



# Attacking 1...d5

Kiril Georgiev

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Current Theory and Practice Series

## **Attacking 1...d5**

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*Play 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6!*, Alexei Kornev, Chess Stars 2018

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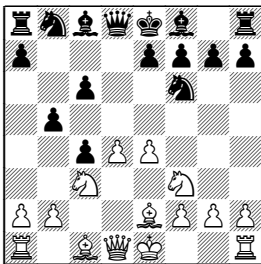
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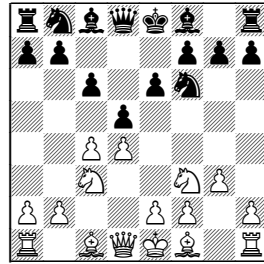
# Introduction

I have been seeking for new weapons against 1.d4 d5 for many years. In my previous 2-volume work on the English I offered some ideas, specific to the move order with 1.c4. However, the systems based on 1...d5 are so solid and deeply analysed that we need a wider arsenal in order to be unpredictable. It should include sharp variations which require concrete knowledge and difficult decisions early in the opening. Players that embrace set-ups with ...d5 commonly prefer calmer positional play, so unbalanced positions may throw them off from their zone of comfort.

My initial intention was to analyse gambit treatment of the Slav and the Semi-Slav. Its core was supposed to be **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♗c3 dxc4 5.e4 b5 6.♙e2**



and **4...e6 5.g3**

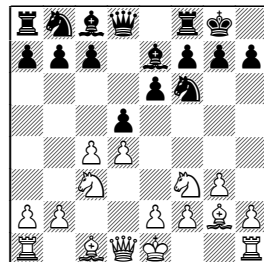


In both cases White sacrifices the c4-pawn, proposing a real gambit.

Of course in the latter case Black is not obliged to take on c4, so I also considered the Closed Catalan with 5...♗bd7.

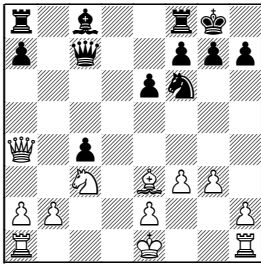
A natural add-on was a chapter on the Triangle System since it could transpose to the Geller-Tolush Gambit after 3.♘f3 e6 4.♗c3 dxc4 5.e4 b5 or to the Semi-Slav after 5.g3.

Then I decided to include also the set-up without 1...c6 – **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♘f6 4.♘f3 ♙e7 5.g3 0-0 6.♙g2**



## Preface

Now ...c6 would transpose to the Closed Catalan, while 6...dxc4 7.♘e5 would at least optically be similar to the plan against the Semi-Slav. I was amazed to discover in my practice that second players answer almost automatically 7...♘c6?!, when 8.♙xc6! bxc6 9.♘xc6 ♖e8 10.♘xe7+ ♗xe7 11.♗a4 has been assessed as toothless for many years, but lately White has found the right keys to Black's position. After 11...c5! 12.dxc5 ♗xc5 13.♙e3 ♖c7 14.f3! first players score the incredible 75% in OTB games.

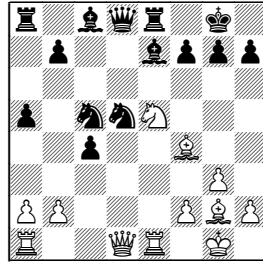


It turns out that the opposite-coloured bishops do not guarantee an easy draw. Note that the current trend is 14.0-0-0, but I prefer to leave the king on f2.

I'd like to stress that the proposed repertoire is not a hit-and-run tactic. It is meant to withstand a thorough home preparation as I never recommend tricky, but dubious lines. Sometimes the engines will show their favourite "0.00" evaluations, but they do not recognize the initiative as a crucial factor. Also the cost of Black's mistakes is higher.

My own experience with both colours has taught me that it is not easy for Black to anticipate all the tricks White hides up his sleeve.

Gelfand-Kiril Georgiev  
Mallorca ol. 2004



In this position I was expecting only 16.♙xd5 ♙e6=, when suddenly 16.♘xf7!! came out of the blue. After 16...♙xf7?! 17.♙xd5+ ♔g6 18.♙e5! ♙f5 19.♙xf5! it was all over.

### Who is this book for?

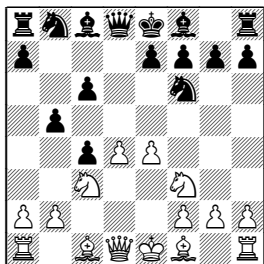
If you are fed up with all the mainstream Slav/Meran theory out there, this book will offer you new refreshing approaches for both sides. However, you should feel at ease in positions with an initiative for a pawn or two. You should be able to use the full power of your pieces. Do not get frustrated if things go not so smoothly in the beginning. With practice, you'll get in taste and you'll be glad to meet 1...d5 players over the board.

