♕a7+ ♔b5
[If 56...♘a6 57.b4+! .]
57.♕b7+ ♔a5 58.♖c1! ♖d1+ 59.♖xd1 ♕xb2
60.♕a7+ ♘a6
[Alternatively, 60...♔b5 61.♕a4+ ♔c5 62.♕a5# .]
61.b4+ ♔xb4 62.♕b6+ . Petrosian managed to fool Guimard with his quiet moves in combination with one of his favourite devices: the exchange sacrifice.
1-0

D13

□ **Gufeld,E**
■ **Petrosian,T**
16: USSR Chmshp Semi-final, Tbilisi 1956
[Thomas Engqvist]

Eduard Yefimovich Gufeld (1936-2002) is famous for writing more than 100 chess books, mainly on openings. An excellent book is Chess: The Search for Mona Lisa (2001), where he argues that the Elo list reflects the sporting component, but ignores the art and science of the game. He suggests that these subjective features ought to be quantifiable. Artistic and scientific criteria could be: "1) novelty of ideas, and 2) strength of opposition and accuracy of play." With three criteria, instead of one criterion emphasising the sportsman's superiority, the Elo rating would take into consideration important aspects like new ideas that enhance the development of chess and beautiful games that provide aesthetic enjoyment.
Gufeld's own 'Mona Lisa' was his win with the King's Indian Defence against Vladimir Bagirov (1936-2000) in Kirovobad, 1973. This was the game from a lifetime he had the most pleasure with, where, to use his own words, he was a "genius of one evening". Gufeld was a pleasant opponent for Petrosian with whom he had a murderous statistic. They played in the period of 1956-1972 and according to Gufeld in the aforementioned book, Petrosian won six games and drew three. However, I only managed to find eight games in the Mega Database 2013.
Here is their first recorded meeting from the Semi-final, which was convincingly won by Petrosian with ten wins and nine draws.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c6 Prior to this game, which was played in round 13, Petrosian had played the King's Indian Defence in three games against 1 d4. He drew with Antoshin (round 1), beat Chukayev (round 9) and Polugaevsky (round 11), so the opening choice may have been a surprise for Gufeld who probably had prepared something for his own favourite opening.
3.♘c3 d5 The Slav Defence, which is a very popular opening today, was used from time to time in Petrosian's black games. Remember though that in those days, after the highly important Candidates tournament in Zurich 1953, it was more common to fight for the initiative immediately with Black, by playing the Sicilian Defence and the King's Indian Defence, rather than playing to equalize.
4.cxd5 cxd5 5.♗f4 Undoubtedly the Exchange Variation gives White chances of exploiting the small advantage in development because of the half-open character of the game.
♘c6 6.e3 e6
[The modern method with 6...a6 is more flexible, keeping the option of developing the light-squared bishop outside the pawn chain.]
7.♘f3 ♗d6 By principle Black should avoid the exchange of the dark-squared bishops to avoid sitting with a bad bishop versus a good one.
[7...♗e7]
[or 7...♘h5 were viable options for the purpose of not giving away the dark squares so light-heartedly.]
8.♗d3
[Later L.Portisch-T.Petrosian, Moscow 1967, continued 8.♗g3 0-0 9.♗d3 ♖e8 10.♘e5 ♗xe5 11.dxe5 ♘d7 12.f4 ♕b6?! *(12...♘c5* is a better move *)* 13.0-0! with a slight advantage.]
8...♗xf4 9.exf4 EXERCISE: What are the pros and cons of allowing Black to exchange on f4?
ANSWER: White may have played with inspiration from Akiba Rubinstein (1882-1961), who favoured such a pawn formation, securing permanent control of e5. The disadvantage is that the central pawn on d4 is weakened. You get nothing for free in the logical game of chess.
♗d7 10.0-0 0-0 11.♖c1 ♖c8 12.♗b1 White plans the centralization of the knight with Ne5 and wants to have the d4-pawn protected by the queen.
QUESTION: How should Black unravel?
ANSWER: The normal plan for White in the Exchange variation is to place a knight on the outpost at e5 and for Black to exploit the outpost at c4. Sometimes other outposts are available too, like c5 for White and e4 for Black.
♘a5 This is a standard manoeuvre. **13.♘e5 ♘c4 14.b3 ♘d6** An excellent square for Black's queenside knight, turning the attention to the other outpost at e4 as well. At the same time it does a good job on c4 of luring the white pawn to advance to b3 and thereby weaken the dark squares on the queenside. The disadvantages with b2-b3 are twofold:

the knight on c3 loses its support and the dark squares on c3 and a3 become eternally weak.

15.♕d3 g6 Black prevents once and for all the pressure on the diagonal b1-h7 and at the same time it's not easy for White to exploit the dark-square weaknesses around Black's king. A weakness is only weak when it's possible to exploit it.

16.♖c2 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a good move for Black?

ANSWER: **♕b6** A good move, putting pressure on the d4-pawn. **17.♖fc1** Normally White wants to reply Na4 when Black places the queen on this active square, but that move is not available because of the bishop on d7. This is one of the points of Black's set-up.

[Note that the exchange of the strong knight to the useful bishop on d7 with 17.♘xd7 ♘xd7 followed by 18.♘a4 amounts to nothing after ♕b5 when White has lost the harmony of his position. Particularly the bishop on b1 is a bad sight.]

17...♖fd8 18.h3 The king needs an escape square.

[The variation 18.♘xd7 ♘xd7 19.♘a4 ♖xc2 20.♖xc2 ♕b4 accentuate the weakness of the back rank in White's camp. After the practically forced 21.♕c3 *(* if *21.♘c3 ♘f5 22.♖d2 ♖c8 23.♘e2 ♘f6* with strong initiative *)* 21...♕xc3 22.♘xc3 ♘b8! White, not surprisingly, has problems with his d4-pawn. When playing this structure White must in general aim for the middlegame, since the endgame normally favours Black because of his better pawn structure.]

18...♗e8 This consolidating move increases the harmony within Black's forces and now we are just waiting for an additional move like ... Kg7 to complete the harmonious picture of his position.

19.♘g4 Here we see another point of playing 18 h3.

QUESTION: How should Black react to the versatile and annoying knight?

ANSWER: If White has a knight on e5 in a symmetrical pawn position then Black can have one too.

♘fe4! Black's knight centralization releases the potential energy in his position. Particularly the rook on d8 is important in this respect, putting pressure on d4 after a likely exchange on e4.

20.♘xe4 What else?

[20.♕d1 ♘xc3 21.♖xc3 ♖xc3 22.♖xc3 ♕b4! is annoying for White with ...Nb5 at an appropriate moment to follow.]

20...dxe4 21.♘f6+ ♔g7 22.♘xe4

[22.♘xe8+ doesn't solve any problems for White after ♖xe8 23.♕e3 ♖xc2 24.♖xc2 ♖d8 followed by ...f7-f5 when Black's position is to be preferred. The isolani on d4 and the passive bishop trapped by the enemy pawn on e4 are two reasons this variation is not so tempting for White to enter.]

22...♖xc2 23.♕xc2 ♘xe4 24.♕xe4

EXERCISE: Which way is the most precise recapture of the pawn?

ANSWER: **♕xd4!**

[24...♖xd4? is imprecise after 25.♕e5+ , practically forcing the weakening move f6 when after 26.♕e3 and 27 Be4 White isn't worse any more.]

25.♕xb7 ♕xf4 26.♖f1 a5 The start of a minority attack with ...a5-a4. White's position is slightly uncomfortable, mainly because of the passive rook and bishop having no useful active functions.

27.♕e4? A mistake. Now Black's task is easier after the exchange of queens. At the same time it's understandable White finds the black queen disturbing on its active position.

[A more stubborn defence is 27.♕e7 , with the idea of exchanging queens only when forced to.]

27...♕xe4 28.♗xe4 ♖d2 29.♖a1

[The more economical defence 29.♗b1 doesn't change the verdict of the position. Black continues f5 followed by the centralization of his king. The king, which is like a small queen moving one move in all directions, replaces the exchanged queen with domination on the dark squares.]

29...f5 30.♗b7 White's idea is to place the bishop on the safe and active square c4.

EXERCISE: Can you find a set-up to prevent White's idea?

ANSWER: **e5! 31.♗a6 ♗f7** After this strong set-up White can only sit and wait, watching while Black improves his position. **32.♗b5 e4 33.g3 ♗d5 34.♗f1**

[34.♔f1 gives Black the strong tactical possibility: e3! 35.fxe3 ♖h2 and White's position is in ruins.]

34...♔f6 35.h4 ♔e5 36.♖b1 The same as resignation. White doesn't want to watch the black king enter d4, helping to break up White's pawn position with ...e4-e3 before

penetrating deeper via f3 and g3.
[An illustrative variation is 36.♗g2 ♔d4 (it's unnecessary to rush with *36...e3 37.♗xd5 e2?? 38.♗f3!* when White even wins) 37.♗f1 e3 38.fxe3+ ♔xe3 .]
36...♖xa2 37.b4 a4 38.b5 a3
0-1

B53

□ **Sefc,J**
■ **Petrosian,T**
17: European Team Championship, Vienna
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian played on board 6 in this event, scoring three wins and two draws. Here he plays the Czech player Jan Sefc (1924-), who was a reasonable good player with a highest rating of 2525 according to Chessmetrics.com. In 1956 it gave him place no.127 according to the world rankings.
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♕xd4
The Chekhover Variation was initiated in Leningrad 1938 in the game V.Chekhover-G. Lisitsin. Other names for this variation are the Szily and the Hungarian variation.
♗d7 The idea is to win a tempo with ...Nc6 without allowing the pin Bb5, but the price is a passive placement of the bishop.
[4...a6 has the same advantage as 4...Bd7, but keeps open possibilities of placing the bishop more actively on g4.]
[The aforementioned stem-game continued 4...♘c6 5.♗b5 ♗d7 (Zaitsev's *5...♕d7* is an interesting continuation) 6.♗xc6 ♗xc6 7.♘c3 ♘f6 8.♗g5 ♕b6 with a balanced position.]
5.c4
[W.Bialas-T.Petrosian, Hamburg 1960, deviated with 5.♗g5 ♘c6 6.♕d2 h6 7.♗h4 g5 8.♗g3 ♗g7 9.c3 ♘f6 10.♗d3 ♘h5 11.♘a3 ♘xg3 12.hxg3 ♕c7 13.♘c2 0-0-0 14.♘e3 e6 15.0-0 ♔b8 16.♖fc1? ♗f6 17.c4 ♕a5 18.♕d1?? ♗xb2 and Petrosian eventually won the game.]
5...♘c6 6.♕d2 g6 7.b3 ♗g7 8.♗b2
EXERCISE: What is best: exchange the bishops or avoid the exchange? Explain your answer!
[The main variation is 8.♘c3 ♘f6 9.♗b2 ♗g4 10.♗e2 0-0 11.h3 ♗xf3 12.♗xf3 ♘d7 13.0-0 . In the game J.Polgar-V.Topalov, Dos Hermanos 1996, Black tried the new idea ♕a5 . The game continued 14.♖ab1 ♖fd8 15.♖fc1 a6 16.a3 and here Topalov played the strong ♗f6! . The main idea is to activate the queen to g5 after let's say 17.b4 ♕g5 . A useful idea to remember in this variation.]
8...♗xb2! ANSWER: In principle Black is happy with an exchange of the dark-squared bishops. White will be left with the worse bishop and as a consequence becomes weaker on the dark squares.
[8...♘f6 is playable, but there is no guarantee anymore that the bishops will be exchanged on the long diagonal.]
9.♕xb2 ♘f6 10.♗e2 0-0 11.♘c3 ♘h5!?
[A normal move in such positions is to play 11...♗g4 , with the idea of exchanging the knight on f3, increasing Black's control of the dark squares. The text move also focuses on the dark squares in a typical Petrosian way.]
12.0-0 ♘f4 13.♘d5 QUESTION: Which of the two possible exchanges should Black aim for?
ANSWER: **♘xe2+** It may seem paradoxical to exchange White's bad bishop. In some endings though this bishop is not so bad as it looks and Black didn't have any other good options after entering this line with 11...Nh5!?. What Petrosian is doing is following another plan of exploiting the hole on d4.
[Instead, 13...♘xd5?! has the defect that it increases White's space advantage and create a potential weakness on e7 after 14.exd5 .]
14.♕xe2 ♗g4 15.♕e3 e5 This is the positional idea which is not without risk. It should be mentioned that 1957 is one of the years when Petrosian was more inclined to play riskier chess than usual. I think this is exemplified by this game because he allowed White to establish a centralized knight on the fifth rank, in itself a risk.
16.♘e1? Too passive. It's better to allow the exchange of the bishop for a knight.
[One illustrative variation of the positional risk Black is taking is: 16.h3 ♗xf3 17.♕xf3 f5 (or *17...♘d4 18.♕d3* followed by f4) 18.exf5 gxf5 19.♖ad1 , and if now ♘d4? 20.♖xd4! exd4 21.♕f4 ♖f7 22.♖e1 when Black has serious positional problems. The knight on d5 is a colossal strength in this kind of position with scattered pawns, clumsy rooks and an open king's position.]
16...♘d4 17.f3 ♗e6 Black is more interested in the knight on d5 than the knight on f3.

18.♘c3 ♕a5 Black has a slight initiative and threatens the fork with ...Qxc3 followed by ... Ne2+. **19.♘e2?!**

[The knight is useful on c3, controlling d5 and b5, so a better move is 19.♖f2! and only then to challenge the knight on d4 with the other knight by Nc2. Notice that ♘xb3?? 20.axb3 ♕xa1 21.♖a2 traps the queen.]

19...♘xe2+ 20.♕xe2 EXERCISE: How to expand the horizon of Black's bishop?

ANSWER: **b5! 21.cxb5 ♗xb3** The bishop is superior to the knight in this type of position with pawns on both sides. This is actually a good example for studying the relationship between bishop and knight. To have any chance to combat the bishop, White's knight must reach the outpost on d5, but this is far from easy because of the pawn weaknesses that have arisen in White's position.

22.♖f2 White prepares 23 Rb1 and wants to defend the pawn on a2.

[Observe that activation of the knight fails to 22.♘c2 ♗xc2 23.♕xc2 ♕xb5 when White is a pawn down.]

22...♗a4 23.♖b1 ♖ab8 24.♕d2 ♖xb5 25.♖xb5 ♕xb5 26.♕xd6 ♕b1 27.♖e2 ♗b5 28.♖e3 EXERCISE: How ought Black to continue?

ANSWER: When you have bishop versus knight the ideal is to have a position where you have a distant passed pawn.

♕xa2!

[28...♖e8 29.♕d2 ♗c4 30.♖c3! keeps the pawn position symmetrical and after ♗xa2 31.♖a3 ♗e6 32.♖xa7 the chess board has actually become smaller, which normally benefits the knight.]

29.♕xe5 ♕d2 30.♕c5 QUESTION: Can we push the a-pawn?

♕d7 A move characteristic of Petrosian's unhurried style. However it wasn't necessary to move the active queen following the general rule by Znosko-Borovsky.

[ANSWER: Actually 30...a5! and 31...a4 immediately is a more active continuation. It's interesting that Petrosian didn't play 30...a6, so the move played showed his intention of playing the a-pawn two steps. At least this is what Petrosian wants his opponent to think.]

31.♖c3 ♖d8 32.h3 a5! Here we go. **33.♘c2 a4 34.♘e3 ♕d4** White's threat of Nd5 has to be parried, so this is important. Normally rook and bishop are stronger than rook and knight so the exchange of queens should be in Black's favour.

35.♔h2 ♕xc5 36.♖xc5 EXERCISE: What is Black's best move?

ANSWER: **♖b8!**

[There is no reason to play 36...♗e8 and allow 37.♖a5 and Ra7 when the white rook would be ideally placed.]

37.♖c3 ♖a8 Black's rook should be behind the pawn, not White's rook. **38.♘c2 ♗d7** Later on Black hopes to place this bishop on e6 where it supports the pawn on a2. **39.♖a3 ♔f8 40.♘d4?!**

[40.♔g3 is more stubborn.]

40...♔e7?!

[More precise is 40...♖b8! with the idea of entering the seventh rank with ...Rb2. One illustrative variation goes 41.♖a2 ♖b4 42.♘c2 ♖b3 43.♘d4 ♖d3 44.♘e2 a3 45.♘c1 ♗e6! 46.♖c2 ♖d4! followed by ... Rb4 and ...Rb2, winning.

This is in accordance with the principle of Karpov that in endings you should first activate the pieces optimally and only then the king. This is contrary to the principle of Capablanca who said that you should activate the king first. A good example is how to mate with knight and bishop. Do you put the knight on a central square defended by the bishop before you centralize the king or do you centralize the king first?]

41.e5?!

[41.♔g3 followed by Kf4 is better.]

41...♖a5 42.f4 ♖d5 43.♘f3 ♖c5 44.g4 White is too slow with the activation of his king.

EXERCISE: What is Black's most precise move?

ANSWER: **♖b5!** The immediate threat is 45... Rb3, exploiting the unprotected knight. **45.♖a2 ♖b4 46.♔g3 ♖b3 47.♔f2 a3 48.♖a1** The threat was 48...Rb2+, so White must step out of the way, giving Black more ground. **♖b2+ 49.♔e3 a2 50.♘d4** White must prevent ...Be6 followed by ...Rb1, but now succumbs to his weaknesses on the kingside. **♖h2 51.♔e4 ♗c8!** The chessboard is too big for the white knight. **52.♘c6+ ♔e8 53.♘b4**

[A fitting end would be 53.♖d1 f5+! 54.exf6 ♗b7! and Black wins the knight.]

53...♗e6 54.f5 ♗b3 55.fxg6 hxg6 56.♘d3 ♗c2 57.♔d4 ♗xd3 This bishop's sweeping movements have been truly impressive. **58.♔xd3 ♖xh3+ 59.♔c4 ♖a3** . A fine game showing the differences between bishop and

knight. Petrosian always knew which pieces to keep on the board.
0-1

Chapter Three

Strongest Period

Petrosian has written that he played his strongest chess in the period 1958-1963 and this game against Anatoly Alexandrovich Bannik (1921-2013) helps to prove it. Bannik was a strong player in the 1950s, rated no.33 in the world with a highest *Chessmetrics.com* rating of 2640.

18: T.Petrosian-A.Bannik, USSR Championship, Riga 1958

Petrosian's opponent, the International Master from the Philippines, Rodolfo Tan Cardoso (1937-2013), is perhaps most famous for his eight-game match against Fischer in New York 1957 which he lost with 6-2. He was the first Asian International Master and the first and only Philippine who managed to beat Fischer in a serious game.

19: T.Petrosian-R.Cardoso, Portoroz Interzonal 1958

The Argentine Hector Decio Rossetto (1922-2009) was a professional player who was awarded the grandmaster title in 1960 and was one of the best players in Argentine history.

20: T.Petrosian-H.Rossetto, Portoroz Interzonal 1958

Nikolai Vladimirovich Krogius (1930-) is famous for his book*Psychology in Chess* which advises how chess players should prepare for competitive play. His peak as a player was in 1967 when he was ranked 18th in the world and Krogius played in several finals of the Soviet Championship. The individual score between Petrosian and Krogius was 5-1, with four wins and two draws. Here is the fourth meeting between them.

21: T.Petrosian-N.Krogius, USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1959

The Estonian Grandmaster Paul Keres (1916-1975) is regarded as one of the strongest players in the history of chess never to become world champion. The score between these great players was completely even at 17-17. Petrosian won three games and lost three, while the rest were drawn. The following game is probably the best game he played against the 'Eternal Second'.

22: P.Keres-T.Petrosian, Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade Candidates 1959

The then 29 nine-year-old talented grandmaster Aleksandar Matulovic is probably most famous for his work as a journalist and editor-in-chief for *Chess Informant.* At the chess board he was a strong theoretical player which he combined with strong intuition.

23: A.Matanovic-T.Petrosian, USSR vs. Yugoslavia, Kiev 1959

Petrosian won the Nimzowitsch Memorial convincingly in Copenhagen. In the following game he faces one of the strongest Danish players Borge Andersen (1934-), who was the Danish Champion in 1958.

24: B.Andersen-T.Petrosian, Nimzowitsch Memorial, Copenhagen 1960

The International Master Robert Graham Wade (1921-2008) won the championship of New Zealand three times before moving to England where he won the British championship twice.

25: T.Petrosian-R.Wade, Leipzig Olympiad 1960

Petrosian won the 28th USSR Championship which was a Zonal tournament. He won with the smallest possible margin and only lost to Stein in the sixth round. Petrosian said that he was nervous at the start of the tournament and that this was bound to affect his play. Here we look at his game from the third encounter where he scored his first victory.

26: T.Petrosian-A.Lutikov, USSR Championship, Moscow 1961

The lifetime score between Petrosian and Grandmaster Pal Charles Benko (1928-) was 11½-6½ in Petrosian's favour. Petrosian lost his first game to Benko in Budapest 1952, but after that game he never lost to him again.

27: P.Benko-T.Petrosian, Curacao Candidates 1962

The Grandmaster Miroslav Filip (1928-2009) became the first Czech Candidate in 1956. In those days his play was

The Grandmaster Miroslav Filip (1928-2009) became the first Czech Candidate in 1956. In those days his play was characterized as "serious, solid and deep". Surprisingly he lost interest in chess around 2002.

28: M.Filip-T.Petrosian, Curacao Candidates 1962

The Austrian International Master Andreas Dückstein (1927-) represented Austria in eight Olympiads from 1956-1976.

29: A.Dückstein-T.Petrosian, Varna Olympiad 1962

Mikhail Moiseyevich Botvinnik (1934-1995) became a grandmaster in 1950 and was world champion during the periods 1948-1957, 1958-1960 and 1961-1963. Botvinnik won the first game in the 1963 world championship match and after the match Petrosian said: "Botvinnik apparently thought I would behave just like the other challengers. But I continued to play calmly, as if nothing had happened, so to speak." The next three games were drawn and the fifth game we are going to study in depth.

We know that a knight planted on a central square on the sixth rank is generally enough to win a game. A knight well defended on the fifth rank, in the spirit of Labourdonnais's or Pillsbury's ideas, is the first step to create conditions for a successful attack on the wing. What Petrosian showed with this historically important game is how to win with a knight permanently established on the fourth rank.

30: T.Petrosian-M.Botvinnik, World Championship (Game 5), Moscow 1963

A29

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Bannik,A**
18: USSR Championship, Riga 1958
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian has written that he played his strongest chess in the period 1958-1963 and this game against Anatoly Alexandrovich Bannik (1921-2013) helps to prove it. Bannik was a strong player in the 1950s, rated no.33 in the world with a highest Chessmetrics.com rating of 2640.

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.g3 d6?!
[More active are either 4...♗b4]
[or 4...d5 .]

5.d4 g6?! EXERCISE: What is the problem with this move?

ANSWER: **6.dxe5 ♘xe5**
[6...dxe5? is a serious mistake because of 7.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 8.♗g5 ♗e7 9.0-0-0+ when White has a winning attack: for instance, ♘d7 10.♘d5! .]

7.♘xe5 dxe5 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9.♗g5 ♗e7 10.0-0-0+ ♘d7 This is the only move.

EXERCISE: How should White continue after 10...Nd7?
[Other moves loses immediately: 10...♗d7?? 11.♗xf6 ♗xf6 12.♗h3]
[or 10...♔e8?? 11.♘b5 .]

ANSWER: **11.h4!**
[11.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 12.♘d5+ is not as good as it seems. After ♔d8 13.♗h3 *(* if *13.♘f6* immediately then Black has the simple *♔e7)* 13...f5 14.e4 c6 15.♘e3 *(* or *15.♘c3 ♖f8)* 15...f4 16.♗xd7 ♗xd7 17.♘g4 ♖e8 18.♘f6 ♖e7 Black is fine. Instead, Petrosian played a very clever move, planning the weakening of Black's pawn structure.]

11...f6
[Alternatively: 11...c6? weakens the d6-square seriously and White exploits it with 12.♘e4 h6 13.♘d6 ♖h7 14.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 15.♗h3 f5 16.h5 *(* or *16.e4 .)*]
[Black collapses after 11...h6? 12.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 13.♘d5+ ♔d8 14.♗h3 f5 15.h5! .]
[11...h5 seems playable after 12.♗xe7+ ♔xe7 13.♘d5+ ♔d8 14.♗h3 f5 15.e4 c6 16.♘c3 ♖f8 when Black defends the critical points and 17.♖d6 is answered by ♖f6 .]

12.♗e3 c6 13.h5 Here we see one of the points behind 11 h4!. Black is practically forced to weaken the f5-square. **g5**

If Black moves his rook, White will control the open h-file. **14.♗h3** White wants to exchange his bishop for the one on c8 to accentuate the weakness of the empty square f5. **♔c7**

15.♘e4 ♘b6
[An interesting possibility is 15...♘f8 16.♗xc8 ♖xc8 17.f4 exf4 18.gxf4 ♘e6 19.♖df1 gxf4 20.♗xf4+ ♘xf4 21.♖xf4 ♖cg8 22.♘xf6 ♖g2 23.e3 ♖d8 24.♘e4 h6 and it's not easy for White to exploit the extra pawn.]

16.♗xc8 ♖axc8 17.b3 ♖cd8 EXERCISE (planning): Make a positional judgement! How should White proceed regarding which pieces to exchange and which to keep, and for what particular reason?
[If 17...g4 , with the idea to stop White from playing g3-g4, Petrosian had planned 18.h6 followed by Rh5.]

ANSWER: Petrosian played the highly original and creative:

18.♗c5!! QUESTION: Why does White exchange his good bishop for Black's bad one?

ANSWER: Petrosian probably played this according to the method of exclusion.
[As a matter of fact the standard plan is to exchange all the superfluous pieces with 18.♖xd8 ♖xd8 19.♗xb6+ *(* after *19.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 20.♔xd1 ♘c8* Black avoids one of the exchanges *)* 19...♔xb6 . The next step is to secure the f5-square with 20.g4 , exchange the last rook with Rd1 and then head for a position with a knight on f5 and the king on e4. We can't reckon with achieving the ideal position with the king on f5 and the knight on e4 because Black will cover the f5-square with his own king on e6.
When we analyse like this we are using Capablanca's approach to the position. According to the principle of the Cuban genius, we try to imagine which pieces to exchange and where to place the other pieces, so as to achieve the maximal advantageous position.
If you managed to find all this in your own analysis you have good technique, but is the position won? It's actually not clear how White can win and therefore he should refrain from playing according to the normal mode of technique. The high level with which Petrosian played this game was even beyond the technique of the great Capablanca! Chess on this level is about embracing the exceptions to the classical rules and using a creative rather than a

mechanical technique.]

18...♖xd1+

[Barcza, Alföldy and Kapu analyse 18...♗xc5 19.♘xc5 ♖he8 20.♖xd8 ♔xd8 21.♘xb7+ ♔c7 22.♘c5 e4 with the idea of taking away the b4-square from the knight with ... a5 and following up with ...Re5, threatening the knight. However, this plan can be prevented by the simple 23.♖d1 a5 24.♖d4 f5 25.a3 ♖e5 26.b4 and White keeps his extra pawn.]

19.♖xd1 ♗xc5

[The passive 19...♗d8 is answered by 20.g4 .]

20.♘xc5 ♖e8 21.♘e4 The advantage of the exchange of the bishops is obvious since White can work with direct threats on the weak f6-pawn and the weak d6-square.

♖e6

[21...♖f8 allows the invasion of the white rook on the sixth rank with 22.♖d6 ♘d7 *(* or *22...f5 23.♖f6!)* 23.♖e6 when White continues to improve his position with every move while Black just sits and waits.]

22.g4 a5 A risky move since it creates new weaknesses on the queenside, but on the other hand White will increases his space on that side anyway if Black remains too passive.

23.♖d3 ♘d7 24.♔c2 b6 Preventing White from playing c4-c5 or using the square for his knight after a preliminary Rxd7+. **25.♖f3** Black, in his turn, threatened to play 25...Nc5 which would liberate his position considerably.

♔d8 26.a3 c5 Black defends against the threat of 27 b4 followed by c4-c5, but seriously weakens d5.

[However, other moves do not help either: 26...♔e7 27.b4 axb4 28.axb4 followed by Ra3 results in an invasion into the black position via the a-file.]

[26...♔c7 27.b4 axb4 28.axb4 ♔b7 29.♖d3 ♔c7 30.♖a3 ♔b7 31.c5 and White has a positionally won game.]

27.♔c3 ♔e7 28.♖d3 ♖c6 29.♖d5 ♘f8 30.♘g3 ♘e6 31.♘f5+ ♔e8 EXERCISE: White has improved his pieces and placed them on good squares. How do you now improve the pawn structure?

ANSWER: **32.e3** A good move, accentuating the difference between the knights. Black's knight can't do anything dangerous from now on. It's usually a good device to put a pawn three squares in front of the knight to limit its action. This Karpov-like technique of how to limit a knight works most effectively.

♘c7?

[32...♘d8 followed by Nf7 is correct to defend the entry points in Black's position: for instance, 33.♔d3 ♘f7 34.♔e4 ♘d8 and Black defends more successfully than in the game.]

33.♖d1 ♘e6 34.♔d3 ♖c7 35.♔e4 ♖c6

[35...♖d7 doesn't improve Black's play after 36.♘d6+ ♔d8 *(* or *36...♔e7 37.♘c8+* and the b6-pawn falls *)* 37.♔f5! ♘d4+ 38.♔xf6! ♖xd6+ 39.♔xe5 ♖e6+ 40.♔d5 and Black is lost.]

36.♘d6+ ♔e7 37.♘f5+ ♔e8 38.♘d6+ ♔e7 39.♘f5+ ♔e8 Under time pressure Black missed the opportunity to claim a draw. The position has actually been repeated three times! **40.a4?!**

[40.♖d6 ♖xd6 41.♘xd6+ ♔d7 42.♘b5 wins immediately:

A) 42...♘f8 43.♔f5 ♔e7 44.♘c3 ♘d7 45.h6! .;

B) 42...♘g7 43.h6 ♘e8 *(* or *43...♘e6 44.♘c3!)* 44.♔d5! .;

C) 42...♔e7 43.♘c3 ♘c7 44.♘d5+ ♘xd5 45.♔xd5 ♔d7 46.a4 and Black is in zugzwang.;

D) 42...--]

40...♘d8 EXERCISE: The game was adjourned here. What do you think Petrosian sealed?

ANSWER: **41.♘h6!** This beautiful move, cleverly using the rim, is the right way to stop Black from playing ...Nf7 when he would start to construct a temporary fortress.

♘e6

[Other moves don't help either: 41...♖e6 42.♔f5 ♖c6 43.♘g8 and the f6-pawn falls.]

[41...♘b7 42.♘g8! ♔f8 43.♖d7 ♔xg8 44.♔d5! and White wins. *(* Notice that *44.♖xb7 ♖d6* prolongs the game. *)*]

[41...♘f7 42.♘xf7 ♔xf7 43.♖d7+ ♔g8 44.♔d5 with a decisive penetration.]

42.♘g8 ♘f8 EXERCISE: How should White continue?

[If 42...♔f7 43.♖d7+! ♔xg8 44.♔d5 and White wins.]

ANSWER: **43.♖d2!** This or 43 Rd3! puts Black in zugzwang.

[Not, though, 43.♔f5? ♔f7 44.♘h6+ ♔g7 45.♖d8 ♘e6 46.♖e8? ♘c7 47.♖e7+ ♔xh6 48.♔e4 ♘a6 and Black is winning.]

43...♔f7

[Other moves lose too: 43...♘d7 44.♔f5 ♔d8 45.e4! (White improves the pawn position before the decisive exchange

sacrifice) ♔e8 46.f3 ♔d8 47.♖xd7+! ♔xd7 48.♘xf6+ and White wins.]
[43...♖e6 44.♔f5 ♔f7 45.♖d8 (with the threat of 46 Rxd8+) ♖c6 46.♘h6+ ♔g7 *(46...♔e7 47.♖b8* followed by the regrouping Ke4 and Nf5+ is decisive *)* 47.♔e4! ♘e6 48.♖d7+! ♔xh6 49.♔d5! . This triangle manoeuvre Kf5-e4-d5 is very impressive indeed.]
44.♘h6+ ♔e8
[Alternatively, 44...♔g7 45.♖d8! ♔xh6 *(* after *45...♘e6 46.♖d7+ ♔xh6 47.♔d5* White wins *)* 46.♖xf8 ♔g7 *(* if *46...♖d6 47.♖f7!* and Black is in zugzwang *)* 47.♖d8 ♔f7 48.♔d5 ♖c7 49.♔d6 and after 50 Rd7 White wins the pawn ending.]
45.♘f5 ♘e6
[45...♘d7 is answered by 46.♖d6 and 47 Kd5.]
46.♖d6 ♖xd6 47.♘xd6+ ♔d7 48.♘b5 The knight ending is easily won for White because of the weak squares on f5 and d5, which White can invade with his king at an appropriate moment.
♘g7
[48...♘f8 49.♔f5 ♔e7 50.♘c3 ♘d7 51.♘d5+ ♔f7 52.e4 h6 53.f3! and Black must give ground because of zugzwang.]
49.h6 ♘e8 50.♔d5 A beautiful zugzwang position. This was also one of Petrosian's specialities, to take away moves from the opponent. **f5 51.♔xe5 fxg4 52.♘c3 ♔e7 53.♘e4 ♔f7 54.♔f5 g3 55.fxg3 g4 56.♘g5+ ♔g8 57.♔e6 ♘c7+ 58.♔d7 ♘a6 59.e4 ♘b4 60.e5 ♘d3 61.e6** . A big triumph for Petrosian's light-square strategy.
1-0

E49

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Cardoso,R**
19: Portoroz Interzonal 1958
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian's opponent, the International Master from the Philippines, Rodolfo Tan Cardoso (1937-2013), is perhaps most famous for his eight-game match against Fischer in New York 1957 which he lost with 6-2. He was the first Asian International Master and the first and only Philippine who managed to beat Fischer in a serious game.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 d5
[Today 4...c5]
[or 4...0-0 are regarded as more flexible and reliable continuations.]
5.a3 An invitation to the Botvinnik variation in the Rubinstein system. This variation has a good reputation for White and gives decent attacking chances if Black accepts the challenge.
♗xc3+
[5...♗e7 is playable, leading to a Queen's Gambit with the extra move a2-a3, but with the c1-bishop locked in. T.Petrosian-V. Antoshin, USSR Championship 1957, continued 6.♗d3 0-0 7.♘ge2 b6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.b4 c5 10.b5 a6 11.0-0 axb5 12.♗xb5 ♗b7 13.♘g3 g6 14.♗b2 ♘c6 with an equal game, although Petrosian went on to win after 41 moves.]
6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♗d3 0-0 9.♘e2 ♘c6
[The famous stem-game in this variation, M. Botvinnik-J.Capablanca, AVRO 1938, varied with 9...b6 10.0-0 ♗a6 , splitting the pair of bishops.]
10.0-0 ♖e8 11.f3 This is a typical move in this variation, planning e3-e4 or g2-g4 in the future. **cxd4** It's not clear why Black wants to exchange his more active c-pawn for White's weaker c-pawn at this moment. **12.cxd4 b6 13.♗d2 ♗b7 14.♘g3 ♖c8 15.♖b1** The rook is biting on granite here, but White dreams of a4-a5, creating life for his rook on the b-file. **♖c7 16.♕a4 g6 17.♖fc1 ♖e6 18.♖c2 ♕e8?** EXERCISE: Black threatens 19...Rxe3. How to prevent it?
19.♘f1?
[ANSWER: Far too passive, particularly when Petrosian had the chance to play the active 19.e4! with strong effect. Sometimes his frame of mind prevented him from playing the best and most active move. Despite having built up a good position, he must now start all over again.]
19...♔g7 The king isn't better placed here compared with the normally best square on g8. **20.♖bc1 ♕d8 21.♗b5 ♕a8 22.♗d3** True to his style, Petrosian is not in any hurry. **♖d7**
[Unexpectedly Cardoso avoids a repetition of moves with 22...♕d8 , although Petrosian would probably have avoided that as well.]
23.♘g3 ♖dd6 24.♔h1 ♘d7 EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): What is White's strongest move?
25.♕b3?! Some times Petrosian strength becomes his weakness, that is; he waits too

long. The strongest was to play the tactical and thematic

[ANSWER: Petrosian's strength sometimes became his weakness by waiting too long instead of acting immediately when there was a strong move. The thematic move is once again to play the tactical 25.e4! , exploiting the awkward placement of the black king. The immediate threat is 26 e5 and if Black responds by opening up the centre with dxe4 , White replies 26.♘xe4 :

A) 26...♘c5 27.dxc5 ♖xd3 28.♗c3+ ♘e5 29.♘f2! ♗c6 30.♕f4 ♖d5 31.cxb6 and Black loses material. *(31.--)*;

B) 26...♖xd4 27.♗c3 when White wins a whole rook.;

C) 26...♖d5 27.♗b5 and White wins because Black must place one of his knights on b8 and then his queen can't move.;

D) 26...--]

25...♕d8 26.♘e2 ♕h4? The queen is lonely here and completely misplaced.

[26...♖e8 is a better try to escape the knight's radar.]

27.♕b2 ♘f6

[Safest is 27...♔g8 to step out from the white queen's X-ray.]

[EXERCISE (calculation): The pseudo-attack 27...♕f2 gives Black problems. Why? ANSWER: 28.♘g3 traps the queen and after ♖xe3 the strongest and most spectacular move is 29.♗f5!! , *(* although the prosaic variation *29.♖f1 ♕xg3 30.hxg3 ♖xd3* wins too. *)*]

28.♖f1

[More active is 28.♘f4 followed by 29 Bb5.]

28...♖e8 29.♗b5 ♔g8? QUESTION: What is White's best continuation?

[Better is 29...a6 30.♗d3 with a clear advantage, *(* but not the continuation *30.♗xc6? ♖xc6 31.♖xc6 ♗xc6 32.♕xb6? ♗b5 33.♖e1 ♕f2* when it's Black who is winning. *)*]

[Not 29...♖c8? 30.♖fc1 .]

ANSWER: **30.♕c1!** Putting pressure on the c-file, but also on the diagonal c1–h6 after the preliminary e3-e4. **♖c8 31.e4! dxe4 32.♗g5** The black queen is trapped. **♕h5**

[After 32...exf3 33.♗xh4 fxg2+ 34.♔g1! gxf1♕+ 35.♕xf1 White wins easily.]

33.♘g3 exf3 Black should have resigned here. **34.♘xh5 fxg2+ 35.♖xg2 ♘xh5 36.♕c4 ♘d8 37.♕b4 ♖e6 38.♔g1 ♗xg2 39.♔xg2 ♖e4 40.♔f3 a5 41.♕d2** . Petrosian collected 12½ points in Portoroz, with six wins, thirteen draws and one loss against Bent Larsen. He shared third place with Pal Benko. Mikhail Tal won with 13½ points and Svetozar Gligoric was second with 13 points.

1-0

D35

□ **Petrosian,T**

■ **Rossetto,H**

20: Portoroz Interzonal 1958

[Thomas Engqvist]

The Argentine Hector Decio Rossetto (1922-2009) was a professional player who was awarded the grandmaster title in 1960 and was one of the best players in Argentine history.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.♘c3 ♗e7 5.cxd5 The Exchange variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined was also a favourite weapon of Botvinnik who believed it gives White an enduring initiative. After seeing this excellent model game we must agree with Botvinnik's opinion.

exd5 6.♗f4

[Petrosian used to vary between this and the main variation 6.♗g5 .]

6...c6 7.♕c2 The main idea is to control the central e4-square and prevent Black from playing his bishop to f5. **♘a6** This seemingly extravagant manoeuvre is actually typical of this type of position where Black tries to liberate his light-squared bishop. Black is planning ...Nc7-e6 followed by ...g7-g6, ...Ng7, and then ...Bf5 or ...Nf5 depending on circumstances. The ultimate goal is not only to reach d6, which is the best square for the knight, controlling all the vital central squares, but also the exchange of the light-squared bishops, weakening all White's squares.

[In M.Botvinnik-G.Stahlberg, Budapest 1952, Black prepared the development of his bishop immediately with 7...g6 8.h3 ♗f5 . After the further 9.♕c1 0-0 10.e3 ♘e4 11.♗e2 ♗d6 12.♗xd6 ♕xd6 Black had with simple means already achieved an equal position.]

[T.Petrosian-A.Pomar, Stockholm Interzonal 1963, saw another, perhaps more clever way of developing the light-squared bishop with the continuation 7...♘h5 8.♗e5 f6 9.♗g3 ♘a6 10.e3 ♕b6 11.a3 ♗f5!

, utilizing the tactical circumstances prevalent in the position. The game continued 12.♕d2 ♘xg3 13.hxg3 and now 0-0-0? was a mistake; *(better was 13...0-0)* . After 14.b4 ♘b8 15.♖c1 ♗e4? 16.♕a2! ♘d7 17.♘xd5 ♗xd5 18.♕xd5 White was a pawn ahead.

The game continued a5 19.♕xa5?! Typically Petrosian, who was a waiting player, slowed down the game considerably instead of keeping up the pace and the initiative. *(* The position really called for *19.♕f7!;* or *19.♗d3!* , maintaining strong pressure on the black king *)* . Instead, the game concluded: 19...♕xa5 20.bxa5 ♗xa3 21.♖b1 ♔c7 22.♘d2 c5? 23.dxc5 ♗xc5 24.♘c4 h6 25.♗e2 ♖he8 26.♗f3 ♖b8 27.♖b5 ♗f8 28.♔e2 ♘e5 29.♘xe5 ♖xe5 30.♖xe5 fxe5 31.♖c1+ ♔d7 32.♖b1 ♔c7 33.♖b5 ♗d6 34.♗d5 ♔c8 35.♔f3 ♗c7 36.♔e4 g6 37.g4 ♗d6 38.♖b6 ♔c7 39.g3 g5 40.♖b5 ♔c8 41.♔f5 ♔d7 1-0. A characteristic victory for Petrosian, crushing Black on the light squares.]

8.a3 Taking away the b4-square from both the knight and bishop, and preparing a future minority attack with b4-b5. **0-0 9.e3 ♘c7 10.♗d3 ♘e6 11.♗e5 g6 12.0-0 ♘g7 13.b4 a6** Black is breaking the principle that you shouldn't weaken the position where you are attacked, but there are pros and cons to this move. The good thing is that Black eliminates a possible weakness on a7 after White has broken through with b4-b5-xc6. The bad things are that White obtains an extra file for his attack and Black loses potential support for a knight on b6. Indeed, White can even use the b6-square to attack the c6-pawn from the side with a rook.

14.♗xf6! ♗xf6 QUESTION: Why does White exchange his centralized bishop for the knight?

ANSWER: The exchange of bishop for a knight is a standard motif and part of preparing a successful minority attack. White is planning a minority attack with a3-a4 and b4-b5,with the idea of isolating the pawn on c6. In such a position Black's dark-squared bishop is superfluous regarding the defence of the pawn on c6 which is placed on a light square.

15.a4 ♗f5! The most principled move and an important exchange in Black's favour. The exchange of the light-squared bishops makes the squares on c4 and e4 considerably weaker.

16.♗xf5 ♘xf5 17.b5! White plays this crucial break at the right moment. Otherwise Black may carry out the manoeuvre ...b7-b5 followed by ...Nf5-d6-c4, blockading the queenside. Now White enjoys enduring pressure and Black must play precisely to avoid further problems.

axb5

[O'Kelly, Gligoric and Matanovic's suggestion 17...c5 is a very interesting move with the tactical idea 18.dxc5 ♖c8 , leading to a completely different kind of game.]

18.axb5 EXERCISE: What is Black's best move?

♕d6? A positional mistake.

[ANSWER: White's minority attack is undertaken at a moment when Black has practically no chances to organize a counter demonstration on the other wing, so it's vital to position the pieces on the right defensive locations. The exchange of the light-squared bishops is normally linked with the occupation of the c4-square, so 18...♘d6 suggests itself. However, Black has only one knight to occupy the c4-square and therefore White has the advantage. This was one of the points behind liquidating one of the knights with 14 Bxf6!. That said, even if the knight doesn't manage to move to the dream square at c4, it nevertheless has an excellent post on d6.]

19.bxc6 bxc6 20.♘a4 It's customary for an isolated pawn that not only is the pawn weak in itself, but first and foremost the square in front of the pawn is weak too, in this case the c5-square.

♖fb8 21.♘c5 ♕e7 Black realizes that the knight belongs on d6. **22.♘d3 ♕b7 23.♘fe5** Not only c5 is a weak square, but also e5 and from here the knight can attack the weak pawn on c6. **♗xe5 24.♘xe5 ♖xa1 25.♖xa1 ♘e7** QUESTION: Can you describe in general terms how White plays for a win in such a position?

ANSWER: For a waiting player of Petrosian's calibre this is just a perfect position where he has the more active pieces and can play against one or several weaknesses. The key to win the game is to create another weakness. Petrosian's great strength was his patience and many players succumbed to him because of that quality.

26.g3 ♕b2 This is just pseudo activity, but very typical play when sitting with a passive

position.
QUESTION: Should White now play with or without the queens?
[Passive waiting tactics like Darga's suggestion 26...♕c7 aren't to everybody's taste]
[while 26...f6 weakens both the kingside and the second rank.]
27.♕d1! ANSWER: It's important to avoid the exchange of the queens because a second weakness may then be created more easily on the black kingside. If White exchanges queens it's much easier for Black to defend.
h5? It was very dangerous to play such weakening pawn moves against Petrosian who now had two weaknesses to concentrate on.
[27...f6?? is answered by the fork 28.♘d7]
[so the waiting move 27...♔g7 is probably best.]
28.♖c1 ♖b6 29.h3! White makes a preparatory move for the pawn break g3-g4 later on. **♔g7 30.♔g2 ♕a3**
[EXERCISE: The German Grandmaster Klaus Viktor Darga (1934-) suggested 30...♘f5 31.♖c2 ♕b3 with counterplay. Is this correct?
ANSWER: No! 32.♕c1 nullifies the pin and wins the pawn on c6 with three attackers to Black's one. The black knight belongs on the defensive position e7 and shouldn't be moved at all.]
31.♖a1
[The immediate 31.♕f3 f6 32.♘d7 is answered by ♘f5! .]
31...♕b2 EXERCISE: How should White continue?
[The retreat 31...♕d6 32.♖a7 gives White strong pressure on the seventh row.]
ANSWER: The position is ripe for the decisive break: **32.g4! hxg4 33.hxg4** Now when the h-file has become opened Black must be careful about attacks both on the h-file and the a-file. **♖b7** EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): Which move is the strongest, 34 Rc1 or 34 Ra8? Calculate the consequences as far ahead as you are able to.
34.♖c1
[ANSWER: The most precise move is the direct attacking one 34.♖a8 with the dangerous idea of 35 Qf3 f6 36 g5!. Black has three continuations all leading to a lost game:
A) 34...f6 35.♕f3 ♕b1 *(* after *35...g5 36.♖d8 ♕c2 37.♖d6* eventually White will manage to attack two of Black's weaknesses and Black is lost *)* 36.g5 ♕f5 37.♕xf5 gxf5 38.gxf6+ ♔xf6 39.♖f8+ ♔e6 40.♘d3 ♔d6 41.♘c5 ♖a7 42.♖e8! and an amusing zugzwang position has arisen.;
B) 34...♖b8 35.♕f3 f6 36.♘d7! ♖xa8 37.♕xf6+ ♔g8 38.♕xe7 and Black can't prevent mate. The knight on e5 is an enormously vital piece.;
C) 34...♕b1 35.♕xb1 ♖xb1 36.♖a7 ♔f6 37.g5+ ♔e6 38.♘d7! and Black is lost. The lesson of these variations is that when the pawn arrives on g5 everything collapses.;
D) 34...--]
34...♕b5
[Other defences are not better: 34...f6 35.♘xc6 ♖c7 36.♖b1 and White keeps his extra pawn.]
[34...♖b6 35.♕f3 f6 36.♘d7 ♘g8 37.♖h1! with a win. The double threat of Nxb6 and Qh3 invading the h-file is too much for Black.]
35.♕f3 The combined play against the two weaknesses, the c6-pawn and the black king, is called alternation to use an expression from Nimzowitsch. Petrosian, who had read Nimzowitsch's books, was of course familiar with this strategic device.
f6 EXERCISE: What is White's best continuation?
ANSWER: **36.g5!** Incredibly this idea works even with the rook on c1. **♘f5**
[After 36...fxe5 37.♕f6+ ♔g8 38.♖h1 it's mate on h8]
[while it's curtains after 36...f5 37.♕h3 ♘g8 38.♖h1 .]
37.gxf6+ ♔xf6 38.♖xc6+ ♔e7 39.♕f4 . A well-played game by Petrosian demonstrating his ability of simultaneously playing against two weaknesses.
1-0

D91

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Krogius,N**
21: USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1959
[Thomas Engqvist]

Nikolai Vladimirovich Krogius (1930-) is famous for his book Psychology in Chess which advises how chess players should prepare for competitive play. His peak as a

player was in 1967 when he was ranked 18th in the world and Krogius played in several finals of the Soviet Championship. The individual score between Petrosian and Krogius was 5-1, with four wins and two draws. Here is the fourth meeting between them.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.c4 ♗g7 4.♘c3 d5 5.♗g5 Petrosian chose a quiet continuation, probably from a psychological point of view, since Krogius had a reputation of being strong in the field of opening theory. In those days this solid system wasn't so deeply researched unlike today.

♘e4 6.cxd5

[The natural 6.♗h4 didn't give Black any difficulties in T.Engqvist-M.Rytshagov, Helsinki 1991, after the moves ♘xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4 8.♕a4+ c6 9.♕xc4 ♕a5 10.e3 ♘a6 11.♘d2 ♗e6 12.♕d3 0-0! 13.♗e2 ♘c5! 14.♕c2 ♗f5 15.♘b3! ♘xb3 16.♕xb3 e5 17.0-0 ♗e6 with an equal game.]

[6.♗f4 retains a slight advantage according to Petrosian, but there is no consensus with modern theory. Indeed, Jonathan Rowson's Understanding the Grünfeld regards this system as relatively harmless.]

6...♘xg5

[6...♘xc3 7.bxc3 ♕xd5 8.e3 c5 is more in the spirit of the Grünfeld, even though White's central pawn trio gives chances for a slight but persistent edge by blocking the diagonal of the bishop on g7.]

7.♘xg5 White plays a clever system because it is useful to trade the bishop for a knight in this type of position which will often result in a minority attack from White's point of view. The black bishop is misplaced on g7 where it has no influence on White's king's wing or its own queen's wing. In practice White has an extra knight when he starts the attack on the queen's wing. This game proved that Krogius didn't understand the nuances of the position.

e6 8.♘f3

[The variation 8.♕d2 exd5 9.♕e3+ ♔f8 10.♕f4 ♗f6 11.h4 leads to a considerably more lively game, but it didn't correspond with Petrosian's taste, since he normally preferred a quiet game with a slower rhythm, giving room for intricate manoeuvring.]

8...exd5 9.e3 0-0 10.♗d3 ♘c6

[Standard is 10...c6]

[but an interesting alternative is 10...c5 11.dxc5 ♘d7 12.♖c1 ♘xc5 13.0-0 ♗e6 14.♗e2 ♖c8 with a complicated position in A. Riazantsev-V.Neverov, Saint Petersburg 1999.]

11.0-0 ♘e7 QUESTION: What is White's plan in this kind of position?

ANSWER: The normal plan is to begin a minority attack with b2-b4-b5, putting pressure on the c-pawn. It doesn't really matter for the time being if the c-pawn stands on c7 or c6 because White will double his rooks on the c-file all the same.

12.b4 ♗f5? Piece exchanges are normally in White's favour because they will diminish any potential attack on the white king.

[It was therefore better to play 12...♗g4 , provoking a weakness with h2-h3.]

13.♗xf5 ♘xf5 14.b5 White's plan is to play 15 Qb3 and force 15...c6 which will leave Black with a weak pawn on c6 after 16 bxc6 bxc6.

♕d6 15.♕b3 ♘e7 Black tries to postpone the crucial ...c7-c6 to a better moment, but White focuses on the c-pawn anyway. **16.♖fc1 ♔h8?** Black wants to get out of the way of the white queen's X-ray and possibly plans a minority attack with ...f5-f4. However this plan is not realistic since White's attack has already begun. Black should rather take care of his defence on the queen's wing and follow the famous device of Steinitz that if you are worse you must defend and you must defend the weakest point.

[In this case the c-pawn needs to be taken care of, so better is 16...♖fc8 .]

17.♖c2 h6 This is a consequence of the passive move 16...Kh8.

[Black wants to play 17...♖fc8 18.e4 dxe4 *(* in this last variation *18...c5* can be played, but White keeps a stable slight advantage after *19.bxc6 bxc6 20.e5* followed by 21 Na4, controlling the vital square at c5 *)* , but it's not possible because of 19.♘g5 when f7 falls with devastating effect.]

18.♖ac1 c6 EXERCISE: How should White continue the minority attack?

