

THE EXCHANGE SACRIFICE

A Practical Guide



SERGEY KASPAROV

The Exchange Sacrifice

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by
Sergey Kasparov



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Russell Enterprises, Inc.
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Signs and Symbols

!	a strong move
!!	a brilliant or unobvious move
?	a weak move, an error
??	a grave error
!?	a move worth consideration
?!	a dubious move
=	an equal position
≅	White stands slightly better
±	White has a clear advantage
+−	White has a winning position
≒	Black stands slightly better
∓	Black has a clear advantage
−+	Black has a winning position
∞	an unclear position
#	mate
(D)	See the next diagram

Introduction

Dear Reader!

So, you have taken this book from the shelf in a bookstore to leaf through it and familiarize yourself with its contents, or you are considering purchasing online. Well, let me try and explain the subject as briefly as possible.

But, first allow me to introduce myself, though it is not impossible that we have already met each other on the pages of previous books and articles – or even during tournaments.

Working for you is grandmaster Sergey Kasparov from Belarus, an East European country and a former USSR republic. And now to chess.

We all have been told that every chess piece possesses an approximate strength measured “in pawns.”

A rook is roughly equivalent to $4\frac{1}{2}$ pawns, a bishop – to 3 and a knight to $2\frac{1}{2}$ pawns. For different chess manuals, those estimates may vary in the range of plus or minus a half-pawn. They are certainly rather arbitrary as the real strength of pieces changes depending on many different factors. For example, a rook’s strength increases in the endgames; in closed positions with strongpoints, it is knights that “build up their brawn,” etc.

Let us divide the general contents of the book into various topics. In every one of them, you will find several examples taken from games played by strong grandmasters, and also some fragments from the author’s personal experience.

As usual, I will be using many diagrams to give my busiest (or laziest ☺) readers a chance to do without an actual chessboard, making themselves comfortable with the book in a chair or sofa.

In the first two chapters you will find collections of examples taken from the games of Tigran Petrosian, the ninth world champion (1963-1969) and Anatoly Karpov, the twelfth world champion (1975-1985). The former was a universally recognized expert in exchange sacrifices, and the latter is one of the greatest all-time experts in positional play. It seems interesting to compare the games of those great champions and try to draw conclusions as to their views on our subject.

I hope that after reading this book you will be able to carry out promising exchange sacrifices (or, conversely, discourage them) with greater confidence.

In any event, I have always recommended to my students – and I have been working in a specialized chess school and now give online chess lessons – to employ this strategic weapon actively.

I am now going to reveal a small secret to you. While working on the book, I immersed myself in its principal subject more deeply as it may come in handy in my future chess practice. In this way I managed to mix business with pleasure. I do hope that my publishers remain ignorant about this...☺

At the end, you will be offered some positions for solving. I then take the liberty of estimating your real chess strength at this time based upon the number of points you score.

Just to give readers a chance to relax a bit, I am going to introduce some interesting “off-board” fragments from numerous tournaments somewhere in between the “dry chess” pages.

You are also welcome to email your questions, wishes and critique to the author at tkasparova@rambler.ru . I hope that your time spent with this book will turn out both pleasant and profitable.

Sergey Kasparov
Belarus

Trying to “Muddy the Waters”

33. ♖g3 33... ♗f3!? ♜e6 (33... e4 34. ♗xe4 dxe4 35. ♖f1 +-) 34. ♖g3= 33... d4! 34. ♗c4+ ♜f6 35. ♗e2 ♗d6 36. ♗xf4 36. ♗xd4 ♗xc4 37. ♗xc6 bxc6 38. b3 ♗e3 39. ♗d6+ ♜g5 40. ♖xc6 is interesting enough: the position is unclear as both sides have their own advantages.

36... exf4+ 36... ♗xc4!? 37. ♗h5+ ♜g5 38. ♖f1. The only move. (38. b3 ♗e3 +-) 38... ♗e4 with the initiative. 37. ♜xf4 ♗xc4 38. b3 ♗e3 39. g5+ ♜g6 40. ♖xd4 ♗d5+ 41. ♜e5

Grishchuk acts rather wisely: he gives up his piece but eliminates his opponent's best “trump card.” Now White is quite safe, while Black has to display a certain vigilance.