*Kiril Georgiev  
Sofia, May 2021*

## Chapter 1. The Geller-Tolush Gambit Sidelines

# Main Ideas

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.c4 c6 4.♗c3 dxc4 5.e4 b5



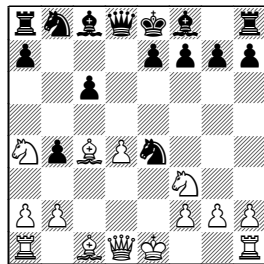
We start the book with the Geller-Tolush Gambit, sometimes referred as the Slav Gambit. To be completely precise, both Godfathers attacked 5...b5 with 6.e5 ♘d5 7.a4, which is beyond the scope of our analysis. We owe the current renaissance of the old gambit to Dubov and Adhiban. They were the first top grandmasters to embrace a new plan, based on **6.♗e2!** in 2018. Carlsen also tried it twice recently, but it was a pure improvisation, obviously not backed with deep home work. The word about the new weapon against the Slav has been spreading around quickly, and I expect hundreds of games in the next months. So we should grasp the chance to collect as many points as possible until Black has not found the best retorts.

Let me point out that you cannot skip this chapter, as the attempt to convert play to the 4...e6 5.g3 dxc4 system with 5.g3 could stumble into 5...g6!.

I divided the material into 2 chapters as the character of play in the sidelines is completely different from the main line 7...e6.

The first move we should be ready to face after 6.♗e2 is **6...b4?!**. We should give up the central pawn without hesitation:

7.♗a4! ♗xe4 8.♗xc4



Black's knight can retreat to d6 or f6. I suggest the following rule:

---

We meet ...♗d6 by ♗b3, ♖c2.

We meet ...♗f6 by ♗d3, ♖e2 (♖e1).

---

I consider the first case in **Game 2** Basso-Brunello, Padova 2019.

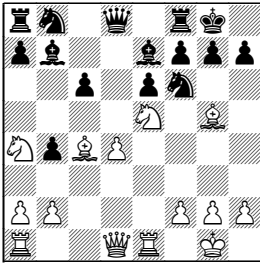
**8...e6 9.0-0 ♗e7** followed by ...♘f6 is more natural. Then we have two approaches. My main line is 10.♖e2 ♘f6 11.♘c5 with typical play on the queenside.

It is more tricky to attack the e6-f7 complex with 10.♘e5 0-0 11.♞e1 ♘f6 12.♗g5. This plan is more likely to award you with crushing victories right in the opening. Here is:

### A Practical Attacking Guide

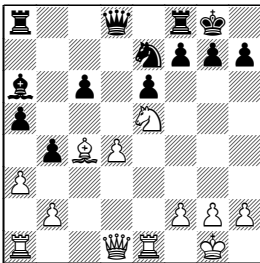
Whenever Black's c8-bishop loses contact with e6, you should watch for destructive sacrifices on e6/f7:

#### Analysis



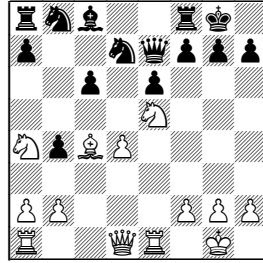
13.♘xf7! ♞xf7 14.♗xe6 ♗c8 15.♗xf7+ ♜xf7 16.♗xf6 ♗xf6 17.♖h5+ ♜f8 18.d5 cxd5 19.♞ad1+-.

#### Analysis



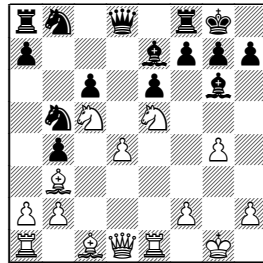
17.♘xf7! ♜xf7 (or 17...♞xf7 18.♗xe6) 18.♗xe6+ ♜e8 19.♖h5+ (19.d5±) 19...g6 20.♖xh7±.

Karthik-Skoberne  
Spilimbergo 2018



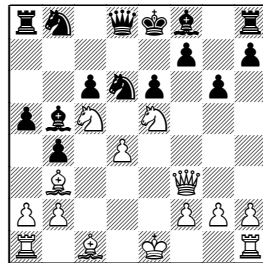
14.♘xf7!+- ♜xf7 15.♞xe6.

#### Analysis



15.♘xe6! ♞xe6 16.♘xg6 hxg6 17.♞xe6 ♞f7 18.♗f4±.

