

GM Dragan Barlov

**DYNAMIC
PLAY
IN THE WORLD
CHAMPIONS'
MASTERPIECES**

I think about chess
dynamics,
therefore I am!



Chess Informant
SINCE 1966

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ISBN 978-86-7297-102-6

Publisher

Šahovski informator

11001 Beograd, Francuska 31, Srbija

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Editorial Note

The books and sources listed in the Bibliography are used primarily for adaptation and translation of the material presented in the book. The list contains only the most important sources and is most recommended for further reading and studying.

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SYSTEM OF SIGNS

±	white stands slightly better	↗	diagonal
∓	black stands slightly better	⊕	centre
±	white has the upper hand	»	king's side
∓	black has the upper hand	«	queen's side
+—	white has a decisive advantage	×	weak point
—+	black has a decisive advantage	⊥	ending
=	even	♖♗	pair of bishops
∞	unclear	♖♗	bishops of opposite color
∞	with compensation for the material	♖♗	bishops of the same color
⊙	development advantage	○○	united pawns
○	greater board room	○-○	separated pawns
→	with attack	♚	double pawns
↑	with initiative	♚	passed pawn
↔	with counter-play	>	advantage in number of pawns
⊙	zugzwang	⊕	time
#	mate	75/199	Chess Informant
!	a very good move	E	12 Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings
!!	an excellent move	♚	3/b Encyclopaedia of Chess Endings
?	a mistake	N	a novelty
??	a blunder	(ch)	championship
!?	a move deserving attention	(izt)	interzonal tournament
?!	a dubious move	(ct)	candidates' tournament
△	with the idea	(m)	match
□	only move	(ol)	olympiad
⤴	better is	corr.	correspondence game
↔	file	RR	editorial comment
		R	various moves
		L	with
		┘	without
			etc
		—	see

Foreword

"The possibility that the material can be converted into the dynamics, and the dynamics into the material, is a magnificent attribute of a chess game, and perhaps its greatest mysteries."

Rudolf Spielmann (The Art of sacrifice in Chess)

Ten elite chess players competing on Mount Olympus, deep in thought, while the audience observes the spectacle captivated by their artistry. Quite a realistic surroundings of a modern-day top event. Chess lovers follow the games on the electronic demonstration boards and comment on the moves in whisper. If a player sacrifices a piece, the whisper becomes tense followed by slight commotion in the venue:

"Carlsen sacrificed a pawn! I have a good feeling about it..."

"I believe Anand is just about to sac the rook!..."

Ever since the glorious London Tournament in 1851, chess lovers enjoyed the thrill of the elite events with the same enthusiasm. That very Tournament marked the beginning of the professional chess initiating the similar competitions throughout the Europe and the rest of the World. In those olden days, the main protagonists were Adolf Anderssen and Howard Staunton, marvelous attackers and skillful dynamic players. Anderssen won the London Tournament and was glorified as the best player in the world and unofficial World Champion.

Some of the sages claim that chess dynamics and sacrifices are not to be considered as crucial factors when estimating a relative strength of any chess player. Of course, one can play quite well without sacrifices or any deep knowledge of chess dynamics, reaching the checkmate as the ultimate objective without sacrificial actions. However, one may wonder how much of the immanent beauty would remain within our beloved game without dynamic play and sparkling combinations? Doubtless, the answer is a rather simple one – chess would be an extraordinary difficult game to master, but also a very boring one, resembling a drama piece without a tragic plot, or life itself without struggle...

I dedicate this book to all the chess lovers, hoping to inspire them to embark on the most beautiful journey into the mysterious subtleties of CHESS DYNAMICS, a truly intriguing aspect of modern chess. I used 40 deeply annotated games played by 20 World Chess Champions in order to explain how to use dynamic play in the most effective way, as a pure climax of all the crucial chess elements – material, space and time.

GM Dragan Barlov

Dynamic play in the world champions' masterpieces

I think about chess dynamics, therefore I am!