41... ♗c3 42. ♖d2 ♗e4 42... ♜xg5 43. ♖c2 ♗d5 44. ♖xc6 bxc6 45. ♜d6 ♗b4 46. a3 ♗c2 47. ♜xc6 a5 48. ♜b5= 43. ♖d8 ♗c3 43... ♗xg5 44. ♖d6+ ♜g7 45. ♖xc6 bxc6 46. ♜d6= 44. a3 44. ♖d6+ ♜xg5 45. ♖xc6! bxc6 46. ♜d6 ♗xa2 47. ♜xc6 ♜f6 48. ♜b6 ♗b4 49. ♜a5= 44... ♜xg5 45. ♖g8+ ♜h4 46. ♖g1

The struggle continues on the queenside only, and the black king practically takes no part in it.

46... ♗e2 47. ♖g6 ♗c1 48. b4 ♗d3+ 49. ♜d4 ♗b2 50. ♖xc6 bxc6 51. ♜c5 ♜g5 52. ♜xc6 ♜f6 53. ♜b7 ♗c4 54. a4 a5 55. bxa5 55. b5 ♗b2 56. ♜a6 ♗xa4= ½-½

The struggle against the rooks as interpreted by the leader of Indian chess is rather instructive. Despite his material advantage and lack of obvious defects in the pawn structure, Black was helpless. The knight on b6 obstructed the Ukrainian grandmaster's entire queenside practically single-handedly.

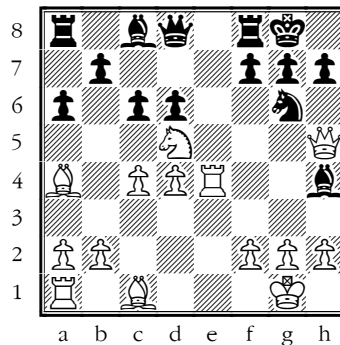
(76) Anand – Ivanchuk

Las Palmas 1996

Ruy Lopez [C78]

1. e4 e5 2. ♗f3 ♗c6 3. ♗b5 a6 4. ♗a4 ♗f6 5. 0-0 ♗c5 6. ♗xe5

♗xe5 7. d4 ♗xe4 8. ♖e1!? ♗e7 9. ♖xe4 ♗g6 10. c4 0-0 11. ♗c3 d6 12. ♗d5 ♗h4 13. ♜h5 c6 (D)



A usual position that looks approximately equal: neither side has any weaknesses. 14. ♖xh4!?

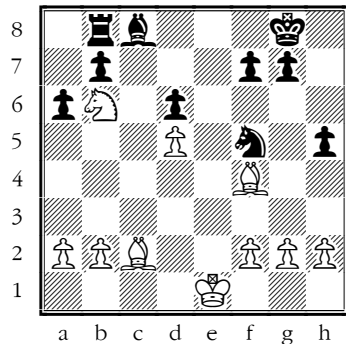
A topical move! The Indian player probably did not like 14. ♗c3 b5 15. ♗c2 f5 with an unclear position (15... bxc4? 16. ♖xh4 ♜xh4 17. ♗xg6±). 14... ♜xh4 14... ♗xh4?! 15. ♗g5 f6 16. ♗xh4 cxd5 17. ♜xd5+ ♜h8 18. ♗g3± 15. ♜xh4 ♗xh4 16. ♗b6 ♖b8

Other continuations are no better: 16... ♖a7 17. ♗f4 ♗f5 18. d5 with compensation; the prisoner on a7 spoils Black's position; 16... ♗f5 17. ♗xa8 ♖xa8 18. ♗f4 ♗d3 19. d5 cxd5 20. cxd5 – White has a pair of bishops and a pleasant position.

17. ♗f4 ♗f5 17... ♖d8? 18. ♗g5+- 18. d5 18. g4?! ♗xd4 19. ♗xd6 ♗xg4±; 18. h3!? ♖d8 19. c5 with compensation. 18... ♖e8 18... cxd5 19. cxd5 ♖d8 20. ♖e1 h6 21. ♗d1 ♗d7= 19. ♜f1 h6?!