#### Analysis

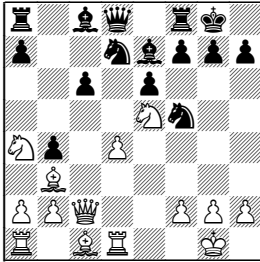




## The Geller-Tolush Gambit Sidelines

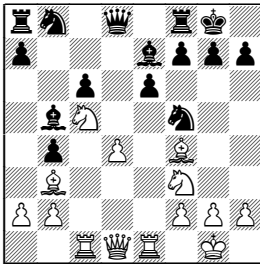
14. ♖xf7 ♖xf7 15. ♗xe6 destroys Black's king's shelter – 15... ♖d7 (15... ♗e7 16. ♖d1) 16. ♗f4 ♗d6 17. ♗xd6 ♗xd6 18. 0-0-0+-.

### Analysis

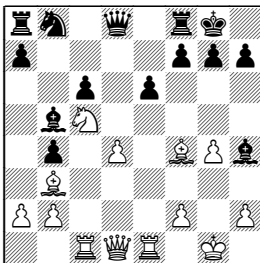


14. ♖xf7!? ♖xf7 15. ♗xc6 ♖b8 16. ♗xe6 ♗d6 17. ♗e2 favours White.

AR. Salem-Bartel  
blitz, Moscow 2019



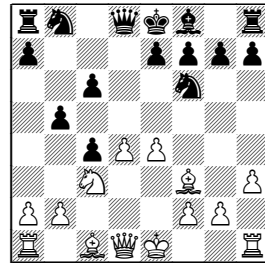
Salem missed 15. ♗xe6 fxe6 16. ♗xe6 ♗c8 17. ♖xf8 ♗xf8 18. d5+- . Instead he chose 15.g4 ♖h4 16. ♖h4 ♗xh4



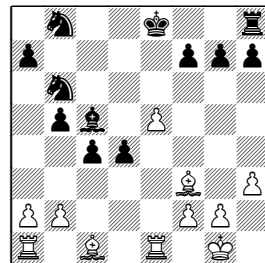
Now the stunning 17. ♗xe6!! fxe6 18. ♗xe6 ♗f6 19. ♗c5!!, heading for f5, is crushing.

A general rule for these sacrifices is that central files open in favour of White's coordinated heavy pieces. They can only be effective in early opening, while Black is still undeveloped.

6... ♗g4!? 7. h3! ♗xf3 8. ♗xf3



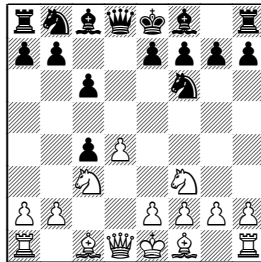
This position has only occurred in two games so far. After 8...e6 9.0-0 a6 I recommend 10. ♗g5! ♗e7 11.a4 with excellent compensation. Critical is the untested line 8...e5! 9.0-0 ♗xd4! 10. ♗xd4 exd4 11. ♗xb5 cxb5 12.e5 ♖fd7 13. ♗xa8 ♗c5 14. ♗e1 ♖b6 15. ♗f3



Although the engines claim some advantage for White, the smallest imprecision could turn the tables.

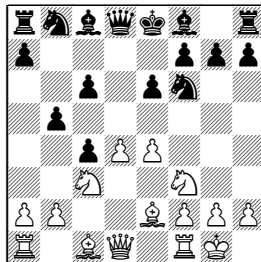
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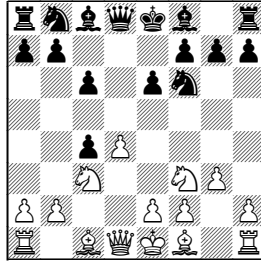
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e6 7.0-0



7...♗e7 27 (7...b4 25; 7...♗bd7?! 26; 7...b4?! 26; 7...a5 26)  
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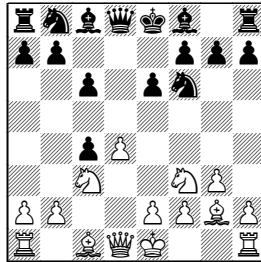
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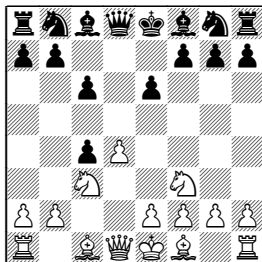
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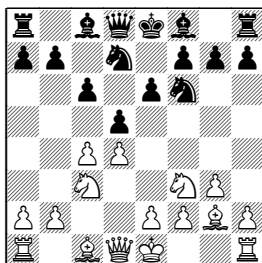
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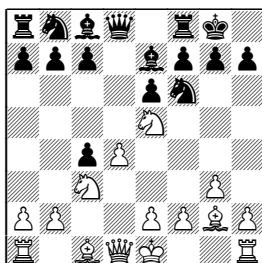
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