Introduction

For quite some time it is a well-established intention of every chess player to play in a dynamic manner, to seize the initiative. So, what is the initiative, what does it consist of? Basically, if a player positions his forces on the most active squares, creating constant threats, thus forcing the opponent to defend without any glimpse of counter-play - he owns the initiative.

José Raúl Capablanca understood the power of initiative very well and was able to apply it in his games brilliantly. He used to stress the significance of the first move and the advantage-initiative White naturally gets. White is obliged to maintain the initiative as long as possible, and to exchange it to some other kind of material advantage when the circumstances are favorable.

Therefore, the initiative is actually the possibility to force the opponent to play in the way that is beneficial for you. So, one of the rivals comprehends all the nuances of the position and is able to execute the plan based on the initiative. Of course, he must understand all the possible continuations and secrets of the position in order to be successful. In actual fact, by executing the moves which force the opponent to react according to our previously conceived plan we reach the conclusion of the game scenario we anticipated. Naturally, a player must be skilled enough to be able to seize initiative in any phase of a chess game - the opening, middle-game, or even in the endgame. I devote great attention to various examples in order to teach you, dear readers, how to improve your strategic thinking process. The initiative will include both the phase of piece development and their transfer in order to achieve certain goal. Development as such is not a difficult task (advancing the pawns obtaining the control in the centre, bringing the knight and bishops in the battle, castling), but it must be executed having a specific objective in mind - forcing the opponent to develop his own pieces without freedom and efficiency, but in the manner that is useful for our game plan. Actually, this is the crucial aspect of many opening variations.

IF ONE OF THE RIVALS GAINS A LASTING INITIATIVE, THE OTHER RUNS OUT OF GOOD AND USEFUL MOVES VERY QUICKLY!

In the modern tournament practice we often witness games in which one of the rivals obtains the initiative in the opening and sacrifices the material in order to retain it. So, it is of utmost importance to seize the initiative and keep it, or to fight for it if it is in opponent's possession. He who obtains the initiative usually wins!

The origin of the royal game is not easy to establish with complete certainty. However, the history of the World Championship duels is pretty easy to follow. In 1886, Johannes Zukertort and Wilhelm Steinitz fought for the ultimate crown in the match organized in the USA (New York, Saint Louis and New Orleans). It was Steinitz, the Austrian emigrant, who won the match and became the first official World Chess Champion. All of his successors (except Bobby Fischer) tried to remain on the throne battling with the pretenders for the crown, investing tremendous willpower and effort in the process. Is there any particular quality which distinguishes World Champions from other elite chess players? For sure, all of them possessed immense thirst for success, extremely strong willpower. Quite often we label such a quality as "the killer instinct", the virtue that mere mortals do not possess.

In this book I collected 40 games of the World Champions which should depict their usage of the dynamic play in the most accessible manner. You will be able to examine how they treated all the dynamic aspects of chess throughout their careers, and how much their ideas contributed to development and evolution of chess technique. So, I hope you will enjoy such a journey and learn a lot from dynamic play of the legends, as they managed to create serious problems for their opponents over and over again. Also, you will find 120 additional diagrams with 120 different types of positions exploring the Champions' ability to sense the dynamics, tactics and victories! That part of the presented material should be used as a workbook of chess tactics, so you can test your tactical prowess trying to find the way the legends applied dynamics in their games. Of course, it is advisable to solve those puzzle positions without moving the pieces, looking for the killing move and the winning plan as a whole. If you are not successful you should invest even more effort and find the correct solution over the board.

So, dear readers, are you ready for this entertaining challenge and compare your talent with the amazing skills of the World Champions?

PART ONE

Classical
World
Champions

Chapter One
Wilhelm Steinitz



Wilhelm Steinitz

Wilhelm Steinitz (Prague (Praha) 14 May 1836 - New York 2 August 1900)

"I can play against God and give him a pawn of advantage."