The following picturesque variations are “left off-screen”: 19... h5 20. f3 ♖d8 21. c5 cxd5 22. g4 hxg4 23. fxg4 ♗d4 24. ♖d1 with the initiative; 19... ♖e4 20. ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 21. ♜xe1 cxd5 22. cxd5 h5 23. ♗c2 with compensation. (D)

The Exchange Sacrifice



Let us have a look at the additional diagram here. A pictorial position, is not it? The black pieces look paralyzed! **20.h3 ♖e4 21.♙h2± c×d5 22.g4!**

Vishy is machine-like in his precision; Black's problems snowball. **22...♞×c4 22...♙e6 23.g×f5 ♙×f5 24.♙×d6 ♞d8 25.♙c7±; 22...♙d4 23.♙×d6+- . 23.♙×c4** Vassily regains the exchange, but, in spite of his extra pawns, it does not alleviate Black's sufferings. Subsequent material losses are inevitable. There follows the technical part without comments.

23...d×c4 24.♞e1 ♙e6 25.g×f5 ♙×f5 26.♙×d6 ♙×h3+ 27.♞g1 ♞d8 28.♞e8+ ♞×e8 29.♙×e8 ♙e6 30.a4 g5 31.a5 ♞g7 32.♙a4 ♞g6 33.♙d1 ♙d5 34.♙c2+ ♞f6 35.♙c7 ♞e6 36.♙h7 ♙f3 37.♞h2 ♞d5 38.♙c2 ♙e4 39.♙d1 ♞d4 40.♙e2 ♙d3 41.♙b6+ ♞d5 42.♙d1 f5 43.♞g3 ♞e5 44.♙c5 ♞f6 45.♙h5 f4+ 46.♞h2 1-0

Levon Aronian is a very creative player, and the organizers of elite tournaments certainly love him. Against a background of frequently ponderous play of the celestials, Levon is the one who, in my opinion, likes positions with unusual material balance. I happened to play against him in a couple of tournaments and I never noticed anything like this then, because it was I

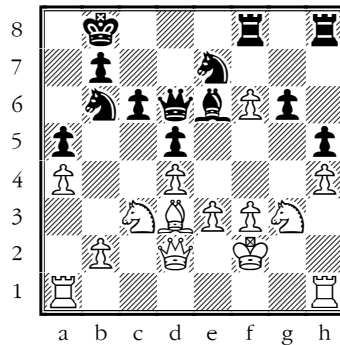
who had to defend myself in somewhat worse technical positions. But that was many years ago, and it is not improbable that the style of one of the best (at present) players of the world has undergone certain changes.

(77) Nakamura – Aronian

Moscow 2011

Queen's Gambit [D31]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♙c3 ♙e7 4.c×d5 e×d5 5.♙f4 c6 6.e3 ♙f5 7.g4 ♙e6 8.h4 ♙d7 9.♙g3 ♙b6 10.f3 ♙d6 11.♙×d6 ♞×d6 12.♞c2 ♙e7 13.♙d3 h5 14.g5 0-0-0 15.♙ge2 ♞b8 16.♞f2 g6 17.a4 a5 18.♙g3 ♞df8 19.♞d2 f6 20.g×f6 (D)



Quite a normal situation; the self-suggesting continuation is **20...♙f5**, followed by annihilation of the surrounded f6-pawn. And here, out of the blue, Aronian makes the move...

20...♞×f6!? If it were not Levon the Great, I would take it for a banal blunder (**20...♙f5 21.♙ge2 ♞d8=**).

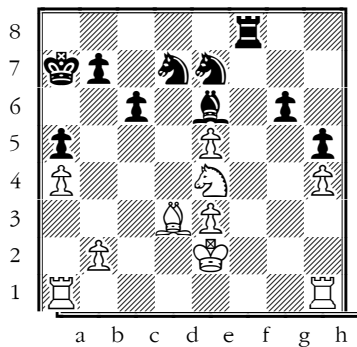
21.♙ce4 d×e4 22.♙×e4 The queen has no chance to retreat and to defend the rook, but, while giving up the material, Black creates a certain discomfort for his opponent's king.