ANSWER: **19.♘a4!** A useful move keeping the tension and strengthening the position maximally. If Black captures on b5, it will lead to a strategical weakness at d5 and tactical weaknesses at a7 and b7.

[The immediate 19.bxc6 bxc6 20.♘a4 is playable but unnecessary. Why play poor psychological chess and give your opponent breathing space with ♖ab8? It was part of Petrosian's make-up to take care of such subtleties. The smaller details are one of the secrets of achieving mastery

of the highest level.]
19...♖ab8 EXERCISE: Petrosian now played a prophylactic and useful move. Can you find it? ANSWER: **20.g3!** This move is very characteristic of Petrosian. It doesn't only give White's king an escape square after files are opened, it also prevents ...f5-f4 even before Black has put his own pawn on f5. This move is a very good illustration of how Petrosian prevented activity from the opponent many moves in advance. Fischer said: "Petrosian has the ability to see and eliminate danger 20 moves before it arises!". The move 20 g3! is also according with the principle that when you are in total control of the position, don't hurry! This puts additional pressure on the opponent and increases the chances for more errors.
♔h7 21.♘c5 ♖fd8
[White also has a clear advantage after 21...b6 22.♘d3 cxb5 23.♕xb5 ♖fc8 24.♖xc8 ♖xc8 25.♖xc8 ♘xc8 26.♕e8! .]
22.bxc6 bxc6 23.♕a4 ♕f6 EXERCISE: Can you guess Petrosian's next move?
[ANSWER: 23...♕f6 24.♘e5 is the most forceful and natural move. One logical continuation is ♕f5 25.♕xa7 ♗xe5 26.dxe5 ♕xe5 27.♘d7 and White wins the exchange. However Petrosian didn't play like this:]
24.♔g2 It's impressive to see that Petrosian was never in any hurry to win and conclude the game as quickly as possible. Even in won positions he had great patience and continually strengthened his position.
♖a8 Black moves his rook to a8 as if he wants to start a new game. **25.♘b7 ♖e8 26.♘a5 g5** Black tries to do something on the king's wing. It's better to be late than to never start the attack. **27.h3** Another typical move from Petrosian showing he's in no hurry whatsoever.
[Of course the immediate capture with 27.♘xc6 , answering g4 with 28.♘d2 , won too, but Petrosian characteristically didn't want to give Black an inch of an improvement to his position.]
27...♕f5 28.♘xc6 ♕e4 29.♖c5
[Because of the limitations of a practical game Petrosian normally avoided complicated variations like 29.♘xe7 ♖xe7 30.♖c7 ♖ae8 31.♕xa7 h5 and now:
A) 32.♔g1! ♖xc7 33.♖xc7 ♕xf3 34.♖xf7 ♕d1+ 35.♔g2 ♖g8 36.♖f5 and White wins because the g5-pawn is lost.;
B) 32.♔h2? ♕xf3 33.♖xe7 ♕xf2+ 34.♔h1 ♕f3+ 35.♔g1 ♕xg3+ 36.♔f1 ♕f3+ 37.♔e1 ♖xe7 38.♕xe7 ♗f8!! and Black forces the draw with perpetual check. *(38...--)*;
C) 32.--]
29...f5 30.♕c2 A beautiful symbolic line-up on the c-file where White has already broken through. **♘xc6 31.♖xc6 f4** Black's thematic attack comes too late. White's pieces are on their ideal squares. **32.exf4 gxf4 33.g4 ♗xd4 34.♕d2 ♗g7 35.♖e1 ♕a4 36.♕xd5 ♖xe1 37.♘xe1 ♖f8 38.♘f3 ♔h8 39.♖c7 a6 40.♕b7 ♖g8 41.♘h4** . Petrosian's unhurried style in advantageous positions makes a big impression when you consider the many 'normal' moves he didn't play even when you surely expected them.
1-0

B39

□ **Keres,P**
■ **Petrosian,T**
22: Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade Candidates 1959
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Estonian Grandmaster Paul Keres (1916–1975) is regarded as one of the strongest players in the history of chess never to become world champion. The score between these great players was completely even at 17-17. Petrosian won three games and lost three, while the rest were drawn. The following game is probably the best game he played against the 'Eternal Second'.
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 g6 For some reason Petrosian was never successful with the Accelerated Dragon. Maybe it's only a coincidence, but he only managed to win one game with it, albeit a superb one as we shall soon see.
5.c4 ♗g7 6.♗e3 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘g4 This continuation loses control of the d5-square, but on the other hand it opens the diagonal for the bishop on g7. **8.♕xg4 ♘xd4 9.♕d1** EXERCISE: This position shows what preferences Petrosian had. What move would you choose: defend the knight or retreat it and, if so, where?
♘e6
[ANSWER: Bronstein's 9...e5 blocks the bishop and creates a glaring weakness on d5. This was never played by Petrosian in a serious game.]
[9...♘c6 is playable, but loses time. It's better to start immediate manoeuvring with

the knight like Petrosian did. He placed the knight more centrally while heading for the outpost on c5.]

10.♕d2

[10.♖c1 is another variation, but has disadvantage that White reveals the location of his queen's rook too early. There are many possible locations for the rooks even though c1 and d1 are the most common ones.]

10...d6

[10...♕a5 practically forces 11.♖c1 , avoiding having the pawns doubled on the queenside. After ♗xc3!? 12.♖xc3!? *(* Larsen thought that Black could hold the draw after *12.♕xc3 ♕xc3+ 13.♖xc3* because of his very sound pawn structure *)* 12...♕xa2 13.♗d3 White has the initiative. I can't imagine Petrosian playing a position like this and it may be one explanation why he didn't play the sharper 10...Qa5.]

11.♗e2 ♗d7

[V.Korchnoi-T.Petrosian, Candidates (fifth matchgame), Odessa 1974, deviated with 11...♕a5 12.♖c1 ♗d7 13.0-0 ♘c5 14.♗h6! 0-0 15.♗xg7 ♔xg7 16.b3 ♗c6 17.♖fe1 ♘e6 18.♗g4 ♖ad8 19.♖e3 and Petrosian lost after 42 moves.]

12.0-0 0-0 QUESTION: How would you plan the deployment of the white rooks? **13.♖ac1** Keres chose the positional set-up for the rooks.

[ANSWER: The rooks are two of the trickiest pieces to deal with since their deployment is connected with future pawn breaks. B. Larsen-T.Petrosian, Santa Monica 1966, continued with the more aggressive 13.♖ad1 , with the idea of developing the rook on f1 with the pawn move f2-f4 and if possible to advance further with f4-f5. Development of the rooks in this fashion, so that they control the centre and the kingside, is a much more ambitious set-up suitable for attacking players who wish to initiate a kingside attack. The aforementioned game continued ♗c6 14.♘d5 ♖e8? *(* Petrosian avoided the natural *14...♘c5* because he surprisingly didn't like to play *15.♕c2 a5 16.♗xc5 dxc5 17.♘f6+ ♗xf6 18.♖xd8 ♖fxd8* , despite the fact that he would have dark-square control and enough compensation for the sacrificed queen; if he'd played like this, it might have been Petrosian who made a queen sacrifice instead of Larsen *)* 15.f4! and Larsen managed to win brilliantly after 30 moves with a beautiful queen sacrifice on g6.]

13...♗c6 14.♖fd1 ♘c5

[14...♗xc3?! 15.♕xc3 ♗xe4 16.♗h6 or *(16.c5* gives good play for the sacrificed pawn. *)*]

15.f3 a5 16.b3

[The earlier A.Reshko-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Kiev 1957, saw instead 16.♕c2 ♕b6 ith the idea of 17...Bh6! 18 Bxh6?? Nd3+ followed by smothered mate. Following 17.♖b1 ♖fc8 *(* if *17...♗h6 18.♗f2)* 18.♕d2 ♕b4 19.♘d5 ♗xd5 20.exd5 ♘a4 21.♗d4 ♗xd4+ 22.♕xd4 ♖c7 23.h4 ♘b6 24.b3 ♘d7 25.h5 gxh5 26.f4 ♘f6 27.♖d3 ♕c5 28.♕xc5 ♖xc5 29.a3 ♔f8 30.♖d2 ♖ac8 31.♖d4 ♔e8 32.♗d3 ♔d7 33.♗f5+ e6 34.♗h3 ♘g4 35.♖bd1 ♔e7 *(35...e5!? 36.fxe5 dxe5 37.♖xg4 hxg4 38.♗xg4+ ♔d6 39.♗xc8 ♖xc8 40.a4 f5* with a probable draw because of White's strong protected passed pawn *)* 36.dxe6 fxe6 37.♖xd6 ♖8c7? *(37...a4* was necessary with a complicated but roughly equal game *)* 38.a4 White went on to win after 72 moves.]

16...♕b6 Black plans ...a5-a4 since b3-b4 is stopped by this move. **17.♘b5!** White exploits the fact that Black's pawn isn't on a7 anymore.

[17.♘d5 is the standard move in similar positions.]

17...♖fc8

[One of the points behind White's last move is that the exchange 17...♗xb5 18.cxb5 only benefits White, who will be able to establish his bishop on the outpost c4 and control the light squares along the classical diagonal.]

18.♗f1 White makes room for second rank manoeuvring like Qd2-f2. **♕d8 19.♕f2 ♕e8!?** One of Petrosian's mysterious waiting moves. EXERCISE (calculation) What happens if White takes twice on c5?

[One would expect the standard 19...♕f8 followed by ...Bh6 at the right moment for the purpose of obtaining stronger control of the dark squares in White's position.]

20.♘c3

[ANSWER: 20.♗xc5 dxc5 21.♕xc5 fails to ♗b2! , giving rise to the following lines:

A) 22.♘a7 ♖d8 23.♖b1 ♖xd1 24.♖xd1 ♖d8 25.♖xd8 ♕xd8 26.♘xc6 bxc6 27.♔h1 ♕d2 crashes through on g1 or f1, and 28.♕xe7 ♕d1 wins on the spot.;

B) 22.♖b1? ♗xe4 23.♕f2 ♗xb1 24.♕xb2

♗f5 and Black has won the exchange.;
C) 22.♖c2? ♗xe4! and Black wins,
(but of course not *22...♗xb5? 23.♕f2! .)*;
D) 22.--]

20...b6 Not only securing the c5-square, but also the harmonious interaction between his pieces. Such small moves were extremely important for a player like Petrosian to be successful and also reveal one of the secrets of how he managed to beat his opponents imperceptibly. It's a matter of increasing the harmony in the position and here he opened a communication line on the second rank for his rooks.

21.♖c2 A typical move strengthening White's position. From now on the doubling of the rooks is possible at any moment.

[One would expect the sharp move 21.h4 from a player like Keres. On the other hand, his earlier rook deployment doesn't really fit into this scheme of attacking on the kingside. If he wanted to attack the black king in the first place, he should have followed Larsen's model which started with 13 Rad1.]

21...♕f8 22.♕d2 ♗d7 23.♘d5 With this normal move Keres shows the main defect of the Dragon structure, the d5-square. Compare with the Scheveningen variation, where Black protects all the squares c5, d5, e5 and f5 with the pawns on d6 and e6. Black now has to deal with the dominant knight some way or the other. If he exchanges it for a bishop or harasses it with a timely ...e7-e6, new targets will be made available for White's forces. It's interesting to study how Petrosian dealt with this fundamental positional problem.

♖ab8 24.♗g5 ♖e8 25.♖e1 It seems Keres was anticipating a future ...Bc6-xd5 with e4xd5 activating his rook on e1. **♖b7!**
This mode of play on the second rank is one of Petrosian's trademarks. Remember that according to Keene this deployment of the rooks is reminiscent of how the Arabic players of the 10th Century played.

26.♕f2 White plans 27 Qh4 putting pressure on the pawn at e7, but Black had probably already anticipated this with his 20th move.

♗c6 27.♕h4 EXERCISE (positional judgement): Should Black reduce the pressure on the e7-pawn with 27...Ne6 or 27...f6?
ANSWER: **f6!!**

[The English Grandmaster Harry Golombek (1911-1995), who the arbiter at this tournament, later wrote a book about the event, stating: "Preferable to this pawn weakening move was 27...♘e6 ." However, this is a misconception. After 28.♗e3 ♘c5 Black's position is fully playable, albeit a little bit passive. One thing catching the eye is that the queen has no legal move on f8. The move played in the game improves the position and the bishop on g7 is only temporarily blocked.]

28.♗e3 e6 29.♘c3 According to classical theories Black has a weakness on d6, but also the pawns on e6, f6 and g6 are regarded as weaknesses. What's new with Petrosian's strategy is that the traditional pawn weaknesses at the same time make his pawns flexible. White has to reckon with all the possible breaks in the centre, especially ... f6-f5.
This situation has some similarities with the problem of the isolani which is regarded as both a strength and a weakness. The idea that a weakness is weak only when it can be attacked wasn't new, but the idea that you voluntarily accept weaknesses for the purpose of creating a strong flexibility with pawn breaks was new.
The problems connected with the weak d6-pawn in openings like the King's Indian or the Sicilian were, of course, familiar to Petrosian since those ideas had been known from the famous Candidates' tournament played in Zurich 1953. This method of playing in tight positions, where you strive for liberations with pawn breaks in the centre, is very reminiscent of the modern Hedgehog formations. From this perspective, the game we are looking at might even have been an embryo or a forerunner for that development in the Hedgehog which is normally attributed to players like Ulf Andersson and Ljubomir Ljubojevic.

♖d7 Black has achieved a beautiful harmony in his position and the proof of it is that it's easier to strengthen his position than White's.

30.♗d4 f5! Black releases the energy inherent in his position. **31.exf5 gxf5**
The exchange of the e4-pawn for the g6-pawn makes Black's pawn centre numerically stronger and the pawns from now on have a strong lust to march forward.

32.♖d2 ♗xd4+ 33.♖xd4 ♖g7
Black's manoeuvre ...Rb8-b7-b7-g7 transformed the rook from being a humble defensive piece into an attacking piece.

34.♔h1 ♖g6! Petrosian prepares a horizontal

defence of d6 with ...e6-e5 at the right moment. After some impressive manoeuvring the queen's rook has found the perfect location. We saw another astonishing manoeuvre with the queen's rook in Game 14, Petrosian-Taimanov.

35.♖d2 ♖d8

[35...♕g7 with the double threat of 36... Qxc3 and 36...Bxf3 is answered by either 36.♕d4 *(* or *36.♘e2 .)*]

36.♖ed1 ♖d7 The pleasure Petrosian must have had while making such micro manoeuvres on the second rank is clearly visible. **37.♕f2 ♕d8 38.♕e3 e5! 39.f4** EXERCISE: How should Black continue after 39 f4?

[On 39.♘d5 it's very tempting to play the exchange ♗xd5 *(* the correct strategy is *39...f4* combined with vertical pressure on the h- and g-files *)* 40.♖xd5 ♘e6 , but after 41.♕d2 ♘d4 42.f4 White position is tremendous.]

39...e4?

[ANSWER: Best is to keep the tension in the centre with 39...♕h4! . In the variation 40.♘d5 ♘e4 41.♖c2 ♗xd5 42.cxd5 exf4 43.♕xb6 f3 44.♕e3 f2 45.♖d3 ♖h6 46.h3 ♖g6 Black is on top. However, in the game an unfortunate mistake in time-trouble took place.]

40.♘e2 ♖dg7 Here the game was adjourned.

41.♘d4 The sealed move.

♗d7 42.a3

[42.♘b5 ♗xb5 43.cxb5 is also a good continuation.]

42...♕a8! A highly relevant move in conjunction with the possibility of ...Nd3, using the X-ray along the long light-square diagonal with the axis on g2. **43.♔g1**

[Ignoring the knight on d3 with 43.b4 axb4 44.axb4 ♘d3 45.♖b1 makes White the master of the situation.]

43...h5 44.♖b1

[Again 44.b4 is better. The possible continuation axb4 45.axb4 ♘d3 46.♗xd3 exd3 47.♘f3 ♕e4! 48.♖e1 ♖g4 49.♕xe4 fxe4 50.♘g5 holds a slight advantage for White.]

44...h4 45.♖bb2 ♖g4 46.♖f2 ♕d8 47.b4 EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): What is Black's strongest continuation? ANSWER: In the concluding phase of the game Petrosian reveals he's a bloodthirsty tactician in a strategist's clothes. Look at this: **♖g3!! 48.hxg3** According to Golombek, Keres thought he had won a rook for nothing.

[A better practical solution is 48.♕e1 ♘d3 49.♗xd3 ♖xd3 50.♖fd2 ♖xa3 51.bxa5 ♖xa5 with an equal position.]

48...hxg3 49.♖fd2?

[Other options are: 49.bxc5?! ♕h4 50.♕xg3 ♕xg3 51.♖b3! ♕g4 52.cxb6 ♗c8 and Black is in control.]

[49.♖f3! ♕h4 50.♗e2 with an approximately equal position.]

[49.♗e2! gxf2+ 50.♕xf2 with an even game.]

49...♕h4 50.♗e2 ♖h7 51.♔f1?? EXERCISE (combination alert): Petrosian now concluded the game brilliantly. How?

[51.♗h5 is the only move to fight on. A possible continuation is ♖xh5 52.♔f1 ♘d3 53.♘e2 ♘xb2 54.♖xb2 ♕f6 55.♘xg3! with some drawing chances.]

ANSWER: **51...♕xf4+!** Keres had completely overlooked this queen sacrifice.

[After 51...♕xf4+ 52.♕xf4 follows simply ♖h1# .

The winner of the tournament had the right to challenge Botvinnik in a match for the world championship. As is well known, Tal challenged Botvinnik in 1960 and became the new world champion. Tal had won the fourth Candidates tournament in 1959 with 20 points out of 28. Keres was second with 18½ and Petrosian came third with 15½.]

0-1

B17

□ **Matanovic,A**
■ **Petrosian,T**
23: USSR vs. Yugoslavia, Kiev 1959
[Thomas Engqvist]

The then 29 nine-year-old talented grandmaster Aleksandar Matulovic is probably most famous for his work as a journalist and editor-in-chief for Chess Informant. At the chess board he was a strong theoretical player which he combined with strong intuition.

1.e4 c6 Black plans 2...d5 putting pressure on White's strong pawn on e4 and opens the diagonal for the bishop on c8. The c6-d5 structure and early development of the c8-bishop is very popular today. One practical reason for the popularity of this opening scheme is that it can be played against all available set-ups for White.

2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 dxe4 There is nothing better

than to give up the centre with the idea later on to focus on sapping the fortification of the strong centralized knight and eventually also the d4-pawn.

4.♘xe4 ♘d7 QUESTION: What is the main idea with this modest move?

[ANSWER: The main idea is to prepare 5... Ngf6 and challenge the centralized knight on e4. If White captures the knight Black recaptures with the other knight. Thus Black doesn't need to worry about any structural imbalance in his pawn structure compared with the original Caro-Kann which runs 4...♘f6 5.♘xf6+ exf6 *(* or the Bronstein and Larsen's *5...gxf6* . The modified pawn configurations arising after these variations have their pros and cons. *)*]

5.♘f3

[5.♘g5 is the trickiest line. The exposed squares on f7 and e6 reminds Black about being careful not to fall into any cheap traps. The main variation ♘gf6 6.♗d3 e6 7.♘1f3 ♗d6 8.♕e2 h6 9.♘e4 ♘xe4 10.♕xe4 ♕c7 , with the idea of 11.♕g4 ♔f8 , is one of the critical lines in the 4...Nd7 system.]

[The famous trap 5.♕e2 ♘gf6?? 6.♘d6# is most simply avoided by 5...Ndf6!, putting pressure on d4 and e4 simultaneously.]

5...♘gf6 6.♘xf6+ It's not to everybody's taste to place the knight on the odd square g3 and certainly not c3 where the c6-pawn stands ready killing any knight there.

[However, 6.♗d3 ♘xe4 7.♗xe4 ♘f6 8.♗d3 ♗g4 9.c3 *(* or *9.♗e3)* , has been played by the highest-rated woman in the world, Judit Polgar, in some top-level games. Black shouldn't have any problems, even though White has an advantage in development and space, because of Black's impregnable position. One possible continuation is 9...e6 10.♗e3 ♗d6! 11.h3 ♗h5 12.♕e2 ♕a5! , preventing White from castling queenside, as in J.Polgar-V.Anand, San Luis 2005. If White wants to create life in this variation, it's necessary to play aggressively with h2-h3 and g2-g4 in conjunction with Ne5 before Black places the dark-squared bishop on d6, where it controls the important square e5. A useful idea to remember.]

6...♘xf6 7.♗c4 ♗f5 8.♕e2 e6 9.♗g5

[9.c3 was later played in E.Mnatsakanian-T. Petrosian, Moscow 1964, Game 32.]

9...♗e7 10.0-0-0 EXERCISE: What is Black's safest continuation?

[10.0-0 gives White's king a better location where it doesn't risk coming under a future pawn storm.]

ANSWER: **10...♗g4!** Fischer wrote in his famous My 60 Memorable Games the following about Petrosian's bishop move: "This super-refinement reduces all of White's attacking prospects. Petrosian has a knack of snuffing out such dreams twenty moves before they even enter his opponent's head!".

[This is certainly a clever prophylactic move played at the last moment to eliminate any idea of Ne5 which would give White some chances of claiming the initiative. Another, more direct idea was to focus on the light squares and play 10...b5 11.♗d3 ♗xd3 12.♕xd3 ♕d5 13.♔b1 0-0 with exciting play, as in K.Lerner-A.Ivanov, Beltsy 1977.]

[However, the natural 10...0-0?! 11.♘e5 gives White the initiative on the kingside.]

11.h3

[11.♔b1

A) , with the idea of avoiding further simplification with 11...♘d5 12.♗c1;

B) , is strongly answered by the thematic 11...b5! 12.♗b3 *(* or *12.♗d3 ♕d5* and if *13.♗xf6* the in-between move *♗xf3* destroys White's kingside pawn structure *)* 12...0-0 with an equal position according to Tiviakov in his annotations to the game S.Tiviakov-M.Adams, 3rd matchgame, New York 1994, in Informant 61. One possible sequel may be One possible sequel might be 13.h3 ♗xf3 14.♕xf3 ♘d5 15.♗xe7 *(* too passive is *15.♗c1 a5* and Black attacks first *)* 15...♕xe7 16.c3 a5 17.♗c2 and Black is fine.;

C) 11...--]

11...♗xf3 12.♕xf3 ♘d5 13.♗xe7

[White can't avoid the exchange if Black persists, since 13.♗d2 can always be answered by ♗g5 .]

13...♕xe7 14.♖he1

[The famous game R.Fischer-T.Petrosian, Bled 1961, continued 14.♔b1 ♖d8 15.♕e4 b5 16.♗d3 a5 17.c3 ♕d6 18.g3 b4 19.c4 ♘f6 when Black had some pressure on the d4-pawn and d-file. Surprisingly Petrosian eventually lost from this position because of "serendipity" to use Fischer's own description.]

14...0-0 15.♔b1 White secures his king's position by moving away from the diagonal c1-h6. This is usually a useful idea before entering any action. It also contains the

primitive threat of taking twice on d5.
[15.♗xd5 immediately results in an equal position after ♕g5+ .]
15...♖ad8 16.♗b3 ♕f6 QUESTION: Should White avoid the exchange of queens or accept it?
[ANSWER: Fischer most probably would have exchanged queens with 16...♕f6 17.♕xf6 ♘xf6 because he really liked to play endings with his favourite piece, the light-squared bishop, versus a black knight.]
Matulovic, however, took the wrong decision and avoided the exchange:
17.♕e2?! ♖d7 18.c3 The d4-pawn is the natural target for Black and White wants to secure it.
EXERCISE (planning): What is Black going to do now?
ANSWER: **b5!** Black targets the c3-pawn instead. This is a useful plan to remember.
19.g3 White takes away a square from the knight and prepares to grab more space with f2-f4. However, there is no question of a bind here because White needs a knight for that purpose.
♖fd8 20.f4 b4 21.♕f3? EXERCISE: How should Black continue the attack?
[Simagin's recommendation 21.♗xd5 ♖xd5 22.cxb4 is a better continuation. If we prolong the variation with ♕g6+ 23.♕d3 ♖xd4 24.♕xg6 ♖xd1+ 25.♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 26.♔c2 hxg6 27.♔xd1 ♔h7 , a complicated but drawn pawn ending has arisen. Check it – it's quite rewarding. Pawn endings are important to study, not only because of the ending itself, but above all for the art of calculation, because they can't be played intuitively.]
ANSWER: Petrosian was a great master regarding the handling of the pawns:
21...bxc3 22.bxc3 c5! Remember these pawn advances from moves 18-22! **23.♖e5**
[23.c4 ♘b4! with the idea of 24.dxc5 *(* better is *24.a3 ♘a6 25.d5* , but Black's position is preferable after *♘c7* followed by the pawn exchange on d5 and ...Nb5 *)* 24...♘d3! leads to a clear advantage according to Simagin. White has a bad king position barely protected by the 'big pawn' on b3. After 25.♖e2 ♘xc5 Black will also control the d-file.]
23...cxd4 24.♗xd5 The knight had become too strong on d5 because of the clever pawn breaks with the c- and b-pawns. Now, though, when the defending piece disappears White's king's position becomes very unsafe.
♖xd5 25.♖xd5 EXERCISE: How should Black recapture?
ANSWER: **exd5!** It's important to keep both the major pieces because of White's bad king's position.
[25...♖xd5 26.♖xd4 forces an exchange of rooks since ♖b5+ is answered by 27.♖b4 .]
26.♖xd4 h6 27.g4?
[The greedy 27.♖xd5? fails to ♖b8+ 28.♔c1 ♕b6 29.♕d3 ♕g1+ .]
[Stronger is 27.♕d3 , but Black keeps his advantage with ♕e6! according to Neikirkh.]
27...♕e7 White can't cover both the b-file and the e-file. Also the possibility of ...Qa3 is an important motif. From White's perspective this is far from an envious position.
28.♕f2
[28.♖xd5? loses to ♕b7+ .]
28...♖b8+ 29.♔a1 ♕a3 30.♕c2 ♖e8 31.♖b4 EXERCISE: White's position is on the brink of a breakdown. Do you see the winning stroke?
ANSWER: Petrosian plays beautifully with his pawn breaks in this game. Look at the next smashing move:
d4! The third important break with a pawn. These three pawns, which sacrificed themselves for a higher purpose, should really be dubbed the three musketeers.
32.♖xd4
[32.♖b3! is a tougher defence, but probably doesn't change the outcome of the game. Black wins the f-pawn after the forced sequence ♖e1+ 33.♖b1 ♖xb1+ 34.♔xb1 dxc3 35.♕b3 ♕c5 36.♔c2 ♕f2+ 37.♔xc3 ♕xf4 and here White, with the more active king, could set a cunning trap by continuing with the centralizing 38.♕d5 . If now ♕e3+ 39.♔b4 ♕xh3? *(39...g6* is correct, securing two flight squares for the king *)* 40.♕a8+ ♔h7 41.♕e4+ g6 White draws immediately with the stunning 42.♕f4! .]
32...♖e1+ 33.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 34.♕xd1 ♕xc3+ 35.♔b1 ♕xh3 The position is clearly lost for White because of his passive king and weak pawns on the kingside. **36.a4 h5!** Centralizing queen moves are winning too, but this is nevertheless the logical move. **37.gxh5 ♕f5+ 38.♔b2 ♕xf4 39.♔b3 ♕f5 40.♔c4 ♔h7 41.♕d2** . A beautiful game showing how to win with the help of pawn breaks.
0-1

E88

□ **Andersen,B**
■ **Petrosian,T**
24: Nimzowitsch Memorial, Copenhagen
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian won the Nimzowitsch Memorial convincingly in Copenhagen. In the following game he faces one of the strongest Danish players Borge Andersen (1934-), who was the Danish Champion in 1958.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 The King's Indian Defence is an active and fighting opening which tries to unbalance the position. It's suitable when playing for the initiative and the full point. It's not easy for White to increase the drawing chances by simplification, as in openings like the Slav, the Queen's Gambit Declined or the Queen's Indian.
4.e4 d6 5.f3 The sharp Sämisch Variation was seen in Stoltz-Petrosian, Game 11.
[A simplifying attempt like 5.♘f3 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.♕xd8 ♖xd8 9.♗g5 only results in the exchange of queens and the resulting middlegame position is still full of interesting possibilities. Black also has the option to play a move than 6...e5 for the sole purpose of avoiding this forced line without queens.]
5...c6 6.♗e3 e5 7.d5 0-0 8.♕d2 cxd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.0-0-0
[G.Kamsky-G.Kasparov, Manila Olympiad 1992, continued 10.♗d3 ♘h5 11.g4? *(* the simple developing move *11.♘ge2* should have been played *)* . Even in the early 1990s it wasn't fully understood that you shouldn't allow the enemy knight to reach the f4-square. Even though White wins a central pawn, the activity of the bishop on the long dark-square diagonal supplies more than enough compensation. The game continued 11...♘f4 12.♗c2 b5 13.♕f2 ♘d7 14.♘ge2 b4 15.♘a4 a5! 16.♘xf4 exf4 17.♗xf4 ♘e5 and now the best move, according to Kasparov's analysis, is 18.0-0 , which Black would answer with ♗a6 and 19...Bb5. White has serious problems with the stranded knight on a4.]
10...b5 11.♔b1 ♘bd7 12.♖c1
[The immediate 12.g4 looks more to the point.]
12...♘b6 13.♘d1 It's extravagant to try to create some play on Black's territory. Black would like to play ...Nc4 anyway at the right moment, in the same spirit as Kasparov played ...Nf4 against Kamsky. In such positions, with the kings on opposite wings, the number one thing is the initiative and not small material gains like a pawn.
♘fd7 Black prepares the standard break ...f7-f5. **14.g4 f5 15.gxf5 gxf5 16.♗d3**
This natural move doesn't anticipate the coming ...Nc4 because of the tempo lost when exchanging on c4,
[so more logical is therefore 16.♘h3]
[or 16.♕g2 .]
16...♘f6 17.♖c6 ♘c4 18.♗xc4 bxc4 19.♘c3?
[19.♖xc4 is a better alternative which is confirmed by the forced variation fxe4 20.fxe4 ♘xe4 21.♖xe4 ♖f1! *(* not *21...♗f5? 22.♕d3* and White wins *)* 22.♘e2! (the only move) ♖xh1 23.♘g3 ♖xd1+ 24.♕xd1 , which leads to an even position.]
19...fxe4 20.fxe4 EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): How should Black continue?
ANSWER: **♘xe4! 21.♘xe4 ♖f1+?!**
This is the logical move, but not the best.
[An even stronger move is 21...♗f5! , with the idea of 22.♖xc4 *(* after *22.♕c2 ♕h4 23.♖xc4 ♖ac8 24.♘f3 ♖xc4 25.♘xh4 ♗xe4 26.♕xe4 ♖xe4* and Black wins *)* 22...♖c8! and White can't defend against the numerous threats like 23...Rxc4 and 23... Bxe4 followed by 24...Rf1+. 23.♕c2 ♖xc4 24.♕xc4 ♕h4 when the knight on e4 is doomed.]
22.♔c2 ♗f5 23.♕g2? EXERCISE: If we think of the queen as an octopus, which tentacle should Black use when moving his queen? Should he use the tentacle heading for h4 or the one to a5?
[23.♖xc4 is slightly more resilient, as the following variation proves: ♖c8 24.♕d3 ♖xc4+ 25.♕xc4 ♕a5 26.♔b3 ♖e1 27.♘c3 ♖xe3 28.♘ge2 ♕b6+ 29.♔a3 ♖f3 30.♖g1 ♗g6 with a clear advantage to Black.]
23...♕h4!? A strong move emphasised with an exclamation mark in most sources.
[ANSWER: More exact though, and this will become clear in a couple of moves, is 23...♕a5! putting pressure on d5 and a2 immediately. After 24.♖xc4 *(* or *24.♕xf1 ♗xe4+ 25.♔c1 ♗xh1* when both d5 and a2 hang *)* 24...♕xd5 25.b3 ♗xe4+ 26.♖xe4 ♖f4!! . Black wins. The most important concept in the King's Indian Defence are such ideas which have the purpose of opening up the diagonal for the King's Indian bishop, particularly when the white

king is located on the queenside. 27.♗xf4 leads to a forced win after ♖c8+ 28.♔b2 exf4+ 29.♔a3 ♕a5+ 30.♖a4 ♕c5+ 31.♖b4 a5 32.♕b7 axb4+ 33.♔a4 ♖c7 when White must give up his queen to avoid mate.]

24.♖xc4 ♕e1 Geometrically speaking this is a wonderful manoeuvre with the queen from d8-h4-e1 and you can understand it was hard for Petrosian to resist it. The e1-square also symbolizes the original square of the white king.

25.♔d3 ♖b8 26.♕c2 ♕a5 In a most extraordinary, roundabout way the queen has reached a5 in any case. This is where the octopus belong after all, putting pressure on all the vital weaknesses.

27.♗d2

[27.♔e2 is answered by ♖f8! followed by 28...Bg4+.]

27...♕xd5+ 28.♔e2 EXERCISE (combination alert): Black has a spectacular move which Petrosian didn't play. Do you see it?

♖f8

[ANSWER: The most spectacular win is 28...♖xb2 , with the mating idea 29.♕xb2 ♕xc4+ 30.♔e3 ♕xe4# .]

29.♘f3 . Understandably Andersen had had enough and resigned without waiting for Petrosian's response. The most unforgettable thing about this game is the queen manoeuvre from d8-h4-e1-a5-d5, which in effect used the whole capacity of both the queen and the board.

0-1

A48

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Wade,R**
25: Leipzig Olympiad 1960
[Thomas Engqvist]

The International Master Robert Graham Wade (1921-2008) won the championship of New Zealand three times before moving to England where he won the British championship twice.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 b6 An invitation to the Queen's Indian Defence, but Petrosian declines with a pet move of his: **3.♗g5 ♗b7 4.♘bd2 g6**

[4...e6 allows White to seize space in the centre with 5.e4 .]

5.e3 ♗g7 6.♗d3 c5 7.c3 d6 8.0-0 0-0 9.♕e2 h6 10.♗h4 ♘bd7 11.h3 ♘h5 This move secures an exchange of White's active bishop on h4 by playing his own bishop to f6. **12.♘h2** Petrosian plays one of his mysterious waiting moves and probably plans f2-f4 next if Black plays a neutral move. In such a case White's bishop on h4 would have an escape route along the diagonal e1-h4.

cxd4 The reason for the pawn exchange c5 versus c3 isn't clear. Maybe Wade's plan is to exchange pieces on the c-file to increase the chances of a draw.

[12...♗f6 immediately seems more logical.]

13.cxd4 ♗f6 14.♗xf6 ♘dxf6

[14...♘hxf6 solves the problem with the h5-knight, but not the d7-knight which would still be controlled by the d4-pawn. Another problem for Black, if that move is chosen, is that White also has an extra option to play 15.e4 . With the knight on h5, as in the present position, Black can answer e3-e4 with ...Nf4.]

15.♖ac1 ♖c8 16.♘hf3 Of course the knight never belonged on h2. This might be a psychological ploy when Petrosian was in the mood to toy with his opponent. Indeed, it seems he often only wanted to jump around with his horses for the sole purpose of confusing his opponent.

♖c7 17.♘b3 A waiting move in the spirit of 12 Nh2. The main function is to defend the rook on c1 one extra time. Normally though, you don't want to put a knight on b3 when Black has a pawn b6.

♖xc1 18.♖xc1 ♕a8 19.♗a6 Black's bishop is actually a little bit stronger than its counterpart so it makes sense to exchange it.

♖c8 20.♖xc8+ ♗xc8

[20...♕xc8 loses the c-file after 21.♗xb7 ♕xb7 22.♕c2 and if Black tries centralization with ♕e4? , White penetrates on the c-file with 23.♕c8+ and after ♔h7 plays 24.♕f8 ♕e6 25.d5! ♘xd5 26.♘bd4 ♕f6 27.♕a8! , with advantage.]

21.♘bd2 The queen's knight belongs on d2 in this position. **♕c6 22.♗xc8 ♕xc8 23.♕c4** Black controls the only open file, so it's logical to exchange his active queen. **♕xc4**

[After 23...♕b7!? followed by ...Ng7-e6 Black has his share of the centre in a hypermodern style, controlling the centre with pieces.]

24.♘xc4 It looks as if all the pieces will disappear, but Petrosian still keeps an edge mainly because of his more harmonious and

centralized position. Endings with four knights are relatively rare. In this position the pawn position is symmetrical and the only defect in Black's position is the knight on h5. Black needs only two moves to catch up and in the meantime Petrosian will improve his position too. It's interesting to study how Petrosian manages to win this game with such a tiny advantage. A statistical check with Mega Database 2013 showed that 70 per cent of similar knight endings with symmetrical pawn structures actually end in a draw.
♘d5 QUESTION: How should White proceed in this endgame situation?
25.♔f1 The logical move is to centralize the king.
[ANSWER: This isn't a middlegame so to seize space with 25.e4 is too early here. Black benefits from the structural change in the pawn position after ♘b4 26.a3 ♘d3 27.b4 ♘f6 28.♘cd2 d5 29.e5 ♘e8 .]
25...♘hf6 26.♔e2 White is two moves ahead with the centralization of his king compared with Black's king. While Black is centralizing his king, White will regroup his knight on f3 to the more central square d3.
♔f8 27.♘e1 ♔e8 28.♘d3 ♔d7
White's knights and king now stand excellently.
QUESTION: What does White want to do next?
ANSWER: This is the right moment to seize space: **29.f3 ♘c7 30.e4** White has a slight advantage because of his slightly more active and centralized position. Black's position is not so easy to handle over the board, even though objectively speaking it should be okay.
♘fe8 31.h4 White's pieces stand perfectly so the moment is ripe to improve the pawn position. **f6?!** EXERCISE: What is White's best move to profit from Black's last?
ANSWER: White increases his space advantage: **32.d5! e6** Sooner or later Black must make this move to avoid being suffocated, but now White secures two pawn islands versus Black's three. **33.dxe6+ ♘xe6** This recapture weakens the d5-square.
[33...♔xe6 would for the moment control d5 with pieces, but after 34.♘f4+ ♔f7 35.♘e3 g5 36.hxg5 fxg5 37.♘fd5 White would be in possession of this important square anyway. Black could as a last resort try h5 38.♔d3 h4 39.♔c4 ♔e6 and fight for the draw.]
34.♘e3 Petrosian's pair of knights are now on their perfect locations. **g5 35.♘f5**
[35.h5 is also an interesting option, blockading the pawn on h6 before attacking it. The disadvantage though is that Black can attack this pawn as well.]
35...h5 36.♔e3 ♘8g7 37.♘xg7 ♘xg7 38.hxg5 fxg5 39.f4 gxf4+ 40.♘xf4 ♔e7
EXERCISE: What is White's strongest continuation?
ANSWER: **41.♔d4! ♔f6**
[The pawn ending arising after 41...♘e6+ 42.♘xe6 ♔xe6 is lost after 43.g3! . Black is in zugzwang and White will decide with Kd5 followed by e4-e5, picking up the h5-pawn.]
42.♔d5 ♔g5 43.♘e2 ♘e8 44.♔c6 ♘f6 45.♔b7 ♘xe4 46.♔xa7 ♔f5 47.♔xb6 ♔e5 48.a4 d5 49.a5 d4 EXERCISE: What's the simplest move to decide the game?
ANSWER: **50.♘xd4! ♔xd4 51.♔c6!**
[Of course not 51.a6?? ♘d6! 52.a7 ♘c8+ 53.♔b7 ♘xa7 54.♔xa7 , leading to a draw.]
51...♘c5 52.b4 ♘d3 53.♔b5!
[Not 53.b5?? ♘e5+ 54.♔c7 ♘c4 55.a6 ♔c5 56.a7 ♘b6 57.♔b7 ♔xb5 58.♔b8 which also leads to a draw.]
53...♔e5 54.a6 ♘xb4 55.♔xb4
[Alas! 55.a7 ♘d5 56.♔c6! won too. A good technical game, though, demonstrating Petrosian's abilities in the ending and above all with the knights.]
1-0

E92

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Lutikov,A**
26: USSR Championship, Moscow 1961
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian won the 28th USSR Championship which was a Zonal tournament. He won with the smallest possible margin and only lost to Stein in the sixth round. Petrosian said that he was nervous at the start of the tournament and that this was bound to affect his play. Here we look at his game from the third encounter where he scored his first victory.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♘f3
[The game T.Petrosian-E.Geller, USSR Team Championship, Moscow 1961, saw the surprising move 6.d5!? . This is what the world-class grandmaster Efim Petrovich

Geller (1925-1998) wrote about this experience: "At first sight a rather strange move. Instead of developing a piece, White advances a central pawn which was not attacked by anything, and affords the opponent a wide choice. Had such a move been made by a player of other than Petrosian's class, he would have been reproached for his lack of knowledge of the basic laws of opening play. As for the considerations by which Petrosian was guided at this point, only he himself can answer."

As Geller pointed out in his annotations one reason may have been out of psychological considerations: "Black is forced to solve new problems, and in this case the width of choice can often prove counterproductive: with time restricted it is not easy to establish precisely which continuation is in fact the strongest."]

6...e5 7.d5 To play with a blocked centre was Petrosian's favourite strategy. This was his own variation against the King's Indian and it also bears his name. His statistics were really awesome with an astonishing 81 per cent and no losses.

a5 This is the most precise continuation and was developed by Stein and Geller. The main idea is to prepare ...Na6 followed by ...Nc5 and have the outpost secured. The knight on c5 and the bishop on g7 are regarded as the key pieces of this system.

[. The other important variation 7...♘bd7 8.♗g5 h6 9.♗h4 g5 10.♗g3 ♘h5 is problematic because of the strong move 11.h4! which was introduced in P.Keres-M. Matulovic, Moscow 1963. Keres's move is the main reason it's more popular to play 7... a5.]

8.♗g5 The key move in this variation, pinning the knight and putting pressure on the diagonal h4-d8. The main idea is to make it more difficult for Black to prepare the natural pawn break ...f7-f5.

h6 9.♗h4 ♘a6 10.♘d2 This prevents any idea connected with ...g6-g5 and ...Nh5, forcing a minor piece exchange. **♕d7!?**

An unusual way to step out of the pin. Black prepares to move the knight and follow up with ...f7-f5.

[It's more common to play 10...♕e8 . T.Petrosian-L.Stein, Moscow 1967, continued 11.0-0 ♗d7 12.b3 ♘h7 13.f3 h5 14.a3 ♗h6 15.♗f2 *(* with present day knowledge, in this sequence *15.♔h1* is more exact, allowing the extraordinary bishop manoeuvre *♗e3 16.♖b1 ♗c5* , which has the purpose of preventing the desirable pawn push b3-b4. Of course the knight on a6 looks strange, but the pressure on a3 is a fact. Presumably this is what Petrosian wanted to prevent. However, White can continue *17.♕c1* with the follow-up Nc3-a2 and prepare for b3-b4 *)* 15...♕e7 . Black controls the diagonal d8-h4 and will later transfer the queen to the strong square g5. After 16.♕c2 h4! (with ideas like ...h4-h3 or ...Bf4, provoking further weaknesses in White's king's position) 17.♖fd1 f5 18.♖ab1 ♕g5 19.b4 axb4 20.axb4 ♘f6 21.f4!? (this original idea forces a draw) ♕xf4 *(* if *21...exf4? 22.♘f3* and Nxh4 with a clear advantage *)* 22.g3 hxg3 23.hxg3 ♕g5 24.♘f3 ♕h5 25.♘xe5 ♕h3 26.♗f1 *(* not *26.♘xg6?? ♗e3!* and Black is winning *)* 26...♕h5 27.♗e2 ♕h3 28.♗f1 ♕h5 the players agreed to a draw.]

11.a3 ♘h7 12.f3 f5 QUESTION: What move do you suggest for White?

ANSWER: **13.b4!** This is a logical move, cutting off the knight on a6 and using the fact that Black's rooks are not yet defending each other. **axb4** This routine exchange actually only helps White. It was probably better to move the other rim knight to a decent square.

14.axb4 The a6-knight is unpleasantly pinned now. **♖b8 15.♖b1 ♘f6 16.♗f2** This is an ideal diagonal for the bishop where it will be able to support the key break c4-c5. **♕e7**

EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Suggest the strongest continuation for White and give the most important variations.

ANSWER: **17.c5!**

[The idea is to meet 17.c5 dxc5 with the paradoxical 18.♗xa6! bxa6 19.♗xc5 and White's advantage is obvious because of his strong centralized position. However, it must be admitted it was a success for Black to get rid of his bad knight in this variation. This is from White's perspective a transformation of advantages and a useful device to remember.]

17...♔h7 18.cxd6 cxd6 The pawn exchange that has taken place is actually the same as if Black had played ...c6xd5 himself. Who benefits most of the opened c-file? White has the advantage in space and Black has a problem knight to deal with, so the exchange should therefore benefit White. White's pair of

bishops are very strong on the adjacent diagonals, shooting arrows towards the black queenside.
19.0-0 f4 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a move to speed up White's attack?
ANSWER: Often it's very useful to think like a dentist and ask yourself the question: where are the holes in Black's position? We can see one on b6 and a knight stationed on that square is of course embarrassing for Black.
20.♘c4 ♘c7
[20...b5? creates a weakness on b5, but also a hole on c6 which White can exploit immediately with 21.♘a5 . If Black covers it with ♗d7 , a new hole will arise on d5 after the forced sequence 22.♘c6 ♗xc6 23.dxc6 .]
21.♘b6 g5 22.♖a1 ♖g8 QUESTION: How should White be thinking in this position? Do we need to defend or can we keep on attacking?
ANSWER: In this position it's a matter of style whether to think about attack or defence. Petrosian liked to play prophylactic chess.
23.♔h1 A useful move preparing for Black's coming ...h6-h5 ...Bh6 and ...g5-g4.
[A more aggressively-inclined player would play the natural 23.♖a7 , exercising pressure on the seventh rank. However, a move like Kh1 would most probably have to played sooner or later.]
23...♗d7 Black tries to escape with the bishop to e8. **24.♘xd7** This exchange is in White's favour. It makes the pawn break ...g5-g4 more difficult to achieve and at the same time his control of light squares increases.
♕xd7 25.♘a4 ♗f8
[A move like 25...♘a8 would only make White happy. After 26.b5 White threats to shut the knight out of the game forever with 27 b6.]
26.♘b6 ♕g7 EXERCISE: The ...g5-g4 break begins to be a reality. How should White react to it?
ANSWER: **27.g4** A prophylactic move characteristic of Petrosian's view of how chess ought to be played. Why give Black extra opportunities connected with ...g5-g4 when a move like this stops everything?
h5
[Instead, 27...fxg3 28.hxg3 g4 29.fxg4 wins a pawn since Black can't take it back with ♘xg4 30.♗xg4 ♕xg4 31.♕xg4 ♖xg4 because of the fork 32.♘d7! . This variation proves how well coordinated White's forces are. The knight on b6 very quickly jumps to b8 or even to f6 and g4 in this beautiful variation.]
28.h3 ♖h8 Black concentrates on the h-file, but White easily neutralizes the pressure before Black has even started to think about how to use the h-file. Remember what Fischer said about Petrosian's abilities to foresee threats many moves in advance.
29.♔g2 ♔g8 30.♖h1 hxg4 Of course a plan associated with placing the major pieces on the h-file wouldn't work. White's positional advantages are too big for such a venture.
31.hxg4 ♖xh1 32.♕xh1 ♘d7
Black's defensive plan of exchanging White's active pieces also helps White. In a bad position there are only bad moves as Tarrasch said. **33.♕c1 ♘xb6 34.♗xb6 ♘a8**
[34...♘e8 35.♗b5 followed by 36 Ra7, 37 Bxe8 and 38 Qc7 decides the game more quickly.]
35.♗a7 ♖d8 36.♗b5 The most active square for the light-squared bishop. **♗e7 37.♗f2 ♔f7** Black prepares the exchange of his last rook for White's more active one. **38.♕c2 ♖h8 39.♖h1 ♖xh1 40.♔xh1 ♕h8+ 41.♔g2 ♕b8** Black has managed to exchange the strong knight on b6 and the active rook on the a-file, but White's remaining forces are still too strong for him to handle.
EXERCISE: How should White deploy his forces?
ANSWER: **42.♗d7!** This bishop is like a razor blade in Black's position.
[42.♕a4 followed by 43 Bd7 is also a good deployment of the white forces.]
42...♘c7 43.♕c1 Petrosian is faithful to his style and isn't in any hurry as he controls the position completely. **♘a6 44.♕h1 ♔g7 45.♗f5 ♕h8** EXERCISE: White cannot break through on the h-file. What is best: exchange the queens or keep them on the board?
46.♕b1 It's better to keep the queens on the board.
[ANSWER: The ending after 46.♕xh8+? ♔xh8 47.♗e1 ♘b8! is a tough nut to crack. The main idea is that White wins the b-pawn only by entering an endgame with opposite-coloured bishops and it's a draw as the following variation shows: 48.♗c8 b5 49.♗f2 ♗d8 50.♗a7 ♗c7 .]
46...♕e8 47.♕h1 ♕h8 48.♕a1 Petrosian is really like the cat playing with the mouse. **♕b8**
[48...♘xb4? loses a minor piece to 49.♕b1 ♘a6 50.♕xb7 .]