Wilhelm Steinitz was generally considered to be the strongest player in the world since 1866 when he won the match against Adolf Anderssen. He became the first official World Chess Champion in 1886 after winning the match against Johannes Zukertort. The match was held in USA and consisted of 20 games. Overall, Steinitz had a fruitful, 40 years long career which changed the character of chess in a quite revolutionary way. Before his reign, chess was a romantic game, full of sparkling gambits, brave sacrifices and a lot of risk. Steinitz transformed such a casual game into intense psychological struggle of true professionals.

His play was very resourceful while he remained a stubborn believer in his own principles and theories. He laid the foundations of the first complete chess school, claiming that a win is only possible if there was a prior disturbance in dynamics aspects of the game. In order to be victorious a player should accumulate small advantages, sometimes even a trifle ones - often leading to substantial edge and victory. That very idea forms the basis of Steinitz's theory of positional chess. The "romantic" and "classical" chess were closely bond together at the turn of the century (1885 - 1914), following Steinitz's foundations of modern chess science.

However, Steinitz was a courageous attacker in his youth , resembling his contemporaries Paul Morphy and Adolf Anderssen. He was even named "The Modern Calabrese" by his admirers in England, because his style of play reminded them on Greco's games. Swift as-

saults on the enemy king and gambit play in the opening were trademarks of such playing style. Over the years, Steinitz slowly developed his own approach to chess and his unique principles of positional play. Only later in his career, we meet a "real" Steinitz who praised defensive play highly, as well as the active role of king and the understanding of different pawn structures and formations. After winning the title in 1886, he defended it twice against Mikhail Chigorin (1889 and 1892) and Isidor Gunsberg (Izidor Artúr Günzberg) (1891). Finally, he lost the crown in 1894 losing the match against Emanuel Lasker, a much younger rival at the time. Eventually, Steinitz level of play dropped and he experienced first signs of severe mental illness. He received treatment in Moscow, then in Vienna but to no avail. The great Wilhelm Steinitz died on the 12th of August 1900 of heart failure being totally impoverished in New York State Asylum on Ward's Island. He longed to play with Lasker one more time and with God himself being sure that he would be victorious!

Giuoco Piano, Greco's attack C 54

Wilhelm Steinitz – Curt von Bardeleben

Hastings 1895

1. e4 e5 2. ♘f3 ♘c6 3. ♕c4 ♕c5 4. c3

White intends to create a strong pawn centre by d4, ed4, cd4. However, if Black plays the opening stage of the game correctly, White will not be able to achieve his goal. On his part, White wishes to use the position of the c5 bishop and gain a full centre.

4... ♗f6 5. d4 ed4 6. cd4

The main variation. In several games in his match versus Lasker in 1894, Steinitz played 6. e5 , though without much success.

6... ♖b4 7. ♘c3

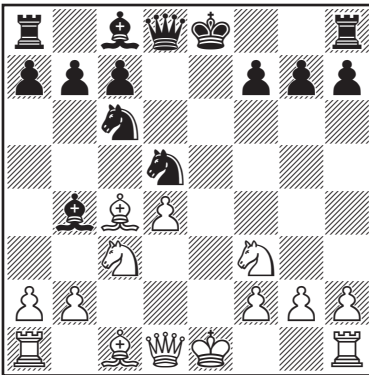
A very familiar pawn sacrifice in order to gain initiative created by famous Italian player Greco way back in the XVI century. 7. ♖d2 is a more solid option, even though after 7... ♖d2 8. ♘bd2 Black can play 8... d5! and then 9. ed5 ♘d5 White would have an isolani on d4, instead of the strong centre he initially had in mind.

7... d5

Black should have approached the opening phase of the game in a more concrete manner and played 7... ♘e4!? with a roughly equal play after 8. 0-0 ♖c3 9. d5 ♖f6= according to detailed analysis devoted to this variation.

8. ed5 ♘d5

Quite similar to 7. ♖d2, with the isolated pawn on d4.



9. 0-0!

A totally logical response: White completes development, losing a pawn in the process.