22...♞×f3+ 23.♞×f3 ♞d5?! The correct continuation is **23...♞f8+ 24.♞e2 ♙g4+ 25.♞e1 ♞d8 26.♞×a5 ♙f5**. The rooks on a1 and h1 are cut off from each other, which makes the

Trying to “Muddy the Waters”

“metabolism” of the white organism much more difficult.

24. ♖h2+ ♜a7 25. ♗e5?!
 Returning the favor. Better is 25. ♗d6!? ♗g4+ 26. ♜f2 ♖f5 (26... ♗f8+ 27. ♜g1 ±) 27. ♗c5 ±, but we are not entitled to condemn the players as the position is rather “computerish.” **25... ♗f8+ 26. ♜e2 ♗×e5 27. d×e5 ♖d7** with compensation. (D)



Now the white pawn is doomed, and his opponent’s knight acquires an excellent post on e5. And all this is a result of the American grandmaster’s unhappy 25th move.

28. ♖d2 ♖×e5 28... ♗g4+ 29. ♜e1 ♖×e5 is better.

29. ♗e4?! 29.e4!?, though it is unpleasant to put the pawn on a light square. 29... ♗d8 (29... ♗g4+ 30. ♜e3) 30. ♗a3.

29... ♗g4+ 30. ♜e1 ♖d5 More precise is 30... ♖f5! 31. ♗×f5 (31. ♗a3? ♖g3 32. ♗g1 ♖×e4++) 31... ♗×f5 ±.

31. ♗a3 ♗d8 32. ♗h2 ♖b4 33. ♜f1 ♗d1 34. ♗g2 ♗g4 35. ♗h2 ♗f5 36. ♗×f5 g×f5 37. ♗g2 ♖g4 38. ♖c4 ♗e8 39. ♗e2 The subsequent struggle took place within the limits of rough equality.

39... ♖d5 40. ♜e1 ♗e6 41. ♗d3 f4 42. e4 42. exf4 ♗×e2+ 43. ♜×e2

♖×f4+ 44. ♜d2 ♖×d3 45. ♜×d3 ± **42... ♖de3 43. ♖×e3 ♖×e3 44. ♗d7 44. ♗d4= 44... ♗×e4 45. ♜f2 ♗b4 45... ♗×a4** is better: 46. ♗h7 ♖f5 47. ♗d2 ♖×h4 48. ♗×h5 ♖g6 with compensation.

46. ♗h7 ♗b3 47. ♗×h5 ♖g4+ 48. ♜f1 f3 49. ♗d2 ♗b4 49... ♜b6 50. ♗d4 ♖e3+ 51. ♜f2 ♖d5 52. ♗g5 with the initiative. **50. ♗×a5+ ♜b6 51. ♗g5 ♗×a4 52. ♗×g4** The only move. **52... ♗×g4 53. ♗h2 ½-½**

Michail Gurevich managed to hold his inferior position confidently by means of a timely exchange sacrifice. To avoid the worst, his opponent promptly transformed his advantage into an “extra pawn” which, as a result of the insecure kings, was difficult to convert into a win.

(78) M.Gurevich – Ehlvest

Reggio Emilia 1991

English Opening [A25]

1. c4 e5 2. g3 ♖c6 3. ♗g2 g6 4. ♖c3 ♗g7 5. ♗b1 a5 6. d3 d6 7. e3 f5 8. ♖ge2 ♖f6 9. b3 0-0 10. ♗b2 ♖h5!? 11. ♗f3 ♗e6 12. 0-0 ♗f7 13. ♗g2 ♗e8 14. ♜d2 ♖f6 15. e4 f4 16. g×f4 ♗h6 17. ♜d1 exf4 18. ♖d5 ♖×d5 19. c×d5 ♖e5 20. d4 f3 21. d×e5 f×g2 22. ♜×g2 d×e5 23. f4 ♗g7 24. ♜d2 ♜d6 25. f×e5 ♗×e5 26. ♖d4 ♜d7 27. ♜g5 h6! 28. ♜h4 g5 (D)