49.♕a4! This is the right location for the queen. Black can't prevent the further invasion of the white queen on a light square in the heart of Black's position.
♔f8
[Alternatively, 49...♕d8 50.♕b5! *(* or the more spectacular *50.♗b6!* with the idea of *♕xb6 51.♕e8* , leading to a forced mate in six moves *)* 50...♕c7 51.♕e8 and wins.]
50.♕d7 ♘xb4 51.♕e6 ♕c7 52.♗h7
Noiseless moves are somehow more aesthetically pleasing than moves giving check,
[although 52.♕h6+ ♔e8 53.♕g6+ ♔f8 54.♗e6 is also good enough for a quick win.]
52...♔e8 53.♗g6+ . A typical win against the King's Indian Defence where Petrosian blockaded all hope of an attack with 27 g4.
1-0

A07

□ **Benko,P**
■ **Petrosian,T**
27: Curacao Candidates 1962
[Thomas Engqvist]

The lifetime score between Petrosian and Grandmaster Pal Charles Benko (1928-) was 11½-6½ in Petrosian's favour. Petrosian lost his first game to Benko in Budapest 1952, but after that game he never lost to him again.
1.g3 One of Benko's favourite opening moves, but as Benko has pointed out himself, it's silly to call it 'the Benko system'.
[He already has a system named after him, the Benko Gambit (1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5), which he wrote a book about in 1974.]
1...d5 2.♘f3 c6 3.♗g2 ♗f5 4.0-0 e6 5.d3 ♘f6 6.♘bd2 ♘bd7 7.♕e1 When White plays c2-c4 at some point, it's Reti's opening according to the Serbian International Master Vladimir Vukovic (1898-1975), but when White strives for e2-e4, it's a King's Indian Attack.
h6 8.e4 ♗h7 9.♕e2
[9.e5 is answered by ♘g8 followed by ... Ne7 with a comfortable position.]
9...♗e7
[9...♘c5 looks safer, so as to be able to answer 10.e5 with ♘fd7 when Black's minor pieces harmonize well.]
10.e5 ♘g8 Typical of his style, Petrosian provoked White to attack him with a gain of tempo. However, the position is fairly blocked so the time won by White isn't to be overestimated.
11.♘b3 QUESTION: How should Black solve his problems with the development of the kingside?
ANSWER: **♗f8** The Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman (1951-) wrote in his excellent book about the tournament in Curacao 1962 that "the Armenian usually had no objection to playing awkward positions, as long as he liked the pawn structure". This slow manoeuvre reminds us of Petrosian's favourite variation in the French Defence: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 Qd7 5 Qg4 Bf8. The time factor is normally less important than usual in Petrosian's games. As the English FIDE Master Peter Hugh Clarke (1933-) observed in his excellent book Petrosian's Best Games of Chess, force and space are more prevalent in Petrosian's games.
12.c4 ♘e7 13.♘fd4 This move has the disadvantage that it only helps Black to exchange one knight. It's more in Black's interest to exchange them than for White who has the space advantage.
[Timman's suggestion 13.♗d2 followed by the development of the rooks is more in accordance with the requirements of the position.]
13...♘f5 14.♘xf5 ♗xf5 15.cxd5 cxd5 16.d4
EXERCISE: What is White's problem? Can you find the black move which profits from this fact?
ANSWER: **a5!** Tarrasch said that a knight on b3 always stands badly and this typical pawn thrust tries to take advantage of that.
[The mechanical 16...♗e7 17.♗d2 0-0 is playable, but then it's important to see that the pseudo attack with 18.♘a5 boomerangs after ♕b6 19.♗c3 ♖fc8 with the threat of 20...Rxc3.]
17.♗e3 ♗e7
[17...a4 is answered by 18.♘c5 with the idea of ♗xc5 19.dxc5 ♘xe5? 20.♗d4 and White wins back the pawn with advantage.]
18.♖fc1 0-0 19.♕b5 a4 20.♘d2
[EXERCISE: What is Black's best variation if the aggressive move 20.♘c5 is played? ANSWER: 20 Nc5 gives Black a clear advantage after ♗xc5 21.dxc5 ♘xe5 22.♕xb7 ♕f6! planning ...Rfb8. *(* Worse is *22...♖b8 23.♕a7 ♖xb2 24.c6* and White

has counterplay. *)*]
20...♖a7 21.♘b1! ♘b8! Both knights seek their natural outposts on c3 and c6 respectively. **22.a3**
[22.♘c3 rather unnecessarily gives Black a strong pawn after a3 23.b3 ♘c6 which may be useful in a coming endgame.]
22...♘c6 23.♘c3 ♕a5 24.♗f1 f6 25.f4 fxe5 26.fxe5 QUESTION: How should Black continue?
ANSWER: Black wants to exchange his good bishop for White's bad one. Therefore: **♗g5!** The knight on c6 is actually stronger than its counterpart on c3 because of the pressure it exercises on the pawn on d4. **27.♗xg5** Black can't avoid the exchange because of the pin. **hxg5 28.♕xa5 ♖xa5 29.♖d1 ♖aa8 30.♗b5** EXERCISE: What is Black's best move?
ANSWER: The versatile knight on c6 is exceedingly strong: **♘a5!** The immediate threat is 31...Nb3, trapping the rook on a1.
31.♗xa4 ♘c4 32.b3 ♘b2 33.♖dc1
[The natural continuation 33.♖d2 may lead to a devilish trap: ♘xa4 34.♘xa4 ♗h3 35.♖f2 ♖fc8 36.♘b6? ♖xa3 when Black breaks through.]
33...♘xa4! 34.♘xa4 ♗h3 Petrosian builds a prison for the white majesty in his own camp.
35.♖a2? Understandably White wants to relieve the pressure on the f-file by swapping off a set of rooks. The problem is that it's not only the f-file which is weak, but also White's third rank where the pawns on b3 and a3 are vulnerable weaknesses.
[35.♘c5 is a better try.]
35...♖f3 36.♖f2
[After 36.♘c5 b6 and White's position collapses when the b3-pawn falls.]
36...♖xb3 37.♘c5 ♖bxa3 38.♘xb7 ♖d3 39.♘d6 ♔h7
[39...♖xd4 40.♘f7 ♖g4 followed by ...Kh7-g6 is another winning plan.]
40.♘b5 ♖b8 41.♖b2 ♖f3 42.♖bb1 ♗f5 43.♖b2 g4 . Black plans the unavoidable 44... Bd3 so White resigned.
[Instead, the immediate 43...♗d3 results in mate if White plays as expected and tries not to lose the knight on b5: 44.♖c3 *(44.♖c5* loses the knight after *♖f7* and 46...Rfb7 *)* 44...♖f1+ 45.♔g2 ♖d1 46.♖cb3 ♗f1+ 47.♔f2 ♗c4 48.♖b4 ♖f8+ 49.♔e3 ♖e1+ 50.♔d2 ♖e2+ 51.♔c3 ♖f3# .]
0-1

B08

□ **Filip,M**
■ **Petrosian,T**
28: Curacao Candidates 1962
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Grandmaster Miroslav Filip (1928-2009) became the first Czech Candidate in 1956. In those days his play was characterized as "serious, solid and deep". Surprisingly he lost interest in chess around 2002.
1.d4 g6 2.e4 ♗g7 3.♘f3 d6 4.♘c3 ♘f6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.0-0 ♘bd7?! QUESTION: What is the problem with this natural move, presumably preparing 7...e5?
[ANSWER: It's more solid to play 6...c5 if Black doesn't mind playing a Benoni position after 7.d5 .]
[Instead, 6...c6 was tried unsuccessfully in other games by Petrosian.]
The disadvantage with the seemingly natural text move is that White can use a tactical trick and claim space in the centre:
7.e5! ♘e8
[7...dxe5 8.dxe5 ♘g4 is answered by the typical thrust 9.e6! ♘de5 *(after 9...fxe6?? 10.♘g5* White wins material *)* 10.exf7+ ♘xf7 11.♗c4 with a slight advantage, since White has two pawn islands versus Black's three.]
8.♗f4
[More active is 8.♗g5 , exploiting the pin on the d-file after dxe5 9.dxe5 c6 10.♕d2 ♘c7 11.♖fd1 ♘e6 12.♕e3! ♘xg5 13.♘xg5 e6 14.♘ce4! , with interesting play in E. Rozentalis-P.Svidler, Trakai 1995.]
8...♘b6
[White doesn't mind an opening of the centre with 8...c5 since in that case he will enjoy an advantage in development after including the major pieces in the game. A good example is G.Sosonko-G.Botterill, Ostend 1975, which continued 9.♖e1 cxd4 10.♕xd4 and White has at least a slight advantage.]
9.♖e1 c6 10.h3 ♘c7 11.♗g3 EXERCISE: You have the black pieces. Any suggestions?
[White wants to secure the bishop from a knight attack from d5 or e6, but more active is Timman's suggestion 11.♕d2 followed by Bh6.]
[Here 11.exd6 exd6 12.♘e4 is also an interesting option.]
ANSWER: **11...f5** This move tries to profit from White's last move and irritate him with the annoying ...f5-f4. Interestingly Black has a

set-up very similar to the Leningrad variation in the Dutch Defence.

[Timman in his annotations to this game didn't believe in the objective merits of the move and suggested instead the developing move 11...♗f5 .]

12.exf6

[The continuation 12.♕d2 ♘e6 renews the positional threat.]

12...exf6 EXERCISE: Petrosian probably overlooked White's best move. Can you find it?

[ANSWER: Fischer had the opinion that if he had this position he would win with 12...exf6 13.d5! . Indeed, Black would have a tough time after ♘cxd5 *(* or *13...♘bxd5 14.♗c4!* and White wins back the pawn with the clearly better position*;* while *13...c5 14.a4* would lead to a very good Benoni-type position for White *)* 14.♘xd5 cxd5 15.a4 a5 16.♗b5 f5 17.♗h4 ♗f6 18.♗xf6 ♕xf6 19.♕d2 f4 20.b4! when the knight on b6 looks shaky. In the game White missed this opportunity.]

13.♗d3?! QUESTION: How does Black unravel?

ANSWER: Black plays for the same idea as before with ...f5-f4, but uses the former e-pawn instead.

f5 14.♗h4 White forces the exchange of the black bishop in a different way, without playing the customary Qd2 and Bh6. **♗f6 15.♗xf6 ♕xf6 16.♕d2 ♗e6 17.♕f4?!**

[It's better to place a knight on this square, but the move sequence suggested by Timman 17.b3 ♖ae8 18.♘e2 ♗d5 19.♘h2 gives Black no problems after ♗e4 .]

[17.a4 immediately or on move 18 is interesting to provoke ...a7-a5. Then it's not easy for Black to develop his a8-rook without losing his a5-pawn which is eyed by the queen on d2.]

17...♖ad8 18.♕g5 ♔g7 19.♕xf6+ ♔xf6 Black has improved his position considerably because of some planless play from White. Compare this position with the situation before White played 14 Bh4. What has happened is that the dark-squared bishops and queens have disappeared. White didn't make a single other move, but Black now has his king on f6, bishop on e6 and rook on d8. When you analyse the situation like this, it's only Black who has moved his pieces.

20.♘d2

[If 20.♘e2 ♘c4 and Black keeps the initiative.]

20...♗f7 21.♗f1?! White plays waiting moves and is too passive. This is a highly dangerous tactic when you meet a player of Petrosian's calibre.

[A normal move is Timman's suggestion 21.♘e2 .]

21...♖fe8 22.♘f3 EXERCISE: White plans the exchange of all four rooks on the e-file. How should Black react?

ANSWER: Black ignores White's plan of exchanges and seizes space on the kingside: **g5! 23.♖xe8 ♖xe8 24.♖e1 ♖xe1 25.♘xe1 ♘e6** Black has more space and the more active pieces, which is enough for Petrosian to create winning chances. **26.♘e2** EXERCISE: Petrosian has attained a clear advantage in force and space, and it's instructive to see how he exploits it. Try to find Black's next move!

ANSWER: **f4!**

[26...♘c4 only helps White to activate his knight on e1 with 27.♘d3 .]

27.c3

[After 27.♘d3?! ♗g6 White must retreat the knight.]

27...♗g6 28.♘c1

[28.b3 is the alternative. Now all White's pieces are on the back rank and the difference between the forces is obvious.]

28...♘a4 29.♘ed3 c5! 30.d5

[Alternatively, 30.dxc5 ♘exc5 and White loses a pawn by force.]

30...♘f8 This move, keeping the harmony between the pieces, is typical of Petrosian's slow motion chess as Botvinnik liked to call it.

[More to the fore is 30...c4! 31.dxe6 cxd3 32.♗xd3 ♘xb2 33.♗xg6 hxg6! with a winning knight ending. A problem with Petrosian's style is knowing exactly when to play for activity and emphasize time rather than force and space.]

31.c4 ♘d7 32.b3 ♘c3 33.h4 h6 34.hxg5+ hxg5 35.f3 White really needs to get his king out. Better late than never. **♘e5 36.♘b2 a6 37.♔f2 b5** Black plans to fix the pawn on a2 with ...b5-b4 and follow up with ...Bg6-b1.

38.a4

[Clarke has suggested 38.a3 as a better defence.]

38...bxa4 39.bxa4 a5 40.♔e1 ♗e8 41.♘b3 ♘xa4 EXERCISE: Here the game was adjourned. Which move should White seal? Should he exchange his knight on b2 or keep it?

ANSWER: 42 Nd1 is the correct move to seal. Black still has to prove he can win the position. In the game an error was made: **42.♘xa4?** A mistake because now Black can force a good knight versus bad bishop situation. **♗xa4 43.♘xa5 ♔e7!** The knight is trapped on a5 and Black forces the aforementioned exchange. **44.♔d2 ♔d7 45.♔c3 ♔c7 46.♘b3 ♗xb3 47.♔xb3 ♔b6 48.♔c3 ♘g6 49.♔d3 ♔a5 50.♔c3**

[Of course if 50.♔e4 then ♘h4 followed by ...Kb4.]

50...♘h4 . White can't prevent the decisive manoeuvre ...Nh4-f5-e3, so Filip resigned. Interestingly the proud bishop stood on f1 from move 21 to the very end of the game, just like the tin soldier...

0-1

B18

□ **Dueckstein,A**
■ **Petrosian,T**
29: Varna Olympiad 1962
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Austrian International Master Andreas Dückstein (1927-) represented Austria in eight Olympiads from 1956-1976.

1.e4 c6 The British player Horatio Caro (1862-1920) and the Viennese player Marcus Kann (1820-1886) recommended this solid opening in the magazine Brüderschaft in 1886. It was popularised by players like Nimzowitsch, Capablanca and Botvinnik. It was Petrosian's first trainer Ebralidze who influenced Petrosian to include Caro-Kann in his repertoire. The main disadvantages are that the knight on b8 becomes passive and when Black tries to solve it by playing ...c6-c5 and ... Nc6, he loses a tempo with the c-pawn.

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5

The Classical Variation.

[Petrosian also liked to play 4...♘d7 regularly. Look at Games 23, 32 and 45 for this continuation.]

[He also tried 4...♘f6 5.♘xf6+ exf6 in a few games, giving Black a comfortable development and a safe kingside. The drawback is that the pawn majority on the queenside gives White a theoretically won pawn ending if that ending should arise. However, it should be clear that it's far from an easy task to exchange all the pieces and at the same time keep the same pawn structure. For instance, a placement of a black knight on e6 would dissolve Black's doubled pawns if an exchange should take place there.]

5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.♘f3 ♘d7 7.♗d3

A quiet continuation, planning kingside castling. White hopes to use his slightly more active pieces and slightly greater manoeuvring space.

[B.Spassky-T.Petrosian, the thirteenth game of the 1966 match for the world championship, continued more aggressively with 7.h4 , aiming for the exchange of the bishops. The game continued h6 8.h5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♕c7 11.♗d2 e6 12.0-0-0 ♘gf6 13.♕e2 0-0-0 14.♘e5 ♘xe5 15.dxe5 ♘d7 16.f4 ♗e7 with a comfortable game for White who has established a strong grip on the black kingside with the pawns on e5 and h5. It's difficult for Black to move any of his pawns on the kingside and White will improve his position with a later g2-g4, creating pawn breaks like f4-f5 or g4-g5. Spassky went on to win a long game after 91 moves.
In the rest of the match Petrosian played the Sicilian and the French Defence. However, nowadays new methods have been found in the Classical Caro-Kann associated with the moves 6...e6 or 6... Ngf6 before ...Nd7. The idea is to allow 7 Ne5 and after the retreat 7...Bh7 strike back on the centralized knight with ...Nd7.]

7...e6

[In this position Black isn't forced to play 7...♗xd3 and help White's development with 8.♕xd3 , since he doesn't mind an early exchange on g6 which would give him a useful h-file. Normally Black exchanges on d3 when he wants to castle on the kingside, so as not to be worried about being mated on the h-file when the black pawn stands on g6 instead of h7. First of all because of the open h-file and, secondly, because of the possibilities of planting a knight on the weak square g5.]

8.0-0 ♕c7

[More common is 8...♘gf6 . Play might continue 9.c4 ♗e7 10.♖e1 *(* or *10.b3 0-0 11.♗b2 ♕c7 12.♗xg6 hxg6 13.♕e2 a5 14.♖fd1 ♖fe8 15.♘e4 a4 16.♘xf6+ gxf6!?* , as in Y.Fedoruk-G.Kasparov, USSR 1978; now the best continuation is *17.g3* followed by h4 and Kg2 according to Kasparov *)* 10...0-0 11.♗xg6 hxg6 12.♗f4

♖e8 13.♕c2 c5 14.♖ad1 cxd4 15.♘xd4 ♗b4 16.♗d2 ♗xd2 17.♕xd2 a6 18.b4 ♕c7 19.♖c1 ♖ad8 20.♕c3 ♘b6 *(20...♘b8* followed by 21...Nc6, challenging the centralized knight on d4, looks more in the spirit of the position *)* 21.♘f3 with a level game in M.Najdorf-A.Kotov, Zurich 1953.]

9.c4 EXERCISE (planning): Can you suggest a plan for the housing of the black king?
ANSWER: The safest continuation is simply to strive for development on the kingside with ...Ngf6, ...Be7 and ...0-0 in the spirit of the aforementioned game Fedoruk-Kasparov. In this game Petrosian intensified the struggle, playing more provocatively and riskily than he normally did. Moreover, he was playing an Austrian master famous for his dangerous attacking play and who managed to win against Botvinnik in 1958 Olympiad.

0-0-0!? 10.♗xg6 Apparently White didn't like the X-ray of the rook versus his queen, so he solves this in the most radical manner, giving Black a half-open h-file.

hxg6 11.♕a4 This is only a one-move threat. Now White's queen stands in the way of his own pawn storm.

[More flexible and solid alternatives are Clarke's suggestion 11.♕e2]

[and Crouch's 11.♗d2 .]

11...♔b8 12.b4 QUESTION: How does Black develop his kingside?
ANSWER: **♘h6!**

[Much better than the less harmonic routine move 12...♘gf6 when the black knights stumble on each other. Now Black can play ...Nf5 with pressure on d4.]

[12...♘e7 is playable too, with the additional tactical idea 13.♘g5 ♘f5 14.♘xf7?? ♘b6 and Black wins material.]

13.♕b3 ♘f5 14.a4

[14.♖e1 prevents Black from liberating his position with ...e6-e5 and reduces White's space advantage in the centre. The game L. Neuronov-Mandzdaladze, USSR 1980, continued ♗e7 15.a4 and after the passive ♘f8 with the idea of ...f7-f6 and ...g6-g5-g4, but now White's pawn storm becomes very dangerous; *(* more active possibilities were either *15...♘h4;* or *15...♘f6* to counterbalance White's attack *)* 16.♗b2 f6 17.a5 g5 18.b5 cxb5 19.cxb5 ♕d7 20.♘xf5 exf5 21.a6 g4 the best move 22.b6! would have led to too tough a position for the black king to handle.]

14...e5 15.dxe5

[Another possibility is 15.♘xf5 gxf5 16.c5 , putting pressure on f7: exd4 *(16...e4??* is a grave mistake; after *17.g3 ♕c8 18.♗f4+ ♔a8 19.♘g5* Black's position falls apart *)* 17.♕xf7 ♘f6 with a reasonable position for Black. If White keeps the queen on the board with If White keeps the queen on the board with 18.♕c4 , play might continue ♗e7 19.g3 ♔a8 20.♗f4 ♕d7 21.♖fd1 ♕e8 22.♘xd4 ♕h5 23.h4 ♘d5 and ...Bxh4 is in the air.]

15...♘xe5 16.♘xe5

[16.♗f4 is answered simply by the developing move ♗d6 . *(* Unnecessary would be *16...♘d4?! 17.♘xd4 ♖xd4 18.♗xe5 ♕xe5 19.♖ae1 ♕f6 20.♖e8+ ♖d8 21.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 22.c5* and White has the initiative. *)*]

16...♕xe5 17.♗b2 ♕c7

[17...♕f4 , with the idea of ...Bd6 and ...Qh4, is conveniently answered with the prophylactic move 18.h3 .]

18.c5 EXERCISE: How should Black defend against the coming pawn storm?
ANSWER: **a5!!** A surprising move, disrupting the queenside, is the solution. Normally it's a bad idea to move the pawns in front of your king, but this is an exceptional case. The idea is to release the bishop on f8 and gain control of the central squares. Generally good control of the wings begins with good control of the centre.

[The move order 18...♖h4!? 19.♖ad1 ♖xd1 20.♖xd1 a5!! is also playable, reaching the same position as in the game by transposition.]

19.♖ad1 ♖xd1

[Of course not 19...axb4?? 20.♗e5 and the black queen is overloaded.]

20.♖xd1 EXERCISE: What is Black's best continuation?
♖h4?

[ANSWER: It's better to play on the fourth rank instead of the fifth with 20...♘xg3 21.hxg3 axb4 22.♕xb4 ♖h5! , controlling e5 and putting pressure on the c5-pawn. This way of playing leads to an approximately even position.]

[Instead, 20...axb4? is a mistake after 21.♕xb4 , giving White the initiative. He already threatens 22 Be5! Qxe5 23 Rd8+ followed by mate on b6.]

21.bxa5!

[If White wants to keep the pawn on c5, he might play 21.♗c3 axb4 22.♗xb4

, but after ♘d4 followed by ...Ne6 Black will exercise strong pressure on the c5-pawn.]
[Crouch analyses 21.♕d3 ♔a7 22.♘xf5 ♕xh2+ 23.♔f1 gxf5 24.♕d8 ♕h1+ 25.♔e2 ♖e4+ 26.♔d2 ♕xg2 27.♕xa5+ ♔b8 28.♕d8+ ♔a7 , leading to a draw by perpetual check. If White tries to win the game he may end up losing after 29.♔c2 ♗e7 30.♕b6+ ♔b8 31.♖d7?? ♖e2+ .]

21...♗xc5 22.a6 b6 The idea is to pick up the pawn on a6 later on with the king, but if White plays energetically and forcefully this might prove to be a risky tactic.

EXERCISE: What is White's strongest continuation?

[A safer continuation is 22...♘d4!? 23.♕e3 ♘e6 24.♕e1 ♗d4 25.♗xd4 ♖xd4 26.♖xd4 ♘xd4 27.♕e8+ ♔a7 28.axb7 ♔xb7 29.♘e4 and White has a slight advantage because of Black's less well protected king.]

23.♖e1? ANSWER: Dückstein's move looks logical since the rook has no invasion squares on the d-file. It also supports Ne4 or Be5.

[However, there is a much stronger continuation in 23.♘xf5! gxf5 *(23...♕xh2+? 24.♔f1 ♕h1+ 25.♔e2 ♖e4+ 26.♘e3 ♕h5+ 27.♔e1 ♕h1+ 28.♔d2* leads to a win for White *)* 24.g3 , and if now ♖b4 25.♕c2 f4 26.♗xg7 fxg3? 27.♕f5! White is even winning.]

23...♔a7 24.♗e5 ♕d7 25.♘e4

[Not 25.♖d1? ♕e6 26.♕c3 ♖xa4 when Black has very good winning chances.]

25...♗d4 The extraordinary move 18...a5!! is the sole reason we are able to watch this bishop dominate on the central dark squares.

26.g3 EXERCISE: What is Black's most efficient continuation?

[Other possibilities are: 26.♕d3 , but the pin is harmless after either ♕d5 *(* or *26...f6 .)*]
[26.♗g3 ♘xg3 27.hxg3 *(27.♘xg3 ♖f4! 28.♖e2 ♕d5!* and Black dominates the position *)* 27...♖h5 28.♖d1 ♖d5 and Black's strong bishop on d4 is overprotected. Black will further improve his position with ...Kxa6 and drive away the enemy knight with ...f7-f5.]
[26.a5 is answered by the calm b5 , avoiding an opening of the b-file.]

26...♗xe5!

[ANSWER: It's understandable Petrosian didn't want to enter variations where he had to fight for a draw with 26...♖h8 27.♖d1 ♕d5 *(27...f6* is the alternative *)* 28.♕xd5 cxd5 29.♗xd4 dxe4 30.a5 ♘xd4 31.axb6+ ♔xb6 32.♖xd4 ♔xa6 33.♖xe4 ♔b5 Kb5 and Black should draw after ...Kc6-d7 followed by ...Re8.]

27.gxh4 ♘d4! 28.♕d1 ♕d5 29.♖e3

[Another variation keeping the dynamic balance is 29.♘c3 ♕f3 30.♘e2 . Black can draw immediately with ♗xh2+ *(* or play on with *30...♘f5)* 31.♔xh2 ♕xf2+ 32.♔h3 ♕f5+ .]

29...♘f5 30.♖e1 ♘d4 31.♕d3

[Why didn't Dückstein play for a repetition of moves with 31.♖e3 - ? Petrosian often used this ploy to check if the opponent was happy with a draw. Dückstein may, though, have felt that Petrosian was just toying with him and wouldn't accept a draw anyway.]

31...f5 32.♘g5 c5 33.♖e3

[If 33.♕e3?! then ♗f6 with the tactical idea of 34.-- f4! 35.♕xf4 ♘e2+! .]

33...c4 34.♕d1?!

[Dückstein missed a good opportunity to give back the exchange with 34.♖xe5! ♕xe5 , picking up a pawn in the process with 35.♕xc4 .]

34...♔xa6 35.♖a3?

[EXERCISE: How does Black answer the seemingly strong move 35.♘e6 ?
ANSWER: With the tactical shot f4! *(35...♕xe6 36.♕xd4 ♗xd4 37.♖xe6 ♔a5* is an alternative win *)* 36.♘xd4 fxe3 37.fxe3 ♗xd4 38.exd4 ♔a5 39.♕a1 ♕f3 with an easily winning queen ending. The passed c-pawn is too strong. 40.♕b2 is answered convincingly with ♕b3 and ...c3 next move.]
[35.♕e1 with the idea of 36 Rxe5 is a better try to prolong the game.]

35...♗f6 36.h3 f4 37.♕g4 QUESTION: Isn't Black's king exposed?

[Alternatively, 37.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 38.♕xf3 ♕xf3 39.♖xf3 ♗e5 followed by ...Ka5 and ...Kxa4 with a quick defeat ahead for White.]

ANSWER: The king may actually be a strength. Petrosian now played the most logical continuation:

37...♔a5! Petrosian really knew how to handle this important piece which has the same strength as a small queen. It moves in all directions, but only with one step. Most players are normally only active with the king in the endgame, but there are many exceptions to this rule, as Steinitz pointed out a long time ago.

38.♘f3

[After 38.♕d1 ♔b4! 39.♖a2 c3
White's major pieces are powerless against the harmonized black position which is like a giant piece.]

38...♔b4! 39.♘xd4 ♔xa3 40.♘c2+ ♔xa4 . Another famous game where Petrosian played aggressively with his king on the queenside is R.J.Fischer-T.Petrosian, Bled/ Zagreb/Belgrade 1959. As a matter of a fact, a study of Petrosian's games for the purpose of understanding how he treated the king is very rewarding. Other players who come to mind in this regard are the first official world champion Wilhelm Steinitz (1836-1900) and the American Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan (1960), who both played several games with unusual treatments of their kings.
0-1

D94

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Botvinnik,M**
30: World Championship (Game 5), Moscow
[Thomas Engqvist]

Mikhail Moiseyevich Botvinnik (1934–1995) became a grandmaster in 1950 and was world champion during the periods 1948–1957, 1958-1960 and 1961-1963. Botvinnik won the first game in the 1963 world championship match and after the match Petrosian said: "Botvinnik apparently thought I would behave just like the other challengers. But I continued to play calmly, as if nothing had happened, so to speak." The next three games were drawn and the fifth game we are going to study in depth.
We know that a knight planted on a central square on the sixth rank is generally enough to win a game. A knight well defended on the fifth rank, in the spirit of Labourdonnais's or Pillsbury's ideas, is the first step to create conditions for a successful attack on the wing. What Petrosian showed with this historically important game is how to win with a knight permanently established on the fourth rank.
1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 d5 Petrosian devoted much of his preparation to the Grünfeld Defence because he was certain it would arise. Botvinnik actually scored 61 per cent taking account all of the Grünfeld games he played with the black pieces in his whole career. However, Petrosian scored 71 per cent with the white pieces against it.
4.♘f3
[When Fischer annotated his game with the black pieces against Greenwald at Poughkeepsie, 1963, he wrote that 4.cxd5 "is White's only chance of gaining any real advantage against the Grünfeld". Today the variation ♘xd5 5.e4 *(* nowadays there is even an original system in *5.♘a4!?* which wasn't on the agenda during the heyday of Fischer *)* 5...♘xc3 6.bxc3 has been analyzed into very long and forced variations.]
4...♗g7 5.e3 A very solid system, keeping Black's activity to a minimum. It was Petrosian's plan to do exactly this to increase his chances against the formidable Botvinnik who was an accomplished opening theoretician.
0-0 6.♗e2 This innocent-looking move was one of the secret weapons Petrosian found and analysed together with his trainer Isaac Yefremovich Boleslavsky (1919-1977). It's funny though that Fischer in his annotations to the game, published in Chess Life (August 1963), labelled it with a question mark and even regarded it "as a beginner's move". This was possibly due to the psychological warfare between Fischer and the Russians because of the suspected Russian collaboration in Curacao 1962 which made it harder for the American to qualify for the world championship.
dxc4 Fischer actually put a questionable question mark on this one too. The reason Botvinnik chose this variation was because it wins a tempo for Black compared with the variation 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e3 g6 5 Bxc4 Bg7 6 Nc3 0-0.
[According to the theoretical guides of the time, 6...e6 was regarded as the main line because of the game A.Sokolsky-M. Botvinnik, USSR Championship 1938. In that game Sokolsky played very passively and got a cramped position since he only aimed for planless development with 7.0-0 b6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.b3?! . *(* During his preparations for the match Petrosian regarded 6...e6 as a rather passive set-up which could be exploited by playing along the lines of Vladimir Andreyevich Makogonov's (1904-1993) plan with an early b2-b4. The game V.Simagin-D.Osmanagic, Sarajevo 1963, which was played at the same time as the world championship, confirmed White had good prospects after

9.b4! . This is more in the spirit of the position and also gives White opportunities to place the queen on the more active square b3. That game continued *c6 10.a4 ♖e8 11.♗a3 ♘bd7 12.b5 c5 13.dxc5 ♘xc5 14.♘d4 ♘fe4 15.♖c1 ♘xc3 16.♖xc3 ♘e4 17.♖c2 ♕h4 18.♗b2 ♕h6 19.♕a1 ♗e5 20.♘f3 ♗xb2 21.♕xb2 ♘c5 22.a5* and White increased his advantage and won after 42 moves *)* . Instead, in Sokolsky-Botvinnik, after 9...♗b7 10.♗b2 ♘bd7 11.♕c2 a6 12.♖ac1 ♖c8 13.♖fd1 ♕e7 14.♕b1 ♖fd8 15.♗f1 c5 Black had the initiative. Note that the white pieces can't even reach the fifth rank here.]

[Fischer regarded 6...c5 as the strongest line and this is also in the spirit of the Grünfeld Indian, creating life for the fianchettoed bishop.]

[Instead, 6...c6 transposes to the solid Schlechter variation in the Slav and had already been chosen between the same players in 1955. It was understandable Botvinnik chose a continuation in 6...dxc4 which he hadn't played before to avoid possible preparation.]

7.♗xc4 c5

[7...♘fd7 followed by ...e7-e5 is the best according to Fischer.]

8.d5

[Petrosian didn't normally mind an isolani after either 8.0-0]

[or 8.h3 , allowing cxd4 9.exd4 , but here Black has a stronger set-up on the kingside compared with normal isolani structures where the bishop is placed on e7.]

8...e6?! EXERCISE: White's centre pawn is under pressure. How does he handle it?

[Fischer's recommendation 8...♘e8 is answered by 9.♗b3! ♘d6 10.0-0 with a slight advantage according to Korchnoi.]

[However, 8...♘fd7 is an interesting alternative to avoid what happened in the game.]

ANSWER: **9.dxe6!**

[The supportive 9.e4 only results in active pieces for Black after exd5 10.exd5 ♖e8+ 11.♗e3 *(* or *11.♗e2 ♗f5)* 11...♘g4]

[and the natural 9.0-0 gives Black very comfortable development indeed with exd5 10.♘xd5 ♘c6 . Petrosian chose a much better continuation.]

9...♕xd1+ 10.♔xd1 ♗xe6 11.♗xe6 fxe6

12.♔e2 EXERCISE (planning): Make an evaluation of the position in combination with suggesting the general plan for both sides. ANSWER: The early exchanges of queen is slightly advantageous for White because he has only two pawn islands whereas Black has three. Black's main weakness is the square e4, rather than the isolated pawn on e6, because White can easily plant an 'eternal' knight there via Nf3-g5-e4 or Nf3-d2-e4. For his part, Black's counterchances are associated with his advantage in development and pawn majority on the queen's wing. For defensive purposes he should strive for an exchange of both White's knights.

♘c6

[The sensible move 12...♘d5 is answered by 13.♘e4 ♘d7 *(13...♘a6!?)* 14.♘fg5 *(* or *14.♖d1* with a slight initiative according to Petrosian; Kasparov thinks Black has no problems after *♖ad8 15.♘fg5 ♘c7 16.♘d6 ♘b8 17.♘ge4 b6 18.♖b1 ♘c6 19.♗d2 ♘d5 20.♘c4 ♖d7* , but in principle White's position ought to be preferred because of his better pawn structure and the eternal knight on e4. *)*]

[Petrosian would probably not mind either Kasparov's suggestion 12...h6!? , since the f3-knight might reach the e4-square anyway with 13.♘d2 .]

13.♖d1

[13.♘g5 may have been more precise in order to prevent Flohr's idea ...Kf7-e7. On the other hand, it's in accordance with Petrosian's style to keep such micro-threats in reserve to put maximum psychological pressure on the opponent. Now Black has to deal with the very intricate question of whether it's better to play 13...Kf7, 13...h6 or the text move.]

13...♖ad8?!

[Flohr suggested centralization with his king by the preventative 13...♔f7 and 14...Ke7, in order to keep pieces on the board so as to be able to exploit the queenside pawn majority together with Black's better development and more active pieces.]

14.♖xd8 ♖xd8

[14...♘xd8 is a suggestion by the American Grandmaster Reuben Fine (1914-1993), but of course the knight is badly placed there.]

15.♘g5 ♖e8 Black unnecessarily loses a tempo because of the thirteenth move.

16.♘ge4 ♘xe4 It's only in White's interest to exchange the superfluous knight on c3 for the

one on f6.
[With 16...b6 17.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 18.♘e4 Black may regroup his bishop and neutralize the white knight with ♗e7 ahead of striving for ...e6-e5 and ...Kf7-e6 with good centralization, although the bishop would be trapped behind its own pawns.]
17.♘xe4 b6 The first stage of the plan to regroup the knight to the powerful e4-square is implemented. Now comes the second stage of the plan.
QUESTION: Why is the knight on e4 so strong?
ANSWER: If we analyse the strength of the knight on e4 we notice that it controls four squares in Black's territory: d6 and c5, and deeper into Black's position, f6 and d6. Such a strong knight will secure a lasting initiative and increase the pressure on Black's position. Black hasn't even managed to neutralize it and for some time it's not possible to put his own knight in a position to challenge it.
The second stage of White's overall plan is to restrain Black's pawn majority with pawn moves such as a2-a4 and b2-b3. For this purpose White must defend the pawn on b2 with a rook move. The main ideas are to make the development of the bishop to d2 possible in conjunction with a2-a4 and b2-b3.
18.♖b1 ♘b4 Black hopes to put pressure on the white knight with ...Nd5-f6 and thereby increase his chances of reaching a draw.
[The alternative was the natural move 18...♖d8 .]
19.♗d2
[19.a4 is also playable according to Petrosian, but the text move gives Black the chance of making a mistake. Such nuances are typical of a great master.]
19...♘d5 QUESTION: What happens if Black captures the pawn on a2?
[ANSWER: 19...♘xa2? leads to the forced line 20.♖a1 ♘b4 21.♗xb4 cxb4 22.♖xa7 ♗xb2 23.♖b7 ♖c8 24.♖xb6 with good winning chances for White.]
[Instead, Fine's suggestion 19...♘c6 only loses time and helps the white knight to remain eternal.]
20.a4! White follows the main plan of first restricting and only then attacking Black's pawn formation with pawns and pieces. **♖c8**
[The defensive 20...♘f6 is worth a try to force the white knight away from the strong post at e4. Kasparov's analysis runs 21.♘d6 ♖d8 22.♘c4 , changing to another outpost and still keeping slight pressure on the Black position.]
[Instead, 20...♔f8 followed by 21...Ke7 has been a suggested improvement by both Averbakh and Fine.]
21.b3 The main plan of restricting the black pawns with the white pawns is now achieved.
♗f8
[Black's bishop was biting on thin air and changes to a more vital diagonal. Incidentally, it threats complete liberation with 21...♗f8 22.-- c4 23.♖c1 cxb3! 24.♖xc8 b2 25.♖c1 bxc1♕ 26.♗xc1 with a certain draw.]
[Of course not, though, 21...c4?? immediately because of 22.♘d6 , forking the rook and the pawn.]
22.♖c1 When Black's pawns on the queenside have been completely restrained, the next phase is to attack them. Note that the white king takes part in the attack so White has in effect one extra piece.
[Note too that the immediate 22.♔d3?! doesn't work after ♖d8 23.♔c4 a6 when White's king can't enter Black's position and stands in the way of its own pieces.]
22...♗e7?! EXERCISE: How ought White to attack Black's queenside pawns?
[22...♖c7 protects the rook and after 23.♘g5 ♖e7 24.e4 Black can try h6!? . After the further 25.♘h3 ♘f6 26.f3 White can follow up with Nf2-c3 and b2-b3 according to analysis by Speelman.]
[Tal's suggestion was 22...a6 with the idea of 23.b4 c4 24.b5 axb5 25.axb5 ♗e7 when Black has counterchances on the a-file and against the weak b5-pawn.]
[Tal, as well as Barcza, Alföldy and Kapu, also advising changing file with 22...♖b8 to prevent White's next move.]
ANSWER: The most effective is to attack immediately:
23.b4! Petrosian thought for 26 minutes before he made this crucial move which gives Black a passed pawn.
[In this position it's better not to follow Nimzowitsch's famous formula (restrain, blockade then destroy) with 23.♖c4 , since Black would simply reply a6 24.b4 b5 followed by ...c4 with a protected passed pawn!]
23...c4 EXERCISE: What is White's best move?
[The waiting move 23...♖c7 is answered by

24.bxc5 bxc5 *(* or *24...♗xc5 25.♘xc5 bxc5 26.e4* with a big advantage for White; he has the more active king, the better pawn structure and bishop and rook versus knight and rook, which normally favours the owner of the bishop *)* 25.♔d3 followed by a4-a5 and Kc4 when Black faces a tough ask with the king which is outside play.]

[23...♔f7 is a better way to improve Black's position, although after 24.bxc5 bxc5 *(* but not *24...♗xc5?? 25.♘d6+)* 25.♗c3!? White has a slight advantage. If Black tries to play actively with his rook he might encounter some problems after ♖b8 26.♗e5 ♖b4 27.♘xc5 ♗xc5 28.♖xc5 ♖xa4 29.♖b5 when the rook and bishop are again superior to Black's rook and knight.]

ANSWER: **24.b5!** White prevents Black from stabilizing the pawn on c4 with ...a7-a6 and ... b6-b5, so now the pawn in White's territory is artificially isolated. This a huge advantage since White has four pieces versus three to attack it.

♔f7 EXERCISE (planning): Can you find White's general plan?

[24...♗a3 leads to a rook ending where only White can hope for a win after the practically forced 25.♖c2 c3! 26.♗xc3 ♖c4 *(26...♗b4?! 27.♔d2 ♖c4 28.♗xb4 ♖xe4 29.♗d6 ♖xa4* is an equal endgame according to Averbakh, but *30.f3* keeps a slight edge according to Petrosian who was prepared to play this during the game *)* 27.♔d3 ♖xa4 28.♖a2 ♖xe4 29.♖xa3 ♘xc3 30.♔xc3 ♖e5 31.♖xa7 ♖xb5 32.♖b7 ♖c5+ 33.♔d3 b5 and Black's king is cut off. White too has some problems to pass the fifth rank with his king, though, and isn't in possession of a passed pawn.]

[Note that 24...c3? doesn't work because of 25.♘xc3 ♗a3 26.♘xd5! and White wins.]

ANSWER: Now Nimzowitsch's formula is validated.

25.♗c3! The first step to blockade the passed pawn is done. The text step is to put pressure on the pawn with Nd2. The last step will be to approach the pawn by playing g2-g3 which prepares to drive away the enemy knight with e3-e4. Observe how powerful the white knight is on e4. It may manoeuvre backwards at any time with devastating effect. This is the true strength of the centralized knight on the fourth rank, namely that it can participate in so many different plans.

If the black pawn were still on f7, Black would merely have played ...f7-f5 at the right moment and driven away the centralized knight. This isn't the case with the present Black pawn structure and therefore White has a lot of time to implement his plans connected with the eternal knight. In Petrosian's games the element of time has a strong tendency to be reduced. Moreover, if the knight stands too long on a centralized square it will sooner or later make a decisive manoeuvre.

♗a3 26.♖c2 ♘xc3+

[After 26...♔e7 27.♘d2 *(* not *27.♗e5?* as the blockading square is more important than the central square; Black answers *♗b4* , with the idea of *28.♘d2 ♗xd2 29.♔xd2 ♘b4* which gives him control of the situation because of his counterplay on the light squares *)* 27...♔d7 28.g3 and e3-e4 Black soon loses the pawn on c4.]

[Instead, 26...h6 27.♘d2 is a suggestion by Fine.]

27.♖xc3 ♗b4 28.♖c2 ♔e7? Too passive.

[Better drawing chances are offered by 28...e5! 29.♘d2 c3 30.♘e4 ♔e6 with a more active king's position:

A) . If White stabilizes the knight on e4 with 31.f3 , Black will do the same with his bishop and he keeps the balance after ♗a5! . If White approaches the c3-pawn with 32.♔d3 , Black has enough counterplay after ♖d8+ 33.♔c4 ♖d2 34.♔b3 ♖d3 , according to Petrosian. Kasparov mentions 35.♖e2 ♖d1 with an equal position.;

B) 31.♔d3 ♖d8+ 32.♔c4 ♖d2 33.♔b3 ♖xc2 34.♔xc2 ♔d5 (by advancing to the c4-square Black secures the draw) 35.♘f6+ *(* or *35.♘xc3+ ♔c4 36.♘e4 ♗e7* and according to Speelman, Black has enough compensation for the pawn and realistic chances to save the draw *)* 35...♔c4 36.♘xh7 ♗e7! 37.f4 exf4 38.exf4 ♔b4 39.g4 ♔xa4 40.♔xc3 ♔xb5 41.f5 gxf5 42.gxf5 ♔c5 43.f6 ♗xf6+ 44.♘xf6 ♔d6 and the position is a draw according to Kasparov.;

C) 31.--]

29.♘d2! c3

[The exchange 29...♗xd2 30.♔xd2 ♖d8+ *(30...♔d6* with the idea of supporting the pawn on c4 doesn't work after *31.♔c3 ♔c5 32.♖d2* , threatening 33 Rd4; if Black defends with *e5* a surprising mate will appear on d5 after *33.e4!)* 31.♔c3 ♖d1 allows Black a more tenacious defence in

Petrosian's opinion. A logical continuation may be 32.♔xc4 ♖a1 33.♔b3 ♖b1+ 34.♔a2 ♖g1 35.g3 ♔d6 when Black has the more active king and rook, and so has counterplay for being a pawn down in the rook ending.]

30.♘e4 ♗a5 Black secures his bishop on a5 so White doesn't get a tempo for his king on c4 later on. **31.♔d3 ♖d8+ 32.♔c4 ♖d1**

[Petrosian wrote in his annotations: "The showy 32...♖d2 is parried by the prosaic 33.♔b3 ".]

33.♘xc3 QUESTION: What is Black's best defence: exchange the knight or move the rook?

[ANSWER: Normally rook and bishop are stronger than rook and knight, but not in this position. 33.♘xc3 ♗xc3 is the best continuation when Black might have some practical saving chances of saving the rook ending, even though the odds are against him in this particular case. Botvinnik should have remembered that there is a famous proverb which says that all rook endings are drawn and there is some truth in this sentence because of the unexpected intricacies of some rook endings.

After 34.♔xc3 Techner thinks that

A) 34...♖h1 gives White too much activity with the king and rook after 35.♔d4 ♖xh2 36.♖c7+ ♔d6 37.♖xa7 ♖h4+ *(* or *37...♖xg2?! 38.♖b7* and White has two advanced passed pawns *)* 38.♔c3 . Normally rook endings are won if the extra pawn is combined with an active rook and this is the case here where Black has to attend to several pawn weaknesses.;

B) 34...♔f6!? with the idea to centralize the king at e5 is also worthy of attention.;

C) 34...g5! is the most stubborn move. The idea is to play the pawn to g4 and then try to create some weaknesses on the white kingside. It's also useful to have the pawn as far advanced as possible if a pawn race may arise. Other possible variations except Techner's suggestion are:]

33...♖h1? This leads to a completely lost position according to Petrosian.

EXERCISE: What is White's best continuation?

ANSWER: **34.♘e4!** This is the key move which took Petrosian eight minutes to figure out. The main ideas are to avoid the exchange of the bishop for the knight and increase the harmony of White's position. Now the bishop is useless on the diagonal a5-e1 and Black's scattered pieces give a very inharmonious impression indeed. Petrosian really was a great master of harmony and it was very rare his opponents had a more harmonious position than him.

[David Bronstein was very impressed by this move as many players probably would have chosen the simple 34.h3 instead. Petrosian knew what he was doing though, as we'll see from the instructive conclusion of the game.]

34...♖xh2

[34...♖a1 doesn't help either after 35.♔d4 ♖xa4+ 36.♔e5 ♖b4 37.♖c7+ ♔d8 38.♖xa7 ♖xb5+ 39.♔xe6 with a clearly winning position according to Clarke.]

35.♔d4 The harmony between White's pieces and the dominance over Black's position is clearly visible. **♔d7**

[It's more important for Black to prevent an invasion on his second rank than to pick up another pawn with 35...♖xg2 : 36.♖c7+ ♔d8 37.♖xh7 wins easily by continuing with Ke5 or Rxa7.]

36.g3

[36.g4 also wins, but unnecessarily gives Black some activity with his h-pawn. Petrosian analyses the following sequence: h5 37.♔e5 hxg4 38.♘f6+ ♔e7 39.♘xg4 ♖h5+ 40.♔e4 with a win.]

[An alternative win is actually to activate all White's pieces: 36.♘f6+ ♔d6 37.♖c6+ ♔e7 38.♔e5 ♖xg2 39.♖c7+ ♔d8 40.♖xh7 ♗c3+ 41.♔xe6 ♗xf6 42.♔xf6 ♖xf2+ 43.♔e5 and the rook ending is a win. It's understandable, though, that Petrosian wasn't so interested in parting with his knight for the opponent's bishop on principle.]

36...♗b4 Black's bishop tries to defend the king, but it's too late now. **37.♔e5 ♖h5+**

[If 37...♗e7 38.♖d2+ and after White has conquered the weak squares e4 and e5 in front of the pawn, the weakness on e6, the heart of Black's position, will fall.]

38.♔f6 ♗e7+ 39.♔g7 The main threat is 40 Rd2+ followed by 41 Kf7.

[39.♔f7 was also a good move, and ♖d5 *(* or *39...♖f5+)* , then 40.♔g7 and Black can't defend his pawn weaknesses.]

39...e5 QUESTION: It seems Black plans to activate his king to e6. Can we prevent that?

[Clarke gives 39...♖h1 40.♔f7 ♖d1 41.♖d2+ with a win]
[and Fine 39...g5 40.♔f7 when it's all over after the coming Rd2+.]
ANSWER: White played the most precise move:
40.♖c6! By using the outpost on c6 White effectively cuts off the king from the centre while preparing a mating attack.
[40.g4 , with the double threat of 41 gxh5 and 41 Kf7, is answered by ♖h3 41.♔f7 ♖f3+ .]
40...♖h1 Here the game was adjourned.
EXERCISE: What did Petrosian seal?
ANSWER: **41.♔f7!** The sealed move puts pressure on the bishop on e7 and after the further 42 Re6 Black must give away important dark squares to White. The amusing thing with the sealed move is that Botvinnik turned to the match arbiter and claimed that White had sealed 41 Kf8. This occurred because Petrosian had a habit of writing the number seven with a round tail. After this small incident play continued.
♖a1
[41...♖h5 doesn't help after Kasparov's suggestion 42.a5! when White wins after bxa5 43.♖a6 ♖f5+ 44.♔g7 ♗b4 45.g4 ♖f8 46.♘f6+ ♔e7 47.♖xa7+ ♔e6 48.♖a6+ .]
42.♖e6 ♗d8
[Petrosian gives 42...♗c5 43.♖xe5 ♖xa4 44.♘xc5+ , transposing to a clearly winning rook ending.]
[42...♗b4 doesn't help either after 43.♖xe5 ♖xa4 44.♘f6+ ♔d6 45.♖d5+ ♔c7 46.♖d4 with a deadly pin and 47 Nd5 will follow next move.]
43.♖d6+ ♔c8 44.♔e8 ♗c7 45.♖c6 ♖d1
[Petrosian analyses 45...♖xa4 46.♘g5 *(46.♘c3* with the idea of 47 Nd5 also wins, but Petrosian's solution is more elegant *)* 46...♔b7 47.♘e6 ♗b8 48.♘d8+ ♔a8 49.♖c8 followed by Nc6]
[while 45...♔b7 loses to 46.♘g5 .]
46.♘g5 ♖d8+ 47.♔f7 ♖d7+ 48.♔g8
. This was Petrosian's first win against Botvinnik in an official event and a game he regarded as especially memorable. It certainly demonstrated his positional prowess. Eventually the match ended in a victory for Petrosian by 12½ points to 9½.
Later Botvinnik wrote that Petrosian was the most inconvenient player in the world. The reason was that Botvinnik didn't succeed in adapting to his original style. Paradoxically Botvinnik also said that style wasn't that important, just that strength of play was.
1-0

Chapter Four

Life as World Champion

In 1963 Petrosian participated in one of the most significant chess events in America since the 1927 tournament in New York and that was the first Piatigorsky Cup. Petrosian was the first reigning world champion to play in an American tournament since 1932. The previous occasion was when the fourth world champion Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946) had played in Pasadena, California.

Here Petrosian plays the strongest player from Argentina, Grandmaster Oscar Roberto Panno (1935-). He is remembered for introducing into master play the Panno variation in the fianchetto variation of the King's Indian Defence. The main idea with that variation is to develop the knight to c6 and then transfer it to a5 after White has played d4-d5 attacking it.

Petrosian and Panno played each other in two games during the tournament and their first game was drawn after a whopping 111 moves. Actually Panno was the hardest-working in the event, playing 645 moves in all his games, whereas Petrosian battled for a mere 601 moves.

31: T.Petrosian-O.Panno, Los Angeles 1963

The All-Union Trades Union Sport Societies Championship was played in Moscow, December 1964. Petrosian won with 10½/15. Here follows his last win of the year against Eduard Mnatsakanian (1938), who was still an active player in 2013.

32: E.Mnatsakanian-T.Petrosian, Moscow 1964

Petrosian was in really good shape in 1965, as was recorded by the Soviet Master Yakov Borisovich Estrin (1923-1987), who followed him when he gave lectures and simultaneous exhibitions during 24 days in Germany: "We thought that Petrosian only played chess, but he is a genuine marathon runner!"

In Zagreb Petrosian played the temperamental Yugoslavian Grandmaster Mijo Udovcic (1920-1984) whose motto was: "I prefer one good game in a series of zeros to a colourless series of draws without winning a game."

33: M.Udovcic-T.Petrosian, Zagreb 1965

Boris Vasiliyevich Spassky (1937-) became a grandmaster at the comparatively young age of eighteen. Before this world championship match he managed to defeat Keres, Geller and Tal in the Candidates encounters and thus qualified to face the mighty Tigran.

34: B.Spassky-T.Petrosian, World Championship (Game 7), Moscow 1966

The Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen (1935-2010) was a candidate for the world championship on four occasions, reaching the semi-final three times and was considered one of the threats to the Soviet hegemony. He was one of Fischer's victims when he lost in Denver in 1971 by the crushing score 6-0. Petrosian had a good lifetime score against Larsen with 13½ points to 8½.

35: B.Larsen-T.Petrosian, Havana Olympiad 1966

International Master and International Correspondence Grandmaster Mikhail Mikhailovich Yudovich (1911-1987) is most famous in the west for his book *The Soviet School of Chess* which he wrote with Kotov. Like Petrosian, Yudovich's style of playing was distinguished by a strictly logical style.

36: T.Petrosian-M.Yudovich, Moscow 1967

In the international tournament in Venice, October-November 1967, Petrosian was placed third with seven wins and six draws. In the following game he plays the Yugoslavian Grandmaster Dragoljub Janosevic (1923-1993), who was famous for being a strong blindfold player. He had actually already beaten Petrosian in Belgrade 1954 and Petrosian, who was the reigning world champion, was obviously anxious to win this game.

37: T.Petrosian-D.Janosevic, Venice 1967

The American Grandmaster Samuel Herman Reshevsky (1911-1992) is together with Capablanca and Pomar the most famous of child prodigies. Like Capablanca he learnt the game as early as the age of 4 and is regarded as one the best eight players in the world from 1935 to 1953.

Reshevsky was the best American player until another chess prodigy, Robert James Fischer took over the throne from him. Petrosian normally didn't have any problems in their encounters. They played 10 serious games and

from him. Petrosian normally didn't have any problems in their encounters. They played 10 serious games and Petrosian scored two wins, actually two games from the Olympiad, and drew the others. Here is his first win from the Olympiad in Switzerland.

38: T.Petrosian-S.Reshevsky, Lugano Olympiad 1968

Spassky convincingly won all three 1968 Candidates encounters, beating in succession Geller, Larsen and Korchnoi, and was a tougher challenger for Petrosian in 1969 than in 1966. He was more thoroughly prepared and spent three months studying Petrosian's games while working hard on his physical condition.