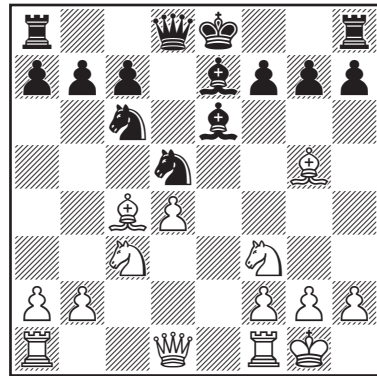
9... ♖e6

The alternatives are less satisfactory: 9... ♖c3 10. bc3 0-0 11. ♖c2 h6 12. ♖e1 ♖e6 13. ♖h6!+- ; 9... ♘c3 10. bc3 ♖c3 (10... ♖e7 11. ♖f4±) 11. ♖b3 ♖a1 12. ♖f7 ♖f8 13. ♖a3 ♘e7 14. ♖h5 g6 15. ♘g5 ♖e8 16.

♖e1+- ; 9... ♘b6 10. ♖e1 ♖e7 11. ♖b3 0-0 12. d5 ♘a5 13. ♖c2 ♘ac4 14. ♖d3↑ with a strong initiative for White, Steinitz – Blackburne, Nürnberg 1896

10. ♖g5! ♖e7

Black solved the opening problems quite well. He has a firm control over the d5 square, he is just about to castle and finish his development. Of course, White is bound to have issues with his d4 isolani in the later stage of the game. However, Steinitz's judgement was extremely deep and profound, so Black was obliged to take all dynamic aspects of Steinitz's play into consideration.



11. ♖d5!

White initiates the most dangerous game plan! He intends to exchange three minor pieces retaining the edge in development while preventing Black to castle and complete development.

11... ♖d5

Black should not play 11... ♖g5? , as after 12. ♖e6 fe6 13. ♖b3+- his position deteriorates rather quickly.

12. ♘d5 ♖d5

If 12... ♖g5 after 13. ♘c7 White wins a pawn.

13. ♖e7 ♘e7

40 years later in the Edwin Weiss — Matthaus Seibold correspondence game Black continued with 13... ♔e7 The position of Black's king in the centre helped White to execute a devastating attack and win the game very quickly: 14. ♖e1 ♗f8 15. ♕e2 f6 16. ♗ac1 ♖c8 17. ♗c5 ♕d6 18. ♗c4 ♗d8 19. ♗d5 ♗c6 20. ♗e2 ♗f7 21. ♗e7 ♗g8 22. ♗d7 ♗c4 1 : 0

14. ♖e1

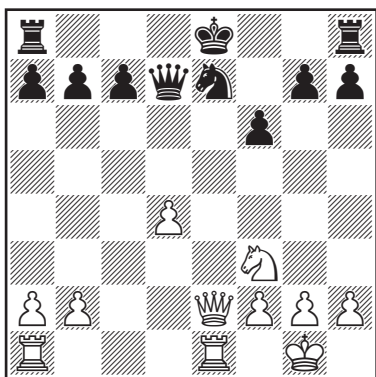
Certainly, Steinitz had this position in mind when he engaged exchanges of the minor pieces. Black's king is stuck in the centre so he must proceed with great caution.

14... f6

Since he cannot castle, Black wishes to coordinate his rooks by means of ♗f7. It is very hard to propose a better solution. For example: 14... ♕d6 15. ♗e2± with a clear advantage for White, or 14... ♗d8 (with the idea of ♗d7) 15. ♗a4± and White collects the pawn.

15. ♗e2 ♗d7

Black does not achieve much in case of 15... ♕d6 because 16. ♗b5 ♗c6 17. ♗b4 ♗d6 18. ♗b7±

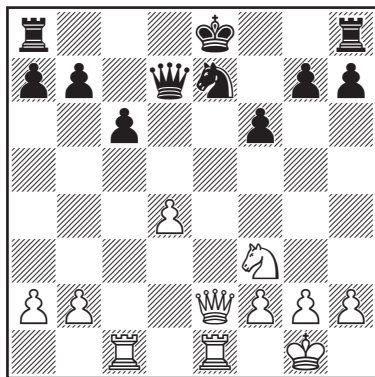


16. ♗ac1!