39: B.Spassky-T.Petrosian, World Championship (Game 27), Moscow 1969

E02

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Panno,O**
31: Los Angeles 1963
[Thomas Engqvist]

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Petrosian and Panno played each other in two games during the tournament and their first game was drawn after a whopping 111 moves. Actually Panno was the hardest-working in the event, playing 645 moves in all his games, whereas Petrosian battled for a mere 601 moves.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.g3
This introduces the Catalan opening. The system got its name from Saviely Grigoryevich Tartakower (1887-1956) at the Barcelona tournament of 1929. After playing the sequence d4, Nf3, g3 and Bg2 he named it after the region.
dxc4 5.♕a4+ ♘bd7 6.♗g2 a6 7.♘c3 ♖b8 8.♕xc4 b5 9.♕b3 ♗b7 10.0-0 c5 11.♗e3 ♗e7 12.dxc5 ♘xc5 QUESTION: Where should White place the queen?
13.♕d1!
[ANSWER: 13.♕c2 is an uncomfortable placement for the queen after ♖c8 14.♖fd1 ♕a5 . White has no good square for the queen so Petrosian just strives to swap it off.]
13...0-0 14.♕xd8 ♖fxd8 15.♖fd1 ♔f8 16.♘e5 ♗xg2 17.♔xg2 ♖bc8
[A more precise continuation is 17...♖xd1 18.♖xd1 ♖c8 .]
18.♖xd8+ ♗xd8? EXERCISE: What is the problem with the bishop recapture?
[Necessary is 18...♖xd8 19.♘c6 ♖c8 20.♘xe7 ♔xe7 21.♖c1 ♘cd7 with the idea to answer 22.♘d5+ with ♔d8 .]
19.♖c1?
[ANSWER: Surprisingly Petrosian missed the opportunity to win a pawn with 19.♘xb5! axb5 20.♖c1 ♗e7 21.b4 ♘d5 22.♗xc5 , thereby keeping the advantage.]
19...♘cd7 Now the position is equal and the game would normally end in a draw. **20.♘d3** The knight is more secure and active on d3, so it's best to avoid the exchange which is only in Black's interest. **♗b6 21.♗d2 ♔e8 22.f4** Winning space on the kingside and preventing Black from playing ...e6-e5. **♗a5?!** Probably Panno made some miscalculation in connection with 24...Nb6.
[It's better to activate the other knight with 22...♘g4 , followed by 23...Ne3 or 23...Be3, striving to penetrate into the heart of White's position. This idea results in more exchanges and more easily steers the game towards a draw.]
23.♔f3 ♗d8
[23...♘b6 is simply answered by 24.♗e1 , threatening b2-b4. One illustrative variation is ♘c4? *(24...♘bd7* is necessary *)* 25.b3 ♘d6 26.♘xb5! and White wins.]
24.g4 ♘b6 25.g5 ♘fd7 26.♗e3 ♗e7 27.♗d4 f6 28.h4 ♔f7 29.b3 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a drawish continuation and a more enterprising one?
ANSWER: **♗a3**
[This is the more enterprising continuation than to play for a draw with an exchange of rooks with 29...b4 30.♘e4 ♖xc1 31.♘xc1 and then go ♘d5 .]
30.♖g1 ♘d5 31.♘xd5 exd5 Black's pawn position is weakened, but there are always possibilities for counterplay on the c-file. **32.f5 ♗d6**
[32...♖c2 33.♘f4 ♖xa2 34.g6+ followed by Nxd5 keeps a steady advantage for White.]
33.e4 dxe4+
[After 33...♖c2 34.exd5 ♖xa2 35.g6+ hxg6 36.fxg6+ ♔f8 37.♗b2 ♘b6 38.♔e4 ♘c4 39.bxc4 bxc4 40.♖a1 ♖xa1 41.♗xa1 cxd3 42.♗c3! White wins because of his more active pawns. *(* Notice that *42.♔xd3?* is bad because of *a5* when Black has serious counterplay. *)*]
34.♔xe4 EXERCISE: What is Black's best continuation?
♘b8? Too passive.
[ANSWER: The active 34...♖c2 is a safer way to equality. This is a good example that

the best way to play for a draw is to play an active game. Passive play has the disadvantage that it puts you in the wrong frame of mind and that in itself almost inevitably leads to a lost game.]

35.gxf6 gxf6 36.♖c1 Petrosian naturally wishes to exchange off Black's only active piece. **♖e8+**

[The variation 36...♖xc1 37.♘xc1 followed by 38 Kd5 deprives Black of all counterplay.]

37.♔f3

[37.♔d5 forces the monarch back with ♖d8 38.♔e4 ♖e8+ 39.♔f3 and results in the same position as in the game. Sometimes Petrosian used such ploys in his games for the sake of deceptiveness.]

37...♖d8 38.♗e3 ♔e7 39.♘f4 ♖g8 40.♘d5+ ♔f7 41.♗f4 ♖d8 42.♗xd6 ♖xd6 43.♖c7+ ♘d7

[The exchange of rooks doesn't change the state of affairs after 43...♖d7 44.♖xd7+ ♘xd7 . The knight ending is easily winning after 45.♘c7 ♘c5 46.b4 ♘a4 47.♘xa6 ♘c3 48.♔e3 ♘xa2 49.♔d4 when the b5-pawns falls after 50 Kc5 and 51 Nc7.]

44.♔e4 ♔e8 45.h5 ♔d8 EXERCISE: What is your choice: 46 Ra7 or 46 Rc2?

46.♖c2

[ANSWER: A pretty win is 46.♖a7 ♔c8 47.♖a8+ ♘b8 *(or 47...♔b7 48.♖h8)* 48.♘e7+ ♔b7 49.♖a7+! ♔xa7 50.♘c8+ ♔b7 51.♘xd6+ ♔c6 52.♘e8 ♘d7 53.b4 and Black is in zugzwang.]

46...h6 47.b4 ♘b6 48.♘xb6 ♖xb6 49.♖g2 ♖d6 50.♖g6 ♔e7 51.♖xh6 ♖d2 52.♖h8 ♖xa2 53.h6 ♖h2 54.♔d5 ♔f7 EXERCISE: What is now the correct continuation? ANSWER: **55.♖a8!** A great continuation making Black's pieces to mere spectators while White's pieces become stronger and stronger. **♖xh6 56.♖a7+ ♔g8 57.♖xa6 ♖h4 58.♔c5 ♔g7 59.♖d6 ♖e4 60.♖d5 ♖e5 61.♖xe5 fxe5 62.♔d5** . The world champion Petrosian commented very honestly in the September 1963 issue of Chess Life: "A very difficult tournament, and I am satisfied with the outcome. Some may have thought that I should take undisputed first, but actually I am delighted to be able to share that with Keres, who may have lost at least two games because of illness."

1-0

B17

□ **Mnatsakanian,E**
■ **Petrosian,T**
32: Moscow 1964
[Thomas Engqvist]

The All-Union Trades Union Sport Societies Championship was played in Moscow, December 1964. Petrosian won with 10½/15. Here follows his last win of the year against Eduard Mnatsakanian (1938), who was still an active player in 2013.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3

[Nowadays the blocking of the centre with 3.e5 probably supersedes this natural developing move. However, it leads to a more complicated and demanding game for both players and preparation must be in order before entering its tricky and unusual lines.]

3...dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♗c4 ♘gf6 6.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7.♘f3 ♗f5 8.♕e2 e6 9.c3

[The continuation 9.♗g5 was seen in Matanovic-Petrosian, Game 23.]

9...♗g4 10.h3 ♗xf3 11.♕xf3 EXERCISE: What is Black's safest route to equality? ANSWER: **♘d5!** White has obtained a rather passive dark-squared bishop because of making too many pawn moves. Now the active possibility Bg5 is no longer possible.

12.0-0 ♗d6!

[12...♗e7 is a natural and fully playable move, but after the next move it will become clear what Petrosian is aiming for.]

13.♗b3 White is stabilizing the bishop and wants to play c3-c4, dislodging the knight. QUESTION: So what is Black to play? ANSWER: **♕f6!** It's logical to strive for an exchange of queens to take the sting out of White's advantage in space. Also it wasn't clear what else the black queen might do. It's clever idea to develop the bishop to d6 and make possible the queen manoeuvre to f6.

14.♕xf6

[14.♗xd5 cxd5 15.♕xf6 gxf6 gives no tangible advantage for White because it's difficult to exploit the disrupted pawns on the kingside if Black keeps his king in that area.]

[Instead, 14.♕e4 may have led to a sharper game. We don't know which direction the enigmatic Petrosian might then have castled. In similar typical structures he actually used both options.]

14...♘xf6 15.♖e1 0-0-0 16.♗d2 ♖d7 17.♗d1

EXERCISE: Black has a good preventative move. Can you find it?
ANSWER: **h6!** Petrosian wants to stop White from playing the bishop to g5 once and for all.
18.♗f3 ♖hd8 Petrosian is actually overprotecting his most important square d5 according to Nimzowitsch's famous theories.
19.c4?! Unnecessarily weakening the pawn on d4 where Black has already doubled his rooks. This is exactly what Petrosian wants.
QUESTION: How can Black profit from this? With 19...Bc5 or 19...Bc7?
[ANSWER: A radical solution is 19.c4 ♗c5 which probably wasn't according to Petrosian's taste or state of mind. After 20.♗xh6 *(not 20.♗a5? ♗b6)* 20...gxh6 21.dxc5 ♖d2 22.b4 ♖c2 Black wins back the pawn and maintains active play. Such decisions as this one are often the key to understanding what kind of player we are dealing with. There are two approximately even options at move 19, but you can only choose one. In such a situation it's the preference of your style which decides the course you'll take. Petrosian chose the cautious move according to his style and we clearly see that his ambition wasn't to play as actively as possible in this game.]
19...♗c7 20.♗c3 ♔b8 21.♖ac1 ♗b6 22.d5!? White sacrifices a pawn for the purpose of destroying Black's pawn formation.
[22.c5 would be a positional concession, giving away the d5-square. Black exploits it by ♗c7 followed by ...Nd5 with comfortable play.]
22...cxd5 23.cxd5 exd5 24.♗e5+ ♗c7 25.♗xf6 gxf6 26.♗g4 ♗a5! This active in-between move might may been overlooked by White. **27.♗xd7 ♗xe1 28.♖xe1?**
[28.♗g4 gives White definite drawing chances because of his strong control of the light squares. Now he's entering a rook ending a pawn down and a passed pawn at that.]
28...♖xd7 29.♖e8+ ♔c7 30.♖h8?
[EXERCISE: White now played a bad move in the game. What would you play if White had preferred 30.♔f1 with the idea of placing the king on one of the blockading squares d3, d2 or d1?
ANSWER: ♔d6 is the best and if and now 31.♔e2? *(31.♖h8* is necessary, but Black's advantage is undisputed *)* , a lost pawn ending arises after 31...♖e7+ 32.♖xe7 ♔xe7 .]
30...d4 The black rook is perfectly placed behind the unstoppable passed d-pawn.
31.♔f1?!
[31.♖e8 prolongs the game, but White still loses after d3 32.♖e1 ♔c6 followed by ... Kc5 and ...Kd4. The black rook penetrates the seventh rank with devastating effect.]
31...♖e7! . The king is cut off from the d-pawn so White resigned. Not a game of high quality from White's point of view, but it still contains some valuable ideas.
0-1

A25

□ **Udovcic,M**
■ **Petrosian,T**
33: Zagreb 1965
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian was in really good shape in 1965, as was recorded by the Soviet Master Yakov Borisovich Estrin (1923-1987), who followed him when he gave lectures and simultaneous exhibitions during 24 days in Germany: "We thought that Petrosian only played chess, but he is a genuine marathon runner!"
In Zagreb Petrosian played the temperamental Yugoslavian Grandmaster Mijo Udovcic (1920-1984) whose motto was: "I prefer one good game in a series of zeros to a colourless series of draws without winning a game."
1.c4 g6 2.♘f3 ♗g7 3.g3 EXERCISE: What is Black's most principled move in his quest to equalize?
ANSWER: **e5!** Grandmasters David Bronstein (1924-2006) and Nigel Davies (1960-) both taught me the necessity of playing 3 d4! after the move order 1 Nf3 g6 2 g3 Bg7 and not 3 Bg2? e5! with immediate equality in T. Engqvist-N.Davies, Wrexham 1995. I guess the same could be said about this position. Udovcic was little disposed to the theory of chess openings even though he was a co-inventor of Zagreb's variation in the King's Indian Defence.
4.♘c3 ♘c6 5.♗g2 ♘ge7 6.0-0 0-0 7.d3 QUESTION: What set-ups are playable for Black?
ANSWER: Black can choose to play on the queenside, on the kingside or in the centre as Petrosian chose in the game.
[T.Petrosian-I.Boleslavsky, from the famous Candidates tournament in Zurich 1953,

continued 7.d3 d6 8.♗d2 ♗d7 9.♖b1 ♕c8 10.b4 ♗h3 11.b5 ♘d4 12.a4 ♗xg2 13.♔xg2 ♕d7 14.♘d5 and now, according to Bronstein, ♘ef5 is best to avoid the exchange and only then drive away the white knight with ...c6.]

Petrosian chose the centralizing...

7...♘d4 ...which has the main idea of keeping the pawn on d7 flexible, so as to be able to play it to d5 in one move instead of two. It's also in the spirit of the first positional player Francois-André Danican Philidor (1726-1795), to prepare for ...c7-c6 and ...d7-d5 while not letting the pieces get in the way of the pawns. It's Philidor who said that the pawns are the soul of chess. This is a position containing many plans and it's interesting to see Petrosian's choice of plan. He didn't mind emphasizing pawn play as in too, for instance, Game 34.

[Other viable set-ups are 7...a6 with the idea of ...Rb8 and ...b7-b5, or expansion on the kingside with moves such as ...f7-f5, ... h7-h6 and ...g7-g5.]

8.♘xd4

[If White plays in the spirit of Bronstein's idea and avoids the exchange of knights before driving Black's away then 8.♘d2 c6 9.e3 ♘e6 is a possibility, as in S.Bjarnarson-H.Westerinen, Hafnarfjordur 1998.]

8...exd4 It's interesting to follow the destiny of this pawn which actually is the prime cause for a later mistake on White's part. **9.♘e4** EXERCISE: What is a reasonable continuation here?

ANSWER: **h6**

[A prophylactic move with the intention of preventing Bg5, which is possible after 9...d5 with 10.cxd5 ♘xd5 11.♗g5 , disturbing the harmony of the black forces.]

10.b4 d5 11.cxd5 ♘xd5 12.♕b3 ♘c3! This move is very logical and in the spirit of Steinitz who was the first player in history to understand the importance of holes in a position and how to exploit them, just like a dentist. Objectively speaking Black isn't better, but he is controlling the game and plays according to the universal laws of chess logic.

13.♘xc3

[13.♖e1!? , with the idea of forcing Black to take on e4, involves a sacrifice of the exchange after ♗e6 14.♕c2 ♗d5 15.♗d2 ♗xe4 16.♗xe4 *(* but not *16.dxe4? ♘xe2+!* and Black is winning *)* 16...♘xe4 *(* maybe *16...c6!?)* 17.dxe4 d3 18.exd3 ♗xa1 19.♖xa1 ♔h7 and White has enough compensation because of his more active position. However, this interesting position may not be to every player's taste.]

13...dxc3 14.♗e3 ♗e6 15.♕c2 ♗d5 16.♗xd5 ♕xd5 17.d4 EXERCISE: What is the best way to defend the pawn on c3: a direct defence or an indirect defence?

ANSWER: Petrosian chose the positional course and for all English Opening players a humiliating move: **♕c4** The same square where White originally placed his c4-pawn, constituting the English Opening.

[The tactical and indirect defence of the c3-pawn with 17...a5 18.♕xc3 axb4 19.♕xb4 c5 results in the loss of exchange for White, but he obtains reasonable drawing chances after 20.♕xc5! ♕xc5 21.dxc5 ♗xa1 22.♖xa1 .]

18.♖fc1 c6

[Of course, not 18...♗xd4? 19.♕e4! ♖ad8 20.♖d1 when Black loses the bishop because of the pin.]

19.♖ab1

[White isn't so interested in 19.♕xc3 ♕xe2 which is a pawn exchange in Black's favour because of the resulting isolani and weaknesses on the light squares.]

[Best is the extraordinary move 19.♕d2!! , exchanging the pawn on c3 for the pawn on b4 after the plausible moves ♖fd8 20.♖xc3 ♕xb4 . Play might continue 21.♖d1 ♖d5 22.♖b3 ♕e7 23.♕b4 with only a minimal advantage to Black. After the text move White is still threatening 20 Qd2!!.]

19...♖ad8 20.♖b3 ♗xd4

[If 20...♖fe8 21.♖xc3 ♕xb4 22.♖b1 ♕e7 23.♖cb3 and White's strong pressure on the queenside offsets Black's pressure on the central files.]

21.♗xd4 ♖xd4 EXERCISE: What is the best recapture of the pawn: 22 Rxc3 or 22 Qxc3?

22.♖xc3??

[ANSWER: Necessary is 22.♕xc3 ♕d5! when Black has only a slight positional advantage. *(* Instead, after *22...♕xc3 23.♖cxc3 ♖d2 24.♖e3 ♖xa2* White has enough counterplay for the pawn with *25.♖e7 .)*]

22...♕xb4 23.♖b1 ♕e7 White has lost a pawn for nothing. **24.♖e3 ♕d7 25.h4 h5 26.♕c5?!** White is only helping Black to achieve what he wants.

QUESTION: What is it that Black wants?

ANSWER: Black wants to stabilize the pawn

structure and exchange a pair of rooks.
[It was better to play 26.a4 and push on to a5 to obtain some pressure against the black queenside pawns.]
26...b6 27.♕g5 ♖e8 28.♖bb3 ♔g7
[28...c5]
[or 28...♖xe3 29.♖xe3 ♕d5 are also good moves in this technical phase of the game.]
29.♖xe8 ♕xe8 30.♖f3
[If 30.♖e3 then ♖e4 31.♖xe4 ♕xe4 32.♕d2 c5 leading to a won endgame because of the passed c-pawn and strong centralized queen.]
30...♕e6 31.♕c1 c5 32.♕b2 ♕e5 33.♔g2 ♖e4 34.♕a3
[The rook ending arising after 34.♕xe5+ ♖xe5 is easily won. Two variations are suffice to illustrate this: 35.♖a3 c4! 36.♔f1 *(* or *36.♖xa7 c3* followed by ...Rc5 and the pawn will queen *)* 36...♖e7 37.♔e1 ♖d7! and the white king is cut off from the dangerous passed pawn, which meanwhile will be supported by ...b6-b5.]
34...♕e7 35.♕b2+ ♔g8 36.e3 c4 37.♕b5
EXERCISE: There are two good continuations for Black. Can you suggest either?
♕e6
[ANSWER: 37...c3? is premature because Black's major pieces haven't achieved optimal harmony. This can be achieved by placing the black queen on a light square. If not, White will place his queen on one with 38.♕c6 and increase his chances of saving the game.]
[37...♕b7 , playing for ...a7-a6 and ...b6-b5, is a good continuation as well as the game continuation.]
38.♕b2 ♕c6 39.♕c3 ♖e6 40.a3 a5
. Notice Petrosian's unhurried play from the beginning to the end.
0-1

D03

□ **Spassky,B**
■ **Petrosian,T**
34: World Championship (Game 7), Moscow
[Thomas Engqvist]

Boris Vasiliyevich Spassky (1937-) became a grandmaster at the comparatively young age of eighteen. Before this world championship match he managed to defeat Keres, Geller and Tal in the Candidates encounters and thus qualified to face the mighty Tigran.

1.d4 This was the only game in the match where Spassky opened with the d-pawn. Spassky was a universal player who varied between 1 e4 or 1 d4. In the first three white games of the match he played 1 e4 and Petrosian answered with the Caro-Kann Defence and drew all three games. Before the seventh game the score was 3-3 with six draws.
Interestingly Petrosian opened with 1 c4 in his first four white games, followed by 1 Nf3 in the next three. In the rest of his white games he played 1 d4. Taking his whole career in account he preferred 1 d4 as his first choice. When he didn't play 1 d4, he selected only one of four moves, which were 1 c4, 1 Nf3, 1 e4 and 1 g3.
♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♗g5 This opening was developed during the 1920s by the Mexican player Carlos Repetto Torre (1905-1978), and is named after him. It was played in the games C.Torre-F.Sämisch, Marienbad 1925, and C. Torre-B.Verlinsky, Moscow 1925. Although Spassky had three wins with the Torre Attack prior to this game it was probably not a clever choice. It is like playing on Petrosian's home ground, since he had even more experience of the positions arising from this opening. Spassky was eager to complicate the position with the white pieces, but presumably underestimated Petrosian's tactical abilities and attacking skill.
d5 Petrosian chooses a classical continuation.
[A more critical and logical continuation is 3...c5 . After 4.e3 the main position of the Torre Attack arises. Now ♕b6 , targeting the tactical weakness on b2 and at the same time unpinning the knight on f6, is the sharpest continuation. This kind of risky play however wasn't Petrosian's cup of tea, particularly not at this stage of the match. Normally Petrosian preferred simple classical chess. *(* Another, more hypermodern approach is *4...b6* followed by the fianchetto of the bishop to b7, but the problem with this is the strong *5.d5!* , as in the game T.Petrosian-J.Kozma, Munich Olympiad 1958. *)*]
4.♘bd2 ♗e7 5.e3 ♘bd7 Observe how Petrosian postpones castling to keep his options open and maintain maximum flexibility for his king. **6.♗d3 c5 7.c3** QUESTION: How is Black to continue his development? Can we castle?
ANSWER: **b6**

[It's clever to initiate development on the queen's wing before deciding on where to place the king. Compare with the following game and what happened in the actual game: 7...0-0?! , as played in T.Petrosian-V. Liublinsky, USSR Championship, Moscow 1947, ought to be delayed in this variation. After 8.♘e5 ♘xe5 9.dxe5 ♘d7 10.♗f4! (it is better to avoid the exchange of bishops to keep attacking chances) f5 11.h4! c4 12.♗c2 b5 13.♘f3 ♘c5 14.g4?! too risky; *(14.♘d4* followed by h4-h5 and 0-0 is the safer course *)* 14...b4 *(* best is to accept the pawn sacrifice with *14...fxg4* ; if White continues with *15.♘g5* Black can without risk play *h5* , as White can't liquidate the pawns on h5 and g4 with *16.♗h7+ ♔h8 17.♗g6* because of *♕b6* and *18.♗xh5??* falls to *♘d3+ 19.♔d2 ♖xf4!)* 15.gxf5 exf5 .

Play continued 16.♘g5? this is too aggressive; *(* better is *16.♘d4* with an approximately even position *)* 16...g6? now the bold attack pays off, *(* but if Black instead played *16...bxc3 17.bxc3 ♕a5!* , with the idea of *18.♕xd5+? ♗e6 19.♘xe6 ♘d3+* winning the queen, he would have taken over *)* 17.h5! ♘d3+? *(* the last chance was *17...♗xg5 18.♗xg5 ♕xg5 19.♕xd5+ ♗e6 20.♕xc5)* 18.♗xd3 cxd3 19.hxg6 *(* even stronger is the blow *19.♘xh7! ♔xh7 20.hxg6+* and White decides on the h-file *)* 19...hxg6 *(* after *19...♗xg5 20.♖xh7 d2+ 21.♔xd2!* Black can't prevent White from playing Qh5 next move *)* 20.♕xd3 bxc3 21.bxc3 ♗xg5 22.♗xg5 ♕a5 23.♗f6 ♖e8 24.♕d4 ♔f7 .

QUESTION: Can you see the neat win?

ANSWER: 25.e6+! ♖xe6 26.♗d8! . The most spectacular winning move and now Black resigned.]

[If Black wants to avoid continuations with a white knight on e5 he can try 7...♕c7 which is the most important candidate move and Petrosian's own suggestion. Kasparov writes in the third volume of My Great Predecessors, that "such play based on nuances, the ability to determine the priority in the development of the pieces – it is this that constitutes chess aerobatics!"]

8.0-0 ♗b7 9.♘e5 EXERCISE: What is Black's best continuation?

[9.♕b1!? , as in the beautiful simultaneous game G.Kasparov-R.Monier, Cordoba 1992, to control the b1-h7 diagonal and the central square e4 is an interesting option which may also prepare b2-b4 in the future, X-raying the bishop on b7.]

ANSWER: Of course Black takes on e5 before White can build up a Pillsbury position starting with f2-f4. The attacking player Harry Nelson Pillsbury (1872–1906) had great success with this set-up when he played the Queen's Gambit.

9...♘xe5 10.dxe5 ♘d7 11.♗f4?!

Not so effective since Black hasn't determined the position of his king yet.

[The main variation is 11.♗xe7 ♕xe7 12.f4 and now 0-0-0 is the safest position for the black king. One possible variation is 13.♕e2 f6 14.exf6 gxf6 15.e4 d4 with complicated play.]

11...♕c7 This prevents White from playing Bg3 followed by f2-f4, securing the centre pawn. It also prepares queenside castling which will make the pawn on e5 weaker than if Black had the king on g8.

12.♘f3 EXERCISE: How can Black exploit the position of the bishop on f4?

ANSWER: The white bishop on f4 is a target for Black who wins valuable time for his pawn storm on the king's wing. Thus: **h6! 13.b4** Spassky tries to grab the initiative with every possible means and it's like he is saying to his opponent: if you castle on the queenside, I will attack you!

g5! Of course even a normally defensive player like Petrosian attacks in such a position because it is the best continuation in the quest for the initiative.

[Material considerations like 13...cxb4?! 14.cxb4 ♗xb4 15.♘d4 are only in White's interest, since he obtains attacking opportunities with Qg4 (or Qh5), Rc1, Bg3 and f2-f4-f5 according to Petrosian.]

14.♗g3 h5 15.h4

[Tal recommends in his annotations 15.h3 g4 16.hxg4 hxg4 and now the ingenious 17.♘d4!? *(* less adventurous is *17.♘h2 ♘xe5 18.♘xg4 ♗d6 19.bxc5 bxc5 20.♘xe5 ♗xe5 21.♕a4+ ♔e7 22.♗xe5 ♕xe5 23.♖fb1 ♕h2+ 24.♔f1 ♕c7* with an even game *)* , with the idea of 17...cxd4 18.cxd4 and Black's king has problems finding a refuge. Only a player like Tal would dare to play like this in a world championship game.

According to Kasparov's analysis Black can keep the advantage after

A) a more critical line seems to be

18...♕c3 19.♖c1 *(19.a3!? is answered by ♖c8 , stopping 20.♖c1)* 19...♕xb4 20.♕xg4 ♗d8! . This is the point of Black's defence. If now 21.f4 *(* or *21.♕g7 ♕f8!)* 21...♖c8 22.♖xc8 ♗xc8 23.f5 ♕a3! 24.fxe6 ♕xd3 Black wins;

B) 18...♗xb4 19.♖c1 ♕d8 20.♕xg4 ♖c8 21.♕g7 ♖f8 22.♗f4 ♘b8!? and prepare a refuge on d7 for the king. However things don't look so simple after 23.♖xc8 ♕xc8 24.♗h6 ♔d7 25.f4! *(* not *25.♕h7? ♖h8 26.♕xf7+ ♗e7* followed by 27...Qe8 with good winning chances *)* 25...♗a6 26.♗xa6 ♘xa6 27.f5 and White has enough compensation.]

15...gxh4!

[It is more important to open the g-file with strong attacking chances instead of picking up the central pawn with 15...g4 when Petrosian didn't like

A) after 16.♘d2 Tal's analysis goes ♘xe5 *(* instead, *16...c4!* avoids further line-openings and after *17.♗c2 ♘xe5 18.e4 0-0-0 19.♖e1 d4!* Black has a clear advantage *)* 17.bxc5 bxc5 18.♗b5+ ♔f8 19.e4 with formidable counterplay as the scope of White's dark-squared bishop has been increased;

B) 16.♘g5 ♘xe5 17.♗b5+ even though it's objectively playable after ♔f8 .]

16.♗f4 White must keep control of the centre now that the g-file is open for Black. **0-0-0!** Petrosian castles at the right moment as he needs to connect his rooks and double on the g-file. Such late castling is one of Petrosian's distinctive features and in some games he never castled.

17.a4?! Spassky signals his intention of starting a pawn storm on the queenside and Petrosian responds with some extraordinary measures.

EXERCISE: A famous position has arisen. Do you know what Petrosian played here? It's revolutionary move you'll never forget.

[More logical was an opening of the b-file with 17.bxc5

A) , and here Kasparov is certain Petrosian would have replied with 17...♘xc5 with the idea of 18.♘d4 ♘xd3 19.♕xd3 ♕c4! followed by ...Rdg8.;

B) . Instead, after 17...bxc5 18.♖b1 Black can defend his right wing according to Tal's suggestion by placing the knight on b6, the king on a8 and the queen's rook on b8. When this set-up is reached Black can play ...Nb6-c4 at the right moment. *(18.♕a4* , threatening the a7-pawn, can be ignored by *h3!* . After some normal moves like *19.gxh3 d4 20.e4 dxc3 21.♗a6 ♘b6 22.♗xb7+ ♕xb7 23.♕c2 ♕a6!* Black has a strategically won game. *)*;

C) 17...--]

ANSWER: **17...c4!!** After 20 minutes' thought Petrosian shows his deep understanding of the dynamic strategy inherent in this complicated position. This brave decision is the most famous example from Petrosian's games of how he handled dynamic strategy. According to classical methods the move is normally a positional mistake since a pawn move to the fifth rank weakens the d4-square which can be exploited by the opponent's knight. The first official world champion Wilhelm Steinitz taught us not to give away such holes, so what is Petrosian doing? The point with dynamic strategy is to interpret the position with our own strategical understanding rather than employing Steinitz's ideas uncritically. We must use our own judgement and contemplate whether this classical rule is valid or not. Steinitz's teachings are full of exceptions and Petrosian realized that in this specific position the weakness of the d4 point isn't of any crucial importance. After all, what can the white knight do there with no attack against any vital squares or pawns? In a sharp position with mutual pawn storms, it's more vital not to allow the opponent any open files.

18.♗e2 EXERCISE: Now try to find the move which seriously weakens White's queenside attack.

[More to the point seems 18.♗f5 followed by transferring the bishop to h3 where it neutralizes future pressure on the weak point g2. However, Spassky didn't like the idea of having a bishop on h3 which looks like a strange big pawn. Black also has a strong central counterthrust with the unexpected d4!! *(18...exf5 19.e6 ♗d6 20.exd7+* regains the sacrificed piece with some counterplay *)*

A) 19.cxd4 exf5 20.e6 ♕c6 21.exd7+ ♖xd7 and Black has a clear advantage. The immediate threat is ...h4-h3 opening up the long light-squared diagonal.;

B) . A crazy and forced variation is 19.♘xd4 exf5 20.♘b5 ♕b8 21.♕d4 ♘xe5 and now: 22.♗xe5 *(22.♕xe5 ♕xe5*

23.♗xe5 ♖hg8 24.♘xa7+ ♔d7 25.f3 ♗g5 26.♗d4 ♖g6 27.♘b5 ♖dg8 with a clear advantage to Black *)* 22...♖xd4 23.cxd4 ♕a8 24.♘c7 ♖g8 25.♖fc1 ♖xg2+ 26.♔f1 ♕b8 27.♘b5 ♗f3 28.♖xc4+ ♔b7 29.♗xb8 ♔xb8 30.♖ac1 ♖g8 and the h-pawn decides.;

C) 19.-- , and then:]

ANSWER: Black played a move which definitely ended White's hopes of an attack on the black king and which is the main point of Black's overall dynamic strategy.

18...a6! Petrosian hereby uses a typical method of avoiding files to be opened and the text move also has the function of hindering the white knight reaching b5 in the near future.

19.♔h1 Spassky wants to protect his king behind Black's doubled h-pawns and prepares to defend the weak point on g2 with Rg1.

♖dg8 After playing excellently with the pawns on the queen's wing, Petrosian plans to double the heavy artillery on the g-file. **20.♖g1 ♖g4 21.♕d2 ♖hg8 22.a5**

[22.b5 a5 controls c6 which might be useful, but it also gives Black a strong outpost on c5 for his knight.]

22...b5 Petrosian made this move immediately and wisely avoided allowing a file to be opened on the queen's wing. The result is that White only has a short diagonal from d4 to a7, which cannot be used constructively for attacking purposes, as long as the bishop on b7 defends the important squares on a8 and a6.

23.♖ad1 A useful developing move in particular in connection with the pawn break e3-e4 at an appropriate moment.

EXERCISE: How can you strengthen the attack on White's pawn at e5?

ANSWER: **♗f8!** Petrosian prepares to put huge pressure on the white central pawn on e5 which has become a really weak spot in White's position. **24.♘h2**

[Passive defence of the pawn on e5 in combination with a waiting game doesn't help after 24.♕d4 ♗g7 25.♔h2 ♕d8! 26.♔h1 f6 27.exf6 ♗xf6 28.♕d2 ♕e7 followed by 29...Qg7 with strong pressure on the g-file and the long dark-square diagonal.]

24...♘xe5! After seven minutes Petrosian decided on the sacrifice of exchange.

25.♘xg4 hxg4 Normally one or one and a half pawns plus a minor piece is enough material for a rook, but in this situation Black has two pawns, full control of the centre and all the attacking chances.

26.e4 Spassky tries to extend the scope of his queen's rook. **♗d6** This neutralizes the 'London diagonal' h2-b8 which is under White's control.

[Opening the d-file with 26...dxe4?? is, of course, suicidal after 27.♗xe5 ♕xe5 28.♕d8# .]

27.♕e3 EXERCISE: What is the most effective winning continuation for Black?

♘d7?! Petrosian probably reasoned that the bishop on f4 is the key piece both for attack and defence and therefore must be eliminated by an exchange He resembles the Cuban genius Capablanca who had great insight regarding which pieces to exchange and which pieces to keep on the board. However, this move was a big surprise for those in the press room.

[ANSWER: They mainly expected one of the winning moves: 27...dxe4 with the continuation 28.♖xd6 ♕xd6 29.♖d1 ♕c7 and Black has three extra pawns with a winning position]

[or 27...g3 with the main point that with the main point that 28.f3 is answered by ♘g4! 29.♗xd6 ♘xe3 30.♗xc7 ♔xc7! and Black threatens everything.]

28.♗xd6 ♕xd6 29.♖d4?! Amazingly after the game Spassky said he thought he was better after this move. The impression is that he was a little bit groggy. He wanted to provoke Black's pawn to advance in the centre, but this is only to Black's advantage.

[The modest 29.♖d2 is answered by ♕e5! with the idea of 30...Nf6 and after 30.exd5 Black has the strong ♕xe3 31.fxe3 ♘f6! with the deadly threat of 32...Ne4, as well as the positional threat 32...Nxd5.]

[The best practical chance is 29.f4 , but White still has a tough time after gxf3 30.♗xf3 *(* or *30.gxf3 ♖g3!* with an excellent outpost for the rook: *31.♖xg3 ♕xg3 32.♕g1 dxe4 33.♕xg3 hxg3 34.♔g2 ♘f6 35.♔xg3 e3* is a winning ending, since ... Nd5 is in the air *)* 30...♕g3! 31.exd5 h3 32.♖ge1 ♘f6 33.♖e2 ♘xd5 34.♕c5+ ♕c7 35.♗xd5 ♗xd5 36.♖xd5 exd5 37.♕xd5 hxg2+ 38.♖xg2 ♖xg2 39.♕f5+ ♔b8 40.♔xg2 ♕c6+ 41.♔f2 ♕e6 with a winning queen ending.]

29...e5! 30.♖d2 EXERCISE: How does Black respond to White's passive rook move?

[Tal thought better practical chances were

offered by the exchange sacrifice 30.♖xd5 ♗xd5 31.♖d1 ♘f6 32.exd5 . However, Black keeps excellent winning chances with ♔b8 , preventing the invasion of the white queen to a7 which is White's only hope of counterplay now that the bishop on b7 has gone.]

ANSWER: **30...f5!!** The last two pawn moves may well have been inspired by Nimzowitsch's famous expression of 'the pawn's lust to expand'. Already in 1955, during the USSR-USA match the ex-world champion Dr Max Euwe (1901-1981), commented that Petrosian was a "great master of pawn play".

[30...♘f6 also wins but it is not of the same aesthetic value as the played move.]

31.exd5

[31.exf5 is very strongly met by the activation of the queen with ♕f6! . Black is planning 32...h3, so White is virtually forced to weaken the square on g3 with 32.f3 . After g3 the threat of ...h4-h3 is renewed and White can't prevent it. A plausible continuation is 33.♖gd1 h3 34.♗f1 ♕xf5 35.♔g1 d4! 36.cxd4 e4! 37.fxe4 *(* or *37.f4 h2+ 38.♔h1 ♘f6* and the f-pawn falls *)* 37...♕xe4 38.♕xe4 h2+ 39.♔h1 ♗xe4 40.d5 ♘f6 followed by 41...Kd7 and 42...Kd6 with a strategically won game.]

31...f4! When you see this very impressive array of pawns on the fifth rank you don't only think about the pawn's wish to go forward à la Nimzowitsch, but you also think about the great French player Philidor who already in the 18th Century declared that the pawns are the soul of chess.

[31...♘f6 is also good enough for a win, but who can avoid the temptation of having an array of pawns on the fifth rank?]

32.♕e4 ♘f6 33.♕f5+ ♔b8 34.f3 White has to prevent Black from setting up a crushing array of pawns with ...e5-e4. **♗c8**

[Also convincing is to continue the pawn's lust to expand with 34...e4 35.♕e6 *(* or *35.fxe4 ♗c8 36.e5 ♗xf5 37.exd6 ♘e4* and Black wins *)* 35...♕xe6 36.dxe6 h3 37.e7 hxg2+ 38.♖xg2 ♔c7 and White is lost.]

35.♕b1 g3 Black's plan is now simply to place the rook on h8 followed by ...h4-h3 and mating the king on the h-file.

[The immediate 35...h3 also wins because it leads to a position where the white king has lost all his clothes. If 36.fxg4 *(* or *36.gxh3 g3!* followed by 37...Rh8 *)* 36...hxg2+ 37.♖xg2 e4 followed by 38...f3.]

36.♖e1

[The desperate 36.♗xc4 bxc4 37.b5 , to try to open files for the major pieces on the queenside, doesn't really work after ♔a7 38.bxa6 ♖h8 39.♖b2 h3 40.♖b7+ ♔a8 and White has no good continuation.]

36...h3 37.♗f1

[After 37.gxh3 g2+ 38.♔g1 ♕d7 the black queen just manoeuvres to h3 and h1 which the white king can do nothing about it.]

37...♖h8 38.gxh3

[If 38.♔g1 ♕c7 and ...Qa7+ exploiting the weak classical diagonal.]

38...♗xh3 39.♔g1

[39.♗xh3 is answered by using the pin on the h-file with ♕d7! , resulting in a decisive doubling on the h-file.]

39...♗xf1 40.♔xf1

[40.♖xf1 ♕d7 is also completely over.]

40...e4! We were waiting for this move to come. **41.♕d1** EXERCISE: Here the game was adjourned. After 30 minutes of thought Petrosian sealed the most beautiful and incredible winning move. Can you find it?

[41.fxe4 gives Black a deadly phalanx on the sixth rank with f3! .]

ANSWER: **41...♘g4!!** A deadly move containing multiple threats like 42...Ne3+, 42...Nh2+, 42...Qh6 and 42...Rh1+.

[More prosaic winning moves are 41...♕d7] [and 41...♕e5 .]

42.fxg4

[Practically forced as 42.fxe4 is answered by ♘e3+ .]

42...f3 43.♖g2 Spassky has to sacrifice his rook to avoid mate.

EXERCISE: Which continuation is the most effective for Petrosian to decide the game?

[43.♔g1 suffers this fate after ♕h6 .]

ANSWER: Petrosian thought for four minutes and played: **43...fxg2+**

[The best move was actually 43...♖h1+! 44.♖g1 ♕h6 with a forced mate. Strangely Petrosian overlooked this and it's very likely he only looked at the text move which of course also wins easily and Spassky resigned after two minutes.

By no means a perfect game, but one of the most beautiful world championship games ever played. Petrosian has expressed the following view of the game: "One of my best games. It demonstrates my creative views –

the utmost restriction of the opponent's possibilities, strategy over the entire board, the surrounding of the enemy king and the gradual tightening of the encirclement around it."
Petrosian successfully defended his world championship title, becoming the first world champion in 32 years to do so. He beat his seven years younger opponent by the narrow margin of one point, 12½-11½, not only with positional play, but also with complicated tactical play.]
0-1

C01

□ **Larsen,B**
■ **Petrosian,T**
35: Havana Olympiad 1966
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen (1935-2010) was a candidate for the world championship on four occasions, reaching the semi-final three times and was considered one of the threats to the Soviet hegemony. He was one of Fischer's victims when he lost in Denver in 1971 by the crushing score 6-0. Petrosian had a good lifetime score against Larsen with 13½ points to 8½.
1.e4 e6 In 1834 Paris defeated London in a correspondence match with this pawn move and ever since it has been called the French Defence. **2.♘f3 d5 3.♘c3** This unusual continuation wasn't only used occasionally by Bent Larsen, but also Jonathan Speelman (1956-) had it in his repertoire. **♘f6**
Best since White has already committed his knight to f3 and can't play the important move f2-f4 to support the spearhead on e5.
[Another more challenging continuation, probably not according to Petrosian's taste, is the sharper 3...d4 4.♘e2 c5 5.c3 ♘f6 6.cxd4 ♘xe4 7.♘c3 and now Speelman suggests the paradoxical ♘g5! . The idea is to answer 8.♘xg5 ♕xg5 9.dxc5 with the surprising ♕e5+! followed by ... Bxc5 with comfortable play.]
4.exd5
[Instead, 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.d4 c5 transposes to the Steinitz variation. Compare with the normal move order 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Nf3 c5. This position actually arose in the fifteenth game between Spassky and Petrosian in the 1966 World Championship.]
4...exd5 5.d4 The exchange variation wasn't only used by the Londoners in the aforementioned match, but was also played in the first world championship game between Capablanca and Alekhine, Buenos Aires 1927. It's surprising though that Larsen chose this unpretentious line for this game.
c6 The pawn position is symmetrical and this is the main reason why the exchange variation has a reputation of being dull and drawish. The problem with the white position is not only the drawish tendency, but also the knight on c3 which isn't doing anything.
6.♗d3 ♗d6 7.0-0 0-0 8.♘e2
We can understand Larsen's concern about the queen's knight and he wants to place it on g3 where it has a good eye on f5. **♖e8 9.♘g3 ♘bd7**
[A more active continuation is the Yugoslavian International Master Rudolf Maric's (1927-1990) suggestion of 9...♘e4 10.♖e1 f5 , and now 11.c4 ♗e6 reminds me of the Petroff defence It wasn't really in Petrosian's taste to play a position, though, which from Black's perspective looks like a Dutch Defence, thereby involving risks by weakening the dark squares.]
10.♘f5 EXERCISE: How should Black react to the knight move?
ANSWER: **♘f8** Petrosian was an original player and he wasn't a collector of the pair of bishops. Actually he often exchanged the dark-squared bishop for a knight, such as in the Caro-Kann Defence. Objectively speaking in a semi-open (or semi-closed) position, which we have here, Black has supporting points for his knights and in principle it's never wrong to part with one of the bishops for a centralized knight.
[Nevertheless, some players would regard Petrosian's move as a bit odd. Notice though that 10...♗c7 might have been answered by 11.♗g5]
[and 10...♗f8 too by 11.♗g5 . Both positions are fully playable, but apparently Petrosian preferred the text continuation where the knight on f5 disappeared as did Black's dark-squared bishop.]
11.♘xd6 ♕xd6 12.♘e5 According to the tournament bulletin White is clearly better, but this is a superficial judgement with no understanding of the latent possibilities of the

black knights.
♘6d7 Now when h7 is secure Black can prepare to drive away the centralized knight with ...f6. **13.♗d2** EXERCISE: What is to be preferred: 13...f6 or 13...Nxe5?
[Petrosian probably didn't mind a move like 13.f4 which he might have answered with ♘f6 and ...Ne4 in the spirit of how to handle a Stonewall position.]
ANSWER: **13...f6** The consistent follow-up.
[13...♘xe5 14.dxe5 ♕d8 leads to a double-edged position with a pawn position reminiscent of the Open Spanish. Usually there is a slight advantage for the holder of pair of bishops in such asymmetrical positions where the pawn majorities are ready to advance forward. *(* Notice that both *14...♕xe5?? 15.♖e1;* and *14...♖xe5 15.♗f4* win material for White. *)*]
14.♕h5! EXERCISE: What is Black's best defence?
ANSWER: One of Petrosian's highly successful psychological defence weapons was the sacrifice of the exchange: **♖xe5!**
If you are not familiar with this device you must look up the famous game T.Petrosian-S. Reshevsky, Zurich 1953. It's to be noted that Petrosian had already lost two games against Larsen in previous encounters played in the second Piatigorsky Cup, which was held in Santa Monica, California in August 1966. This game therefore also proves how strong he was in psychological encounters when under heavy pressure. The exchange sacrifice saved him in many difficult situations.
[After 14...g6? 15.♗xg6! *(* the funny continuation *15.♘g4* with the idea of *gxh5? 16.♘h6+* wins back the queen with a superior pawn position *)* 15...hxg6 16.♘xg6 f5 17.♘xf8 ♕xf8 *(* or *17...♘f6 18.♕g6+ ♔xf8 19.♗h6+ ♔e7 20.♗g5* , threatening both the deadly 21 Qg7+ and 21 Re1 when the knight on f6 will fall *)* 18.♕g6+ ♔h8 19.♗h6 ♕g8 20.♗g7+ ♕xg7 21.♕xe8+ ♔h7 22.♕h5+ ♔g8 23.♕xf5 Black is completely lost.]
[Instead, 14...♖e7 is a playable, albeit passive option, and the move Larsen probably anticipated. Plausible continuations might have been either 15.♘g4 *(* or *15.♘f3* with lasting pressure. Such a position would certainly be to Larsen's liking and, more importantly, the upper hand would go to him psychologically. After the text move, though, it's Petrosian who obtains the psychological advantage. *)*]
15.dxe5 fxe5 From now on Larsen is deprived of all his attacking chances and must adapt to the new circumstances.
16.♖fe1?!
[More precise is Boleslavsky's recommendation 16.f3 . If ♘f6 then 17.♕h4 with the idea of preventing Black from gaining space in the centre. Actually a similar idea was played by Spassky against Petrosian in the fifteenth game of the world championship match in 1966, a game that Petrosian subsequently lost.]
16...e4 17.♗f1
[17.♗e2 might have been the most precise move. It's useful to control g4 when Black has a strong pawn on e4.]
17...♘f6 18.♕h4 ♗f5 All according to Nimzowitsch's teachings that the strongest strategical points should be overprotected.
19.♕g3 QUESTION: Does Black want to exchange queens or avoid it?
ANSWER: Normally it's advisable to keep the queens on the board when the control of the centre is strong. It's also in White's interest to exchange pieces when he's slightly ahead in material. Black therefore wants to avoid the exchange of queens.
♕e7! Normally you want to keep the queens on the board when you have strong control of the centre. It's also in White's interest to exchange pieces when he's slightly ahead in material. **20.c3**
[20.♗c3 deserves attention. One of the ideas is that White can force an exchange of queens after c5? *(* Petrosian would probably have played *20...♘e6* with a harmonious position *)* 21.♕g5 .]
20...♘e6 21.♗e3 White strives to immobilize the black pawn majority.
[21.♕e5 ♗g6 22.♗e2 ♘d7 23.♕g3 ♖f8 24.♗e3 is a more normal continuation when White can continue with Rad1 and f2-f3, keeping slight pressure on the black position.]
21...♘g4 EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): How should White continue? Warning: this is difficult.
[21...c5? is met by 22.♕e5 ♗g6 23.♗xc5! and Black's position collapses.]
22.h3?!
[ANSWER: The spectacular 22.♗xa7! is answered by the ingenious h5! *(* after *22...♖xa7? 23.♕b8+* White is two exchanges up *)* , and you can understand

why Larsen didn't want to enter the unhuman-like variations 23.♗b8!! ♕d8 *(* or *23...h4 24.♕d6 ♕e8 25.♗c7* with a clear advantage *)* 24.h3 h4 25.♕d6 ♕xb8 26.♕xb8+ ♖xb8 27.hxg4 ♗xg4 28.b4 when White keeps a slight advantage.]

22...♘xe3 23.♖xe3

[23.fxe3 is answered by ♘c5 followed by ... Nd3 at an appropriate moment.]

23...♖f8 24.♕e5 ♗g6 25.♖d1 ♕f7 26.♖d2 ♘f4 27.b4 h6 28.a4 ♗h7 Petrosian increases the harmony in his position. In effect he is playing a waiting game, despite being an exchange down while White is expanding on the queenside. Larsen is clearly affected by Petrosian's original methods in this game because he doesn't play the best moves.

29.♕d4?!

[The logical move 29.b5 creates weaknesses in Black's camp and opens files for the rooks. One possible variation is c5 30.g3 ♘d3 31.♗xd3 exd3 32.♕d6 b6 33.♖e7 ♕h5 34.♖e5 ♕xh3 35.♕xd5+ ♔h8 36.♕d6 with a clear advantage to White.]

29...b6 30.♖e1

[After 30.c4 ♘e6 31.♕e5 d4 32.♖e1 c5 Black has full compensation for the small material deficit.]

[Instead, 30.g3 is interesting, forcing Black to ponder the moves ♘d3 *(* and *30...♘e6* followed by ...Ng5. *)*]

30...♕c7 White can't stop Black from playing ... c5, setting the pawns in motion. The disadvantage though is that the white rooks might be able to exploit the open b-file.

31.♕e3 c5 Petrosian can't show any patience about this pawn push because White is planning his own push with c3-c4, opening up the position to his advantage. Larsen suffered from time pressure around here, so this was the right moment to strike and change the structure from a psychological point of view.

32.bxc5 bxc5 33.g3? A mistake in time pressure only helping Black to achieve his aim, a passed pawn on d3.

[Boleslavsky's 33.♖b1 with the idea of Rb5 and Rdb2 is the critical variation.]

33...♘d3 34.♗xd3

[Not 34.♖b1 ♖f3 35.♕xf3 *(* or *35.♖xd3 ♖xe3 36.♖xe3 d4 37.cxd4 cxd4 38.♖eb3 ♗g6* when Black's king is safe with a won position *)* 35...exf3 36.♗xd3 ♕e5 with good winning chances.]

34...exd3 35.♕e6+?!

[Larsen plays for a loss instead of a half-point with 35.♖xd3 ♗xd3 36.♕xd3 .]

[Instead, Maric's suggestion 35.c4?! dxc4 36.♖c1 is answered by ♕d6! 37.♖xc4 ♖c8 when Black rules the game after the further ...Qd5.]

35...♕f7 36.♕xf7+?

[36.♕d6 ♗e4 37.f4 c4 38.♖b1 followed by Kh2 is a better try.]

36...♔xf7 Now White is clearly lost. **37.♖b2**

[O'Kelly's suggestion 37.♖e5 ♖d8! 38.c4 loses to the astonishing ♖e8!! .]

37...c4! 38.f3 EXERCISE: It's Black to move and win. Can you see how?

[38.♖b7+ ♔f6 39.♖c7 ♗e4 followed by ... Rb8 doesn't help White.]

ANSWER: **38...d4! 39.♖c1 ♔e6 40.♔f2**

[After 40.cxd4 ♔d5 Black's king enters d4 with devastating effect.]

40...♗e4 41.f4 Here the game was adjourned. EXERCISE: Can you find Petrosian's sealed move?

ANSWER: **♖e8! 42.g4**

[42.cxd4 is answered by ♔d5 43.♔e3 ♗g2+ 44.♔f2 ♗xh3 and wins.]

42...♗c6 This prevents White from playing the rook to b5 with check after ...Kd5. **43.♖e1+ ♔d5 44.♖xe8 ♗xe8 45.cxd4 c3 46.♖b8 d2 47.♖d8+ ♔c4 48.♖c8+** An unnecessary spite check.

[48.♔e2 ♗xa4 is the logical conclusion.]

48...♔d3 . Once again one of Petrosian's secret weapons, the exchange sacrifice, laid the foundations for an impressive win.

0-1

D37

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Yudovich,M**
36: Moscow 1967
[Thomas Engqvist]

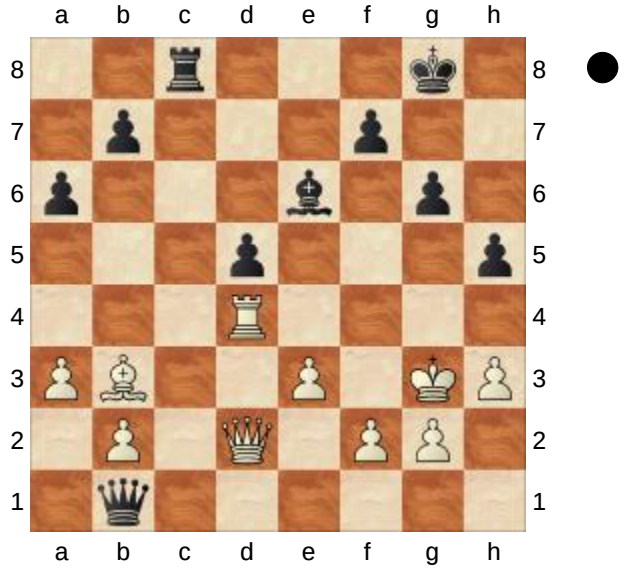
International Master and International Correspondence Grandmaster Mikhail Mikhailovich Yudovich (1911-1987) is most famous in the west for his book The Soviet School of Chess which he wrote with Kotov. Like Petrosian, Yudovich's style of playing was distinguished by a strictly logical style.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗e7 5.♗f4 0-0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 ♘c6 8.♕c2 ♗xc5 9.a3 ♕e7 EXERCISE: What is White's

strongest continuation?
[Nowadays 9...♕a5 is the main move.]
ANSWER: **10.♗g5!** It's worth the loss of a tempo to pin the black knight for the purpose of putting strong pressure on the central pawn at d5. This is rather annoying for Black and a good example of why it's sometimes makes sense to disturb the opponent and not only think about developing your own pieces.
♖d8 11.♖d1 dxc4 QUESTION: What is the most appropriate move? To play 12 Bxc4 or 12 Rxd8 followed by 13 Bxc4?
[ANSWER: The routine move 11...dxc4 12.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 13.♗xc4 ♗e7 has the disadvantage that it actually helps Black to regroup and solve the problem with the pin.]
Thus Petrosian played the stronger:
12.♗xc4! ♖xd1+ 13.♕xd1 h6 14.♗h4 a6
EXERCISE: Can you suggest a useful move for White?
ANSWER: Petrosian never castled when there were other useful moves to hand.
15.♗d3! This is a better diagonal for the bishop than the classical diagonal a2-g8 where it would only bite on granite. It's also a preventive move aimed against Black's ...b7-b5.
♕d8 Yudovich put an exclamation mark to this move in Informant 3 and thus admitted the queen's misplacement on e7.
[Worthy of attention is 15...g5 16.♗g3 e5]
[but not 15...b5? which has lost its sting because of the clever 15th move of Petrosian's and is met by 16.♘e4 , keeping a clear advantage.]
16.0-0 ♗e7 17.♕e2 ♘d5
[17...b5 18.♖d1 ♕c7 is another option, keeping the position in a relative balance.]
18.♗xe7 EXERCISE: What is the problem with 18...Nxc3?
♕xe7
[ANSWER: The in-between move 18...♘xc3 fails to 19.♗xd8 ♘xe2+ 20.♗xe2 ♘xd8 21.♘e5! f6 22.♖d1 with ongoing positional pressure for White in the endgame.]
19.♘xd5 exd5 Black's structural weakness is offset by the liberation of his bishop. **20.♗b1** Petrosian knew what squares the pieces belonged on. Now he plans the transfer of the bishop to a2 and at the same time keeps other possibilities like Rd1 in the position.
♗e6 Albeit passive, this is according to Nimzowitsch's device that this bishop belongs to the isolani like a nurse to a child. **21.♖d1 ♕f6 22.h3 ♖d8 23.♘d4** There is no reason to allow Black to push his isolani from d5 to d4. **♘xd4 24.♖xd4 ♖c8** When Black controls the c-file in such situations he's usually fine. The main thing for him is to avoid passive play. **25.♕d2 g6**
[Black has good chances of a draw if he manages to exchange the rooks with 25...♖c4 , but his position would then lose its dynamism and that isn't to everybody's taste.]
26.♗a2 ♕f5! EXERCISE (calculation): What are White's options? Which move is the best of these options?
[26...♕f5
A) . ANSWER: Firstly, 27.♗xd5 ♗xd5 28.♖xd5 ♖c2 29.♖d8+ *(* or *29.♖xf5 ♖xd2* and the rook ending is a draw *)* 29...♔h7 leads to an equal position.;
B) . Secondly, 27.g4 weakens the kingside and gives Black some counterplay with ♕c2 , *(* but not *27...♕f3? 28.♔h2* when White wins a pawn. The immediate threat is 29 Rf4, trapping the queen. *)*;
C) 27.--]
Petrosian played a third alternative:
27.♗b3! h5 28.♔h2! The first step of an extraordinary, original prophylactic plan with the purpose of placing the king on a safe location. The king is actually slightly more vulnerable on the last rank then on h2 in this position.
♕b1? EXERCISE: What is White's strongest continuation?
[28...♕e5+? is, of course, answered by 29.f4 .]
[Necessary, though, is 28...♖c5 defending the pawn.]
29.♔g3?! Diagram
[ANSWER: Yudovich probably calculated the natural continuation 29.♗xd5 ♖c2 30.♕a5 ♗xd5 31.♕xd5 ♕xb2 32.♖f4 ♕a2 defending the weak spot f7.]
[However, a stronger move is 29.e4! ♖c1 *(* but not *29...dxe4? 30.♗xe6 fxe6 31.♕h6 e3 32.♖d7* and Black gets mated *)* , and only now is it correct to play 30.♔g3! .]

(Diagramme)

29...♖c5?
[29...♕f5 gives better opportunities to



exploit the open position of the white king.]
30.a4?
[30.e4! is again the right move.]
30...a5?
[Again, 30...♕f5! is correct.]
31.e4! ♕g1 QUESTION: What should White do with his king on such a square? ANSWER: Petrosian played a typical pragmatic move: **32.h4**
[He wants to remove even the remotest 'threat' of ...h5-h4+, but even the normal 32.exd5 exploiting the power of the rook on the fourth rank stops it.]
[The continuation 32.♗xd5 h4+ 33.♔f3 is maybe not for the light-hearted, but it's fully playable too, *(* if not *33.♔xh4? ♕xg2* with serious counterplay. *)*]
32...♔h7 33.♗xd5 With the king on g,3 it's understandable White wants to exchange some pieces. **♗xd5 34.♖xd5 ♖c6 35.♖d7 ♖f6 36.♕d4** . Black's queen is out of play and can't assist the defence.
1-0

B37

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Janosevic,D**
37: Venice 1967
[Thomas Engqvist]

In the international tournament in Venice, October-November 1967, Petrosian was placed third with seven wins and six draws. In the following game he plays the Yugoslavian Grandmaster Dragoljub Janosevic (1923-1993), who was famous for being a strong blindfold player. He had actually already beaten Petrosian in Belgrade 1954 and Petrosian, who was the reigning world champion, was obviously anxious to win this game.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.♘f3
[Presumably Petrosian wasn't in the mood for a Benoni structure with 3.d5 , but the truth is most likely that he didn't want his opponent to play something he knew very well like the Czech Benoni with e5 .]
3...cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6
[4...e5 5.♘b5 d5 6.cxd5 ♗c5 wasn't so popular in the 1960s and it first came into vogue after Kasparov used it in the early 1980s.]
5.♘c3 g6 6.♘c2!? It's normally a good idea to avoid piece exchanges when you have space advantage.
[The normal move 6.e4 allows the Gurgenidze system ♘xd4 7.♕xd4 d6 .]
6...♗g7 7.e4 0-0 8.♗e2 d6 9.0-0 ♘d7 10.♗d2!?
[Another scheme of development was seen in A.Karpov-J.Kaplan, San Antonio 1972, which continued 10.♕d2 ♘c5 11.b3? *(11.f3* was a necessary preparation for the set-up with b2-b3 and Bb2 *)* , and Black could now secure a big advantage with 11...♕a5! 12.b4 ♘xb4 13.♘d5 ♘c6 14.♘xe7+ ♔h8 . White players must always be on the guard for such nasty tricks in the Accelerated Dragon.]
10...♘c5 11.b3 f5 A good continuation.
[Black doesn't profit from the exchange 11...♗xc3 12.♗xc3 ♘xe4 , winning a pawn, because of 13.♗b2 when White has enough compensation because of his control of the dark squares around Black's king.]
[Another good continuation is 11...a5! 12.♖b1 f5 13.exf5 ♗xf5 14.♗g4 ♗d3 15.♗e2 ♗f5 16.♗g4 with a draw in V. Korchnoi-M.Matulovic, Sarajevo 1969.]
12.exf5 ♗xf5 Black has equalized rather easily and has activated all his minor pieces to good positions. **13.♖c1 ♘d3 14.♖b1 ♘cb4?** EXERCISE (calculation): What is White's most precise continuation?
[14...♘db4 is correct, transposing to the game after 15.♘xb4 ♘xb4 16.♖c1 .]
15.♘xb4?
[ANSWER: Best is 15.♘e3! ♗xc3 16.♗xc3 ♘xa2 17.♗a1 ♘db4 18.♘xf5 gxf5 19.♕d2 e5 20.♖b2 ♕a5 21.♗d3 followed by 22 Bb1 picking up the doomed knight on a2.

However, Petrosian chose a worse move.]
15...♘xb4 16.♖c1 ♕d7
[16...♘d3?! 17.♗xd3 ♗xd3 18.♖e1 only helps White to achieve his ideal position. It's better to provoke him to play a2-a3.]
17.a3 ♘d3 18.♗xd3 ♗xd3 19.♖e1
EXERCISE (judgement): Why is White slightly better despite the fact that Black has the pair of bishops in a fairly open position?
ANSWER: The reason is that White has the better pawn position with two pawn islands versus Black's three. He has a good outpost for his knight on d5 and can put the e7-pawn under fire. Moreover, in this position it's not difficult to play for an exchange of one of the bishops, reducing the strength of Black's harmonious position.
♖f7 20.♗e3 ♗f5 21.♕d2 b6 22.f3 ♖c8 23.a4! Petrosian restrains the pawn couple on the black queenside. **h5 24.♗d4 ♗f8?!** Black wants to keep his two bishops, but this is too passive.
[Better is 24...♗xd4+ 25.♕xd4 ♕c6 with the idea of 26...Qc5.]
25.♖e2 ♔h7 Black wants to activate the bishop on h6. **26.♖ce1 e5**
[The continuation 26...♗h6 27.♗e3 ♗g7 28.♘b5 followed by 29 Nd4 may result in an exchange of one of the black bishops.]
27.♗f2 ♗e7 28.♘e4 ♕c6 29.♖d1 ♖d8 30.h3! Petrosian was always extremely skilful when it came to play with the pawns. **♖d7 31.♔h2 ♗e6 32.♘g5+! ♗xg5 33.♕xg5** In this position it's all about the opposite-coloured bishops. Both players are a piece down or a piece up depending on perspective. The most important thing in such a situation is to seize the initiative on the squares of the colour where you are the strongest. White's next move plans 34 Be3 so Black must take precautions.
♖f5 34.♕e3 d5?! This freeing pawn move makes the pawn at e5 weaker. It's better to play a waiting move. **35.cxd5 ♖xd5 36.♖de1 ♕d6 37.♗g3 ♖d3**
[37...g5 with the idea of 38...h4 is answered by 38.♕c3 , keeping strong pressure on Black's e5-pawn.]
38.♕c1
[Of course not 38.♗xe5? ♖xe3 39.♗xd6 ♖xe2 40.♖xe2 ♗xb3 with a draw.]
38...♕c5
[After 38...♗xb3 39.♗xe5 ♕c5 40.♕b1 ♗c4 41.♗b2 White attacks along the dark-squared diagonal combined with rook attacks on the eighth and seventh ranks.]
39.♖c2 ♕e7 40.♖c7 ♖d7 41.♖xd7 ♕xd7 42.♗xe5
[42.♕b2 is answered by ♕d5 with pressure on the b3-pawn. After 43.b4 Black can try to exchange queens with ♕a2 with some drawing chances.]
42...♗xb3 43.♗a1
[43.♕a3 is also good.]
43...♗xa4 44.♕c3 ♖f8 EXERCISE: What is White's most efficient win?
ANSWER: **45.♖e6!** White prepares complete centralization with 46 Qe5 when Black can't defend all his weak dark squares. **♕f7 46.♕a3**
[A pretty variation is 46.♕e1 with the point ♖e8 47.♕e5! .]
46...♖e8 47.♖f6 ♕c7+ 48.f4 ♗b5 49.♕g3 ♖g8 50.♗e5 ♕e7 51.f5 Now Black's kingside collapses like a house of cards. **♗e8**
[Instead, if 51...gxf5 52.♕f4 ♖g5 53.h4! *(* but not *53.♕xg5? ♕xe5+* which leads to a draw by perpetual check *)*]
[while after 51...g5 52.♖e6 ♕f7 53.♕b3 ♗e8 54.♕a3 ♕xf5 55.♖xe8! ♖xe8 56.♕xa7+ White wins.]
52.♖e6 ♕f8 53.♕g5 ♗f7 54.♖e7 . A beautiful game showing a lot of patience and a focus on the dark squares in the latter phase.
1-0

A47

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Reshevsky,S**
38: Lugano Olympiad 1968
[Thomas Engqvist]

The American Grandmaster Samuel Herman Reshevsky (1911-1992) is together with Capablanca and Pomar the most famous of child prodigies. Like Capablanca he learnt the game as early as the age of 4 and is regarded as one the best eight players in the world from 1935 to 1953.
Reshevsky was the best American player until another chess prodigy, Robert James Fischer took over the throne from him. Petrosian normally didn't have any problems in their encounters. They played 10 serious games and Petrosian scored two wins, actually two games from the Olympiad, and drew the others. Here is his first win from the Olympiad

in Switzerland.
1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.d4 e6 3.♗f4 The London System is a very solid opening and may have been a clever choice against Reshevsky who was famous for his problems with the clock.
b6 4.e3 ♗b7 5.♗d3 ♗e7 6.♘bd2 ♘h5 This hunt for the two bishops is better motivated once White has castled. **7.♗g3 ♘xg3 8.hxg3** Petrosian liked tiny advantages like a half-open h-file which he was very skilful at exploiting. At the same time it's not easy for Black to crack the pawn triangle c3-d4-e3 and open up the position for the two bishops.
h6 9.♕e2 c5 10.c3 ♘c6 11.g4 ♕c7 EXERCISE: If you were to move what would you play?
ANSWER: **12.a3!?**
[It's typical of Petrosian not to play 12.g5 immediately, preferring to keep such a micro-threat in reserve. Now Reshevsky has to reckon with two pawn breaks instead of one. This is really Petrosian's trademark, keeping the opponent busy with different kinds of small positional threats.]
12...d5
[12...0-0-0 unpins the h-pawn, but then Black has to deal with the other pawn break after 13.b4 d5 *(* or *13...d6 14.bxc5 dxc5)* 14.bxc5 bxc5 15.dxc5 ♗xc5 .]
13.g5 0-0-0 14.gxh6 ♖xh6 15.♖xh6 gxh6 Black has two pawn islands versus White's one and the pawn on h6 is the main weakness in his position. **16.♗a6 f5** Reshevsky slowly commits positional suicide. Now he has two pawn weaknesses, on h6 and e6.
[16...f6 with the idea of preparing ...e6-e5, looks more logical.]
[16...c4 immediately is also interesting, letting the pawn on f7 work as a base for the pawn chain.]
17.g3 Petrosian uses a dark-square strategy for the pawns. This is to compensate for the missing bishop and lets the pawns cooperate and act like that missing bishop.
c4 18.♗xb7+ ♔xb7 EXERCISE: Suggest a manoeuvre which improves White's position.
ANSWER: **19.♘g1!** White heads for the f4-square, putting pressure on e6 and at the same time also prepares an attack on the h6-pawn with Qh5. **♗d6 20.♕h5 ♕g7 21.♘e2 ♘e7 22.♘f4 ♗xf4**
[22...♕f6 23.0-0-0 ♖g8 24.♖h1 ♘g6 is another idea if Black is anxious to keep his bishop.]
23.exf4 ♘g8 24.♕f3 Eyeing the king on b7 so c4 is for the moment unprotected. **♔c7**
25.0-0-0 ♘f6 26.♕e2 ♔d7 27.♖h1 ♘g4
[The natural move 27...♘e4 deforms the pawn structure after 28.♘xe4 fxe4 and gives Black a rather passive position after 29.♕h5 with pressure on h6.]
28.♘f3 ♖e8 EXERCISE: Black plans a future attack with ...Rb8, ...b6-b5, ...a7-a5 and ...b5-b4. Can you find a preventive manoeuvre to undermine its effect?
ANSWER: **29.♔d2!!** Typically Petrosian prevents threats which hadn't even occurred in Reshevsky's head. If so he would certainly have played the rook to b8 already with his 28th move. Now the white king moves to the kingside at just the right moment.
♖b8 30.♔e1 b5 31.♔f1 a5 32.♔g2 a4 Reshevsky blocks the queenside and hopes that White will not manage to break through on the kingside. The disadvantage is that Black doesn't have any counterplay whatever associated with the breakthrough ...b5-b4.
[It's too late for 32...b4? , though. After 33.axb4 axb4 34.♖a1 White gets the attack first.]
[Instead, a flexible waiting move is 32...♕f8 , but White still keeps the positional initiative after 33.♘e5+ ♘xe5 34.♕xe5 ♖e8 35.f3 ♕h8 36.g4 .]
33.♘e5+ ♘xe5 QUESTION: Does White aim for an exchange of queens or does he want to play with all his major pieces?
ANSWER: **34.♕xe5! ♕xe5 35.fxe5** The rook ending is more advantageous for White when Black cannot play ...b5-b4 anymore. White's rook is more active than its counterpart and White's king will soon be more active as well.
♖h8 36.f3 Preparing a timely g4-g5. **♔e7**
37.g4 fxg4 The best move.
[Other moves are clearly worse: 37...♖g8? is a mistake, losing a pawn after the sequence 38.♖xh6 fxg4 39.f4 followed by Kg3 and picking up the pawn.]
[37...f4? 38.g5 ♖g8 *(* or *38...h5 39.♖h4 ♔f7 40.♖xf4+ ♔g6 41.♖f6+* , winning *)* 39.♖xh6 ♖xg5+ 40.♔h2 ♖g3 41.♖h3 ♖g7 42.♖h4 ♖f7 43.♔h3 and White wins the f4-pawn or the b5-pawn.]
38.fxg4 ♖g8 39.♔h3 EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): Is the position a draw or a win for White?
♖f8? It looks natural to place the rook on the only open file, but this is just another

illustration that rook endings are difficult endings.

[ANSWER: The best try to draw the game is one of: 39...♔f7 40.♖f1+ ♔g7 41.♔h4 *(* or *41.♖f6 ♖f8 42.♖xe6 ♖f2* and Black's counterplay results in a draw *)* 41...♔h7 42.♖f7+ ♖g7 43.♖f8 ♖g8 44.♖xg8 ♔xg8 45.♔h5 ♔h7 46.g5 hxg5 47.♔xg5 ♔g7 .]

[39...♖g5 with the idea of ...h6-h5. One possible variation is 40.♔h4 ♔f7 41.♖f1+ ♔g7 42.♖f6 ♖g6 and the game is a draw. In the game, Reshevsky played a losing move.]

40.♔g3 ♖h8 41.♔h4 ♖g8 42.♖f1

. White plans 43 Rf6 or 43 Rf4 followed by 44 Kh5. A brilliant game typical of Petrosian's patient and unforced style.

1-0

E12

□ **Spassky,B**
■ **Petrosian,T**

39: World Championship (27), Moscow 1969
[Thomas Engqvist]

Spassky convincingly won all three 1968 Candidates encounters, beating in succession Geller, Larsen and Korchnoi, and was a tougher challenger for Petrosian in 1969 than in 1966. He was more thoroughly prepared and spent three months studying Petrosian's games while working hard on his physical condition.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.a3

Spassky interestingly chose to play a variation which was actually Petrosian's variation. Normally it's psychologically difficult to fight against your own favourite weapon and Spassky also gambled that Petrosian wasn't expected to know the best set-up for Black. I don't think Spassky would have played like this if he wasn't full of confidence.

♗b7 5.♘c3 d5 6.e3 This is a passive move, hemming in the bishop on c1 at an early stage. This shouldn't cause any problems for Black.

[The active continuation is 6.cxd5 exd5 *(* or *6...♘xd5 7.e3* with a preponderance of pawns in the centre *)* 7.♗g5 and the bishop is outside the pawn chain, exercising pressure on the central square d5.]

6...♘bd7 This is the correct move order and in accordance with Emanuel Lasker's (1868-1941) rule that you should move the knights before the bishop.

[The natural 6...♗e7 is worse because of 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♗b5+ c6 9.♗d3 0-0 10.b4 ♘bd7 11.0-0 and White is ready for the central break e3-e4.]

7.cxd5

[Another continuation is 7.b4 c5 8.bxc5 bxc5 9.♖b1 , attacking the undefended bishop on b7.]

7...exd5 8.♗e2?! Such a move is usually only good if Black has played ...c5, so as to be able to control the d4-pawn with the queen.

[More active is 8.♗d3 , controlling the vital squares e4 and f5 on the b1-h7 diagonal. c5 might have been the reason Spassky did not choose it.]

[If that was the case 8.b4 ♗d6 9.♗d3 is the proper move order. *(* Here O'Kelly has suggested the logical *9.♕b3 0-0 10.a4 ♕e7 11.♗a3* with the idea of exchanging White's bad bishop for Black's attacking one. *)*]

8...♗d6 9.b4 0-0 10.0-0 a6

[Another idea is immediate centralization with 10...♘e4 , forcing White to declare his intentions with the undefended knight on c3. 11.♕b3 might be answered by ♘xc3 12.♕xc3 a6 followed by ...Nf6 and ...Qe7.]

[10...a5 is answered by 11.b5 followed by a2-a4 and Ba3, and helps White to get rid of his bad bishop. This state of affairs arose in E.Geller-M.Bobotsov, Moscow 1967, and led to an even game. Not only the bishops were exchanged on d6, but also the queens.]

11.♕b3 EXERCISE: Spassky plans to get rid of his bad bishop by playing a3-a4 and b4-b5. What can Black do about it?

ANSWER: **♕e7!** Now a3-a4 is stopped because of the pressure on the b4-pawn.

12.♖b1 It's clear that White can't play Ba3 within reasonable time, maybe never, so his bishop on c1 has become a problem bishop.

♘e4! 13.a4

[The tactical point is that 13.♘xd5? fails to ♗xd5 14.♕xd5 ♘c3 , forking queen and rook.]

13...♘df6!

[13...♗xb4 makes Spassky's task easier after 14.♘xe4! dxe4 15.♕xb4 c5 16.dxc5 exf3 17.gxf3 *(* Bondarevsky's suggestion *17.♗xf3 ♗xf3 18.gxf3* looks less precise: *bxc5* gives Black a passed pawn and White's king is rather unsafe compared with the Black king *)* 17...♘xc5 with an even game. White must not make the mistake

18.♕xb6? when ♕g5+ 19.♔h1 ♕h5 loses the pawn on f3.]

14.b5 ♘xc3 15.♕xc3 ♘e4 16.♕c2?

On this exposed square the queen runs the risk of being disturbed by a black rook on c8,

[so better is 16.♕b3 putting pressure on d5 which might be an issue after b5xa6.]

16...♖fc8 17.♗b2

[Korchnoi suggests the exchange of the knight on e4 with 17.♘d2 , but Black keeps good control of the light squares in White's position after axb5 18.♘xe4 dxe4 19.axb5 ♗d5 20.♗c4 c6 21.♕b3 ♕e6 22.♗xd5 cxd5 with a slight advantage.]

17...c6 18.bxc6 ♗xc6 19.♕b3 The queen is eventually placed on the right square. **♕d7**

20.♖a1 This looks passive,

[but the alternatives aren't particularly attractive either: The pawn capture 20.♕xb6?? is a grave mistake after ♖cb8 21.♕a5 ♗b4 and the queen is trapped in the enemy position.]

[20.♘e5 also loses material after ♗xe5 21.dxe5 ♗xa4 22.♕xb6 ♘d2 . In this position White can try to play for a trick with 23.♕d4 threatening 24 Qxd2 and 24 Bg4, but Black has the surprising ♖c2! 24.♗d3 ♘xb1 winning the exchange.]

20...b5 21.a5?

[The best practical chance may have been to play the simplifying 21.axb5 . The disadvantage is that it increases White's control of the light squares because of the forced exchange of the bishops after ♗xb5 22.♗xb5 ♕xb5 23.♕xb5 axb5 with a slight advantage according to Gufeld and Geller. Korchnoi continued the analysis with 24.♖xa8 ♖xa8 25.♖a1 ♖xa1+ 26.♗xa1 to check if the ending contained any winning chances.

Now there are two alternatives:

A) . The direct 26...♗a3 with the idea of ... b4, ...b3 and ...b2 is met by a heroic defence of the white knight. Check this variation: 27.♘e1 b4 28.♘c2 . It doesn't help if the black knight joins the fight with ♘d2 because of the extraordinary move 29.♗c3! . Black is slightly on top, but can't win after bxc3 30.♘xa3 f5! the most active continuation; *(* absolutely not *30...♘b1?? 31.♘c2* and White moves his king to d3 followed by Nb4 and Kc2 with a won knight ending *)* 31.f3 ♘c4 32.♘c2 ♔f7 33.♔f2 ♔e6 34.♔e2 ♘b2 35.♘a3 and it looks like a draw.;

B) 26...b4 27.♔f1 b3 28.♗b2 ♗b4 also fails after 29.♘e5 ♗c3 30.♘d3 ♗xb2 31.♘xb2 ♘d2+ 32.♔e2 ♘c4 33.♘xc4 dxc4 34.♔d2 b2 35.♔c2 c3 36.e4 and the pawn ending is a draw according to Korchnoi. A logical continuation is ♔f8 37.d5 ♔e7 38.e5 ♔d7 39.f4 ♔c7 40.f5 and neither player can play for a win.;

C) 26...--]

21...♗b7!? This move may represent the differences of style if we compare Petrosian with Capablanca.

[I think that Capablanca would play the simpler 21...b4 followed by ...Bb5 next move. Play might continue 22.♘e5 ♗xe5 23.dxe5 ♗b5! *(* stronger than *23...♘d2?! 24.♕xb4 ♘xf1 25.♖xf1 ♖ab8 26.♕d4 ♗b5 27.♗g4 ♕e7 28.♗xc8 ♗xf1 29.e6 f6 30.♗d7* with a complicated position *)* 24.♗xb5 ♕xb5 and Black is clearly on top.]

22.♘e5 EXERCISE: How should Black meet the threat to the queen?

ANSWER: **♕d8!?** This is a characteristic move by Petrosian move which looks like a waiting move. The two last moves might be a component of the overall plan of doing nothing, containing the psychological essence to lure the opponent into the false notion that Petrosian is in a moment of torpor.

[Less precise is 22...♗xe5 because of the forced variation 23.dxe5 ♘d2 24.♕b4 ♘xf1 25.♗g4 ♕c6 26.♗xc8 ♖xc8 27.♖xf1 d4 28.f3 dxe3 29.♕d4 ♕d5 30.♕xe3 b4 31.♖c1 and White has good drawing chances with the opposite-coloured bishops.]

[Geller preferred the normal 22...♕e7 because then it isn't possible to play 23.♗d3 ♘d2 24.♗xh7+ *(24.♘xf7* isn't possible either with the queen on e7; compare this variation with the queen on d8 *)* 24...♔xh7 25.♕d3+ ♘e4 26.f3 f6 27.♘g4 ♖c4 28.fxe4 ♕xe4 and Black has a clear positional advantage.]

23.♖fd1 EXERCISE: Can you now suggest an active continuation for Black?

[If 23.♗d3 Black might continue quietly with ♖c7 , threatening either the fork ...Nd2 or the positional strengthening of the black position with ...Rac8 (or ...b5-b4) followed by ...Nc3.]

ANSWER: **23...♕h4!** This forces White to weaken the kingside position when Rf1 isn't possible due to the knight fork. This is the normal procedure when increasing an

advantage. Later on we'll understand more concretely why it is so important in this position.

24.g3 ♕e7 25.f3!? In principle White wants to drive away the enemy knight and advance his pawn majority on the kingside, but it's not easy since he will weaken his king's position as well.

[Other reasonable moves are either 25.♗f3!?]

[or 25.♗d3!? to be followed by Bxe4. The last move is a suggestion by the third world champion in correspondence chess (1959-1962), Count Alberic Joseph Rodolphe Marie Robert Ghislain O'Kelly de Galway (1911-1980).]

25...♘g5 26.h4

[Other options are: 26.♗a3!? is answered by ♗xa3! *(* not *26...b4?* because of *27.♗xb4! ♗xb4 28.♖ab1 ♗xa5 29.♕xb7 ♕xb7 30.♖xb7* and it's White who has a slight advantage *)* 27.♕xa3 *(* if *27.♖xa3? f6 28.♘g4 ♖c4!* followed by ...Rac8 when Black has strong pressure on the c-file combined with his passed pawn *)* 27...♕xa3 *(* if *27...b4 28.♕a4* with the idea of 29 Qd7 or 29 Rab1 *)* 28.♖xa3 ♖c2 29.♔f1 ♖e8 30.h4 ♘e6 31.♗d3 ♖c7 with a slight advantage to Black who controls the only open file and has a protected passed pawn.]

[26.f4 ♘e4 27.♗h5 forces Black to weaken his kingside, but this is easily met by f6 28.♗f7+ ♔h8 29.♗xd5 fxe5 30.fxe5 ♘g5! 31.exd6 .

EXERCISE (calculation): It's Black to move and win.

ANSWER: ♘h3+ is correct: 32.♔f1 *(32.♔g2 ♖c2+! 33.♕xc2 ♗xd5+ 34.♔xh3 ♕e6+ 35.g4 ♕xe3+ 36.♔h4 g5+ 37.♔h5 ♕h3+ 38.♔xg5 ♖g8+ 39.♔f6 ♕h6+ 40.♔e5 ♕e6+ 41.♔f4 ♖xg4#; 32.♔h1 ♕e4+! 33.♗xe4 ♗xe4#)* 32...♕f6+ 33.♔g2 ♕e6!! (an extraordinarily beautiful move) 34.e4 ♗xd5 35.exd5 ♕e2+ 36.♔xh3 g5 *(* or *36...♖c2* immediately *)* 37.♖h1 ♖c2 38.♕xc2 ♕xc2 and Black wins.]

26...♘e6 27.f4 Spassky is weakening the whole king's flank, but it looks playable because how can Black improve his minor pieces? This is just the moment Petrosian has been waiting for and let us see how he solves this problem.

[27.♗a3 leads to some really interesting complications after f6 28.♘d3 ♘xd4 29.exd4 ♕e3+ 30.♔f1 ♗xg3 31.♕b2 ♖e8 when Black has more than enough compensation for the sacrificed piece.]

27...f6 28.♘f3 EXERCISE: What is the most harmonious continuation for Black?

[28.♘d3 is answered by ♖c4! .]

ANSWER: **28...♘d8!** With the double idea of increasing the pressure on e3 and manoeuvring the knight to f7. Botvinnik once wrote that, move by move, Petrosian decided which piece needed to be transferred to a better square and then just transferred it there. This is a good example of just that.

[Petrosian was in no hurry to play 28...♖c4!? which looks perfectly playable. First he wanted to achieve perfect harmony in his position. Petrosian really was a true master of patience and harmony, keeping the maximum flexibility in his position.]

29.♔f2 ♘f7 30.♘d2 EXERCISE: How should Black now continue?

ANSWER: Petrosian decided that the moment was ripe for the inevitable outpost exchange sacrifice...

♖c4!! ...which has been in the air for some time. Petrosian chose the right moment, though, because White now has two pieces to capture the rook with. The most important thing in chess is not what to do, it's when to do it. Fischer also used to say that chess was all about timing.

Now that the picture is more complete we have another idea why Petrosian played 21... Bb7, instead of activating the bishop with 21... b4 and 22...Bb5 when he had a good opportunity to do so. Botvinnik actually made a similar sacrifice when he played ...Rd4 versus Liublinsky in Moscow 1943. It's because of such exchange sacrifices that we have a strategic device called the Soviet exchange sacrifice. The true precursor to this kind of sacrifice on an outpost defended by two pawns is the 21st matchgame between Pierre Charles Fournier de Saint-Amant (1800-1872) and Howard Staunton (1810-1874), played in Paris 1843. Keene published this game in 1968 in Shakhmatny Bulletin, so it's very likely Petrosian was familiar with it.

31.♕d3

[White is well advised to avoid accepting the sacrifice as the following variations show: 31.♘xc4? dxc4 32.♕c2 ♖e8 33.♗c1 ♗e4 followed by ...Nh6 and ...Nf5 results in a strategically won position for Black. Here

we can clearly see that if the knight were still on e6 it would have been misplaced.]
[31.♗xc4? dxc4 32.♕c2 ♘h6! 33.e4 ♘g4+ 34.♔e2 ♖c8 followed by ...b5-b4 and the pawn majority advances.]
[31.♗f3 ♖e8 32.♖e1 ♕d7 gives Black a comfortable position where he can play for different activities connected with the strong rook on c4 in a similar fashion to the game continuation.]
31...♖e8 32.♗f3 ♗b4 Freeing the d6-square for the black knight. **33.♗a3 ♗xa3** Black doesn't mind the exchange in this position since the knight will replace the bishop on d6 with full effect because of the strong control of the light squares.
34.♖xa3 ♘d6 35.♖e1 f5 36.♖aa1 ♘e4+
[Stronger is 36...♖ec8 with the idea of ...Rc3 and ...Re8, putting pressure on the pawn on e3. If 37.♘b3 ♖c3 38.♕d1 then ♖c2+ 39.♖e2 ♖xe2+ 40.♕xe2 ♖c3 41.♘c5 ♘c4 and the pressure on e3 and a5 is too strong.]
37.♗xe4 fxe4 38.♕b1 EXERCISE: What is the best location for the black queen? ANSWER: **♕d7** This is the right square for the queen where it can invade White's position at h3 or g4 at an appropriate moment. **39.♖a2 ♖ec8 40.♘xc4** Spassky only captures on c4 when Black's pawn on e4 blockades the long light-squared diagonal.
[Boleslavsky's analysis went 40.♘b3 ♕h3 41.♖h1 ♖c2+ 42.♖xc2 ♖xc2+ 43.♕xc2 ♕xh1 , but he missed the strong move 44.♔e2! which leads to a draw after ♕f3+ 45.♔d2 ♕f2+ 46.♔c1 ♕xe3+ 47.♔b2 h6 48.♔a3 because of Black's passive bishop.]
40...dxc4 41.d5? Understandable because of Spassky's feelings of suffocation and his desire to liberate the rooks, but this actually make Petrosian's task easier.
[Other, more patient continuations are: 41.♕b4 c3 42.♖c2 ♖c4 43.♕b3 ♕g4 44.♖xc3 ♕f3+ 45.♔g1 ♕xg3+ 46.♔f1 ♕f3+ 47.♔g1 ♗d5 48.♖ec1 ♕xe3+! with a won position according to Boleslavsky. Malfagia continues this analysis with 49.♖xe3 ♖xc1+ 50.♔f2 ♗xb3 51.♖xb3 ♖d1! 52.♔e3 ♖d3+! with a totally winning pawn ending after 53.♖xd3 exd3 54.♔xd3 ♔f7 because of the distant passed pawn.]
[41.♖c2 looks to be the more promising alternative, preventing Black from advancing his queenside pawns. ♕g4 might then be met by 42.♕d1 , and if ♕xd1? 43.♖xd1 b4? White blockades the pawns with 44.♖b1 b3 45.♖c3 .]
41...♗xd5 42.♖d1 c3! The sealed move.
43.♖c2 EXERCISE: Can you find Black's strongest continuation?
[After 43.♖d4 ♕h3! White is slaughtered.]
ANSWER: **43...♕h3! 44.♖g1**
[The other options also lose: 44.♖xd5 ♕h2+ 45.♔f1 ♕h1+ and White loses the queen.]
[44.♖h1 ♕g4 45.♕d1 ♕xd1 46.♖xd1 ♗b3 and Black is winning.]
44...♕g4 45.♔g2 ♕f3+ 46.♔h2 ♕xe3 47.f5
[During the adjournment Petrosian and his second, Boleslavsky, focused mainly on the variations arising after 47.♕d1 ♕d3 48.♕g4 ♕xc2+ 49.♖g2 ♕xg2+ 50.♔xg2 e3+ 51.♔h2 ♖e8 52.h5 *(* the double threat with either *52.♕d7;* or *52.♕h5* is easily parried by *♗f7)* , and now the most efficient move 52...h6! . After 53.f5 the simplest continuation is e2! 54.f6 g5 55.hxg6 *(* or *55.♕f5 ♗f7!)* 55...e1♕ winning.]
47...♕c5 48.♖f1 b4 49.f6 b3 50.♖cf2 c2 51.♕c1 e3 52.f7+ ♔f8 53.♖f5 b2 54.♕xb2 c1♕ 55.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 56.♖g5+ . Spassky politely resigned and naturally didn't naively expect Petrosian to play the suicidal 56... Kh6??, which would end the game in Spassky's favour with 57 Rf6#. Choosing from 56...Kf8 and 56...Kh8, it's probable that Petrosian would have played the latter.
0-1

Chapter Five

Later Career

The strong Czech Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort (1944-) was a comfortable opponent for Petrosian who played him on sixteen occasions and scored five wins and eleven draws during the years 1961-1977.

40: V.Hort-T.Petrosian, European Team Championship, Kapfenberg 1970

According to the *Mega Database 2013*, Petrosian and Viktor Lvovich Korchnoi (1931-) played 69 games and their lifetime score against each other was equal. They both won 11 games and drew the rest. Petrosian won most of the games in the beginning of his career and Korchnoi manage to catch up by beating him in the Candidates matches in 1977 and 1980. Korchnoi was the second best player in the world in this period, playing two matches for the world championship against Anatoly Karpov in 1978 and 1981.

Earlier Petrosian beat Korchnoi in the Candidates semi-final match in Moscow, July 1971 by winning this, the crucial ninth game. The rest of the games in the 10-game match were drawn.

41: T.Petrosian-V.Korchnoi, 9th matchgame, Moscow Candidates 1971

Robert James (Bobby) Fischer (1943-2008), the eleventh world champion (1972-1975), is regarded as one of the really great chess geniuses. He was a star of the first magnitude in the chess firmament, especially if concentrating on the players representative of the pre-computer era. Prior to this match he had already beaten Taimanov and Larsen in the Candidates' cycle with an astonishing 6-0 score in both matches. Now he had only one obstacle left for the long-awaited world championship match versus Spassky.

Petrosian had the Grandmasters Averbakh and Suetin as his seconds. Suetin told the Russian newspaper *Pravda*: "It will be a clash between two representatives of the classical chess style." Petrosian himself said: "We'll see what happens." Fischer won the first game, but Petrosian wasn't so affected by the missed opportunities and immediately struck back in the second.

42: T.Petrosian-R.Fischer, 2nd matchgame, Buenos Aires Candidates Final 1971

Petrosian played on board one in this match, drawing two games versus Grandmaster Borislav Ivkov (1933-), and winning both games against the imaginative Grandmaster Albin Planinc (1944-2008). Here's their second encounter.

43: A.Planinc-T.Petrosian, USSR vs. Yugoslavia, Ohrid 1972

Petrosian played against Anatoly Yevgenyevich Karpov (1951-) in fifteen serious games. He won one and lost one, while the rest of the games were drawn. Karpov's style has many similarities with Petrosian's outlook of how a game should be played. They both played logical chess with a preference for clear positional pressure combined with prophylaxis that lead to an advantageous endgame. However the main difference is that Karpov's style must be considered more active, particularly from the perspective of the openings.

44: T.Petrosian-A.Karpov, USSR Championship, Moscow 1973

Mikhail, Nekhemyevich Tal (1936-1992), the wizard from Riga, stunned the chess world when he became the youngest ever world champion by beating Botvinnik in 1960. He was only world champion for one year, though, after losing the return match, but he had already obtained much attention for his tactical genius and was followed by many admirers all over the globe.

Petrosian played Tal 45 times and the overall score was 23½ to 21½ in Petrosian's favour. Despite the fact that their playing styles were in stark contrast, they played 35 games which ended in a draw.

45: M.Tal-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Moscow 1973

Petrosian represented USSR in the Olympiad no less than ten times and his result was exceptionally solid. His score was 78 wins, 50 draws and only one loss to Robert Hübner, and this astonishing feat was close to 80 per cent! Here he plays the solid Swedish amateur player Dan Uddenfeldt (1951-) on board three.

46: D.Uddenfeldt-T.Petrosian, Nice Olympiad 1974

Petrosian played on board four in France where he scored eleven wins and three draws. In the following game Petrosian faces the untitled Spanish player Fernando Visier Segovia (1943-).

47: T.Petrosian-F.Visier Segovia, Nice Olympiad Nice 1974

47: T.Petrosian-F.Visier Segovia, Nice Olympiad Nice 1974

Petrosian's opponent in this game was again the Philippine International Master Rodolfo Tan Cardoso, who we first met in Game 19.

48: R.Cardoso-T.Petrosian, Las Palmas 1975

In March 1976 Petrosian played an open international tournament with 57 competitors and won it with four wins and three quick draws in his last three black games. After beating James Sherwin with the black pieces in the first round he had to face the American player John A. Peters (1951-), who was to become an International Master three years after this game.

49: T.Petrosian-J.Peters, Lone Pine 1976

In Hastings 1977-1978 Petrosian played the American (later Norwegian) player Jonathan D. Tisdall (1958-) ,who was to became a Grandmaster in 1995. He has written a very interesting book called*Improve your Chess Now* (1997), where he introduced the stepping-stone method in connection with the calculation of variations.

50: J.Tisdall-T.Petrosian, Hastings 1977/78

In July and August 1978 an international tournament in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, was arranged. Tukmakov won with 10½ points and Petrosian was second with six wins, one loss (versus Beliavsky), and eight draws. Here he plays the talented Swedish player Konstanty Kaiszauri (1952) who unfortunately later abandoned chess for a career in another field.

51: T.Petrosian-K.Kaiszauri, Vilnius 1978

In the 1970s and early 1980s Grandmaster Yuri Sergeyevich Balashov (1949-) was one of the top-25 players in the world.

52: T.Petrosian-Y.Balashov, Moscow 1978

The Keres Memorial was played in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, from February to March in 1979. Petrosian won the tournament without a single loss and collected 12 points out of 16, with eight wins and eight draws. Here he plays the strong Hungarian Grandmaster Gyula Sax (1951-2014). He became an International Master in 1972 and a Grandmaster only two years later. Sax was ranked number 12 in the world 1989. He was most famous for his strong attacking play and for the achievement, together with his team mates, in the 1978 Olympiad, where Hungary managed to win the gold medals ahead of the mighty Soviet team.

53: T.Petrosian-G.Sax, Keres Memorial, Tallinn 1979

The tournament at Banja Luka 1979 is famous because of Kasparov's crushing victory where he scored 11½/15. Petrosian still had a decent result and came fourth without any losses. He won three games and drew twelve. His most impressive game was against the 42-year-old Yugoslavian Grandmaster Enver Bukic (1937-),where he showed his customary patience and technique to earn a victory.

54: E.Bukic-T.Petrosian, Banja Luka 1979

The international tournament in Las Palmas in June 1980 resulted in a share of first to third for Petrosian along with Geller and Miles. He won six games and drew five. A good game was played against the Dutch Grandmaster (although born in Siberia in 1943), Gennady Borisovich Sosonko. Today he is famous for the four books he's written about his early experiences as a chess player in the USSR.

55: T.Petrosian-G.Sosonko, Las Palmas 1980

Petrosian won the international tournament in Bar, Montenegro, which was played in October-November 1980. He scored 10/13 and won seven games and drew six. A nice positional game was his win against one of the best players from the former Czechoslovakia, Grandmaster Vlastimil Jansa (1942-). Together with International Master Josef Pribyl (1947-), Jansa invented an interesting opening system known as the Czech Pirc: 1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 c6. The idea is to wait for 4 Nf3 and then have comfortable development with 4...Bg4. However, the critical variation is 4 f4 with sharp play.

56: T.Petrosian-V.Jansa, Bar 1980

Petrosian played the Russian Grandmaster Garry Kasparov (1963-) five times from 1979-1983 and was black in all those games. In the beginning when Kasparov was a boy Petrosian controlled him. The first game was a draw and the next two were won by Petrosian. The last two games played in 1982-1983, however, were won by Kasparov.

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The tournament which took place in Tilburg had 12 participants and Petrosian was placed second with three wins and eight draws. Alexander Beliavsky (1953-) won by half a point while Kasparov was placed in the midfield. Here follows Petrosian's last win against Kasparov.

57: G.Kasparov-T.Petrosian, Tilburg 1981

The Interzonal tournament in Las Palmas 1982 had three favourites in Petrosian, Larsen and Timman, who seemed the most probable to qualify for the two Candidates places. Surprisingly none of these players managed to come first or second. Surprisingly it was Ribli and Smyslov who qualified and Petrosian, who was placed fourth, failed for the first time in thirty years to qualify.

In our next game Petrosian plays the International Master (GM in 1993) Slim Bouaziz (1950-), the supposed tournament punch bag from Tunisia, but it turned out that he was just as dangerous as anybody else. He managed to surprise everybody and was only two points behind Petrosian at the end. All games are tough as they used to say.

58: T.Petrosian-S.Bouaziz, Las Palmas Interzonal 1982

Lev Abramovich Polugaevsky (1934-95) became a grandmaster in 1962 and was part of the world elite in the 1970s, belonging to the top ten. He is famous for his love of the Sicilian Defence which he shared with his readers in several books. The first one entitled *Grandmaster Preparation* (1981) was published in the Soviet Union 1977 and is a real treasure for the aspiring chessplayer.

The heydays for both these players were behind them in April 1983 when the 50th USSR Championship was taking place, probably more so for Petrosian than for Polugaevsky who shared third to fourth place, whereas Petrosian was placed sixth to ninth with two wins, two losses and eleven draws. Against Polugaevsky he had a plus score counting all their games in their careers. They met 23 times and Petrosian won five, lost three and drew fifteen games. Here is their last game which he won surprisingly easy.

59: L.Polugaevsky-T.Petrosian, USSR Championship, Moscow 1983

Grandmaster Ljubomir Ljubojevic (1950-) was the leading Yugoslavian player from 1974 until the late 1980s. In 1983 he was actually rated third in the world after Karpov and Kasparov. Look how easily though Petrosian takes on this formidable opponent.

60: T.Petrosian-L.Ljubojevic, Niksic 1983

□ **Hort,V**
■ **Petrosian,T**
40: European Team Chship, Kapfenberg 1970
[Thomas Engqvist]

The strong Czech Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort (1944-) was a comfortable opponent for Petrosian who played him on sixteen occasions and scored five wins and eleven draws during the years 1961-1977.

1.e4
[Later Petrosian-Hort, Wijk aan Zee 1971, opened with the unusual 1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.d5!? and is psychologically significant because it shows Petrosian's slightly desperate desire to prevent Hort from playing one of his pet openings, the Grünfeld Defence. It was always important for Petrosian that his opponent wasn't too comfortable at the start of the game and it also increased his chances that his opponent would suffer from time trouble later on.]

1...e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3
[One of Petrosian's pet systems against 3.♘d2 was c5 4.exd5 exd5 when he felt very much at home with the isolated d-pawn.]

3...♗b4 4.e5 c5 The most active move in the Winawer Variation.
[Petrosian was also fond of playing the more passive but fully playable 4...b6 , with the idea of exchanging the so-called bad bishop, to use Euwe's terminology, with 5...Ba6.
A) . After 5.♕g4 Petrosian continued with ♗f8 . *(* The advantage with keeping the pawn structure on the kingside intact, compared with *5...f5* , is that Black secures the possibility of a future break with ...f7-f6. *)*;
B) . Here 5.a3 may also be answered by ♗f8 .;
C) . In the game M.Campos Lopez-T. Petrosian, San Antonio 1972, he even answered the non-threatening 5.♘f3 with the extraordinary ♗f8!? . The idea with such an illogical retreat is that the game has been blocked and in such positions it's more important to manoeuvre than to develop the pieces as quickly as possible. Moreover, the bishop really has no function any more on b4 after White has played the central pawn to e5 and so Black retreats it, making room for light-squared related moves like ...Ba6 combined with ...Ne7-f5 and so forth.;
D) 5.--]

5.a3 ♗xc3+ Normally Petrosian captured on c3 to secure counterplay on the weakened queenside.
[In one early game though he successfully played 5...♗a5 6.b4 cxd4 7.♘b5 ♗c7 8.f4 ♗d7 9.♘xd4 ♘e7 10.♘gf3 ♘bc6 11.♗e3 ♘xd4 12.♘xd4 0-0 and obtained an equal position in P.Ter-T.Petrosian, Tbilisi 1947.]

6.bxc3 ♕c7 7.♕g4 The sharpest continuation, putting immediate pressure on the weakened kingside.
[The main alternative is classical development with 7.♘f3 .]

7...f5 The disadvantage with this move is that Black loses the pawn break ...f7-f6 in the future.
[However, the immediate 7...f6 is answered by 8.♗b5+ and after ♘c6 White claims an advantage with 9.♘f3 , since it's not easy for Black to continue his development because of the pressure on g7. Black might try ♕f7 , but 10.♗xc6+ bxc6 11.0-0 gives White the positional advantage. L.Oll-A.Yermolinsky, USSR Championship 1987, continued ♘e7 12.dxc5 ♘g6 13.♖e1 0-0 14.♕g3 fxe5 15.♘xe5 ♘xe5 16.♖xe5 with an extra pawn and a strong grip on the dark squares.]

8.♕g3 cxd4
[Note that the direct 8...♘e7 is answered by 9.♕xg7 ♖g8 10.♕xh7 cxd4 11.♘e2 .]

9.cxd4 ♘e7
[9...♕xc2?! is too greedy. After 10.♗d2 ♕c7 11.♖c1 ♘c6 12.♗b5 White had more than enough compensation for the pawn in Ernst-J.Gourg, Créon 2005.]

10.♗d2
[10.♕xg7?? is a serious error due to ♖g8 and ...Qc3+ after the queen retreats.]

10...0-0 11.♗d3 QUESTION: How does Black complete his development?
ANSWER: **b6!** The bishop on c8 is a big problem piece with pawns on f5, e6 and d5, so it would be a big achievement to exchange it for the counterpart on d3.

12.♘e2 ♗a6 13.♘f4 ♕d7 14.♗b4!
EXERCISE: What can Black do about White's piece activity with Nh5 looming?
ANSWER: **♖f7** The best move according to the theoreticians of the day from 1967-1969: Rolf Schwarz (1926-2013), Ludek Pachman

(1924-2003), and Paul Keres (1916-1975). The quiet rook move is a preventive one, defending the key point on g7 and at the same time removing the rook from the diagonal a3-f8. Black can always execute the desirable exchange on d3 one move later.

[However, 14...♗xd3? immediately is a mistake because of the in-between move 15.♘h5! and White wins the exchange by force with advantage as in the game B. Spassky-R.Fuchs, Varna 1958.]

[14...♖c8 is a playable alternative with the idea to reply to 15...Ng6 after 15.♘h5 . The reason Petrosian didn't play it is because he plans to place the other rook on c8.]

15.h4!

[15.♘h5 is without venom because of the possible reply ♔h8 .]

15...♗xd3 16.♕xd3 ♘bc6 17.♖h3 ♖c8 18.♖g3 ♘d8! The main idea is to place the rook on c4 followed by a transfer of the e7-knight to c6. **19.h5 ♖c4! 20.h6 ♘ec6** Note that not only the pawn on d4 is threatened, but also the pawn on e5 because of the hanging position of the knight on f4.

21.♘h5 EXERCISE: What is the best way of dealing with White's attack on the g7-pawn?

ANSWER: **g6!** The Estonian International Master Ivo Nei (1934-) expressed with his annotations to this game in 1975 the following: "The ex-world champion has probably no equal in the playing of this type of position. He does not fear the loss of the exchange, for in the resulting position his cavalry will be poised for action."

[Of course, though, not 21...♖xd4? 22.♖xg7+! ♖xg7 23.♘f6+ ♔h8 24.♘xd7 ♖xd3 25.hxg7+ ♔xg7 26.cxd3 according to the analysis of Petrosian.]

22.♘f6+ ♖xf6 23.exf6 ♘f7

[Petrosian wanted to capture with 23...♘xd4 , but noticed that Hort looked confident because he must surely have expected this move. Petrosian didn't only play against the pieces, he also played the opponent. The move played also keeps a nagging edge and it's in the spirit of his style. If Petrosian could choose between several equally good moves, he always preferred the least expected.]

24.♕d2

[Petrosian intended to answer 24.c3 with e5 , postponing opening the h-file with ...Nxh6 for a while. *(* If instead *24...a5 25.♗e7 ♘xe7 26.fxe7 ♕xe7 27.♖b1* White has some counterplay. *)*]

24...♖xd4

[24...♘xd4 25.♖c3 is in White's interest because of the exchange of Black's active rook. After ♖xc3 26.♗xc3 ♘c6 27.0-0-0 we have a totally different game with approximately equal chances.]

25.♖d3 EXERCISE: What is Black's best continuation?

ANSWER: **♖h4!**

[Black must avoid the exchange of his more active rook with 25...♖xd3? 26.cxd3 e5 27.♖c1 with a clear advantage for White because of the possibilities of breaking through on the c-file.]

26.♖h3 ♖g4! 27.♔f1

[Euwe's recommendation 27.♖g3 has the problem that it weakens White's pawn position after ♖xg3 28.fxg3 . After the further strong centralization with ♘fe5! followed by moves such as ...Kf7 and ...Ng4, Black gradually improves his position while it's difficult to find counterplay for the white army.]

27...♘d6 28.♖e1 ♔f7 29.♗c3

[It's tempting to exchange the annoying knight, but after 29.♗xd6 ♕xd6 30.♕c3 Black plays ♖c4 followed by 31...Qc5 and White's position hasn't improved.]

29...♘e4 30.♕d3

[30.♕e2 doesn't help either after ♖f4 31.♖f3 ♖xf3 32.♕xf3 d4 33.♖xe4 fxe4 34.♕d1 ♕d5 and Black is winning. His strong centralized position combined with the many weak white pawns makes White's position resignable.]

30...♘c5 31.♕d1 ♖c4 Black is completely dominating the white position, particularly on the light squares. **32.♗b2 b5 33.♕e2 ♕d6 34.♔g1 ♘e4 35.♖d3 ♕c5 36.♖c1 e5 37.♕e3 d4 38.♕e2 ♘xf6** On top of an exceptionally harmonic position, Black has now also achieved material equality. **39.♖dd1 ♘d5 40.♕d2 e4** Petrosian plays in the spirit of Philidor by pushing the pawns forward with the pieces behind to support them.

QUESTION: Have you ever seen such a dominating position in the centre?