The correct continuation was 16. ♗ad1, for instance: 16... ♗f7 17. ♗c4 ♗d5 18. ♗e5!!

fe5 19. de5 c6 20. e6 ♗e6 21. ♗e6 ♗e6 22. ♗g4+— White has an overwhelming advantage. Although the game move is not objectively the strongest it has a great psychological effect! White intends to prevent Black's planned regrouping ♗f7, ♗d5 and ♗e8 with fine consolidation. Indeed, Von Bardeleben got scared...

16... c6?



Should we criticize Black for playing such a natural move? However, it was wiser to opt for 16... ♗f7 with the idea of connecting the rooks and gaining decent defensive possibilities. Nevertheless, I believe that Black was scared of the exchange sacrifice after 17. ♗e7 ♗e7 18. ♗e7 ♗e7 19. ♗c7 White is winning yet another pawn and gaining excellent compensation for the sacrificed material, especially with the extremely active rook on the 7th rank. Obviously, that was Black's train of thought!

However, the objective truth proves that Black misevaluated the ensuing position after 19... ♗d6 20. ♗g7 (20. ♗b7) ♗ac8 Black wins a crucial tempo thanks to the checkmate threat, so after 21. g3 ♗c7! White is obliged to avoid the trade of rooks 22. ♗g4 (22. ♗c7 ♗c7±) followed by 22... ♗c2± resulting in Black's rather unpleasant activity along the 2nd rank.

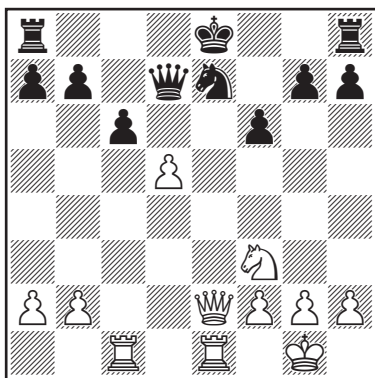
White's two pawns of compensation for the exchange does not seem to be enough for equality.

Evaluation of The Position - Dynamic Planning

Black did not treat the opening in a successful manner. White has a significant advantage in development, which may prove to be of crucial importance. His major pieces are very well positioned, forcing Black to be careful. Overall, White's initiative and advantage are indisputable but that is usually not enough to win a game of chess. It seems that White still needs something extra" in order to capture the enemy monarch. So, a crucial question arises - how to find that additional "spice"?

In my opinion, the most efficient plan for White is to create immediate threats, forcing the opponent to defend himself. He should also try to gain as much time as possible, even if that costs him a pawn (sometimes even a piece!) in order to reach his goal. In the current position, White still needs to activate one more piece, namely the inactive **f3** knight, and to prevent Black in executing his defensive **♔f7** manoeuvre thus consolidating his position and solving all the evident problems (King stuck in the centre, disconnected rooks).

17. d5!!



This is the common method of play in all the similar positions: a dynamic pawn sacrifice based on solid positional grounds changes the

situation in the most dramatic manner. The central d5 square was in firm control by Black as he intended to position a piece on that square (preferably a knight). However, after the game move this square will remain blocked by a black pawn and therefore unavailable for any of the black pieces. In actual fact, the black d5 pawn will be isolated thus providing a safe shelter for the revived white knight to spring around from d4 square. White's knight may reach e6 and apply a very strong pressure on the g7 point and Black's position in general.

Of course, White should act quickly before Black manages to consolidate his position. On top of that, the c-file will be open as well giving White even more advantage in development.

17... cd5

Black may not accept the offered pawn and go for 17... ♔f7, but then after 18. dc6 ♘c6 19. ♖cd1+— White quickly gains a rather strong initiative along the open central files, culminating in decisive advantage.

18. ♘d4!

Mission accomplished! White does not have any concrete threats, but all of his pieces are brimming with "volcanic energy", aimed at the weak black monarch.

18... ♔f7