ANSWER: I'm not going to refer to the small centre, the four squares in the middle of the board, but the larger centre consisting of the sixteen squares ranging from c3-f3-f6-c6. I can't help thinking about what the witty Tarrasch once said: "Chess is a terrible game.

If you have no centre, then your opponent has a freer position. If you do have a centre, then you really have something to worry about!" However, I don't think what Tarrasch said is valid here. Tarrasch referred to the first phase of the game and showed his respect for the so called hypermodern openings.
41.♕g5 ♘c7 42.♖d2 ♘e6 43.♕h4 a5 The sealed move.
44.♖cd1 ♖xc2 45.♖xc2 ♕xc2 46.♖c1 ♕xb2 47.♖xc6 d3 48.♖a6 ♕d4! . A very fine performance by Petrosian illustrating centralization in the spirit of Nimzowitsch. It's also interesting to note, that according to the chief arbiter of the tournament Harry Golombek, Hort felt that "some sort of devilish dance" was performed by the black knights.
0-1

A20

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Korchnoi,V**
41: 9th matchgame, Moscow Candidates
[Thomas Engqvist]

According to the Mega Database 2013, Petrosian and Viktor Lvovich Korchnoi (1931-) played 69 games and their lifetime score against each other was equal. They both won 11 games and drew the rest. Petrosian won most of the games in the beginning of his career and Korchnoi manage to catch up by beating him in the Candidates matches in 1977 and 1980. Korchnoi was the second best player in the world in this period, playing two matches for the world championship against Anatoly Karpov in 1978 and 1981.
Earlier Petrosian beat Korchnoi in the Candidates semi-final match in Moscow, July 1971 by winning this, the crucial ninth game. The rest of the games in the 10-game match were drawn.
1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.b3 A provocative move.
[Theoretically the best move to undermine the black centre is the immediate 3.d4 . However, a lot of psychology was going on between these players with completely different styles of playing. Both were regarded as defensive players, so Petrosian wanted Korchnoi to attack him.]
3...d5 4.♗b2 d4 A good move practically killing the bishop on b2. **5.♘f3**
[Zaitsev's recommendation, 5.e3 c5 6.f4 , is simply met by exf4 7.exf4 ♘c6 and Black holds a solid advantage.]
5...♗d6 6.d3 A Benoni structure has arisen, but it's a passive one for White because of the bad location of the b2-bishop. Such positions are only good with a few minor pieces exchanged. Petrosian plays very provocatively here and this kind of chess is not recommended for emulation.
c5 7.♗g2 ♘e7 8.0-0 ♘ec6
[Keene calls this developing move 'qualitative' and the move 8...♘bc6 'quantitative.' He means that sometimes it's better to develop the g8-knight to c6, so as to create a more harmonious development. Originally the idea of qualitative development is a concept from the second world champion Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941).]
9.e3 0-0 10.♘bd2 ♗e6 11.e4 This is really genuine slow-motion chess because the e-pawn has already moved one time. If we use the terminology from Hans Kmoch (1894-1973), which he introduced in his classic book Pawn Power in Chess (1959), this kind of structure is the Benoni Major, although in a modern context it's more common to say the Czech Benoni. The major problem for both players is how to solve the problem with their bad bishops.
♘d7 12.♘h4 g6 EXERCISE: Black has a space advantage, so how should White react?
ANSWER: **13.♗f3!** White plans to play Bg4 to force an exchange or to provoke the pawn move...f5 when he would gladly open the long diagonal with exf5 and then just go back to f3.
♗c7 Korchnoi wants to solve the problem with his bad bishop too. **14.a3** Typical for his style, Petrosian keeps his options open and maintains maximum flexibility.
[The possibility of Bg4 doesn't run away, but actually it's too early in this position because of 14.♗g4 ♗xg4 15.♕xg4 ♗a5 , and if 16.♗c1? Black wins a pawn with ♗c3 17.♖b1 ♘b4 .]
14...♗a5 15.♗c1 ♕e7
[If 15...♗c3 to force the a1-rook to declare its intentions, Petrosian would most probably have played 16.♖a2 *(* rather than *16.♖b1 .)*]
16.♗g4 f5?! EXERCISE: Why is this move not Black's best?
ANSWER: **17.exf5 gxf5 18.♗f3** The bishop becomes very strong on the long light-squared diagonal after the obstacle at e4 has been removed with Black's help. **♘f6 19.♗g2**
[A more active continuation is 19.b4! cxb4

20.♗xc6 bxc6 21.♖e1 with the initiative to White, but then Petrosian would be attacking Korchnoi.]

19...♖ad8 EXERCISE: What should White play?

[19...♖ae8 seems to be a better and more natural location for the rook, supporting the pawn break ...e5-e4.]

ANSWER: **20.♖a2** The last two moves slightly improve White's position and are typical moves for Petrosian.

[He could, instead, have embarked on immediate action with 20.b4 cxb4 21.♗xc6 bxc6 22.♕a4 keeping up the positional pressure.]

20...♗c8 21.♖e1 ♔h8?

[21...♗c3 reduces the power of the pawn punch b3-b4 significantly.]

22.b4! Because of his patience Petrosian managed to play this pawn break under even more favourable circumstances. This might be what Keene referred to as witchcraft.

cxb4

[After 22...♗c7 23.♘b3 Black is still forced to take on b4.]

23.♘b3! ♗b6

[Kotov analyses 23...♗c7 24.♗xc6 bxc6 25.axb4 with attacking chances on the queenside.]

24.♗xc6! bxc6 25.axb4 a6

[After 25...♖g8 26.♘f3 White should win. His pressure on the centre is tremendous.]

26.♘f3 e4 This may have been the reason Korchnoi placed the rook on d8 instead of the expected e8-square, namely to give the pawn on d4 more support, but it is not enough.

[The variation 26...♗c7 27.♖ae2! proves how clever it was to develop the rook via a2. It's an important and useful device to remember that the bishop on c1 in some positions doesn't need to be developed for the purpose of activating the queen's rook.]

27.c5 ♗c7 28.♘fxd4 ♕f7 QUESTION: Can you suggest a good move for White in the spirit of Petrosian?

ANSWER: **29.♖d2!** An excellent centralizing move, placing the rook on the right location. Petrosian was unbelievable artistic when handling his rooks, the trickiest piece of them all to handle correctly.

♗d7 30.♗b2 It's interesting that the bishop just stood on c1 for 29 moves and when it changed location it was to the longest diagonal, eyeing the black king in the corner.

♔g8 31.♘a5! All White's pieces are now active and the first goal is to secure the pair of bishops. **♗xa5**

[31...♕d5 32.♘db3 isn't so pleasant either.]

32.bxa5 ♖b8 33.♗a1 ♖fe8 34.♖de2 Petrosian plays very subtly indeed with the queen's rook in this game. It seems he had a special relation with that rook, like Fischer had with the bishop on f1. Remember how extraordinarily he played against Taimanov in Game 14. Most great players have their inclinations to a particular chess piece. Which is yours?

♕h5 35.♕d2 ♔f7 36.h4

[Prophylaxis instead of going for the attack with 36.dxe4 fxe4 *(* or here *36...♘xe4 37.♕d3)* 37.♕f4 .]

36...exd3 37.♕xd3 f4 QUESTION: What is White's strongest move?

ANSWER: **38.♘f3!** This strong knight move creates multiple threats like 39 Bxf6, 39 Ne5+ and 39 Ng5+. **♖xe2 39.♕xe2 ♕xc5?!**

[A better move is 39...♖e8 , even though Black is lost after 40.♘e5+ ♔g8 41.♕xa6 .]

40.♘e5+ ♔f8 41.♘xd7+ ♘xd7

[Korchnoi understandably resigned because after 41...♘xd7 42.♕e6 , it's mate in 9 moves.]

1-0

D82

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Fischer,RJ**
42: Buenos Aires Candidates Match (2) 1971
[Thomas Engqvist]

Robert James (Bobby) Fischer (1943-2008), the eleventh world champion (1972–1975), is regarded as one of the really great chess geniuses. He was a star of the first magnitude in the chess firmament, especially if concentrating on the players representative of the pre-computer era. Prior to this match he had already beaten Taimanov and Larsen in the Candidates' cycle with an astonishing 6-0 score in both matches. Now he had only one obstacle left for the long-awaited world championship match versus Spassky. Petrosian had the Grandmasters Averbakh and Suetin as his seconds. Suetin told the Russian newspaper Pravda: "It will be a clash between two representatives of the classical

chess style." Petrosian himself said: "We'll see what happens." Fischer won the first game, but Petrosian wasn't so affected by the missed opportunities and immediately struck back in the second.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗f4

This classical variation was very much in vogue during the AVRO tournament in 1938. It's a solid variation where White tries to exercise pressure along the weakened c-file with a future Rc1. The world-renowned Russian chess trainer Mark Izriloich Dvoretsky (1947) has written that in openings like the Grünfeld White has an extremely wide choice. He's the one who determines the opening formation, and Black has to be prepared for everything.

[Normally Bf4 is played in conjunction with 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.♗f4 , but Petrosian probably didn't want Fischer to have happy memories from his youth when he played his immortal game versus Donald Byrne.]

4...♗g7

[An inaccuracy played in the 14th matchgame between Euwe and Alekhine, Holland 1935, is 4...♘h5?! .

EXERCISE: What is the problem with this move?

ANSWER: 5.♗e5 forces Black to weaken his position because of the unprotected pawn on d5. *(* Of course not, though, *5.♘xd5? ♘xf4 6.♘xf4 e5! 7.dxe5?? ♗b4+* and White has serious problems *)* . After 5...f6 6.♗g3 ♘xg3 7.hxg3 c6 8.e3 ♗g7 9.♗d3 White has a comfortable position and threatens 10 Rxh7. If Black sidesteps this with 0-0? White plays 10.♖xh7! anyway. This is actually what happened in the aforementioned game.]

5.e3

[The prophylactic move 5.♖c1 , to discourage ...c5, now allows ♘h5 harassing the bishop. A.Dreev-P.Leko, Wijk aan Zee 1996 continued 6.♗g5 h6 7.♗h4 dxc4 8.e3 ♗e6 9.♗e2 ♘f6 10.♘f3 c6 11.♘e5 b5 12.f4 ♘d5 .]

5...c5 It's logical to put pressure on the centre at an early stage since White is three moves from castling and Black only one.

[If Black plays the gambit line 5...0-0 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♘xd5 ♕xd5 8.♗xc7 ♘a6 9.♗xa6 ♕xg2 10.♕f3 ♕xf3 11.♘xf3 bxa6 White has an advantageous ending according to Alekhine with 12.0-0 , as in the game S.Flohr-M.Botvinnik, Amsterdam 1938. This is an incorrect evaluation. It's obvious that Black has enough compensation for the doubled a-pawns because of the bad cover of White's light squares.]

6.dxc5

[The primitive 6.♗xb8? ♖xb8 7.♕a4+ ♗d7 8.♕xa7 wins a pawn, but loses the dark-squared bishop and a lot of tempi. The queen is seriously misplaced on a7 and the centre is not stable. After cxd4 9.♕xd4 0-0 Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn, which was proved in the game J.Donner-F.Gheorghiu, Amsterdam 1969.]

6...♕a5 7.♖c1

[Of course, Petrosian wasn't interested in the forced draw, after losing the first game, arising from 7.cxd5 ♘xd5 8.♕xd5 ♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♕xc3+ 10.♔e2 ♕xa1 11.♗e5 ♕c1 *(* if Black wants to keep the game alive he may even play *11...♕b1!? 12.♗xh8 ♗e6 13.♕d3 ♕xa2+ 14.♔f3 f6 15.♗g7 ♘d7 16.♔g3 ♔f7 17.♗h6 ♘xc5 18.♕d4 ♕c2 19.f3 g5 20.h4 g4* with compensation, as in the 1999 correspondence game Kristensen-Sergel *)* 12.♗xh8 ♗e6 13.♕xb7 ♕c2+ with perpetual check irrespective of whether White plays 14.♔f3 *(* or *14.♔e1 ♕c1+)* 14...♕f5+ .]

7...♘e4 Fischer actually got this idea from the game S.Reshevsky-V.Hort, Palma de Mallorca 1970, where he himself participated.

[Kasparov and Rowson recommend instead 7...dxc4 8.♗xc4 0-0 9.♘ge2 ♕xc5 .]

8.cxd5

[In the above-mentioned game Reshevsky played the weaker 8.♘f3? ♘xc3 9.bxc3 ♗xc3+ 10.♘d2 .]

8...♘xc3 9.♕d2 Following Boleslavsky's recommendation. Before this game was played the opinion was that White had the advantage. Of course, neither Hort nor Fischer agreed about this conclusion.

♕xa2

[Better than 9...♕xc5? .

QUESTION: Why is this bad?

ANSWER: 10.♗h6! *(* notice that *10.♘e2?* is a mistake after *♕xd5! 11.♕xd5 ♘xd5 12.♖xc8+ ♔d7* and Black is fine *)*

A) 10...0-0 11.♗xg7 ♔xg7 12.♖xc3 with a clear advantage. *(12.--)*;

B) 10...♗f6 11.bxc3 and Black is a pawn down and unable to castle on the kingside. ;

C) 10...-- , and Black has problems no

matter what he plays:]

10.bxc3

[Nowadays a player like the American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura (1987-) plays 10.♖xc3 0-0 11.♗c4! ♕a1+ 12.♖c1 ♕xb2 13.e4 with the initiative for White.]

10...♕a5

[A.Karpov-G.Kasparov, World Championship (Game 5), London 1986, continued 10...♕xd2+ 11.♔xd2 ♘d7 12.♗b5 0-0 13.♗xd7 ♗xd7 14.e4 f5 15.e5 and now ♖ac8 would have regained the pawn, leading to a roughly equal endgame after 16.c4 ♖xc5 17.♗e3 ♖a5 18.f4 as in D.Rogozenko-Berndt, Sas van Gent 1992. Best now is ♖a2+ 19.♖c2 ♖a1 20.♗d4 ♖f1 21.♔e2 ♖xf4 22.♘f3 ♖g4 23.♔f2 and White has compensation for the pawn with his strong centralized position.]

11.♗c4

[The natural 11.e4?! supporting the centre just turns out to be a weak after ♘d7 followed by ...Nxc5. The black knight plays a very important role in this variation and should not be given any targets.]

11...♘d7! It's more flexible to threaten to recapture with the knight on c5 where it will stand on a good outpost exercising control of the light squares at e4, d3, b3 and a4. The knight will also harmonize well with the bishop on g7.

[11...♕xc5 has the disadvantage that it determines Black's set-up too early and make things easier for White after 12.♗a2 .]

12.♘e2

[Nowadays 12.♘f3 is regarded as the main variation]

[while 12.c6 is a harmless continuation after bxc6 13.dxc6 ♘c5 and now the natural developing move 14.♘e2 is an inaccuracy, giving Black the initiative after ♗a6 15.♗xa6 ♕xa6 .]

12...♘e5

[A more modern continuation is 12...♘xc5 13.0-0 with two variations:

A) 13...e5?! gives White a slight advantage after 14.dxe6 ♗xe6 15.♖a1 ♕d8 16.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 17.♖fd1+ ♔c8 18.♖a5! because it's not possible to play b6?? *(* so Black is forced to play the degrading *18...♗f8* , losing control of the long diagonal *)* , due to 19.♖xc5+ bxc5 20.♗a6# .;

B) 13...0-0 14.♘d4 and now e5 15.dxe6 ♗xe6! with equality looks convincing. The cornerstone of White's position is the knight on d4 which he likes to keep on the board as long as possible.;

C) 13...--]

13.♗a2 ♗f5? Fischer played this superficial move instantly, but it's a mistake.

EXERCISE: How should White continue?

[He should have played 13...♕xc5 trusting in his counterplay resulting from the passed a-pawn. The key to success in the Grünfeld is very often the ending. I.Farago-B.Filipovic, Banja Luka 1981, continued 14.0-0 *(* or *14.♗xe5 ♗xe5 15.♘d4* with a dynamic position in Inkiov-Donchev, Pernik 1980 *)* 14...0-0 15.c4 a5 with an exciting position.]

ANSWER: **14.♗xe5!** White eliminates the strong knight before it will create a chaos in his position.

[However, there is another interesting option, namely securing White the initiative with 14.e4!? ♗xe4 15.0-0 . The main tactical ideas is to win time and open up the position in combination with Ng3, utilizing the fact that Black's light-squared bishop has no good retreat square. After an exchange of knight and bishop, White exercises pressure on the e-file with Rfe1 and the black knight is rather unsafe, as are the pawn on e7 and the king on e8. If ♕xc5 16.♘g3 f5 *(* after *16...♗f5 17.♖fe1* White achieves his main goal *)* 17.♘xe4 fxe4 18.♖b1 ♘d3 19.♖xb7 ♗xc3 20.♕e3 ♕xe3 21.♗xe3 White has a slight advantage.]

14...♗xe5 15.♘d4! ♕xc5

[Black can't really avoid the exchange on f5 since 15...♗d7 is met by 16.c6 bxc6 17.dxc6 ♗c8 18.f4 ♗g7 19.0-0 keeping a great advantage according to Petrosian.]

[15...0-0 16.c6 is also annoying for Black.]

16.♘xf5 gxf5 17.0-0 ♕a5? The American Grandmaster Edmar Mednis (1937-2002) in his book How to Beat Bobby Fischer even put two question marks to this move which he regarded as the losing moment.

EXERCISE: Can you find the move which Petrosian thought was the most difficult move to find in the whole game?

[Instead, Mednis recommends a continuation where "the win is far out in the woods", by playing the pawn sacrifice 17...f4! 18.exf4 ♗d6 followed by queenside castling. It should be noted that Fischer wasn't the kind of player to give away

pawns without any specific reason. Of course Black is worse, but this defence appears to be more stubborn than the move actually played. Kasparov gives the following variation: 19.♖fe1 0-0-0 20.♖e4 ♔b8 21.g3 , stating that "it is not so easy to breach Black's position. The main thing is that, at the cost of a pawn, he has blocked the white centre and defended himself against a direct attack."]

ANSWER: **18.♕c2!** This beautiful small movement to a light square puts immediate pressure on the pawn at f5 and plans the future pawn advance c4-c5.

[18.♗b1 makes Black's defensive task a little bit easier after e6 .]

18...f4

[Stabilizing the position of the bishop with 18...♗f6 is met by a similar stabilizing move by White, threatening the pawn on f5. After 19.♗b3 ♖c8 White's other plan is set in motion with 20.c4 e6 21.c5 according to Techner.]

[Instead, 18...♖c8? loses immediately after 19.♕xf5 ♕c7 20.d6! exd6 21.♗xf7+ , breaking through.]

19.c4!

[19.exf4 ♗xf4 20.♖b1 ♕c7 21.g3 ♗d6 22.♕a4+ ♔f8 looks less convincing compared with the game.]

19...fxe3 EXERCISE: What is White's strongest move?

[If Black stops White's plan of playing c4-c5 with 19...b6 then 20.♕e4! ♗d6 21.♗b3! with the idea of 22 Ra1 and 23 Ba4+ leads to a position where Black is strategically lost. If Black's king seeks refuge on the queenside with 0-0-0 White will win with the beautiful pawn breakthrough 22.c5! bxc5 *(22...♗xc5* loses immediately to a second decisive pawn push: *23.d6! exd6 24.♖a1)* 23.exf4 . With two open lines on the queenside combined with pressure on the light squares it's just a matter of time before the game is over.]

ANSWER: **20.c5!** Petrosian shows a good feeling for timing.

[It's much more important to have the pawn duo on the fifth rank than to recapture the pawn with 20.fxe3 , which gives Black the opportunity to blockade after ♕c5 .]

20...♕d2

[20...exf2+ is answered by 21.♔h1! . If f6 *(* after *21...0-0 22.♗b1 f5 23.♕xf2* White wins by concentrating on an attack on the light squares *)* 22.d6! and Black's king is not safe anywhere.]

21.♕a4+ ♔f8 EXERCISE (calculation): What is White's most effective move?

[The king would be more in danger after 21...♔d8 22.♖cd1 :

A) 22...exf2+ 23.♖xf2 *(* not *23.♔h1? ♕h6 24.h3 ♕f4* when Black forces the exchange of queens and White has to fight for a draw *)* 23...♕h6 *(* Kholmov gives *23...♗xh2+ 24.♔f1 ♕h6 25.d6 exd6 26.♖xf7* with a win *)* 24.d6 ♕xh2+ 25.♔f1 and White has a winning attack.;

B) 22...e2 23.♖xd2 ♗xh2+ 24.♔xh2 exf1♕ wins an exchange, but Black cannot organize a defence after 25.d6 .;

C) 22...--]

ANSWER: The most effective move demands precise calculation.

22.♖cd1!

[Mednis suggestion 22.♖c2? doesn't work after exf2+ 23.♔h1 ♕d4! 24.♖c4! ♕b2! 25.♖e4 ♖g8 with a completely unclear position according to Kasparov.]

22...♕e2

[22...e2 loses after 23.♖xd2 ♗xh2+ 24.♔xh2 exf1♕ 25.d6 . Even with the king on f8, Black is lost because of the passive positions of his major pieces which are defend their king. e6 is now simply answered by 26.d7 .]

23.d6 White opens the classical diagonal for his bishop.

[The prophylactic move 23.g3 was later recommended by Petrosian as being even stronger, with the possible continuation ♔g7 24.d6 . However, as Kasparov has observed, the text move is not worse.]

23...♕h5! The strongest defence.

QUESTION: How should White now continue?

[Other alternatives are worse: 23...♗xh2+ hits thin air after 24.♔xh2 ♕h5+ 25.♔g1 e2 26.dxe7+ ♔g7 27.♖d4 *(* of course not *27.♖d3?? ♕h1+!* and Black wins both rooks *)* 27...exf1♕+ 28.♔xf1 ♕h1+ 29.♔e2 ♕h5+ 30.♖g4+ ♔f6 31.♕f4+ ♔xe7 32.♕d6+ ♔e8 33.f3! and Black must defend against Re4+ and Bb3-Ba4+.]

[23...exf2+ 24.♖xf2 ♗xh2+ 25.♔xh2 ♕xf2 26.dxe7+ wins by force: ♔g7 *(* Kholmov gives *26...♔xe7 27.♖d7+ ♔f8 28.♕c4!* and f7 falls *)* 27.♕g4+ ♔f6 28.♖d3 ♔xe7 29.♕d7+ ♔f8 30.♕d6+ ♔e8 31.♗b3 and Black will be mated.]

[23...exd6 24.fxe3 is decisive because Black can't allow ♖g8 25.♖xf7# .]
ANSWER: **24.f4!**
[24.dxe7+ ♔g7 and the amazing 25.fxe3!! ♗xh2+ 26.♔f2 also wins, but this isn't a variation any human would play.]
24...e2?
[More persistent is Kholmov's suggestion 24...♗f6 , even though Mednis's powerful 25.♖d5 holds a clear advantage after ♕g6 26.♕b3! ♖g8 27.g3 ♖e8 28.♖e1 according to Sullivan.]
25.fxe5 exd1♕ 26.♖xd1 ♕xe5 27.♖f1 f6
There's not much Black can do.
[Kholmov gives 27...♕xc5+ 28.♔h1 f6 29.♕b3 ♕h5 30.♕e6 and Black is defenceless. The four units attacking Black's king are too strong for the defence.]
[27...f5 doesn't help either after 28.♕c4 ♕f6 *(or 28...e6 29.♕h4)* 29.♕d5 and White has decisive threats on f5 and b7.]
28.♕b3 With the double threat of mating on f7 and taking on b7. **♔g7 29.♕f7+ ♔h6 30.dxe7 f5**
[Other hopeless variations are: 30...♖hg8 31.♗b1 ♖g6 32.♗xg6 hxg6 33.♕f8+ and White wins according to Robert Byrne.]
[Active play with 30...♔g5 in the spirit of Steinitz doesn't work after 31.♕g7+ ♔h5 32.♗f7+ .]
[30...♖ag8 is met by 31.♗b1 , winning.]
31.♖xf5 ♕d4+ 32.♔h1 . "Fischer, pale and soaked in sweat, stopped the clocks and extended his hand to Tigran on the 32nd move. The ovation that burst out in the hall greatly exceeded in both strength and duration the one after the first game. Tigre, Tigre - Tigran un Tigre! was the chant that filled the San Martin Theatre when Fischer resigned this game."
According to Petrosian, this was the greatest ovation he ever received anywhere. With this well-deserved win Petrosian managed to break Fischer's unbeaten streak of 20 wins. Games three, four and five were then drawn. What happened, though, in the four last games of the match, which were lost by Petrosian, still remains a mystery.
1-0

B11

□ **Planinc,A**
■ **Petrosian,T**
43: USSR vs. Yugoslavia, Ohrid 1972
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian played on board one in this match, drawing two games versus Grandmaster Borislav Ivkov (1933-), and winning both games against the imaginative Grandmaster Albin Planinc (1944-2008). Here's their second encounter.
1.e4 c6 The Caro-Kann Defence is normally a reliable weapon against players with a disposition for tactics and irrationality. **2.♘c3 d5 3.♘f3 ♗g4 4.h3 ♗xf3** It's very logical to exchange a bishop for a knight early in the opening when knights are actually stronger. This was GM Gennady Timoshchenko's conclusion after he had studied a database of 150,000 games.
5.♕xf3 e6 6.d3 ♘d7
[Van der Wiel's suggestion 6...♗b4!? 7.exd5 cxd5 8.♕g4 ♗f8! , when the white queen is misplaced, deserves attention.]
7.♗d2 ♗d6 8.d4! White seizes space and doesn't allow Black to play his pawn to d4.
EXERCISE: What would you play as Black?
ANSWER: **a6!?** Structurally speaking Black's a-pawn should stay on a6 to compensate for the lack of the light-squared bishop. Black's loss of time is not serious as long as White doesn't have the opportunity to open up the position. If White plays exd5, Black would recapture with the c-pawn. The knight on c3 is not ideally placed in this type of position.
[Most players would probably play 8...♘e7 , but Petrosian wasn't a normal player. This is one reason his games are impossible to emulate.]
9.0-0-0
[More flexible is 9.♗d3 , keeping the options to place the king on either wing.]
9...b5 10.♗d3 ♘e7 11.h4 ♕b6 12.e5
[A sound move is 12.♘e2 to keep the tension in the centre.]
12...♗c7 13.♕g4 EXERCISE (calculation): How should Black handle the threat to g7?
ANSWER: **h5!?**
[13...c5 is the most logical move, giving Black a central preponderance in the variation 14.♕xg7 ♖g8 15.♕xh7 cxd4 and e5 falls. However, the imaginative 16.♘xd5!? *(16.♘e2 ♗xe5)* 16...exd5 17.f4 may have been an idea to Planinc's liking

and Petrosian didn't like his opponent to feel he was like the fish in the water.]

14.♕xg7 ♖g8 15.♕h7 ♕xd4 16.f4 ♘c5 17.♖h3

[17.♗f1 keeps the pair of bishops while protecting both g2 and d3, but gives Black piece activity on the queenside with ♗a5! threatening ...Bxc3. If 18.♖h3 then ♗xc3 anyway because after 19.♖xc3 ♘a4 20.♖b3 c5 Black's activity outwits White's and the rook on b3 is slightly misplaced. Play might continue 21.♗e3 ♕e4 22.♕xe4 dxe4 23.♗f2 c4 24.♖e3 ♘f5 25.♖xe4 ♖c8 with compensation for the pawn deficit. Black's pair of knights are more active than White's pair of bishops.]

17...♘xd3+

[17...♖xg2? is a serious mistake after 18.♗e2! followed by 19 Bxh5 or 19 Be3.]

18.♖xd3 ♕f2 19.♗e3?

[Best is to force a rook exchange weakening the last rank in Black's position: 19.g3! ♖xg3 20.♖xg3 ♕xg3 21.♘e2! ♕g6 22.♕h8+ ♕g8 23.♕xh5 ♗b6 with an equal position.]

19...♕xh4 20.♘e4 Such a move is very typical of the original style of Planinc for, according to him: "The main thing in chess is ideas; rational calculation (perhaps of minor details) is of no importance."

EXERCISE (calculation): What is the flaw with White's tactics?

ANSWER: **♗xe5!**

[Planinc had set the trap 20...dxe4?! 21.♖d7 ♕g4 22.f5!! with serious practical chances. The main idea is ♕xf5?? 23.♖xe7+! ♔xe7 24.♗c5+ , winning.]

21.♘g5

[Black controls the game completely after 21.fxe5 ♕xe4 22.♕xh5 ♖xg2 .]

21...♗g7! The mistake beginning with 19 Be3 in combination with 20 Ne4 is typical of Planinc's weakness, relying on imaginative ideas rather than calculating with precision.

22.g3 ♕g4!

[A strong player automatically disregards the materialistic 22...♕xg3 on general grounds because there is no reason to avoid the move played which is in keeping with the principles of harmony.

Look, though, at this extraordinary computer variation after Black has captured the pawn: 23.♖g1 ♕h4 24.♘f3 ♕f6 25.♗d4 ♕xf4+ 26.♔b1 ♗xd4 27.♖xg8+ ♘xg8 28.♕xg8+ ♔e7 29.♕xa8 ♗e3 30.♕b7+ ♔f6 and Black wins the knight on f3, several pawns to the good. The white queen is misplaced and the knight on f3 can't be protected or move. An incredible position.

However, there is a flaw with this variation. The improvement is to be found earlier in the variation with 26 Kd1!! which gives White's knight the protection it needs because of 31 Ke2 at the end of the line. Chess is really inexhaustible when you look at such unhuman variations.]

23.♗d4 EXERCISE: What is Black's simplest answer?

ANSWER: **♕f5!** This is the pragmatic solution, inspired by the likes of Morphy and Capablanca and it's also according to the KISS principle (for those of you who don't know: KISS means keep it simple, stupid!), but it's not the best move.

[Objectively stronger is actually 23...e5!! 24.♗xe5 ♗xe5 25.♕xf7+ ♔d7 26.♖xd5+ cxd5 27.♖xd5+ ♔c8 , but who dares to play like this when there are simpler, less elaborate means available?]

24.♕xh5 ♗xd4 25.♖xd4 e5! Now is the right moment to emulate Philidor and send the pawns forward. **26.♖4d2 e4 27.♖e1**

EXERCISE: Can you guess Black's next move? Warning: it's difficult.

ANSWER: **♖c8!?** This is one of those moves of Petrosian which is difficult to explain, but one plausible idea is that he saw manoeuvres like ...Rc7, ...Nc8, ...Nd6 and ...Re7. However, they didn't happen in the game. What is of additional interest is that he's telling us he's happy with his king's position on e8 and this is another trademark of Petrosian, to let his king stay where it is. I don't know of any other great player except Petrosian who had his king on its original square for so many moves in so many games. It's quite rewarding to study Petrosian's games in this respect alone.

28.♔b1 ♕g6 29.♕h1

[29.♕h3 looks more active, but has the problem that the queen will hang on h3 after f6 30.♘h7 ♕xg3 31.♕h5+ doesn't alter the situation after ♕g6 32.♘xf6+ ♔f7 when Black nevertheless forces the exchange of queens. His task of deciding the game has then been made considerably easier.]

29...f6 30.♘h7

[The variation 30.♘e6 c5 actually illuminates one idea behind the mysterious rook move. If Petrosian really saw this (I

guess he did) before his 27th move we understand better now his incredibly deep insight into the position.]

30...♔f7

[Another win is 30...♖g7 31.♖h2 ♘g8 32.f5 ♕f7 followed by ...Rc7 and the knight is trapped.]

31.♖h2 ♘f5 32.♕g1 ♕xg3 33.♕a7+ ♔e6

34.♖hh1 e3 The idea is to secure the central e4-square for the black queen. **35.♕xa6 ♕xf4 36.♖hf1 ♕e4 37.♕b7 d4 38.♖g1**

[A fitting end would be 38.♕d7+ ♔xd7 39.♘xf6+ ♔e6 40.♘xe4 c5 .]

38...♘d6 39.♕b6 ♖xg1 40.♖xg1 e2!

[Petrosian wasn't interested in the banal conclusion 40...♕xh7 41.♕xd4 ♕e4 42.♕xe4+ ♘xe4 43.♖e1 ♖h8 and preferred to follow in the footsteps of Philidor, just marching the foot soldiers.]

41.♖e1 d3 42.cxd3 ♕xd3+

0-1

E14

□ **Petrosian,T**

■ **Karpov,A**

44: USSR Championship, Moscow 1973

[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian played against Anatoly Yevgenyevich Karpov (1951-) in fifteen serious games. He won one and lost one, while the rest of the games were drawn. Karpov's style has many similarities with Petrosian's outlook of how a game should be played. They both played logical chess with a preference for clear positional pressure combined with prophylaxis that lead to an advantageous endgame. However the main difference is that Karpov's style must be considered more active, particularly from the perspective of the openings.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.e3

Petrosian liked to play this variation, leading to a non-forcing manoeuvring game.

[He also played his own variation 4.a3]

[and the main variations starting with 4.g3 .]

4...♗b7 5.♘c3 ♗e7

[5...♗b4 is more active, transposing to the Nimzo-Indian Defence.]

6.♗d3 d5 7.0-0 0-0 8.♕e2 c5

[If 8...♘bd7 9.e4 with a slight advantage according to Kasparov, but Petronic's analysis goes dxe4 10.♘xe4 c5 11.♖d1 cxd4 12.♘xd4 ♘e5 13.♗c2 ♗xe4 14.♗xe4 ♘xe4 15.♕xe4 ♘xc4 16.♗f4 ♕d5 17.♕xd5 exd5 18.b3 and now:

A) 18...♘b2! 19.♖d2 ♗b4 20.♖xb2 ♗c3 21.♖ab1 ♗xd4 22.♖d2 ♗f6 *(22...b5)* 23.♖xd5 with a draw as the most likely outcome.;

B) 18...♘a3!? 19.♖ac1 ♗c5 20.♘c6 ♖fe8 21.b4 ♗f8 22.♖xd5 with an equal position in J.Petronic-S.Cvetkovic, Yugoslavia 1994. White went on to win after ♖ac8? *(22...b5* and the game is even *)* 23.♔f1 with a clear advantage.;

C) 18...♘a5!? with an even position.;

D) 18...--]

9.dxc5 dxc4

[Kasparov thinks Tal would certainly have played 9...bxc5 , leading to a more complicated game with hanging pawns. V. Korchnoj-H.Mecking, 11th matchgame, Augusta 1974, continued 10.♖d1 ♕b6 11.cxd5 exd5 12.b3 ♘bd7 13.♗b2 ♖fe8 14.♖ac1 ♗c6 15.♗b5 ♖ac8 16.♗xc6 ♕xc6 17.♕d2 ♘b6 with play for both sides. Karpov may not have been so fond of playing with hanging pawns as against them, but this was probably objectively speaking the best continuation.

After the game Karpov said he didn't understand where he went wrong. As Euwe once expressed, Petrosian is noted for his ability to build up a winning position almost imperceptibly. Maybe this was the first slight mistake which makes White's game easier to play compared with the aforementioned variation.]

10.♗xc4 ♗xc5 EXERCISE: What is White's best continuation?

ANSWER: Petrosian thought for 26 minutes on a simple and natural move.

11.e4! This opens the c1-h6 diagonal and threatens to take more space with e4-e5 followed by Ne4 with attacking chances on the kingside. In such symmetrical positions even the slightest difference of the e-pawns can be decisive for who will take the initiative.

♘bd7

[11...♘c6 is an alternative, but maybe Karpov didn't like the isolani arising after the plausible moves 12.e5 ♘d5 13.♘e4 ♗e7 14.♖d1 ♕c7 15.♗xd5 exd5 16.♘c3 ♘b4 17.♘d4 .]

12.e5! This formation is usually very advantageous to White when Black has castled short. Black doesn't have access to the f6-square anymore and White can operate

from the strong point e4 and develop all kinds of different attacks.

[Prior to this game 12.♗f4]

[or 12.♗g5 were the normal continuations.]

12...♗xf3?! This move is probably the reason 12 e5 didn't receive attention before this game, but Petrosian has done a very good job of calculation as will soon be seen.

[it's better to keep the bishop and play 12...♘d5 13.♘e4 ♗e7 .]

13.gxf3 ♘h5 14.♖d1 ♕e7 15.f4 g6 EXERCISE: Can you find the next short sequence of white moves?

ANSWER: **16.f5! exf5 17.e6!** This relatively forced variation must have been foreseen by Petrosian when he thought for 26 minutes on move eleven. He isn't a player who lets his king cover on g2 disappear without gaining anything in return.

♘df6 EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): How should White continue? Warning: this is extremely difficult.

18.exf7+

[ANSWER: 18.♗g5! is more in accordance with Petrosian's style in the perspective that it keeps the threat of exf7+ and creates a new one with Nd5. On the other hand, it demands the vision of an Alekhine to visualize the following beautiful variation: fxe6 19.b4!! ♗xb4 20.♗xe6+ ♔h8 21.♘d5 ♕c5 22.♖ac1 ♕a5 23.♘xf6 ♘xf6 24.♖c7 ♖ae8!! 25.♗f7 ♖xe2 26.♗xf6# .

Why didn't Petrosian go in for this when he's said to have studied romantic and combinative players like Mikhail Ivanovich Chigorin (1850-1908) and Alekhine? Euwe has written that Petrosian liked quiet positions and that Alekhine liked complicated positions, and these adjectives say something characteristic about their fundamental differences. Petrosian wasn't fond of taking risks and in this way his style resembled more the clear style of Capablanca. I think this position is a good example of choosing between two moves of relatively equal merit and one which is very revealing regarding style.]

18...♔g7 19.♕xe7 ♗xe7 EXERCISE: White has the two bishops and an open centre. The square on e6 is very weak. How should he continue?

ANSWER: **20.♘b5!** A good offensive move putting pressure on a7 while at the same time containing the tactical threat of Nc7. It also plans the positional manoeuvre Nd4-e6. Moves with multiple points are usually good moves.

[Moreover, the bishops can't do so much at the moment, since if 20.♗e3?! ♘g4 21.♗d4+ ♗f6 and Black has solved his problems.]

20...♖ac8? EXERCISE: What are the problems with this move?

ANSWER: This move has two disadvantages. Firstly, it leaves the a7-pawn undefended and, secondly, with the rook still left on f8 the Nd4-e6 manoeuvre will be a problem.

[20...♖fc8 was probably Karpov's last chance to save the game. After 21.♗b3 the most important thing is to prevent the knight from reaching the heart of Black's position. This can be done directly with ♗c5 *(* or indirectly with *21...a5 22.♘d4 a4 23.♗e6 ♖c5* . These variations give White no more than a slight edge. *)*]

21.♗b3 a6

[Black must choose between two evils: he can allow Nb5-d4 as in the game or he can sacrifice the a7-pawn and stop Nb5-d4 with 21...♗c5 , but after 22.♘xa7 ♖cd8 23.♗e3 ♗xe3 24.fxe3 ♘g4 25.♘c6 ♖xd1+ 26.♖xd1 ♘xe3 27.♖d6 ♘f4 28.♔f2 ♘g4+ 29.♔f3 ♘h3 30.♘d4 White should win anyway.]

22.♘d4 ♖xf7

[It's understandable Karpov couldn't stomach the thought of playing the miserable 22...♖h8 23.♗e3 ♘g4 24.♘e6+ ♔xf7 25.♗xb6 with a positionally lost position. All Black's pieces stand very badly and do not cooperate with each other.]

[Also 22...♔h8 loses after 23.♗h6 .]

23.♗e3 ♘g4 24.♗xf7

[24.♘e6+ ♔h8 25.♖ac1 ♖b8 26.♗xb6! is also good enough for a win.]

24...♔xf7 25.♖ac1 ♖c5 26.♔g2 It's very visible when you play through Petrosian's games that he adhered to the 'do not hurry' principle. When the opponent was deprived of counterplay, he aimed for simple strengthening moves before embarking on positive action. This is actually a psychological method of trying to induce weaknesses in the opponent's position. It's also a clever way to give camouflage to your real intentions.

♘hf6

[White should also win after 26...♘xe3+ 27.fxe3 ♘f6 28.♘c6 ♖xc1 29.♖xc1 ♗c5 30.♔f3 .]

27.♗d2 ♖d5 28.♗e1 The aim of this prophylactic move is protection of f2 and is also in the spirit of do not hurry. It's typical for Petrosian to think about defensive measures even when he has a technically won position.
a5?! When Petrosian shows he isn't in any hurry the opponent accordingly starts to make minor concessions. This unnecessary pawn move weakens the b5-square.
29.♘f3 ♖xd1 30.♖xd1 ♘e4 31.♘d2 ♘d6 32.b3 ♘e5 EXERCISE (planning): Can you suggest a general plan for White?
ANSWER: **33.♘b1!** Petrosian plays superbly with the knight in this game. White is refuelling at his last rank before energizing his minor pieces on the queen's wing. **♔e6** Black is well centralized, but it has no bearing on this position. **34.♘c3 ♘ef7 35.f3 ♗d8 36.♗f2 ♘c8** Black has overprotected the tactical weakness on b6, so White changes tack and concentrates on the middle of the board and the kingside. **37.♘b5 ♘cd6 38.♘d4+ ♔d7 39.♗g3 ♗e7 40.♔f1** There's no hurry. **♗f6 41.♘b5** The sealed move.
♗e7 EXERCISE: How can Petrosian improve his position yet further?
ANSWER: **42.h4!** The idea is to make it more difficult for Black to activate his pawn majority on the kingside. There is also another instructive idea which will be seen in a few moves.
♔e6 43.♘d4+ ♔d7 44.♔g2 ♗f6 45.♘b5 ♗e7 46.a4 h6?! EXERCISE: Black has made another concession. How did Petrosian exploit it?
[46...♔e6 is more stubborn, but doesn't hold in the long run after 47.♘d4+ ♔d7 48.h5 and Black's kingside falls apart.]
ANSWER: **47.h5!** This is the other idea referred to. Black's kingside pawns will be scattered and become new weaknesses.
gxh5
[47...g5 only keeps a weakness on h6 which White exploits with 48.♗f2 ♗d8 49.♘xd6 ♘xd6 50.♗d4 ♔e6 51.♗g7 ♘f7 52.♗xh6 and it's all over.]
48.♗f2 ♗d8 49.♘d4 White wins one of the pawns by force. **f4**
[49...♔e8 also loses a pawn after 50.♘e6 ♘c8 51.♘g7+ .]
50.♘e2 The game is definitely settled and the rest needs no further explanation. Just enjoy Petrosian's technique. **♔c6 51.♘xf4 h4 52.♘g6 ♘b7 53.f4 ♗f6 54.♖c1+ ♘c5 55.♔h3 ♘d6 56.♗xc5 bxc5 57.♘xh4 h5 58.♘f3 ♔d5 59.♖d1+ ♗d4 60.♘d2 ♔e6 61.♔g3 ♘f5+ 62.♔f3 h4 63.♘c4 ♗c3 64.♔g4 ♗b4 65.♖d3** . After seven hours of play Black finally resigned after finding himself unable to make a decent move. This was actually the only game Karpov lost during 1973.
1-0

B17

□ **Tal,M**
■ **Petrosian,T**
45: USSR Championship, Moscow 1973
[Thomas Engqvist]

Mikhail, Nekhemyevich Tal (1936-1992), the wizard from Riga, stunned the chess world when he became the youngest ever world champion by beating Botvinnik in 1960. He was only world champion for one year, though, after losing the return match, but he had already obtained much attention for his tactical genius and was followed by many admirers all over the globe.
Petrosian played Tal 45 times and the overall score was 23½ to 21½ in Petrosian's favour. Despite the fact that their playing styles were in stark contrast, they played 35 games which ended in a draw.
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♘d7 5.♗c4
[More common nowadays is the modern continuation 5.♘g5 ♘gf6 6.♗d3 e6 7.♘1f3 ♗d6 8.♕e2 h6 9.♘e4 ♘xe4 10.♕xe4 .]
5...♘gf6 6.♘g5 e6 7.♕e2 ♘b6 8.♗b3 a5
[After the greedy 8...♕xd4? 9.♘1f3 ♕b4+ 10.♗d2 ♕b5 11.c4 ♕c5 12.♘e5 ♗e7 13.♘gxf7 0-0 14.♘g5 White's more active position combined with the better pawn position gives him a clear advantage.]
9.a4
[The other options are 9.a3]
[or 9.c3 .]
9...h6 10.♘5f3 White must protect the d4-pawn. **c5 11.♗f4**
[A.Beliavsky-A.Karpov, Tilburg 1993, later continued 11.dxc5 ♘bd7 12.♘e5 ♘xe5 13.♕xe5 ♘d7 14.♕e2 ♗xc5 15.♘f3 b6 16.0-0 0-0 17.c3 ♕c7 18.♗e3 ♗a6 19.♗c4 ♗xe3 20.♗xa6 ♗c5 and Black was slightly better according to Karpov.]

11...♗d6
[This is more clever than 11...cxd4 12.0-0-0 ♘bd5 13.♗e5 ♗d6 14.♘xd4 0-0 15.♘gf3 b6 16.♘b5 ♗a6 17.♘fd4 ♗xe5 18.♕xe5 ♗xb5 19.♘xb5 ♕c8 20.♖d4 , as in W. Watson-M.Adams, London 1989, where the players agreed to a quick draw. Black keeps his options whether to play the c-pawn to c4 or take on d4 at a later moment.]
12.♗e5
[The former world champion Viswanathan Anand (1969-) has tried both 12.♘e5 followed by 13 Ngf3 and 14 Bg3 in the game V.Anand-B.Macieja, New Delhi 2000]
[and 12.♗g3 followed by 13 Ne5 in V.Anand-A.Karpov, Linares 1994. Such a constellation of the minor pieces as in the game indicates that White will instead develop his g1-knight to h3.]
12...0-0 13.0-0-0!?
[Ivo Nei's recommendation in Sovietskij Sport, 13.♘h3 , keeps Black guessing about the location of the white king.]
13...c4! 14.♗xc4 ♘xa4 15.♘h3 EXERCISE: How should Black continue the attack?
ANSWER: **♘b6**
[The natural continuation 15...♕b6!? 16.♗b3 ♗d7 is good too. Notice that 17.♗xf6 is answered by the extraordinary in-between-move ♖fc8!! .]
16.g4 Tal may have made the judgement that his own threats counterbalance Black's attack on the queenside. White actually manage to open lines before Black so his judgement seems about right.
a4 17.g5 hxg5 18.♘hxg5 a3 19.b3 EXERCISE: The position is extremely sharp. What are your suggestions of how Black should continue? It's important you understand where White's weak spot is located.
ANSWER: **♗b4** The square c3 is the weak point for Black to invade and the text move is what Tal may have overlooked or underestimated. The only question is whether Black should place a bishop or a knight there.
[An interesting move is 19...♘bd5 with some difficult practical problems for White to solve. In the game Petrosian chose the other attractive possibility.]
20.♖dg1? The first turning point in the game.
[Tal seems to have been able to keep a dynamic balance by playing 20.c3! . Look at the following relatively forced variations:
A) 20...♗xc3 21.♕d3 ♗b2+ 22.♔b1 g6 *(22...♘bd7!? 23.♖hg1* with complicated play *)* 23.♗xe6! ♗xe6 24.♘xe6 ♕e7 25.♖hg1 ♘bd5 26.♖xg6+! fxg6 27.♕xg6+ ♔h8 28.♘fg5! and a draw by perpetual check is inevitable.;
B) 20...a2 21.♔b2 ♗xc3+ 22.♔xc3 ♘xc4 23.♕xc4 ♘d5+ 24.♔b2 f6 25.♖hg1 fxg5 26.♖xg5 ♕xg5 27.♘xg5 ♖xf2+ 28.♔a1 ♘e3 29.♕c3 ♘c2+ 30.♔b2 a1♕+ 31.♖xa1 ♘xa1+ 32.♔b1 ♖f1+ 33.♔b2 ♖f2+ with perpetual check.;
C) 20...--]
20...a2!
[Tal may have hoped for the weaker 20...♗c3 with the following continuations: 21.♘e4! *(21.♕d3? a2 22.♔d1 a1♕+ 23.♔e2 ♘bd7* and Black is winning with his material preponderance *)* 21...a2 22.♘xc3 a1♕+ 23.♔d2 ♘xc4+ 24.bxc4 ♕xg1 25.♖xg1 ♘e8 when Black is only slightly better.]
21.♔b2 ♘xc4+ 22.♕xc4
[22.bxc4? loses quickly to ♕b6 .]
22...♘d5 23.♘e4
[The rook on g1 is overloaded after 23.♘xe6 a1♕+ 24.♖xa1 ♗xe6 .]
23...f6 24.♗f4? EXERCISE: Black can win a piece. How?
[24.♗g3 only prolongs the resistance a little bit after ♕a5! .]
ANSWER: **24...♗a3+ 25.♔a1 ♘xf4**
Sometimes chess is easy. The game concluded:
26.h4 ♖f7 27.♖g4 ♕a5
[Understandably Tal didn't want to see 27...♕a5 28.♖xf4 ♗b2+ 29.♔xb2 a1♕+ 30.♖xa1 ♕xa1# .
Petrosian shared second to sixth place in the 1973 Soviet Championship by winning four games and drawing 13. Spassky won with 11½ points.]
0-1

D27

□ **Uddenfeldt,D**
■ **Petrosian,T**
46: Nice Olympiad 1974
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian represented USSR in the Olympiad no less than ten times and his result was exceptionally solid. His score was 78 wins, 50 draws and only one loss to Robert Hübner,

and this astonishing feat was close to 80 per cent! Here he plays the solid Swedish amateur player Dan Uddenfeldt (1951-) on board three.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 e6 5.♗xc4 c5 6.0-0 a6 7.dxc5

[7.♕e2 is the main variation in the Queen's Gambit Accepted.]

7...♗xc5 8.a3

[After 8.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 Black king's is more centralized than its counterpart and has a safe refuge on e7.]

8...0-0 9.b4 ♗e7 10.♗b2 b5 11.♗e2

White doesn't mind a symmetrical game to put some slight psychological pressure on Petrosian who was the clear favourite to win the game.

♗b7 12.♘bd2 ♘bd7 13.♖c1 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a reasonable move to break the symmetry?

ANSWER: **♗d5** A good centralizing move which keeps some options regarding the development of the major pieces. **14.♘e5**

[The symmetrical 14.♗d4 would probably have been answered by ♕b8 , a scheme of development which is not available to White.]

14...♖c8 15.♗f3 Strong centralized pieces tend to be exchanged as Nimzowitsch wrote in his classic works. **♘xe5 16.♗xe5 ♕d7** Black clears the path for the kingside rook to come to d8 or c8. **17.♗d4** White seems to be playing without a plan, but that's not so for Black who has already achieved a slight advantage in development. **♖xc1 18.♕xc1 ♗xf3 19.♘xf3 ♖c8 20.♕b1 ♕c7** Black has finally managed to achieve control of the c-file and has the better bishop. In itself these microscopic or moral advantages are not decisive, but they will put pressure on White who from now on must play more precisely.

21.h3 ♕c2 22.♘e5?

[It's better to put pressure on the long diagonal with 22.♕a1 , preventing ...Ne4 and then following up with 23 Bb2 and 24 Rc1.]

22...♘e4 The problem for White is that the king's rook only has a defensive role. Now Black gradually takes over the game. **23.♘d3** EXERCISE: How should Black exploit his slight advantage?

ANSWER: **f6** Black makes White's minor pieces looking worse and worse.

[23...♘d2 may have been playable too, but I prefer the move played in the game which is more in the spirit of centralization, and above all Nimzowitsch. The continuation would then most probably have been 24.♕xc2 ♖xc2 25.♖d1 followed by Bc5 or if appropriate a3-a4. *(* Notice that *25.♖c1?* is a mistake after *♖xc1+ 26.♘xc1 ♘c4* and Black wins a pawn. *)*]

24.♗c5! Clearly the best defence for White, cutting the communication for Black's major pieces on the c-file. **♕xb1 25.♖xb1 ♖d8 26.♖b3** EXERCISE: How can Black keep the game alive?

♔f7?

[ANSWER: 26...♘xc5 27.bxc5 ♔f7 is the best continuation for Black, but in the game Petrosian made a mistake.]

27.f3?

[The simplest road to a drawn endgame is 27.♗xe7 ♔xe7 28.f3 ♘d2 29.♖c3 and White has nothing to fear except ghosts.]

27...♘xc5 28.bxc5

[28.♘xc5 loses a pawn after ♗xc5 29.bxc5 ♖d1+ 30.♔f2 ♖c1 , but that may have been the best practical chance anyway. After 31.♖d3 ♖xc5 32.♖d7+ ♔g6 33.♖a7 ♖c2+ 34.♔g3 ♖c3 35.♖xa6 ♖xe3 36.♖a5 White transposes to a well-known ending with four pawns versus three on the same wing with drawing chances.]

28...♔e8 29.♔f2 ♔d7 30.♔e2 ♖c8 31.a4

[The cooler defence 31.♖c3 is better, even though it's answered by a5 followed by ... Kc6 which doesn't look too inspiring for White.]

31...bxa4 32.♖a3 a5 33.♖xa4 ♖a8 34.f4 ♗f8 35.♔d2 ♔c6 36.♖e4 EXERCISE: How should Black proceed?

ANSWER: **a4! 37.♖xe6+ ♔d7 38.♖b6 a3 39.♖b1 ♔c6 40.e4 ♗xc5** Black's distant passed pawn, with the rook behind it, combined with the bishop versus knight advantage leaves White with an extremely difficult task.

41.♖c1! a2 42.♖xc5+ ♔b6 43.♖c1 a1♕ 44.♖xa1 ♖xa1 45.♔e3 ♔b5 46.f5?

[The last chance to stay in the game is 46.♔d4 , preventing Black's king invading White's position.]

46...♔c4 Now it's an easy win for Black with the penetrating king cleaning up. **47.♘f4 ♖a3+ 48.♔f2 ♔d4 49.♘e6+ ♔xe4 50.♘xg7 ♔f4** . A good technical win by Petrosian.

0-1

E81

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Visier Segovia,F**
47: Nice Olympiad, Nice 1974
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian played on board 4 and scored eleven wins and three draws. Here is one of the won games when USSR team met Spain. Petrosian played on board four in France where he scored eleven wins and three draws. In the following game Petrosian faces the untitled Spanish player Fernando Visier Segovia (1943-).

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4 ♗g7 5.f3 Petrosian was a dangerous player when he played with this broad pawn centre which is characteristic of the Sämisch variation. In his career he scored an amazing 37/44 with it, which equates to 84 per cent. He is one of the players to study in detail whether you play this variation with the white or the black pieces.

c6 6.♗e3 a6 Black is planning the soundly-based idea of expansion on the queenside with ...b5. A plan well-liked by famous players such as Petrosian, Botvinnik, Taimanov and Robert Byrne.

EXERCISE: How should White react?

ANSWER: **7.c5!?** A logical thrust in the style of Petrosian who tries to put an end to Black's ideas on the queenside and create a hole at b6.

[Earlier T.Petrosian-R.Byrne, Buenos Aires 1964, continued 7.a4 , but then Black should have continued with a5 , securing the b4-square for the knight.]

[Rapid piece development with 7.♗d3 b5 8.♕d2 *(8.e5 ♘fd7 9.f4* , reminding one of positions from the Four Pawns Attack, is sharper *)* , allows Black the fundamental plan of exchanging the b5-pawn for the c4-pawn and breaking in the centre with ...d5. M. Botvinnik-V.Smyslov, the 6th world championship game in 1958, continued 8...bxc4 9.♗xc4 d5 10.♗b3 when White had the better development and a strong centre.]

7...0-0

[If 7...b5 anyway the game D.Bronstein-M. Podgaets, USSR Championship 1974, continued 8.cxd6 exd6 9.♗d3 0-0 10.♘ge2 ♘bd7 11.0-0 with a slight advantage because of White's space advantage in the centre.]

8.♘ge2 a5?! The idea with this move isn't entirely clear.

[More to the point seems to be 8...♘bd7 when White manoeuvres with 9.♘f4 . It's presumably best to wait with the exchange on d6 until White is forced to. If Black plays b6 then 10.cxd6 is the right moment. The game S.Gligoric-M.Bertok, Zagreb 1955, continued exd6 11.♗e2 b5 12.0-0 with a slight advantage for White.]

9.cxd6

[9.♘f4 isn't the best move in this situation. Black can play dxc5 10.dxc5 a4! which closes the door on the queenside and opens a window for his dark-squared bishop.]

9...exd6 10.♘g3 ♖e8 QUESTION: How should White continue his development?

11.♕d2 A good developing move, securing the bishop on e3 and an additional bonus is that it might confuse Black whether White will castle on the kingside or the queenside.

[ANSWER: The problem with 11.♗e2 is that it leaves the bishop on e3 undefended. Black exploits this LPDO factor (the English Grandmaster John Nunn's acronym for 'Loose Pieces Drop Off') immediately with the liberating ♘d5! .]

11...b5 For the time being Black ignores development of his pieces. The problem is that it isn't easy to find a good plan associated with piece development.

12.♗e2 d5?!

[The second player missed the opportunity to aim for the opponent's pair of bishops with 12...♘bd7 13.0-0 ♘b6 , with the positional threat of 14...Nc4. In such a situation Black would be fine after Black wouldn't mind the weakening 14.b3 a4 with counterplay on the queenside.]

13.e5 ♘fd7 EXERCISE: Think for a few minutes and come up with the move you would play here.

ANSWER: **14.♗h6!?** This is really Petrosian in a nutshell. Typically for his style Petrosian waits with the clarification of his king's position to confuse the opponent and increase his own flexibility regarding development and plans. The move played is also a prophylactic one, intending to take the sting out of the possible manoeuvre ...Nb6-c4, forking queen and bishop.

It's important to understand why Petrosian played this instead of so-called normal moves available in the position like 14 0-0, 14 f4 or 14 Rc1. If you suggested one of these moves,

which focus on development or the centre, according to the classical rules in the first phase of a game, you are a normal chess player. However, Petrosian wasn't a routine player and he didn't play standard moves. Petrosian was an original and highly creative player who wanted to play logical chess.

[Actually all the normal moves mentioned above have their distinct disadvantages: 14.0-0 stops White's own attacking chances on the kingside]

[14.f4 if met by f5 makes the bishop on e3 similar to a big pawn]

[and 14.♖c1 concentrates on the queenside instead of the kingside, which is perhaps not so appropriate in this position. Hopefully we understand Petrosian's choice of move better now. Sometimes the seemingly wrong move on the surface is the right move when you scratch the surface and think outside the box.]

14...b4 15.♘a4 ♗xh6 16.♕xh6 ♗a6 Black's plan is to decentralize some of White's pieces and make a breakthrough in the centre where White's king still is located.

17.h4! When the white centre is secured, such attacks are standard as Steinitz showed in many of his model games. But how solid and safe is White's centre in this position?

♗xe2 QUESTION: Which piece should White recapture with? The knight or the king? ANSWER: **18.♔xe2?!** This looks like an inspiration from Steinitz who didn't mind playing an opening like 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Nc3 Qh4+ 4 Ke2, which is actually a variation in the King's Gambit called the Steinitz's Gambit. The main idea is to continue with Nf3 and Kf2 and play for the classical centre with pawns on d4 and e4. The variation is playable, albeit risky. Petrosian's recapture with the king is also risky. By the way, who said Petrosian didn't like to take risks?

[Objectively best is 18.♘xe2 c5 19.f4 cxd4 20.h5! g5 21.fxg5 followed by g6 with pressure on the black king.]

18...♘a6? Too slow.

[It's necessary to attack the base of the centre immediately with 18...c5 19.h5 ♕e7 when the position is double-edged.]

19.h5 ♘f8 20.♖ac1 The idea is to prevent Black from playing ...c6-c5 rather than taking the pawn on c6. The pawn in itself isn't important, but if it manages to advance to c5 and weaken the centre with cxd4 that's of course another story.

♖a7 EXERCISE: How ought White to continue after the rook nudge?

[More logical is the activation of the queen with 20...♕b8 21.♔f2 ♕a7 , even though White keeps lasting pressure after the natural moves 22.♕e3 ♖ac8 23.♖hd1 .]

21.♔f2

[ANSWER: The tactical but complicated (and therefore impractical in a game of chess) 21.♖xc6 is playable because ♕d7 22.♖hc1 ♘b8 23.♘b6 ♕b7 is answered by the surprising 24.♘f5!! *(* not *24.♖c8? ♕xb6 25.♘f5 ♕b5+ 26.♔f2 gxf5 27.♕g5+ ♔h8 28.♕f6+* and it's a draw by perpetual check *)* 24...gxf5 25.♖c8! , winning material by force. Petrosian, though, chose the most practical solution.]

21...♘e6?

[Better is 21...♕b8 , defending the c6-pawn indirectly.]

22.hxg6?!

[22.♖xc6 ♕d7 23.♖hc1 ♘b8 24.♘b6 is an even simpler win when Black can't ignore the possibility of Nxd5 and Nf6+. Apparently Petrosian had made the decision to ignore the pawn completely.]

22...fxg6 The road to h7 is conveniently covered along Black's second rank and the defence has become easier. **23.♖h4?!**

[23.♖xc6 is still the best move, controlling vital squares on the sixth rank. After ♕d7 24.♖hc1 ♘xd4 25.♘b6 ♕g7 26.♕xg7+ ♔xg7 27.♖d6 ♖xe5 28.♘xd5 White's pieces are the more active, putting Black on the defensive.]

23...♖c7?

[Better is the counterstroke 23...c5! 24.dxc5 ♖f7 when Black can hold on.]

[Black hopes for 23...♖c7 24.♖xc6? ♕xh4 25.♕xh4 ♖xc6 when the position is double-edged. Petrosian found a stronger move.]

24.♖g4! ♖f8?! EXERCISE (combination alert): How does White conclude the game? ANSWER: **25.♖xg6+! hxg6 26.♕xg6+ ♘g7**

[After 26...♖g7 27.♕xe6+ ♖ff7 28.♖xc6 ♕h4 29.♖c8+ ♔h7 30.♕h3 ♕xh3 31.gxh3 and with a knight and three pawns for a rook ,White wins fairly easy. Black's rooks have no coordination whatsoever.]

27.♖h1 ♖f4

[After 27...♕e8 28.♕h7+ ♔f7 29.♘f5 ♕e6 30.♘xg7 ♕g6 31.e6+ ♔f6 32.♘h5+ ♔g5 33.e7! Black can resign.]

28.♘h5 ♖cf7 29.e6 . By no means a faultless game, but a game which showed that even

Petrosian could embark on adventurous and risky chess.
1-0

B81

□ **Cardoso,R**
■ **Petrosian,T**
48: Las Palmas 1975
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian's opponent in this game was again the Philippine International Master Rodolfo Tan Cardoso, who we first met in Game 19.
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 This, the Scheveningen variation was first played in the game M.Chigorin-L. Paulsen, Berlin 1882. The variation got its name from the tournament in Scheveningen in 1923 where Euwe played it in two games against Maroczy and Spielmann.
The idea is to use the small centre for defensive measures. I remember a lecture by Sveshnikov in the Swedish town of Orebro where he said that this formation was the strongest for Black. His argument was that Black has five pawns to protect his king and he has dangerous counterplay on the c-file. Especially a positional exchange sacrifice on c3 is an important idea. Thus it should suit Petrosian like a hand in the glove.
6.g4 One of the most dangerous variations you must be prepared for when playing the Scheveningen is the Keres Attack. It was first put into practice by Panov in 1939, but was later adopted by Keres against Bogoljubow in Salzburg 1943. If you don't like this set-up with the black pieces you can avoid it with the move order 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 d6, but then you must like the Hedgehog positions arising after 5 Ndb5 d6 6 c4 Nf6 7 N1c3 a6 8 Na3.
a6 The idea is to play ...b7-b5 and ...Bb7, putting pressure on e4 and the long weakened diagonal as quickly as possible.
[Other important alternatives like 6...♘c6]
[and 6...h6 were also employed by Petrosian, but in most games he preferred the text move. Which move you choose here is a matter of taste.]
7.g5 ♘fd7 8.h4
[Development with 8.♗e3 is the most common move.]
8...b5 9.♗g2 ♗b7 10.h5 ♘c6! It's best not to let the knight on d4 stay unmarked for too long time.
[If Black continues the attack on the e4-pawn and ignores his development with 10...b4 11.♘ce2 ♘c5 12.♘g3 d5 White can take advantage of an early opening in the centre with 13.exd5 *(* after *13.g6 hxg6 14.hxg6 ♖xh1+ 15.♗xh1 dxe4 16.gxf7+ ♔xf7 17.♗e3 ♘bd7* Black has a stronghold on e4 *)* 13...♗xd5 , and then continue 14.0-0 ♗xg2 15.♔xg2 ♖a7 16.♗e3 ♖d7 17.♕g4 ♗e7 18.a3! bxa3 19.b4 ♘b7 20.♖xa3 with a difficult position for Black.]
11.a3 With this humble move White simply fixes the black pawn duo a6 and b5 for some time, so he can turn his attention to the kingside. **♖c8** Surprisingly Kasparov and Nikitin in their book Sicilian: ...e6 and ...d6 Systems wrote that this complicated position is favourable for White. **12.♖h3**
[12.g6? is too early and only helps Black with his development. He obtains the initiative after hxg6 13.hxg6 ♖xh1+ 14.♗xh1 ♘xd4 15.gxf7+ ♔xf7 16.♕xd4 ♕h4 17.♗g2 ♗e7 .]
12...♘xd4 13.♕xd4 ♖c4 14.♕e3 ♗e7 15.f4 e5 16.f5 h6 17.g6
[17.gxh6 ♗h4+ 18.♔f1 gxh6 followed by ... Bg5 gives Black undisputed control over the dark squares.]
17...fxg6 18.hxg6 EXERCISE: (calculation): What is Black's strongest continuation?
♘f6 A viable move putting pressure on the weak pawn at e4 and in accordance with Petrosian's style.
[ANSWER: This is a perfect position to work on for calculation. I bet a player like Tal would play 18...d5!! , giving rise to the following variations:
A) 19.♕e2 ♗h4+ 20.♔f1 d4 and Black's position is to be preferred. *(20...--)*;
B) 19.♘xd5 ♗h4+ 20.♔f1 ♗xd5 21.exd5 0-0 and Black's attack is too strong.;
C) . Likewise, 19.exd5 0-0 with a strong attack; ...Bh4+ and ...Rxf5 is in the air.;
D) 19.--]
19.♗d2?
[19.♕e2 is necessary in order to answer ♕a8?! with 20.a4 .]
19...♕a8 Now Black has an easy game with strong pressure on the e4-pawn. **20.0-0-0?** Giving away a pawn for nothing.
[Better is 20.♗f1 ♖d4 21.♕g1! and White wins the exchange by force after 22 Be3. However, Black can sacrifice the positional

exchange himself with ♖xd2! 22.♔xd2 and after ♘xe4+ 23.♘xe4 ♗xe4 24.♗d3 0-0 he has more than enough compensation.]

20...♘xe4 21.♗xe4 ♗xe4 22.b3 ♖d4 23.f6

[Maybe Cardoso overlooked 23.♘e2 ♕c6! 24.♘xd4 exd4 . The c-file really is the lifeline of the Sicilian Defence as Polugaevsky used to say in his famous books.]

23...♗xf6 24.♖e1 d5 The only move.

[24...♗xg6?? doesn't work after 25.♕xd4 . With the king on e8 Black must be careful.]

25.♘xe4 ♖xe4 26.♕c5 ♖xe1+ 27.♗xe1 ♔d7?!

[27...♗e7! is more precise. Only after 28.♕b6 *(if 28.♕c7 ♗g5+ 29.♔b1 0-0)* , does Black need to play 28...♔d7 .]

28.♗b4 ♕c6 29.♕a7+ EXERCISE: How does Black defend against the queen check?

[ANSWER: Necessary is 29.♕a7+ ♕c7 30.♕xa6 ♖b8 with a clear advantage for Black since White can't avoid the queen exchange with ...Qb6. In the game Petrosian nearly committed suicide.]

29...♔e6?? EXERCISE: It's White to move and win! Can you beat Petrosian in an Olympiad game from this position? Remember that he only lost one Olympic game out of 129.

30.♖g3??

[ANSWER: 30.♖h5! threatens mate in one with 31 Qf7. Black is forced to answer ♕e8 , but then White easily wins after 31.♕xa6+ . Always think about controlling escape squares when you are trying to checkmate the opponent's king! 30 Rh5! is a good illustration of this idea.]

[30.♕f7+? is less good as ♔f5 31.♖c3 secures only an equal game. This game was one of Petrosian's lucky one.]

30...e4?!

[30...d4 prevents Rc3 more effectively.]

31.♕f7+? This useless check only helps Black to improve his king position.

[After 31.♖c3! ♕e8! Black is clearly on top. *(* Note that *31...♗xc3??* leads to a forced draw by perpetual check after *32.♕f7+ ♔e5 33.♗xc3+ d4 34.♕xg7+ ♔f5 35.♕f7+ ♔e5 36.♕g7+ .)*]

31...♔e5?!

[Correct is 31...♔f5 .]

32.♖c3

[32.♗f8 leads to an amusing variation after the exchange sacrifice ♖xf8! 33.♕xf8 ♔f4 34.♖g2 *(or 34.♕b8+ ♗e5 35.♖g4+ ♔f5)* 34...♔f3 35.♖h2 ♕c7 and Black has a deadly mating attack with White's queen out of play.]

32...♕e6 33.♖c7 ♔f5? This position isn't so easy for a human to handle, not even for a player of Petrosian's calibre.

EXERCISE (critical decision/calculation): What is White's best continuation to fight for the draw after 33...Kf5? Warning: this is difficult.

[Better is 33...h5 34.c4 *(34.♖d7 ♖e8! 35.♗c3+ ♔f4* and Black is winning *)* 34...bxc4 35.bxc4 and now the unbelievable ♕f5!! gives Black a clear advantage. In this variation after 36.♕xd5+ ♔f4 it is striking that White's rook cannot reach the black king.]

ANSWER: **34.♖d7! ♖e8 35.♖d6**

[It's important to avoid lines where Black can place his queen on e5 as in the following line: 35.♖xd5+ ♔g4 36.♖d6 ♕e5 37.♕d7+ ♔h4! and Black wins.]

35...♕c8 EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): The picture is a little bit clearer now. What is White's best continuation?

36.♖xd5+?

[ANSWER: Best is 36.♖xf6+! gxf6 37.g7 with the threat of 38 Bf8. Black is forced to play ♖g8 38.♗f8 ♕e6 39.♕h5+ ♔f4 40.♗d6+! ♔e3 41.♕xh6+ and White has perpetual check.]

[However, not 36.♕xd5+? ♔xg6 and Black wins, while a third continuation was played in the game.]

36...♔g4? The position is too complicated for practical chess.

[A better attempt to win is 36...♖e5 37.♖d6 ♖e6 38.♖d5+ ♔g4 39.♖d7 ♕c6 40.♖c7 ♕d5 41.♖d7 ♕e5 42.♗c3 ♕f5 and Black should win.]

37.♖d1?

[White had a forced draw with 37.♖d6! :

A) 37...♔f5 38.♖xf6+ gxf6 39.g7 ♖g8 40.♗f8 ♕e6 41.♕h5+ ♔f4 42.♗d6+ ♔e3 43.♕xh6+ with perpetual check.;

B) 37...♖e7? 38.♖xf6! ♖xf7 39.gxf7 gxf6 40.f8♕ ♕xf8 41.♗xf8 h5 42.c4 and White is winning. *(42.--)*;

C) 37...--]

37...♕e6 38.♖g1+ ♔h3

[38...♔f3 is also good enough to win.]

39.♕a7 e3 40.♕b7 ♕e4 41.♕d7+ ♖e6

[41...♔h2 also wins]

[but not 41...♕e6?? 42.♕d3 when White

wins.]
42.♕d1 e2 43.♕e1 ♕e5 44.♖h1+ ♔g4 45.♕g1+ ♔f5 46.♕f2+ ♔xg6 47.♖g1+ ♔f7 48.♖e1 ♔g8 The king is back home again after a great adventure. **49.♔d2 ♗g5+**
[49...♕g5+ 50.♔d3 ♕d5+ is an even quicker win.]
50.♔d3 ♕d5+ . A game full of mistakes, but a very entertaining one considering the activity of the black king.
0-1

D41

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Peters,J**
49: Lone Pine 1976
[Thomas Engqvist]

In March 1976 Petrosian played an open international tournament with 57 competitors and won it with four wins and three quick draws in his last three black games. After beating James Sherwin with the black pieces in the first round he had to face the American player John A. Peters (1951-), who was to become an International Master three years after this game.
1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 c5 3.g3 ♘c6 4.♗g2 e6 5.♘f3 ♗e7 6.d4 d5 7.cxd5 ♘xd5 8.0-0 0-0 9.♘xd5 exd5 10.dxc5
[The variation 10.♗e3 is best met by c4 .]
10...♗xc5 11.a3 a5?! This stops White from his planned queenside expansion with b2-b4, but weakens the b5-square. Chess would be a completely different game if the pawns were able to move backwards.
EXERCISE: How does White increases the harmony within his position?
[More solid is to keep the pawn on a7, according to the principles of Steinitz that you don't weak your wing pawns unnecessarily. The game L.Spassov-V. Tukmakov, Plovdiv 1983, continued with the natural 11...♗f5 12.b4 ♗b6 13.♗b2 ♖e8 14.e3 ♗e4 15.♕b3 ♕d7 16.♖ad1 ♖ad8 17.♖d2 ♕f5 18.♘h4 with a balanced position.]
ANSWER: **12.♘e1!** This increases the radius of action of both the bishop and the knight (at d3). In the opening and the middlegame, your own pieces are in the way of each other, so it's of utmost importance to create conditions for maximum harmony between the pieces. On this topic alone we can learn a lot from Petrosian who was particularly skilled in the art of manoeuvring his pieces.
d4!? When Black moves the isolated pawn to the fifth rank he increases his space advantage and puts more pressure on the pawn on e2. At the same time it can be more difficult to defend the isolani, particularly in the endgame, since it's closer to the enemy territory.
[Mednis and Peters analyse the alternative 12...♗e6 13.♘d3 ♗d6 14.♘f4 *(* or *14.♗f4 ♗e7 15.♖c1 ♕b6)* 14...♗xf4 15.♗xf4 ♕b6 with an equal game.]
13.♘d3 ♗b6 14.♗d2 ♖e8
[The seemingly natural move 14...a4?! weakens the pawn on a4 and the square b4, as can be seen in the variation 15.♘f4 ♖e8 16.♖c1 ♗g4 17.h3 ♗e6 18.♘xe6 ♖xe6 19.♖c4! ♕d7 20.♖e1 ♘e5 21.♖b4 with pressure on the pawn at a4, the bishop at b6 and the pawn at b7.]
15.♖c1 ♗g4 16.♖e1 ♖c8
[Or 16...♕d7 17.♕b3 ♗a7 18.♘f4 with a distinct slight advantage for White.]
17.h3 ♗f5 18.♕b3 ♗e4
[18...♘e5!? may have been answered by 19.♘f4 followed by Nd5 with a solid, slight advantage.]
19.♗xe4 ♖xe4 20.♕b5 ♘a7 Too passive.
[It's better to play a useful waiting move like 20...h6 , giving the black king an escape hole on h7 and taking away the g5-square from White, just to see what White is up to. With the black pieces Petrosian would probably have played like this.]
21.♖xc8 ♘xc8
[21...♘xb5? 22.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 23.♘c5 ♖e7 24.♘b3 is an illustrative variation showing how weak Black's pawns can become in an endgame. White wins either the a-pawn after a4 *(* or the d-pawn after *24...b6 25.a4)* 25.♘c5 .]
22.♗g5 ♕d6 23.♖c1 ♘a7 24.♕f5 ♖e8 25.♗f4 ♕d8 EXERCISE (calculation): How should White continue?
26.♖c2?!
[ANSWER: White has the initiative and should have continued with irritating small threats like 26.♘e5! ♕d5 *(* if *26...f6? 27.♘d7* with a big advantage *)* 27.g4 f6 *(* not *27...g6* because of the extraordinary move *28.♘d7!!* with good winning chances *)* 28.♘d7 ♕xf5 29.gxf5 ♗d8 30.♔f1 and White has a slight advantage in the endgame because of his more active

position. In the game a more quiet move was played giving Black the opportunity to equalize the game.]

26...♘c6

[26...g6 is an important in-between move before playing the knight to c6. Now White can place the queen on the active square b5.]

27.h4! h6 28.♕b5 ♘a7 29.♕f5 ♘c6 EXERCISE (planning): Can you find the correct plan for White? Warning: this is not an easy one if you are not familiar with the theme.

ANSWER: **30.♔f1!!** The prelude to a plan involving the transfer of the king to the queenside. In such a situation White will be excellently prepared for a break on the kingside with g4-g5.

♖e6 31.♕b5 ♘a7 32.♕b3 ♘c6 In principle Black can only wait while White improves his position according to the method of gradualism. **33.h5!** This stops a pawn configuration from Black's side with ...h6-h5 and ...g7-g6. **♘e7 34.♔e1 ♘d5** The knight can't really do anything useful on this central square and only confirms Black's lack of useful moves. **35.♕b5 ♘f6**

[35...♘xf4 36.♘xf4 leads to a changed state of affairs ,but White still keeps his nagging edge.]

36.♔d1 ♘d5 37.♗e5 ♘e7

[37...f6 38.♗f4 only results in an undefended rook and a weak square on g6. This is exactly what Petrosian is playing for.]

38.g4 ♘c6 39.♗g3 ♘a7 40.♕b3 ♘c6 41.♔c1 ♖e4! Black wants to provoke White to play f2-f3, so a weakness on e3 will arise on its own accord. **42.f3 ♖e3 43.♔b1 ♘e7?** EXERCISE: How can White exploit Black's mistaken knight retreat?

ANSWER: The theme of putting pressure on the diagonal h4-d8 is also the idea behind Petrosian's variation in the King's Indian Defence.

44.♗h4! ♕d6 45.♗xe7

[45.♕b5 keeps the tension in the position and is also strong. The advantage with the text move is that Black is stuck with his bad bishop giving White a clear positional edge.]

45...♖xe7 46.♖c8+ ♔h7

[46...♗d8 47.f4 followed by a knight jump to e5 secures the advantage, and if ♖c7 White naturally avoids the exchange with 48.♖a8 , keeping pressure on the last rank.]

47.♖f8 ♕c7 EXERCISE: What is White's most effective continuation to win the game?

48.f4

[ANSWER: The most effective is 48.g5!! with the threat of 49 g6+. It forces g6 *(48...hxg5 49.♕d5* with the threat of 50 Qf5+ wins immediately *)* 49.hxg6+ ♔xg6 50.gxh6 ♔xh6 51.♕d1 and Black cannot escape the attack from White's major pieces and knight. Three pieces are normally enough to create serious problems for a king. The move Petrosian played keeps the advantage, but is slower.]

48...♗c5?

[Better is 48...g6 to disturb White's intentions somewhat.]

49.♕d5 White can win as he pleases.

[Another option is 49.♘e5 ♖xe5 50.♕c2+ g6 51.hxg6+ fxg6 52.fxe5 with a win]

[or the simple 49.♘xc5 ♕xc5 50.♕d3+ g6 51.♖xf7+ ♖xf7 52.♕xg6+ ♔h8 53.♕xf7 and wins.]

49...♖e5 50.♖xf7

[50.♕c4 is also good, pinning the bishop. A good technical win by Petrosian. The manoeuvring with the king all the way to the queenside followed by the attack on the kingside is very instructive.]

1-0

B82

□ **Tisdall,J**
■ **Petrosian,T**
50: Hastings 1977
[Thomas Engqvist]

In Hastings 1977-1978 Petrosian played the American (later Norwegian) player Jonathan D. Tisdall (1958-) ,who was to became a Grandmaster in 1995. He has written a very interesting book called Improve your Chess Now (1997), where he introduced the stepping-stone method in connection with the calculation of variations.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♗e3

[The dangerous Keres Attack with 6.g4 was discussed in Game 47.]

6...a6 7.f4 b5 The most consistent move and one in the spirit of the Polugaevsky variation which follows up 6...a6 with an immediate 7... b5.

[However, 7...♕c7 , retaining the possibility

of transposing into the Classical Scheveningen with the knight on c6, is also possible.]

8.♕f3

[Keres considered 8.e5 dxe5 9.fxe5 ♘d5 10.♘xd5 ♕xd5 11.♗e2 ♕xe5 12.♕d2 profitable for White, but after ♗b7 13.♗f4 ♕c5 14.0-0-0 ♗e7 15.♘b3 ♕c8 16.♗d6 ♕d8! White couldn't break through and even got the worse position in A.Gipslis-G. Sigurjonsson, Amsterdam 1976.]

8...♗b7 9.♗d3 ♘bd7 10.0-0 EXERCISE: How should Black continue?

[If White plays the most aggressive continuation 10.g4 , Black can reply very energetically and counter immediately in the centre with b4 11.♘ce2 e5! 12.♘b3 *(12.♘f5* is also answered by *d5!)* 12...d5! . Kasparov and Nikitin analyse 13.♘g3 ♕c7 14.g5 ♘xe4 15.♘xe4 ♖c8 16.♘g3 d4 17.♗e4 ♗xe4 18.♕xe4 dxe3 19.0-0-0 with approximately equal chances. Play may continue ♘c5 20.♘xc5 ♗xc5 21.fxe5 ♕c6 followed by the break ...h7-h6.]

ANSWER: **10...♖c8!** Amazingly both Kasparov and Nikitin and the Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings don't mention this natural move which is according to the true spirit of the Sicilian Defence.

[The move seems more logical than the routine 10...♘c5 which only places the knight in the way of a rook on c8 and disturbs the harmony in Black's position.]

[A third move, 10...b4 , is also difficult to motivate since it only helps White to regroup his pieces after 11.♘d1 *(or 11.♘ce2)* 11...♘c5 12.♘f2 ♗e7 13.g4 d5 14.e5 ♘fe4 with an equal game in J.Tisdall-M. Diesen, New York 1976. This is not the way Petrosian played chess.]

11.a3 A success for Petrosian's style because White is preventing ...b5-b4 which has been in the air for some time. The trick is to wait and only play such a move as ...b5-b4 when a clear reason for it can be find. In the meantime the opponent will sometimes prevent it and then you earn a move for other operations or mini-plans.

♗e7 12.♖ae1

[Notice that Petrosian has already prevented the typical attacking move 12.g4 with the thematic exchange sacrifice ♖xc3 13.bxc3 ♘c5 , winning the central pawn on e4. This is one of the most important motifs in the Sicilian to keep in mind. Of course, such a method is stronger when White has ruined his kingside with a move like g2-g4.]

12...0-0

[This is more flexible than 12...♘b6 , with the idea of 13...Nc4, which may have been answered by the flank attack 13.g4 when the exchange sacrifice isn't so effective anymore because of the reduced pressure on e4. A double-edged position would have arisen after ♘c4 14.♗xc4 ♖xc4 15.g5 ♘d7 16.f5 ♘e5 .]

13.♕h3 EXERCISE: This is the most interesting situation in the game. What is your suggestion for Black?

ANSWER: **♔h8!?** An extraordinary move, retaining maximum flexibility. Possibilities like ...Nc5, ...Rc8 and ...e6-e5 are left in the position and the opponent has to think about all these possibilities. Such cool waiting moves put tremendous psychological pressure on the opponent. As a matter of a fact, this is also an example of a kind of super prophylactic move since Black once and for all eliminates sacrifices on e6 with check which would be a possibility when he plays ... Nc5 and captures on e4 with the king still on g8.

[Most players would probably play the natural 13...♘c5 with the fundamental idea that 14.e5 dxe5 15.fxe5 ♘xd3 16.exf6 ♗xf6 loses for White. However, the overall idea is not clear and it limits the power of the queen's rook.]

[Also the double-edged exchange sacrifice 13...♖xc3!? is playable. After 14.bxc3 ♘c5 15.e5 dxe5 16.fxe5 ♘fe4 Black appears to have enough compensation because of White's scattered and weak pawns.]

14.♘f3 Preparing e4-e5.

[Notice that 14.e5 immediately doesn't work because of dxe5 15.fxe5 ♘xe5 16.♖xf6 ♘xd3 .]

14...e5 The safest move despite the fact that d5 and f5 are weakened, but those squares are not easy to exploit.

[The exchange sacrifice 14...♖xc3 15.bxc3 ♗xe4 16.♗d4 leads to a double-edged position probably not according to Petrosian's style.]

15.♘h4 EXERCISE (critical decision/ calculation): How should Black react to the positional threat of Nf5?

g6

[ANSWER: There are three possibilities of equal merit: 15...♘g4!? 16.♕xg4 *(* if *16.♘f5*

♘*xe3* followed by 17...exf4 and Black has no problems *)* 16...♗xh4 17.g3 ♗f6 and Black is fine.]

[15...exf4!? 16.♗d4 ♘e5 17.♘f5 ♘g8 with the idea to neutralize the f5-knight with ...Bg5 and ...Ne7.

Both these suggestions are playable, albeit compromising, mainly because of the capture ...exf4. The advantage with the third possibility, the move Petrosian chose, is that it keeps the central structure of the position and it's not clear how White can exploit the drawbacks, like the weakened dark squares or the possibility of a break with f4-f5.]

16.fxe5 It looks illogical to release the tension in the centre and help Black to centralize his knight.

[16.f5 puts pressure on the g6-pawn, but it's handled with ♘h5! , threatening the knight on h4 and nullifying the threat on g6.]

[Instead, 16.♘f3 keeps the tension in the centre.]

16...♘xe5! 17.♗d4 ♘fd7 18.♘f3 ♗f6 Petrosian follows the famous device by Nimzowitsch and overprotects his most important strategical point e5. **19.♗e3 ♔g8 20.♘d4 ♗g7**

[20...♘c5!? 21.♖d1 h5! secures an outpost on g4 for the centralized knight and is another set-up for Black's minor pieces.]

21.♖d1 ♘b6 22.♘f3?

[A better try is 22.♗h6 , even though ♕d7 results in exchanges accentuating the weaknesses of White's dark squares.]

22...♘bc4

[22...♘ec4 23.♗g5 ♕c7 is also a strong continuation.]

23.♗xc4

[If 23.♘xe5 ♗xe5 24.♗xc4 ♖xc4 and Black's advantage is undisputed.]

23...♖xc4!?

[Petrosian has other plans for his knight rather than playing the natural 23...♘xc4 .]

24.♘d4?

[24.♘d2 ♖c8 25.♗d4 puts up tougher resistance.]

24...h5! 25.♔h1 ♘g4 26.♗g1 ♖e8 27.♕f3 f5 . Tisdall had had enough of the game and resigned. In this Hastings tournament Petrosian shared second and third place with Sax. He won five games and drew nine. Dzindzichashvili won with 10½ points.

0-1

A87

□ **Petrosian,T**

■ **Kaiszauri,K**

51: Vilnius 1978

[Thomas Engqvist]

In July and August 1978 an international tournament in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, was arranged. Tukmakov won with 10½ points and Petrosian was second with six wins, one loss (versus Beliavsky), and eight draws. Here he plays the talented Swedish player Konstanty Kaiszauri (1952) who unfortunately later abandoned chess for a career in another field.

1.d4 d6 2.g3 f5 Petrosian always had good statistics against the Dutch Defence. In his whole career he played 21 games against it, winning 14 and drawing 7. That is an impressive 83.3%.

3.♗g2 ♘f6 4.♘f3 g6 The Leningrad variation was one of Kaiszauri's specialities and he beat Mark Dvoretsky in the second round with this variation. **5.b3 ♗g7 6.♗b2 0-0 7.0-0 ♘e4 8.c4 ♘d7 9.♕c2 ♘df6**

[9...c6 is a more flexible move, keeping options open and planning only to transfer the knight to f6 when it's strictly necessary.]

10.♘bd2 e6 The idea is that Black replies with ...e6-e5 if White plays d4-d5. **11.♘e1 ♘xd2**

[If Black plays a Stonewall structure with 11...d5 , White can achieve an ideal set-up with his knight-pair by playing 12.♘df3 followed by Nd3, Nfe5 and following up with f2-f3, driving away the enemy knight.]

12.♕xd2 ♕e7 13.♘d3 Normally if Black succeeds in playing his pawn to e5 he has equalized, but now White has prevented it and therefore has a slight advantage. Black still has to solve the problem of his bishop on c8.

♖d8 X-raying the white queen on d2 and the positional threat 14...e5 is now on the agenda again.

[The superficial 13...♘e4 only improves White's position after 14.♕e3]

[while Kotov's recommendation 13...♘d7!? intending ...e6-e5 gives White a free hand in the centre after 14.e4 fxe4 15.♗xe4 followed by Rae1 and f2-f4.]

14.♖ad1 EXERCISE (calculation): Is 14...e5 playable anyway?

[ANSWER: 14.♖ad1 e5? fails to the forced sequence 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.♗xe5

(Kotov's recommendation runs *16.♕b4?! ♕xb4 17.♘xb4* , but after *♖xd1 18.♖xd1 e4!* White has only a slight advantage *)* 16...♖xd3 and now the in-between move 17.♗xf6! ♖xd2 18.♗xe7 with a clear advantage to White. It doesn't help Black that he can secure material equality with ♖xe2 . The problem is 19.♗d5+ ♗e6 , losing his pawn on b7 *(* because *19...♔h8* is answered by *20.♗c5* when Black is completely lost. White threats the simple 21 Rfe1, and if *c6* then *21.♗xc6 bxc6 22.♖d8+* and it's all over. *)*]

14...c6 QUESTION: Which square does the white queen belong on?

ANSWER: Petrosian placement of the queen isn't easy to comprehend. He played:

15.♕c1!? We have seen such queen moves before in Petrosian's games, like his 19... Qe8!? instead of the normal 19...Qf8 in Game 18 against Keres. If Nimzowitsch became famous with his idea of the mysterious rook move, Petrosian might be the inventor of the mysterious queen move. One common theme with the moves 19...Qe8!? and 15 Qc1!? is that it's clear the queen normally belongs on f8 and c2 in the respective positions. It's as if Petrosian wants to play his patient slow-motion chess and the reward he obtains is a confused opponent who tries to figure out what he's doing with the queen.

♗d7 Black has managed to develop his bishop, but it still looks like a big pawn.

16.♖fe1 ♕f8 Apparently Kaiszauri wants to place his queen in a similar manner to Petrosian. This is just a psychological ploy where Black maybe offering a draw silently. The diagonal c1-h6 is not important for either player. In this position White doesn't need to worry about ...g6-g5 because Black's rooks have the wrong locations for a kingside attack.

17.a4

[17.c5 changes the structure of the game and also its pace. Petrosian normally didn't play chess like this. He prefers to wait and see what Black is up to.]

17...h5 It really looks like Black is doing some kind of mimicry on the opposite wing. Of course Petrosian wouldn't mind a pseudo attack which weakens the pawn on g6.

EXERCISE: How should White exploit Black's play?

18.♕c2!? This whole idea of first playing the queen to c1 and then to c2 is typical Petrosian. He keeps all his options open and invites further mistakes from Black, instead of forcing the game which would make it easier for Black to find the correct moves. Incidentally this is also a subtle way of playing on the opponent's clock.

[ANSWER: The whole arrangement is screaming for 18.c5 , weakening the e5-square which is highly relevant now when also g6 is weakened. Indeed, White would have a clear advantage after ♗e8 *(18...d5* could be answered by *19.♕a1!* followed by Bc1-f4 with a clear positional advantage *)* 19.cxd6 ♕xd6 20.♗a3 ♕c7 *(* not *20...♕xd4? 21.♘c5 ♕e5 22.♖xd8 ♖xd8 23.♗b2 ♕b8 24.♘xe6* and White wins *)* 21.♘e5 with a clear advantage.

Why didn't Petrosian play this? Even in positions where White should attack and play more forcing variations, Petrosian chose many times to wait. This was both a strength and a weakness. For Petrosian chess was more about waiting than deciding the moment when to strike. It's also a moral victory to humiliate the opponent and win in your way. Chess is not only about playing perfect chess, it's also about playing a human. Petrosian played like Lasker, but in his own way.]

18...h4!? EXERCISE: What is White's best move after 18...h4?

[Kotov's recommendation 18...g5!? looks more logical to keep some coordination between the kingside pawns. Now when the queen is on c2, 19.f3 followed by e2-e4 looks more to the point than 19 c5. It's important to note that g4 with the idea of 20.e4 gxf3 is answered by 21.exf5! fxg2 22.fxe6 and White wins back the piece with a won position. Amazingly, everything fits.]

ANSWER: The most radical solution is to capture the pawn even though the pawn position is weakened on the kingside.

19.gxh4! This pawn now has the important function of stopping Black from playing ...g6-g5. The motivated student should play through the game Veltmander-Petrosian (Game 4) once more, from move 23 where Black played ...a5-a4, giving White a doubled pawn on the a-file. It's important to understand the differences between such doubled pawns located on the rim. Sometimes they are useful in a middlegame situation like the present game.

♘h5 20.c5 We have been waiting for this

pawn move and now when Petrosian plays it he increases his dark-square control over e5. The g5-square and to a certain extent the pawn on g6 are already weak and if Black wants to pick up the pawn on h4 he will lose central control.

d5 21.♘e5 ♗f6

[After 21...♘f4 22.♗c1 *(22.♗f1!?)* 22...♘xg2 23.♔xg2 ♗xe5 24.dxe5 b6 25.♗e3 followed by 26 Rg1 White has everything under control.]

22.♗f3 With the threat of 23 Nxg6.

[Of course not 22.♘xg6?? immediately, as after ♕g7 White is lost.]

22...♔h7 QUESTION: Is White planning a possible exchange on h5? Is it any good?
ANSWER: **23.♗xh5!** A beautiful exchange of Black's rim knight. The main idea is to secure control of the g5-square with moves such as Nf3 and Bc1, or to disorganize Black's pieces if he insists on taking the h4-pawn.

gxh5 24.♘f3 ♕e7 25.♗c1 ♗xh4

[Kotov's suggestion 25...e5!? doesn't help after 26.dxe5 ♗xe5 27.♔h1 ♖g8 28.♕d2 f4 29.♕d3+ ♔h6 30.e4 when it's finito.]

26.♕d2 ♖g8+ EXERCISE: Where should White move the king?
ANSWER: **27.♔h1**

[A big mistake would be 27.♔f1?? ♕g7! 28.♘xh4?? *(28.♕h6+! ♕xh6 29.♗xh6* with an equal game *)* 28...♕g1# .]

27...♖g6 28.♘e5 ♖g5 29.♕f4 ♗e8

EXERCISE: Should White play 30 Qxh4 or 30 Rg1?

30.♖g1 A more prosaic move which also wins.

[ANSWER: A spectacular win is 30.♕xh4!? ♖g1+ 31.♖xg1 ♕xh4 32.♗g5 ♕e4+ *(* or *32...♕xf2 33.♖g2* and the queen is trapped *)* 33.f3 ♕xe2 34.♖d2 ♕a6 35.♗f6 when Black can't prevent the set-up 36 Rdg2 and 37 Rg8 with mate to follow.]

30...♖xg1+ 31.♖xg1 ♕f6 Do you have enough energy left for a last test in this game?
EXERCISE: It's White to move and make Black resign.

32.♘f3

[ANSWER: The amusing move 32.♘g6 would probably have led to immediate resignation. Petrosian, though, preferred a quiet move true to his style.]

1-0

A01

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Balashov,Y**
52: Moscow 1978
[Thomas Engqvist]

In the 1970s and early 1980s Grandmaster Yuri Sergeyevich Balashov (1949-) was one of the top-25 players in the world.

1.c4 e5 Yuri Balashov, who is an e2-e4-player, accommodates White in his desire to play a Sicilian a half-move ahead. **2.b3!?** Petrosian played this move order three times in serious games, but he never opened with 1 b3. I think one reason may have been he wanted to see the reply 1...e5 before entering the lines with b2-b3. The disadvantage with the slightly passive Larsen's opening is that Black obtains a comfortable game just by copying White's initial moves with 1...b6 or by choosing any system like 1...d5, 1...c5, 1... Nf6 or 1...f5. Petrosian didn't like to give his opponent so much freedom.

♘c6 3.♗b2 ♘f6 4.e3 d5 5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.a3

[EXERCISE (calculation): What is the problem with 6.♗b5 ?
ANSWER: ♘db4! 7.♘f3 *(* after *7.♗xe5?? ♕d5 8.♗xc6+ bxc6!* Black threatens everything*; 7.d3* would also be answered by the deadly *♕d5!)* 7...♘d3+ 8.♗xd3 ♕xd3 9.♘xe5 ♘xe5 10.♗xe5 ♕d5 and Black is clearly better according to the Yugoslavian Grandmaster Dragoljub Velimirovic (1942-).]

6...♗d6 The most active position for the bishop, defending the important pawn on e5.

[T.Petrosian-G.Sosonko, Tilburg 1981, continued with the more passive 6...♗e7 7.♕c2 0-0 8.♘f3 ♗f6 9.d3 g6?! *(* more active is either *9...g5;* or *9...a5)* 10.♘bd2 ♗g7 11.♖c1 g5 12.♘c4 ♕e7 13.b4 a6 14.♘fd2 f5 15.♗e2 g4 16.♘b3 ♔h8 17.♘ca5! ♘xa5 18.♘xa5* with pressure on the queenside. Notice the delay in kingside castling which gives White an additional tempo for other operations and keeps his options open for moves such as g2-g3 and h2-h3 if appropriate.]

7.♕c2 This is preparation for 8 Nf3 without being disturbed by the pawn thrust ...e5-e4.

[7.d3 followed by the quick development of the minor pieces is another set-up.]

7...0-0 8.♘f3 ♕e7 9.♗d3!?

[9.d3 transposes to the Kan/Paulsen system of the Sicilian, but having played b2-

b3 rather than b2-b4. After f5 10.♘bd2 ♔h8 11.♗e2 ♗d7 12.♘c4 a double-edged position arose in I.Ibragimov-S.Iskusnyh, Ekaterinburg 1997.]

9...♔h8 This slow move is a surprise considering that "Balashov's style is that of continuous dynamism from the early opening to the final stages of the ending" to quote the American Grandmaster Andrew Soltis's (1947-) description of his playing style.

[More active is 9...f5 without worrying about 10.♗c4 which is parried by ♗e6 . It isn't clear why Balashov didn't play this natural continuation. Maybe this is another example of witchcraft, that Balashov was hypnotized by his opponent.]

10.♗e4! ♘b6 EXERCISE: How can White exploit the active position of the bishop on e4?

[10...♗e6 is answered by 11.♘c3 , increasing the pressure on the centralized knight at d5.]

ANSWER: White has the opportunity to weaken Black's pawns on the queenside.

11.♗xc6! bxc6 Black now has three pawn islands versus White's two, which constitutes a structural advantage for White. The question is only how much value the bishop on c8 has in this concrete position. Watch how Petrosian plays:

EXERCISE: Suggestions for White?

ANSWER: **12.d3!** A good move preventing Black from playing his pawn to e4 while keeping pressure on the weak pawn on c6.

[12.♕xc6? is a positional mistake, running into e4 13.♘d4 ♗d7 14.♕c2 c5 15.♘e2 ♗b5 with more than enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn. Black's control of the diagonal a6-f1 with the supporting point on d3 results in great difficulties for White in trying to find harmony in his position. Of course Petrosian would not allow such a thing to happen being the great master of harmony.]

12...♗d7 13.♘bd2 f5 14.e4! A prophylactic move, preventing Black from playing ...e5-e4 once and for all, and also transforming the e5-pawn into a positional weakness.

fxe4 It's in Black's interest to open up the position for his light-squared bishop and king's rook. **15.dxe4 ♖f4?!** EXERCISE: Can you find a more active move than the routine move 16 0-0?

[Stronger is 15...c5! with the idea of occupying the diagonal a6-f1 with ...Bb5. 16.0-0 is then answered by the surprising c4! , opening up the position for the pair of bishops. After 17.♘xc4 *(* or *17.bxc4 ♘a4* with positional compensation for the slight material deficit *)* 17...♘xc4 18.♕xc4 ♖xf3 19.gxf3 ♗h3 20.♔h1 ♗xf1 21.♖xf1 ♖f8! Black wins back either the pawn on f3 or a3 with a completely equal position.]

ANSWER: **16.♕c3!** The idea is to force Black to defend the pawn on e5 and prevent a more active development with ...Raf8.

[However, 16.0-0 was playable after ♖af8 17.♕c3 when the aggressive ♕f6 is not dangerous for White after 18.♘xe5 ♖xf2 19.b4 followed by 20 Qg3 with the advantage. *(* Note too that *19.♕g3??* loses immediately to *♗c5!* . *)*]

16...♖e8 17.0-0 c5 EXERCISE: Try to figure out how White can strengthen his position in the centre.

ANSWER: **18.♔h1!?** This move plans to bolster White's centre and secure the kingside with f2-f3 after the preliminary Rae1 and Ng1. This is one of Petrosian's hallmarks, manoeuvring for the sole purpose of strengthening the position. The seemingly passive mini set-up with the king and knight next to each other actually gives energy to the white position and was played in several games by Petrosian. One of the games that comes to mind is the 26th world championship game Petrosian-Spassky, Moscow 1966, which the reader should look up.

♗c6 19.♖ae1 ♘d7

[The logical 19...♗b5 is more disturbing to counter White's intentions.]

20.♘g1!? ♘f6 If Balashov's original intention with 19...Nd7 was the manoeuvre ...Ne6 and ...Nd4, it was only a dream.

[20...♘f8 is answered by 21.♘h3 ♖h4 22.f4! when Black can't realize his plan.]

21.f3 ♘h5?? EXERCISE: What is wrong with Black's last move?

[21...♖h4 22.♘e2 followed by Ng3 and Nc4 keeps Black busy, but now the game is over.]

ANSWER: Sometimes it's easy to forget about pawn moves, the so called 'home pawns', to use a terminology from Hans Kmoch's famous book Pawn Power in Chess.

22.g4!

[22.g4 ♘f6 fails to 23.♘e2 trapping the black rook, so Balashov was more or less forced to throw in the towel. The bishop manoeuvre Bd3-e4xc6 followed by the pawn moves d3, e4, f3 and g4, to compensate for

the lost bishop, is very impressive and beautiful.]

1-0

B08

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Sax,G**
53: Keres Memorial, Tallinn 1979
[Thomas Engqvist]

The Keres Memorial was played in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, from February to March in 1979. Petrosian won the tournament without a single loss and collected 12 points out of 16, with eight wins and eight draws. Here he plays the strong Hungarian Grandmaster Gyula Sax (1951-2014). He became an International Master in 1972 and a Grandmaster only two years later. Sax was ranked number 12 in the world 1989. He was most famous for his strong attacking play and for the achievement, together with his team mates, in the 1978 Olympiad, where Hungary managed to win the gold medals ahead of the mighty Soviet team.

1.♘f3 g6 2.e4 ♗g7 3.d4 d6 4.♘c3 ♘f6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.0-0 This is one of the main tabiyas in the Pirc Defence where Black has to choose his plan for the next few moves.

♗g4 Black decides to put pressure on the central pawn on d4. **7.♗e3**

[Interesting is 7.h3 ♗xf3 8.♗xf3 ♘c6 9.♘b5 with the idea to bolster the centre with c2-c3. Play might continue a6 10.♘a3 e5 11.c3 exd4 12.cxd4 ♖e8 13.♖e1 d5 14.e5 ♘e4 15.♘b1! with a slight advantage. The Danish Grandmaster Bent Larsen (1935-2010) once wrote that you can play anything against the Pirc Defence and still keep a slight advantage. I guess this is a case in point.]

7...♘c6 8.♕d2

[One of the main variation nowadays is 8.d5 ♗xf3 9.♗xf3 ♘e5 10.♗e2 c6 11.f4 ♘ed7 12.dxc6 bxc6 13.♕d3 when White's position is slightly to be preferred.]

8...e5 EXERCISE: How should White react to the tension in the centre: 9 d5 or 9 dxe5?

9.dxe5

[ANSWER: 9.d5 blocks the centre and leads to a more complicated game where Black has his chances after ♘e7 10.♖ad1 ♗d7 11.♘e1 and now the surprising b5! with counterplay.

Whether to play 9 dxe5 or 9 d5 is really a matter of taste and style.]

9...dxe5

[If 9...♘xe5 10.♘xe5 dxe5 11.♗xg4 ♘xg4 12.♖ad1 with a slightly better position because of the problem piece at g7.]

10.♖ad1 White's minimal advantages lies in the fact that the d5-square is weaker than the corresponding d4-square and that Black has a passive bishop on g7, which as yet doesn't contribute to the fight for control of the d4-square.

♕c8

[Sax prefers to keep the queens on the board rather than to simplify as in the games B.Larsen-B.Ivkov, Santa Monica 1966, and S.Reshevsky-B.Ivkov, Santa Monica 1966, which continued 10...♕xd2 11.♖xd2 ♖fd8 12.♖fd1 ♖xd2 13.♖xd2 ♘e8 14.♘d5 ♗xf3 15.gxf3! . The idea is to have the e4-pawn protected while keeping the positional idea of breaking with f3-f4 which would open the position for the pair of bishops. After ♘d4 16.♗d1 ♘e6 17.c3 ♗f8 18.♗a4 the position is regarded as approximately equal.]

11.♕c1 ♖d8 12.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 13.♖d1 ♕f8 14.h3 ♗xf3 15.♗xf3 a6 EXERCISE (planning): How should White manoeuvre with his knight in this position?

[A sensible plan, recommended by Petrosian, is to plan the exchange of dark-squared bishops by 15...h5 and 16...Bh6. Here 16.♘b5 is easily answered by ♖c8 .]

16.♘b1! The main idea is to reroute to d2 where the knight has a more flexible position. As we have seen before Petrosian was particularly good at manoeuvring with his knights.

[ANSWER: 16.♘d5?! turned out to be an inaccuracy after ♘xd5 17.♖xd5 ♘d4 18.♗xd4 exd4 with an equal position in J. Timman-M.Matulovic, Wijk aan Zee 1974.]

[However, 16.♘a4!? may be an interesting option, although Petrosian didn't play it. We know he wasn't a stranger of such rim-moves with the knight, though, as we have already seen several.]

16...♖d8 17.♖xd8 ♕xd8

[17...♘xd8 followed by 18...Ne6 is a more precise set-up for Black because his control of the d-file amounts to nothing in this position.]

18.c3 EXERCISE: Petrosian asserted this position was slightly better for White. Why? ANSWER: The main reason is that White's

pair of bishops is superior compared to its counterparts. Particularly the light squares are a problem for Black.
♕d3 This demonstration of the control of the d-line is just a pseudo attack and White can calmly continue with his own plans, step by step improving his position.
19.♘d2 ♗f8 20.♕b1 ♕b5 Sax consequently avoids the exchange of queens.
[As a matter of a fact 20...♕xb1+ 21.♘xb1 deprives Black of any counterplay whatsoever and White will, with the help of the pair of bishops, gradually improve his position.]
21.♕c2 ♘d8
[The otherwise desirable 21...♗c5? fails to 22.a4 ♕b6 23.♘c4 ♕a7 24.♗g5 ♗e7 25.b4 with a clear advantage.]
22.♕b3 ♕d3
[The passive 22...♕xb3 23.♘xb3 b6 is an option, but obviously not Sax's cup of tea.]
23.♕c4 ♕d6 24.♕e2 Petrosian's patience is extraordinary because he's sure he likes his position more than his adversary. This factor alone gives him a psychological advantage.
♕e6 25.♕d3 ♘c6 EXERCISE (planning): Petrosian has a plan in mind here. Can you see it?
ANSWER: **26.a3** The idea is to seize more space with b2-b4 followed by Nc4 and then transfer the light-squared bishop to the classical diagonal with the manoeuvre Bd1-b3.
♕e7 Black can play a waiting game, as he does with the text move,
[or he can agree to the exchange of queens with 26...♕a2 27.♕b1 ♕xb1+ 28.♘xb1 , with a slight advantage to White.]
27.b4 ♘d8?! The knight is better placed on c6 even though the c3-pawn is irritating.
28.♘c4 ♘d7 QUESTION: How should White now make progress?
29.♗g4!
[ANSWER: 29.♗d1 is playable, but slow and Black can try to trade queens with b5 30.♘a5 ♕d6 . It's better to apply immediate pressure when such opportunities are given. Remember the necessity of adapting to the opponent's moves and sometimes changing one's original plan.]
29...♘e6 30.♘a5 b5 31.♘c6 ♕e8
[31...♕d6 also results in a difficult position after 32.♕xd6 ♗xd6 *(or 32...cxd6 33.♘d8!!* when White has the incredible *)* 33.♗e2 followed by c2-c4.]
32.c4 Black is already lost. **♘f6**
[32...bxc4 33.♕xc4 loses a pawn after the forced ♘b6 34.♗xb6 cxb6 35.♗xe6 ♕xe6 36.♕xe6 fxe6 37.♘xe5 .]
33.cxb5 axb5 34.♕xb5 ♘xe4 Black has managed to keep material equality, but now succumbs to White's strong centralized position in combination with his passed pawn on the queenside.
35.♕c4 ♘d6 36.♕d5 h5
[The continuation 36...♘f4 37.♕xe5 ♕xc6 38.♗xf4 doesn't help either.]
37.♗xe6 fxe6 38.♕c5 ♘f5 39.♕c2 ♗g7 40.b5 ♘d4 41.♕c4 ♕d7 42.a4 ♘f5 43.♕e2 . A very instructive game for how to disarm an attacking player. One of the secrets of winning chess games is not to allow the opponent to demonstrate what he can. Petrosian was very good at this.
1-0

D20

□ **Bukic,E**
■ **Petrosian,T**
54: Banja Luka 1979
[Thomas Engqvist]

The tournament at Banja Luka 1979 is famous because of Kasparov's crushing victory where he scored 11½/15. Petrosian still had a decent result and came fourth without any losses. He won three games and drew twelve. His most impressive game was against the 42-year-old Yugoslavian Grandmaster Enver Bukic (1937-),where he showed his customary patience and technique to earn a victory.
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 ♘f6
[This leads to a more enterprising game than 3...e5 , which Petrosian mentions in Informant 27 with the concise judgement '='.]
4.e5 ♘d5 5.♗xc4 ♘b6 6.♗d3
[Another important variation is 6.♗b3 , but it's logical to focus on a future black king on g8.]
6...♘c6 7.♘e2 ♗g4
[7...♘b4 8.♗e4 c6 is equal according to Petrosian. This opinion of his is probably because of Black's strong control of the square d5. Objectively White has the advantage in space and most people would most probably judge the position as slightly better for White. In this slightly

confusing situation we might use the clever suggestion of the Scottish Grandmaster Jonathan Rowson in The Seven Deadly Chess Sins (2006) and say that White is slightly better, but that the favourable trend is for Black. We could also invent a sign between += and = which doesn't exist formally, but surely does in many players' minds during their analysis.]

8.f3 ♗e6 9.♘bc3 ♕d7 10.♘e4 ♗d5 11.♘c5 ♕c8 12.a3 e6 13.♕c2 EXERCISE: Should Black exchange on c5 or just calmly develop with 13...Be7?

ANSWER: The golden rule, when your opponent has more space, is to exchange pieces. The position isn't of the open kind, so the pair of bishops shouldn't be anything to worry too much about.

♗xc5! 14.♕xc5

[14.dxc5 may be answered by the clever ♘d7 15.f4 ♕d8! 16.0-0 ♗b3!! followed by 17...Nxc5 when the bishop on d3 is hanging.]

14...♕d7 15.0-0 ♕e7 16.♕c2 White has more terrain with his strong pawns on e5 and d4, and doesn't want to devalue it with unnecessary exchanges. **♕d7** It's typical of Petrosian to invite a repetition of moves, but you can never be sure he wants the draw by threefold repetition. This is often a psychological ploy to test if the opponent is interested. This kind of information is always valuable during a game and will influence the mind of both players at the time.

17.♗d2 Bukic declined to test his opponent and is now in effect playing for a win, but as a consequence has put more psychological pressure on himself.

♘e7 18.♖ac1 EXERCISE: Can you suggest a reasonable move and plan for Black?

ANSWER: **♗c6** Petrosian follows Nimzowitsch's principle and uses the central d5-square as a pivot for manoeuvring his pieces. Ideally he wants to exchange the light-squared bishops with ...Bb5 and then place the pair of knights at d5 and f5.

19.♗e3 ♘bd5 20.♗f2 ♗b5 21.♘g3?!

[21.♗e4 refrains from the exchange, but allows an active bishop on the diagonal a6-f1. Still this is the more logical option because the exchange is only desirable for Black for the positional purpose of increasing his control of the light squares.]

21...♗xd3 22.♕xd3 0-0 Now the position is equal with a favourable trend for Black. White has a space advantage, but Black has managed to exchange a pair of minor pieces. White's remaining bishop risks becoming a bad piece.

23.♘e4 b6 24.♕a6 ♕c8 25.♕xc8?

It's not easy for Bukic to find an inspiring spot for his queen, but now matters become even worse. **♖fxc8 26.♖c2** White has no targets and can only sit and wait. Incidentally computers are not good in such positions because they don't understand such things as when a square complex is weak. Petrosian thought Black was clearly better here, but the engines judge the position as equal. I trust Petrosian's judgement more than computer's judgement in positions which are not of a tactical nature.

♔f8 Black's king naturally heads to the excellent square on d7. **27.♖fc1 ♔e8 28.♗h4 ♘f5 29.♗f2 ♔d7 30.g4 ♘fe7 31.♗g3**

[31.♗h4 is answered by ♘g6 followed by ... Rh8 and ...h7-h5.]

31...♖h8! Black's target in White's position is the pawn on g4. **32.h4?!** Such a pawn move makes White's bishop worse after Black's next move. **h5 33.g5?!** See the last remark. Better is a move with the king.

EXERCISE: How should Black continue?

ANSWER: The rook has no function any more on h8 and can instead overprotect the knight on d5 with indirect pressure on the d4-pawn.

♖hd8 34.♗f2 ♔e8 35.♔h2 ♖d7 36.♖c4 ♔d8! Notice Petrosian's unhurried play with his king which is on its way to the optimal square at b7. **37.♘g3 g6 38.♘e4** Black has a weak square on f6, but it's of no significance. **♔c8!** An extraordinary move typical of Petrosian. He was never afraid of activating his king. Just remember his famous game against Kasparov (Game 57). When his moves really deserves an exclamation mark, Petrosian himself keeps silent.

39.♘d6+ ♔b8 EXERCISE: How should Black continue after 40 Nxf7?

40.♘e4

[ANSWER: 40.♘xf7 should be answered by ♔b7 41.♘h6 ♖f8 42.♔g3 ♘f4 and Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn. White's knight is offside and Black is dominant on the light squares like d3 and d5.]

40...♔b7 41.♖4c2 ♘f5 42.♔h1 ♖ad8 43.♖d2 ♖c8 44.♔h2 ♘de7 45.♘f6 ♖dd8 46.♘e4 ♘c6 47.♖cd1?

[47.♖c4 with the idea of ♘a5 48.♖c3

is a better try, not allowing Black's other knight too much influence on the light squares.]

47...♘a5! In his famous book My System Nimzowitsch wrote about the importance of exploiting reflex weaknesses, such as c4 and b3 in this kind of position, when dealing with an isolani. The problem with the isolani is not really the weakness of the pawn itself, it's rather the light squares surrounding it.

48.♖c2 ♘b3! 49.♖c4 EXERCISE: Black has established two strong knights putting pressure on the backward d-pawn. How can he now decide the game?

ANSWER: **c5** It's all over. **50.♖d3 ♘bxd4 51.b4 ♘c6 52.♖xd8 ♖xd8 53.bxc5 ♘xe5 54.♖c3 ♖d3 55.♖xd3 ♘xd3 56.cxb6 ♘xf2 57.♘xf2 ♔xb6 58.♔h3 ♔b5 59.♘d3 ♔a4 60.♘e5 ♔xa3 61.♘xf7 a5 62.♘e5 a4 63.♘xg6 ♔b3** . An excellent game by Petrosian showing the disadvantages of a weak d-pawn when too many pieces have been exchanged.

0-1

D02

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Sosonko,G**
55: Las Palmas 1980
[Thomas Engqvist]

The international tournament in Las Palmas in June 1980 resulted in a share of first to third for Petrosian along with Geller and Miles. He won six games and drew five. A good game was played against the Dutch Grandmaster (although born in Siberia in 1943), Gennady Borisovich Sosonko. Today he is famous for the four books he's written about his early experiences as a chess player in the USSR.

1.♘f3 c5 2.g3 d5 3.♗g2 ♘c6 4.d4 ZOOM 001 – Zero Hour For Operating Opening Models (1979) is a book by Bent Larsen and Steffen Zeuthen which had this set-up with the white pieces as a model based on the Grünfeld Indian structure. Maybe Petrosian even knew about this practical concept. The writers claim that it is a set-up you can use as White against any black defence.

♘f6 5.0-0 ♗g4 6.dxc5 e5 7.c4
[After 7.b4 e4 8.b5 ♘a5 9.♘e5 ♗xc5 10.♘xg4 ♘xg4 Black is fine.]

7...♗xc5 8.cxd5 ♕xd5 EXERCISE (calculation): What is the problem with 8... Nxd5?
[ANSWER: 8...♘xd5 fails to 9.♘xe5! ♘xe5 10.♗xd5 ♗xe2 11.♕xe2! *(* if *11.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 12.♕xe2 ♖e8* and Black has some development lead to compensate for the price of a pawn *)* 11...♕xd5 12.♘c3 ♕e6 13.♕b5+ ♕c6 14.♗f4 f6 15.♖ac1 with a clear advantage.]

9.♘c3 ♕xd1 10.♖xd1 h6 This limits the scope of the bishop on c1. Sosonko had employed this variation before and managed to equalize. **11.♘a4 ♗e7 12.♗e3 e4?!**
[The simple 12...0-0 is a better decision, even though Black has a tough call to decide where to move the bishop to after White asks the question with 13.h3 .]

13.♘d4 ♘xd4 QUESTION: Which piece should White recapture with?

14.♖xd4!
[ANSWER: Imprecise is the recapture with the bishop. After 14.♗xd4 ♗xe2 15.♖e1 ♗d3 16.♘c3 0-0 17.♘xe4 ♘xe4 18.♗xe4 ♗b4! Black is very close an equal game. It's better to activate the rook on the open file while recapturing.]

14...♗xe2 15.♘c3 ♗f3 16.♘xe4 ♗xg2 17.♔xg2 0-0 EXERCISE: What is White's best continuation?

18.♖ad1
[ANSWER: Geller recommends 18.♘d6 immediately, with the idea that after ♗xd6 *(* of course, *18...b6* is the normal move *)* 19.♖xd6 White's bishop is stronger than the opponent's knight. Also it's not clear whether the rook is better on c1 than on d1.]
[18.♖c1 is also an option, but in the game Petrosian played the rook to the d-file. We can understand that Petrosian wants to keep the move Nd6 in reserve which is according to his style. Why he played the rook to the d1-square rather than c1 might be because he followed the principle of Nimzowitsch to overprotect the most important square, which in this case seems to be d6. The rook move to c1 is according to the principle of coordination, but if you regard White's position as slightly better, the rook move to d1 is the logical choice, emphasising the positional pressure on Black's position.]

18...a6 19.♘d6 ♖fd8 20.♘f5
[20.♘xb7 is playable, but gives Black an active rook on b2 starting with ♖db8 . Petrosian didn't like to give activity to his opponent if there were other options.]

20...♔f8 21.♘xe7 ♖xd4
[21...♔xe7 is more exactly even though White keeps some pressure after the forced sequence 22.♖xd8 ♖xd8 23.♗c5+ ♔e8 24.♖e1+ ♔d7 25.♗d4 .]
22.♗xd4 ♔xe7 23.♗c5+ ♔e6
[23...♔e8? is answered by 24.♖e1+ ♔d8 *(or 24...♔d7 25.♖e7+ ♔c6 26.♗d4)* 25.♗f8! ♘e8 26.♗e7+ ♔d7 27.♗a3 and the white rook enters via e7 with decisive effect.]
24.♖d6+ ♔f5 25.♗d4 ♖c8 26.♗xf6 gxf6 27.♖b6 ♖c7 EXERCISE (planning): White has the more active rook and keeps a clear advantage. How to conclude the game?
ANSWER: Black's weaknesses are not only the pawn on b7, but also the pawns on the kingside which White can attack with his king.
28.♔h3! White plans Kh4-h5. **♔g5 29.f4+ ♔f5 30.♔h4 ♔g6 31.♔g4 ♖d7** Black is almost out of moves and can only move his rook back and forth while White improves his position gradually. **32.f5+ ♔g7** EXERCISE (planning): How should White proceed further?
ANSWER: White wants to establish a pawn structure with pawns on h5, g4 and f5 and then follow up by manoeuvring the king to the centre and the queenside.
33.h4! ♖d4+ 34.♔f3 ♖d3+ 35.♔f4 ♖d4+ 36.♔e3 ♖d5 37.♔e4 ♖e5+ 38.♔f4 ♖e7 39.h5! Black's pawns and king are now stuck on the kingside. **♖c7 40.♔e3 ♖c5 41.g4 ♖e5+ 42.♔d4 ♖e2**
[If Black continues his passive defence with 42...♖e7 , White improves his pawn position on the queenside and then advances the king to d6, forcing Black to move his rook.]
43.♖xb7 ♖g2 44.♔c5 ♖xg4 45.b4 ♖g5 46.a4 ♖xf5+ 47.♔b6 ♖e5 48.♔xa6 f5 49.b5 f4 50.♖c7 . Excellent endgame technique by Petrosian.
1-0

A48

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Jansa,V**
56: Bar 1980
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian won the international tournament in Bar, Montenegro, which was played in October-November 1980. He scored 10/13 and won seven games and drew six. A nice positional game was his win against one of the best players from the former Czechoslovakia, Grandmaster Vlastimil Jansa (1942-). Together with International Master Josef Pribyl (1947-), Jansa invented an interesting opening system known as the Czech Pirc: 1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 c6. The idea is to wait for 4 Nf3 and then have comfortable development with 4...Bg4. However, the critical variation is 4 f4 with sharp play.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5 Petrosian liked this half-forgotten set-up which contains a fair amount of poison. One tactical reason for the opening choice may have been that he wanted Jansa to think as early as possible in the game to increase the chances of later time pressure.
♗g7 4.c3 0-0 5.♘bd2 d6
[5...d5 is another set-up Larsen and Zeuthen recommended in their book Zoom 001.]
6.e4 ♘bd7 QUESTION: Where is White to develop the light-squared bishop: e2, d3 or c4?
7.♗c4
[ANSWER: 7.♗d3]
[or 7.♗e2 are fully playable too and it's a matter of taste which of the moves you choose. Kasparov-Martinovic, Baku 1980 continued e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.0-0 b6 10.♖e1 ♗b7 11.♕c2 h6 12.♗h4 ♕e7 13.♗f1 ♖fe8 14.b4! with a slightly preferable position for White because of the hemmed in bishop on g7 which lacks active prospects and only works as a defensive piece.
Petrosian, however, chose the most active move, with a good location on the classical diagonal eyeing the black kingside.]
7...e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.0-0 h6 10.♗h4 ♕e8 11.♖e1 ♘h5 Black wants to put his knight on f4 which is normal for this structure. **12.a4 ♗f6**
[The normal move is 12...a5 , not giving any space to White. It's very dangerous to give ground to such a player as Petrosian who was a true maestro at exploiting space.]
13.a5 ♕e7 14.♗xf6 ♕xf6 EXERCISE: How should White continue?
ANSWER: Petrosian displays his very fine feeling of harmony and realizes that the knight belongs on c4 and the bishop on f1 to reinforce the kingside. Therefore it didn't really matter so much if White placed the

bishop on e2, d3 or c4 on the seventh move because the bishop will go to f1 anyway.
15.♗f1! ♖d8 QUESTION: What is the best square for the queen with ...Nf4 a possibility?
ANSWER: **16.♕e2! ♘f4 17.♕e3** Here the queen stands excellently. **g5 18.♖ed1**
The rook hasn't any function on e1 anymore.
♖e8 19.g3 ♘g6 20.h3 ♘df8 21.♘h2 h5?
Jansa was a strong attacking player, but here he made a mistake.
EXERCISE: Black overestimates his chances on the kingside. What's the problem with this move?
[21...♗e6 was more sensible.]
22.♗e2! ANSWER: Jansa must have overlooked that the h5-pawn is more important than the h3-pawn. **h4**
[22...♗xh3 23.♗xh5 followed by Bg4 results in light-square weaknesses in Black's camp.]
23.♗g4! White secures a clear advantage after the exchange of bishops. **♔g7 24.♘df1 ♘h7 25.♖d3**
[25.♗xc8 ♖exc8 26.♘g4 ♕e6 27.a6 b6 28.♕f3 with the idea of Nfe3-f5+ is also good giving White decent winning chances.]
25...♗e6 26.♗xe6 ♕xe6 27.♘g4
White obviously prepares to place a knight on f5 and Black now tries to disturb White with some small distractions. **♘f6 28.♕xg5 ♘xe4 29.♕h6+ ♔g8 30.♖ad1 ♘f6 31.♘fe3 ♘xg4 32.♘xg4 hxg3**
[A better try is 32...e4 33.♖d7 hxg3 34.fxg3 e3 even though White most certainly wins after 35.♕g5 e2 36.♖e1 ♖e7 37.♖d2 followed by Kf2, picking up the e2-pawn.]
33.♖xg3 ♖ad8 EXERCISE: How should White proceed?
ANSWER: **34.♖e1!**
[34.♖xd8 ♖xd8 35.♖f3 f5 36.♘xe5! is another way to win.]
34...♕f5 35.h4 ♖e6 36.h5 ♕f4 37.hxg6
. This game had some similarities with the one against Sax, Game 53. It's interesting to watch how easily Petrosian plays, starting with safe measures, then taking over the game step by step, and eventually going for the attack himself.
1-0

D22

□ **Kasparov,G**
■ **Petrosian,T**
57: Tilburg 1981
[Thomas Engqvist]

Petrosian played the Russian Grandmaster Garry Kasparov (1963-) five times from 1979-1983 and was black in all those games. In the beginning when Kasparov was a boy Petrosian controlled him. The first game was a draw and the next two were won by Petrosian. The last two games played in 1982-1983, however, were won by Kasparov. The tournament which took place in Tilburg had 12 participants and Petrosian was placed second with three wins and eight draws. Alexander Beliavsky (1953-) won by half a point while Kasparov was placed in the midfield. Here follows Petrosian's last win against Kasparov.
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.♘f3
[3.e3 is a more cunning move order to avoid the solid variation chosen by Petrosian.]
[3.e4 ♘f6 was played in E.Bukic-T. Petrosian, Banja Luka 1979, as is covered in Game 54.]
3...♘f6 4.e3 ♗g4 5.♗xc4 e6 6.h3 ♗h5 7.♘c3 a6 8.g4 ♗g6 9.♘e5 ♘bd7 10.♘xg6 hxg6 EXERCISE: How do you think the young Kasparov continued in this position?
ANSWER: **11.♗f1!** A paradoxical retreat which really shows a deep understanding of the requirements of the position. Because of Black's half-open h-file, White wants to deploy his bishop at g2 to have the h3-pawn protected after castling. It will also have good prospects on the long light-square diagonal since it also works as a prophylactic manoeuvre to prevent Black from playing ...c7-c5. Kasparov mentions in his annotations to the game that when he stood up from the board after this excellent move Spassky slapped him on the shoulder saying: a good manoeuvre.
[Petrosian didn't play like this himself in earlier games in his career when playing White. Instead, he choose the space-gaining move 11.g5 , with the continuations ♘d5 12.♘xd5 exd5 13.♗xd5 c6 14.♗b3 ♕xg5 15.♕f3 ♘f6 , as in T.Petrosian-B.Ivkov, Hamburg 1965, *(* or *15...♗b4+* followed by ... Qf5 as in T.Petrosian-R.Dzindzihashvili, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1978. In both cases White's position was regarded as

harmless. *)*]

11...c6 Black has to choose a passive move with his c-pawn to neutralize the bishop on g2.

12.♗g2 ♕c7 13.0-0 ♗e7 14.f4 ♘b6 15.g5

QUESTION: Where should Petrosian move his knight?

[ANSWER: 15.g5 ♘fd5?! gives White a tempo-gain in the centre with 16.e4 and after the forced exchange ♘xc3 17.bxc3 White's centre becomes strengthened.]

The most precise move is:

15...♘fd7 16.♕g4 EXERCISE: Black must make an important decision over where to place his king. Should he castle on the kingside or on the queenside?

0-0-0

[ANSWER: If 16...0-0? 17.h4 followed by h5 and the h-file would quickly be opened. Petrosian chose the other direction for his king.]

17.♖b1 ♔b8 18.b4 ♘d5 19.♘a4!?

[19.♘xd5 changes the pawn configuration with exd5 making a minority attack possible, starting with 20.a4 . However, the continuation ♘b6 with an eye on the weak c4-square may not have been to Kasparov's liking. If 21.b5 cxb5 *(* or *21...axb5 22.axb5 c5)* 22.axb5 a5 23.♗d2 ♘c4 24.b6 with mutual chances.]

19...f5

[Kasparov analyses 19...♘xb4 20.♗d2 ♘d5 21.e4 f5 22.gxf6 ♘5xf6 23.♕xe6 ♘c5 24.♘xc5 ♗xc5 25.dxc5 ♖xd2 26.e5 ♘d5 27.♕xg6 with attacking chances, but Black also has his chances after ♖d8 .]

20.♕g3!? Kasparov is really trying to win this game.

[Petrosian analysed 20.gxf6 gxf6 21.♕xe6 ♖de8! with an unclear position. Play might continue 22.♗xd5 cxd5 23.♕xd5 ♕c2 with counterchances because of the double threat on b1 and h3. 24.♕b3 is answered by ♕f5 and Black gradually takes over the game.]

20...♘xb4 This is much stronger than on the 19th move since the knight will now be much more permanent when moving back to d5 because the f5-pawn makes the e3-e4-thrust less desirable.

21.♗d2 ♘d5 22.♖fc1 ♔a7 23.♕e1 ♗a3 24.♖c2 ♕d6 Taking control of the diagonal f8-a3 and securing the defensive bishop on a3 will disturb White's attacking aspirations somewhat, especially the knight manoeuvres from b2-d3 or b2-c4 will be prevented because of ...Bxb2.

25.♖b3 ♕e7 26.♕e2 ♖b8

[26...♖a8!? followed by ...Rhc8 and ...b5 was more accurate according to Petrosian.]

27.♕d3 ♗d6

[It's not good to move the eternal knight on d5 because then the bishop on g2 will show its teeth. Look at the following variation: 27...♘b4 28.♗xb4 ♗xb4 29.♗xc6! bxc6 30.♖xc6 ♖b5 31.d5! exd5 32.♘c3 with a strong attack which should yield a win.]

28.♘b2! The right moment to regroup the knight to a more influential position. **♖hc8**

29.♘c4 ♗c7

[Kasparov suggests 29...♘7b6! and, indeed, after 30.♘xd6 ♕xd6 Black's pair of knights are not worse than White's pair of bishops. This is a case in point where one knight already stands excellently on the strong outpost d5, neutralizing White's pair of bishops.]

30.a4 EXERCISE: How can Black defend against a4-a5, Rdb2 and Qb1, with strong pressure on b7?

ANSWER: **b5!?** This shocking move which opens up the position for the king is probably the strongest continuation from a psychological point of view. It certainly had a great effect on Kasparov as can be read from his notes: "This move staggered me" and "It looks like a gesture of despair".

[Trying to defend the b7-pawn by playing 30...♘7b6 31.♘a5 ♗d8 doesn't help when the sixth piece is involved in the attack along the f1-a6 diagonal with 32.♗f1! . From now on a knight sacrifice on b7 will hang in the air. Play might continue ♕d7 33.♖cb2 c5 34.dxc5 ♖xc5 35.♘xb7! ♖xb7 36.a5 ♖b5 37.♖xb5 axb5 38.axb6+ ♗xb6 39.♕a3+ ♔b8 40.♗xb5 with a clear advantage. Black's king isn't so safe in this position even though some pieces are protecting his majesty. Black also has serious problems with his light squares.]

31.axb5 cxb5 32.♖a2 "I remember that I was very proud of my position and I thought that the game was already over." – Kasparov.

EXERCISE: White plans 33 Rba3 so how should Black defend?

ANSWER: **♔b7!?** Shocking move number two. Kasparov was very impressed as can again be understood from his notes: "But this move staggered me even more: can such play

really go unpunished?"

[32...bxc4?? leads to a well-known mate in a few moves by 33.♖xa6+! ♔xa6 34.♕xc4+ ♔a7 35.♕a4+ .]

[Thus Kasparov was expecting 32...♗d6 33.♖xb5 ♖xb5 34.♘xd6 ♕xd6 35.♕xb5 ♖c2! 36.♕b3 ♖xa2 37.♕xa2 ♘7b6 38.♗f1 ♘c7 with an enduring advantage because of the pair of bishops and better pawn position.]

[Finally, 32...♗xf4 is answered by the incredibly versatile move 33.♘a3! . A knight placed on a central square like c4 always has the option to move in all directions, from left to right and back and forward. Remember the strong unassailable knight on e4 in Petrosian-Botvinnik, Game 30.]

33.♗b4? The first turning point of the game. This natural move, which activates the passive bishop, improves Black's defensive resources considerably and even lays the foundation for a black win. The reason is that White's move only helps Black to improve the placement of the queen from a defensive point of view.

EXERCISE: After Kasparov's bishop move can you spot the correct location for the black queen?

[After the game Kasparov immediately discovered 33.♘a3! with the idea of attacking Black's weak points on d5, b5 and a6. It's too late to defend the b5-pawn.

A) 33...♕e8 fails to the breakthrough 34.♘xb5! axb5 35.♕xb5+ ♗b6 36.♖a6! ♔c7! (Black must escape from White's major pieces and bishops) 37.♗a5! ♔d8 38.♗xd5 exd5 39.♕xd5 ♗xa5 40.♖e6! ♕xe6 41.♕xe6 ♖xb3 42.♕xb3 and despite the fact that Black has a rook and two minor pieces, he is lost because of being two pawns down and losing another one on g6 or g7.;

B) 33...♗b6 prevents the sacrifice on b5, but instead White can reroute the knight via c2-b4, attacking the other weaknesses on d5 and a6: 34.♘c2! *(* after *34.♘xb5? axb5 35.♕xb5 ♕d6* Black covers his weaknesses and the king escapes via c7-d8 to the kingside *)* 34...♖a8 35.♘b4 ♕d6 36.♖b1!! (such quiet moves are not so easy to find in a dynamic position like this; the idea is to make room for the queen on b3) ♘b8 37.♕b3 ♖c4 38.♖c1! (Black can no longer hold the key squares c4 and d5) ♖xc1+ 39.♗xc1 ♘c6 40.♘xd5 exd5 41.♗xd5 with a decisive advantage.;

C) 33...--]

[However, there is another, even stronger move in 33.♕b1!! , utilizing the fact that b5 is only protected by the pawn on a6. One possible continuation is ♖h8 34.♘a5+! ♗xa5 35.♗xa5 trapping the king. Everything is prepared for a rook sacrifice on b5 and Black has a tough time in this variation.]

33...♕e8! ANSWER: From here the queen can defend the b5-pawn if required. **34.♗d6**

[Petrosian recommended 34.♘d6+ ♗xd6 35.♗xd6 ♖a8 36.e4 , but Black has no problems after fxe4 37.♗xe4 ♖c6 according to Kasparov.]

[13th world champion analyses instead the stronger 34.♗a3! ♖a8 35.♖b1 followed by Qb3 with a clear advantage.]

34...♖a8 35.♕b1?! EXERCISE: White threatens to win with a sacrifice on b5. How should Black defend?

[ANSWER: After the prosaic 35.♕b1 ♘7b6 36.♘a5+ ♔a7 *(36...♔b8 37.♗c5)* 37.♗c5 White keeps the pressure.]

[35.♗a3 is still the best continuation.]

Petrosian played very impressively:

35...♔c6!! Remarkably Petrosian played this instantly. It's certainly a tribute to Steinitz who was of the opinion that the king often manages to take care of himself during attacks. Petrosian's move combined with the other incredible moves 30...b5 and 32...Kb7 had a strong psychological effect on Kasparov, who again didn't find the strongest continuation.

36.♖ba3?? The second turning point of the game.

[Necessary is 36.♗xc7 when:

A) 36...♔xc7! seems best even though Black permanently weakens the dark squares after 37.♘b2 ♔d8 38.♘d3 ♕e7 39.♖ba3 ♕d6 40.♔f2 when White should have enough compensation for the pawn.;

B) 36...bxc4 looks a little bit risky after the forced variation 37.♖b7! ♖xc7 38.♖xa6+ ♖xa6 39.♕b5+ ♔d6 40.♕xa6+ ♔e7 41.♗xd5 ♖xb7 42.♗xb7 *(* of course not *42.♕xe6+?? ♔d8 43.♕xe8+ ♔xe8 44.♗xb7 c3* and Black wins *)* 42...♕b8 43.♔f2 , with advantage to White. Normally queen and knight are preferable if compared with queen and bishop, but not in this position. Black's position is too passive and the pawn on c4 isn't as

dangerous as may be assumed. The following illustrative variation emphasizes these factors: ♕c7 44.♗c6 c3 45.♕a4 ♘b8 46.♗b5 and if now the natural c2? then 47.♕a3+ ♔f7 48.♕c1 ♕a5 49.♗d3 with excellent winning chances.;

C) 36...--]

36...bxc4 Black is winning a piece in exchange for a pseudo attack. **37.♖xa6+ ♖xa6 38.♖xa6+ ♗b6 39.♗c5 ♕d8!** The idea is to protect b6 while threatening 40...Nxc5 41 dxc5 Kxc5.

EXERCISE: How does Black win after the cunning move 40 Qb4?

40.♕a1

[ANSWER: 40.♕b4

A) However, a grave error would be 40...♖a8?? 41.♗e7!! and White turns the tables: ♕c8 *(* or *41...♖xa6 42.♕d6+!* followed by Bxd8 when White wins *)* 42.♕a4+ ♔b7 43.♖xa8 ♕xa8 44.♕xd7+ followed by 45 Qxe6 and Black's position collapses.;

B) 40...♔b7! and White has no effective way of continuing the attack.]

40...♘xc5 41.dxc5 ♔xc5 42.♖a4 . Kasparov paid tribute to his opponent by writing: "In analysis after the game it was noticeable how much more deeply my opponent had evaluated the positions that arose." After having played one draw and lost two games with the white pieces versus Petrosian, Kasparov said that if it were not for these losses "I would possibly not have reached the top in chess."

0-1

B06

□ **Petrosian,T**

■ **Bouaziz,S**

58: Las Palmas Interzonal 1982

[Thomas Engqvist]

The Interzonal tournament in Las Palmas 1982 had three favourites in Petrosian, Larsen and Timman, who seemed the most probable to qualify for the two Candidates places. Surprisingly none of these players managed to come first or second. Surprisingly it was Ribli and Smyslov who qualified and Petrosian, who was placed fourth, failed for the first time in thirty years to qualify.

In our next game Petrosian plays the International Master (GM in 1993) Slim Bouaziz (1950-), the supposed tournament punch bag from Tunisia, but it turned out that he was just as dangerous as anybody else. He managed to surprise everybody and was only two points behind Petrosian at the end. All games are tough as they used to say.

1.d4 g6 2.e4 ♗g7 3.c3 White solidifies the centre and now the black bishop bites on a very hard rock. **d6 4.♗g5** Petrosian's pet system was to put the bishop on g5 particularly when Black had his bishop on g7.

[Normally White develops the king's knight with 4.♘f3 immediately, but this would have been met by ♘f6 when White must defend his pawn immediately in a slightly awkward manner with 5.♗d3 *(* or *5.♘bd2* blocking the bishop on c1. *)*]

4...c5?! Bouaziz wants to put immediate pressure on the d4-pawn, but it costs him privilege of castling.

[4...♘f6 5.♘d2 with harmonious development for White]

[or 4...♘d7 5.♘f3 were the normal continuations.]

5.dxc5 dxc5 6.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 EXERCISE: White has a slight advantage because of the awkward position of the Black king. How should he continue his development in the most harmonious manner?

ANSWER: 7 Nd2 is playable, but a slight disadvantage is that 0-0-0 doesn't result in a check, which would compel Black to react instead of developing his pieces in the most efficient manner. Petrosian's move is more clever.

7.♘a3! From here the knight also controls the outpost on c4, but at the same time he plans to disturb Black's harmony with 8 0-0-0+. This explains Black's next move:

♗h6!? QUESTION: How should White continue after this?

ANSWER: **8.♗h4!?** I think the reason Petrosian gave an exclamation mark to this move was because it's important to realise that in principle it's wrong to exchange and thereby facilitate Black's development.

[It would only make it easier for him to equalize after 8.♗xh6 ♘xh6 and if 9.0-0-0+ *(* or *9.♖d1+)* , Black's king would find a safe spot with 9...♔c7 .]

[However, objectively speaking 8.♖d1+ was better and it also contains a lot of poison. Look at the very likely continuation ♘d7 *(* if *8...♔c7? 9.♘b5+ ♔b6 10.♖d8 ♗xg5 11.♖xc8* and White has a deadly pin

on the last rank combined with the threat of 12 Nc7 *)* 9.♘f3 with the idea of ♗xg5 10.♘xg5 ♘h6 .
EXERCISE: What is White's best way to maintain the advantage and initiative?
ANSWER: The rook lift 11.♖d3! followed by 12 Rh3 targeting the knight on h6 would keep the pressure on Black's inharmonious position. It's surprising Petrosian wasn't attracted to this variation, containing a rook manoeuvre climbing up the board as up a staircase and infiltrating Black's kingside. Moreover, this rook manoeuvre reminds of what happened in the famous miniature Petrosian-Taimanov, Game 14. One possible explanation is that Petrosian was so fond of keeping the threats in the position and to put psychological pressure on his opponent that he preferred the text move instead.]

8...♗e6 Putting pressure on a2 since Black is anticipating a rook check on d1. The bishop on e6 is actually better than its colleague on h6 which only eyes empty squares on the diagonal h6-c1.
EXERCISE (planning): Can you see the deep plan Petrosian now chose?
ANSWER: Petrosian wants to secure the centre and envisages the move f2-f3 with the scheme: Bf2, g2-g4 and h2-h4, taking space on the king's wing and exploiting the meaningless bishop on h6. It is perfectly all right to play according to the concept of slow manoeuvring rather than quick development because it will take long a time before Black can use his rooks on the d-file. This is also according to Nimzowitsch's concept described in his famous book My System. He wrote that side by side with prophylaxis you must collectively advance your pawns.

9.f3! ♘f6 10.♗f2 ♘bd7
[More preventive is 10...♘fd7 with the idea to secure the king on b7 after ...b7-b6, ...Kc8, ...a7-a6 and ...Kb7. The black king's knight would not be under attack from White kingside pawns then.]

11.h4 a6 12.g4 ♘e8 QUESTION: How does White now make further progress?
[To try to activate the bishop with 12...♗f4 is useless after 13.♘h3 ♗d6 14.♘g5 when White has the advantage of the bishop pair and the better pawn structure after 15 Nxe6. The passive ♘f8 to avoid the doubled pawns is answered by 15.♖d1 with strong initiative.]
ANSWER: By putting the other knight on the rim.

13.♘h3! Black has serious problems over how to activate his bishop on h6. **♘c7**

14.♘c4 ♔c8
[14...b5 15.♘a5 doesn't solve Black's problems.]

15.♘g5 Both knights are very active and put strong pressure on Black's position. **♖b8**
QUESTION: Can you find White's next move and mini-plan?
ANSWER: **16.♘e3!** White plans to push his f-pawn with f3-f4-f5, seizing space while harassing the black bishop on e6. The bishop on e6 is in deep trouble from both White's pawn and knight.

b5
[After 16...f6 17.♘xe6 ♘xe6 18.♘d5 Black can't withstand the further moves g4-g5, Rd1 and Bh3 with a strong attack.]

17.f4 ♗xg5 Now Black loses the pair of bishops and helps White's king's rook to be developed. In a bad position there are only bad moves.
[17...f6 isn't fun either after 18.♘xe6 ♘xe6 19.g5 ♗g7 20.♘d5 followed by Bh3 and 0-0-0 when White wins with his tremendous activity.]

18.hxg5 ♘b6 EXERCISE: How may White continue increasing his advantage?
[ANSWER: Of course a computer continuation like 18...♘b6 19.f5 ♗c4 *(* or *19...♗d7 20.♗g2* followed by 21 0-0-0 *)* 20.♘xc4 ♘xc4 21.♗xc5 ♘xb2 22.♗d4 wins, but why bother with such variations when there are simpler, more human moves available?]
[The variation 18...f6 19.gxf6 exf6 20.b3 followed by queenside castling also secures a clear edge for White.]

19.b3! The knight on b6 and the bishop on e6 are thus immobilized by one simple pawn move. This is also how Karpov used to play chess. **♗d7 20.f5 ♗c6 21.♗g2 ♔b7 22.♗g3** White threats 23 Be5 winning the h7-pawn. Black is positionally lost. **f6** EXERCISE: What is the simplest win for White?
[Bouaziz's last try was maybe 22...♘d7 23.♘d5 e5 with the idea to sacrifice the exchange, à la Petrosian, after 24.fxe6 *(* Petrosian would probably not fall for that and would have played *24.♔f2* instead followed by doubling on the h-file *)* 24...♘xe6 25.♗xb8 ♔xb8 which would result in weak dark squares on e5 and g5.]

ANSWER: **23.♘d5! ♘bxd5 24.exd5 ♘xd5 25.♗xb8** . The most striking with this original game is that Petrosian didn't even move his rooks or king, even when he had a very good rook move at his disposal on move eight. You get the feeling that maybe his hidden intention was to play without the rooks beforehand.
When you play through Petrosian's games thoroughly you frequently observe that he played in the opposite way to beginners' book recommendations. In this game he also put both the knights on the rim. The line between madness and genius is very small indeed. You can't stop thinking that Bent Larsen was correct when he stated that beginners' books are just a bunch of lies. To play chess on the highest level requires finding when the exceptions are the rules.
1-0

A42

□ **Polugaevsky,L**
■ **Petrosian,T**
59: USSR Championship, Moscow 1983
[Thomas Engqvist]

Lev Abramovich Polugaevsky (1934-95) became a grandmaster in 1962 and was part of the world elite in the 1970s, belonging to the top ten. He is famous for his love of the Sicilian Defence which he shared with his readers in several books. The first one entitled Grandmaster Preparation (1981) was published in the Soviet Union 1977 and is a real treasure for the aspiring chessplayer.
The heydays for both these players were behind them in April 1983 when the 50th USSR Championship was taking place, probably more so for Petrosian than for Polugaevsky who shared third to fourth place, whereas Petrosian was placed sixth to ninth with two wins, two losses and eleven draws. Against Polugaevsky he had a plus score counting all their games in their careers. They met 23 times and Petrosian won five, lost three and drew fifteen games. Here is their last game which he won surprisingly easy.
1.♘f3 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.c4 d6 4.♘c3 e5 5.e4
[Black loses the right to castle if White plays 5.dxe5 dxe5 6.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 , but it doesn't really matter because he has a perfectly safe king position with ...c7-c6 followed by ... Kc7. L.Portisch-R.Keene, Teeside 1972, continued 7.♗g5+ f6 8.0-0-0+ ♘d7 9.♗d2 ♘h6 10.♖g1 . The plan of a qualitative majority attack with g2-g4, h4-h5 and Nh4 was comfortably met by ♘f7 11.g4 c6 12.♘e4 ♔c7 13.e3 ♗f8 14.♗c3 ♗e7 15.♗e2 ♖e8 16.h4 ♘c5 17.♘xc5 ♗xc5 with an equal position.]
5...♘c6
[Another scheme of development with the purpose of putting pressure on the central pawn at d4 begins with 5...♗g4 .]
6.dxe5
[6.d5 is answered by the centralizing ♘d4 .]
6...♘xe5 The best way to recapture.
[Worse is 6...dxe5 7.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 *(* not *7...♘xd8? 8.♘b5 ♘e6 9.♘g5* with a winning position according to the German Grandmaster Robert Hübner *)* 8.♗g5+ f6 9.0-0-0+ ♗d7 10.♗e3 and Black has problems to connect his rooks.]
7.♘d4 a6 A useful move neutralizing the knight on d4.
[The move sequence 7...♘e7 8.♗e2 ♘7c6 , putting pressure on the centralized knight on d4, was seen in the game F.Gheorghiu-R.Schlenker, London 1981. After 9.♗e3 h5?! 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.f4 ♘g4 12.♗d4 White had a comfortable edge and went on to win after 28 moves.]
8.♗e2 QUESTION: Is it okay to advance the c-pawn two steps?
ANSWER: **c5?!** Objectively speaking this is a slight strategical error, but Black is hoping for counterplay connected with the dark squares and so sacrifices the central outpost d5. This is a give-and-take strategy and not without risk. Possibly Petrosian had psychological matters in mind because he had prior to this game lost a game with the white pieces versus Yuri Razuvaev (1945-2012), and apparently wanted to play for a win.
9.♘c2 ♗e6 EXERCISE (calculation): Can White play 10 f4 here? Calculate the necessary variations.
10.♘d5?
[ANSWER: The critical move is, indeed, 10.f4! when
A) 10...♘xc4 is answered by 11.f5 gxf5 12.exf5 ♗xf5 13.0-0! *(* not *13.♗xc4? ♕h4+* and Black regains the bishop with clear advantage *)* 13...♗xc2 *(13...♗e6* doesn't work because of *14.♗xc4 ♗xc4*

when White can exploit the two undefended bishops with *15.♕g4!* ; after *♗xf1 16.♕xg7 ♕f6 17.♗h6!* he is clearly better *)* 14.♕xc2 and White has more than enough compensation for the two pawns because of his advantage in development. In the game Polugaevsky made an instructive strategical mistake.;

B) 10...♘c6 is the best move with only a slight edge for White after 11 0-0.]

10...♗xd5! This is the point of Black's set-up. If the pawns can't deal with the weak d5-square, then the pieces do the job instead.

11.exd5

[11.cxd5 results in a Benoni structure considered good for Black after ♘f6 12.♘e3 b5 *(* or *12...0-0;* but Black must not fall into the simple trap *12...♘xe4?? 13.♕a4+ .)*]

[Instead, 11.♕xd5 with the idea of later putting the knight from c2 on d5 via e3 can be answered by ♕e7 12.f3 ♘f6 13.♕d2 ♘c6 14.♘e3 ♘h5 15.0-0 *(* not *15.♘d5? ♕h4+)* 15...♗e5 with full control of the dark squares in White's camp.]

11...♘e7! Petrosian targets d4 in line with his dark-square strategy starting with 7...a6 and 8...c5. **12.0-0 0-0 13.♖b1 ♘f5 14.b4?!** EXERCISE: Why is this pawn break a positional mistake?

ANSWER: Polugaevsky seems to overestimate his position because of his space advantage. Now Black achieves a very strong control of the dark squares, particularly the c5-square for a knight can be useful where it effectively neutralizes the pressure on the b-file. It's also important to notice that Black has managed to get rid of the bishop on c8 for a white knight and that normally eases his task, since he can manoeuvre more easily with the remaining pieces.

[With this hindsight it's better to play 14.b3 for the purpose of stabilizing the united pawns aligned on the diagonal.]

14...cxb4 15.♖xb4 ♕c7 16.♗b2 ♖fe8 17.♘d4?! EXERCISE: Now Black's game becomes very easy to play. Can you spot the continuation?

ANSWER: **♘xd4 18.♗xd4 ♘d7!** QUESTION: Should White allow the exchange of bishops or should he try to avoid it?

ANSWER: Generally it's a good idea to avoid an exchange of bishops in this kind of position where Black has a very strong control of a colour complex. Indeed, 19 Bxg7?! Kxg7 only results in a position where White has unnecessarily split his bishop-pair and is he left with a bad bishop versus a strong knight. Better is the move played:

19.♗e3 QUESTION: How would you evaluate the positional exchange sacrifice on e3?

ANSWER: Petrosian, when once asked which of the chess pieces his favourite was, replied that it was the rook because he could sacrifice it for minor pieces.

♖xe3! The rook removes the key defender of the dark squares and will radically increase Black's domination of them. It's a fight for squares rather than material. As a general rule it is a good idea to make this type of sacrifice if your opponent doesn't have possibilities to create play for the rooks. Rooks need open files, but in this position the half-open b-file is useless because of the knight on c5 and White can't do anything on the half-open f-file either.

Petrosian wrote: "Do not be hypnotized by the relative force of a rook. The decision comes from an actual evaluation of forces and positional factors." The Swedish Grandmaster Ulf Andersson (1951-) made a similar sacrifice to obtain full control of a complex of dark squares against Karpov in Milan 1975. He even managed to win that game and it was Karpov's first loss as world champion. Petrosian and Andersson must be regarded as probably the greatest exponents of the positional exchange sacrifice.

20.fxe3 ♘c5 All the white pieces are practically dead in this position because they can't do anything. All the White pawns are practically dead too because there are no effective breaks for them. It's impossible to find an effective plan for White who from now on only can only sit and wait while Black improves his position step by step.

21.♕c2 ♖e8 22.♖f3?! It's difficult to understand why White wants to defend this pawn. After all, if Black takes the pawn he will also open the e-file.

[A more logical continuation is 22.♖bb1 followed by 23 Rbe1 which at least creates some harmony between the rooks.]

22...♗h6 The bishop moves itself from an empty diagonal to a more useful one and puts pressure on the weak pawn on e3. **23.♕c3 ♕e7 24.♖b6??** An unbelievable mistake from a player of Polugaevsky's calibre. Such a mistake really proves how much pressure he must have felt in this position. He has more material, but doesn't know what to do with it.

Polugaevsky should have played 24 g3 with the idea of putting the king on the safer square at g2.
♘a4 . Certainly a convincing victory for Petrosian's dark-square strategy which was initiated by the positionally risky 8...c5.
0-1

E49

□ **Petrosian,T**
■ **Ljubojevic,L**
60: Niksic 1983
[Thomas Engqvist]

Grandmaster Ljubomir Ljubojevic (1950-) was the leading Yugoslavian player from 1974 until the late 1980s. In 1983 he was actually rated third in the world after Karpov and Kasparov. Look how easily though Petrosian takes on this formidable opponent.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3
Petrosian had great success with this set-up scoring 70% in his career. **0-0 5.♗d3 d5 6.♘ge2 c5**
[Another convenient system for Black, well-liked by the Swedish Grandmaster Gideon Stahlberg is 6...dxc4 7.♗xc4 e5 8.0-0 *(8.dxe5? ♕xd1+ 9.♔xd1* is met by the fork *♘g4* when Black wins back the pawn with advantage *)* 8...exd4 9.♘xd4 a6 10.♕c2 c5 11.♘f5 ♘c6 12.♖d1 ♕c7 13.♘d5 ♘xd5 14.♗xd5 ♗xf5 15.♕xf5 ♘e7 with an equal position in L.Engels-G. Stahlberg, Dresden 1936.]
7.0-0 ♘c6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.a3 ♗xc3?!
[9...c4 is more critical. Now White obtains a position which is easy to play in practical chess. The pawn preponderance in the centre in combination with the pair of bishops and half-open b-file makes White very happy.]
10.bxc3 ♖e8 11.f3 ♗d7 12.♘g3 If Black plays passively White will continue with Ra2-e2 followed by Bb2 and e3-e4. This explains Black's next move. **♕a5** EXERCISE: Black's last move looks pseudo-active. How should White react to it?
ANSWER: **13.♕d2!**
[Not 13.♗d2 ♕c7 and Black has prevented the typical manoeuvre Ra2-e2 in this variation.]
13...♕a4 Black prepares ...Na5 with piece pressure on White's weakened light squares c4 and b3. However, this idea seems to be too ambitious and Black loses force from other sectors of the board.
[That said, the central exchange 13...cxd4?! 14.cxd4 ♕xd2 15.♗xd2 unnecessarily opens up the game in White's favour because of his pair of bishops.]
14.♖b1 ♘a5 15.♗c2 ♕c4
[After 15...♕c6 16.e4 White's centre is set in motion.]
16.♗d3 ♕a4 EXERCISE: Can you find White's strongest continuation?
ANSWER: **17.e4! dxe4**
[If 17...cxd4 18.♖b4 dxc3 19.♕f4! ♕c6 20.e5 when White wins a minor piece and has a winning game.]
18.fxe4 cxd4 19.♖b4 ♕c6
[After 19...dxc3 20.♕g5! White wins one of the knights.]
20.cxd4 ♘xe4 In a positionally lost position Ljubojevic tries his last chance to destroy White's strong 'absolute classical centre' to use a piece of terminology from Euwe and Kramer's The Middle Game Book 1: Static Features (1964).
21.♘xe4 ♖xe4 EXERCISE: What is White's most precise winning move?
ANSWER: **22.♕f2!**
[Of course not 22.d5? ♕c5+ 23.♔h1 ♖e5 when White must try to win the game one more time.]
22...f5
[Other variations: 22...♖e7 results in an undefended rook which can be exploited by the double attack 23.♕h4 , and if Black defends with ♔f8 then 24.♕xh7 wins.]
[22...♖ee8 23.♕xf7+ ♔h8 24.♕h5 h6 25.♕xa5 is also curtains.]
23.d5! ♕xd5 24.♗xe4 fxe4 25.♖d4 ♕e6
EXERCISE (combination alert): What does Petrosian now have in store?
ANSWER: **26.♖xe4! ♕g6**
[26...♕xe4 leaves the last rank undefended after the forced 27.♕f7+ ♔h8 28.♕f8+ ♖xf8 29.♖xf8# .]
27.♖e7 ♗b5 28.♕f7+ . A very nice game. It's hard to improve on this game because Petrosian played as precisely as a computer. This splendid performance was, however, his only win in Niksic and tragically it was his last win in a serious game before his untimely demise.
1-0

Petrosian move by move

Tigran Petrosian was a World Chess Champion and a true legend of the game. He was nicknamed "Iron Tigran" because of his incredible defensive skills that made him a formidable opponent who was virtually impossible to defeat. Petrosian was the master of restraint, prophylaxis and prevention. He could spot and defuse threats well before they were created, suck the life out of an opponent's position and then seize a vice-like grip on the game. In this book, International Master Thomas Engqvist selects and examines his favourite Petrosian games, and shows us how we can all learn and improve our chess by studying Petrosian's masterpieces.

Move by move provides an ideal platform to study chess. By continually challenging the reader to answer probing questions throughout the book, the **move by move** format greatly encourages the learning and practising of vital skills just as much as the traditional assimilation of knowledge. Carefully selected questions and answers are designed to keep you actively involved and allow you to monitor your progress as you learn. This is an excellent way to improve your chess skills and knowledge.

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