Contents

3 16...♛a6 and 16...♛d6

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 e6 5 ♗g5 dxc4 6 e4 b5 7 e5 h6 8 ♗h4 g5 9 ♘xg5 hxg5 10 ♗xg5 ♘bd7 11 exf6 ♗b7 12 g3 ♛b6 13 ♗g2 c5 14 d5 0-0-0 15 0-0 b4 16 ♘a4 *(D)*

B

Apart from the main line, 16...♛b5, Black has two more queen moves available: 16...♛a6 and 16...♛d6. Particularly 16...♛a6 has received a lot of interest, but I have decided to cover these moves only very briefly, since I am now very certain that White is somewhere between clearly better and winning, with correct play. And the good thing is that the refutation can be used against both moves.

Quick Summary
Both 16...♛d6 (Line A) and 16...♛a6 (Line B) are best met by 17 dxe6!,

which seems to give White at least a very substantial advantage. After, for example, 16...♛a6 17 dxe6! (Line B2) 17...♛xe6 18 ♖e1 ♘e5 19 ♗xb7+ ♔xb7 20 ♛xd8 ♘f3+ 21 ♔g2 ♛c6, White has the amazing 22 ♖e8!, which seems to win.

This renders other options against 16...♛d6 and 16...♛a6 unimportant but I have provided short analysis of both, particularly 16...♛a6 17 a3 (Line B1), just in case there is a flaw in the analysis of Line B2 (which I very much doubt).

The Theory of 16...♛a6 and 16...♛d6

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 e6 5 ♗g5 dxc4 6 e4 b5 7 e5 h6 8 ♗h4 g5 9 ♘xg5 hxg5 10 ♗xg5 ♘bd7 11 exf6 ♗b7 12 g3 ♛b6 13 ♗g2 c5 14 d5 0-0-0 15 0-0 b4 16 ♘a4
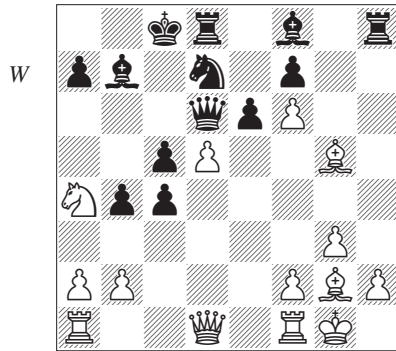
Now:
A: 16...♛d6   38
B: 16...♛a6   39

A)
16...♛d6 *(D)*
17 dxe6!

17 ♗f4 is perhaps best met by 17...♛a6, when 18 dxe6 ♘xf6 does not look very clear. 17...e5 18 ♗e3

♗h6 19 ♕c1 ♗xe3 20 ♕xe3 ♗a6
(20...♘xf6 21 ♕xc5+ ♔b8 22 ♖fc1
♕d7 23 ♕xb4 ♘xd5 24 ♕a5 ♕d6 25
♘c5 +− Wunnink-M.Johansen, Dutch
U-20 Ch (Hengelo) 1997) 21 a3 ♔b8
22 h4!? gave White the advantage in
Kramnik-Ivanchuk, Novgorod 1996.

17...fxe6

The other capture, 17...♕xe6, trans-
poses to Line B2.

18 ♗xb7+

18 f7 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2 ♕c6+ 20 f3
♗d6 21 ♗xd8 ♔xd8 is unclear ac-
cording to Agzamov, although I do not
think that Black has enough compen-
sation.

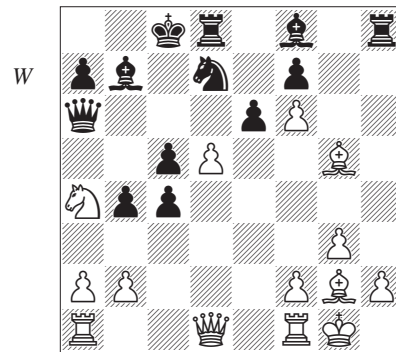**18...♔xb7 19 f7 ♖c8 20 ♕xd6
♗xd6 21 ♖ad1 ♔c6 22 ♖fe1**

Agzamov analyses 22 ♖xd6+?!
♔xd6 23 ♖d1+ ♔c6 24 ♗e7, which at
first sight looks quite good for White,
but a closer look reveals that 24...♘e5
25 ♘xc5 ♘xf7 26 ♘xe6 a5 is not so
clear. Materially, White can be con-
tent, but Black's queenside pawns are
dangerous.

22...♘f8 23 ♖e4

The c-pawn drops, with a clear ad-
vantage to White.

B)

16...♕a6 *(D)*

The advantage of 16...♕a6 over
16...♕b5 is that in some lines it is con-
venient that the queen covers the 6th
rank. However, there is one significant
difference that makes 16...♕a6 clearly
inferior. I will return to that. Here,
White has two possibilities:
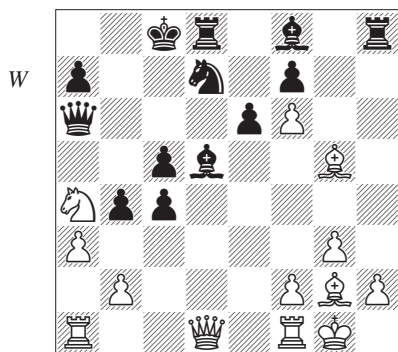
B1: 17 a3   39
B2: 17 dxe6! 41

B1)

17 a3

This was for a long time considered
to be the main line, and I agree that it
makes a lot of sense to try to open the
a-file when Black's queen has resided
on a6.

17...♗xd5 *(D)*

This is the real point of 16...♕a6.
Now when White plays 18 ♗xd5,
Black has 18...♘e5 since 19 ♗xe6+ is

met by 19...♕xe6. There are other options, but all are inferior to the text-move.

18 ♗xd5

An interesting alternative is here 18 axb4 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2, when Black has tried:

a) 19...cxb4 20 ♕e2 ♕b5 21 ♖fd1! ♘e5 (21...♕xg5 loses to 22 ♕xc4+ ♘c5 23 ♘xc5: 23...♕xc5 24 ♕a6+ ♔c7 25 ♖dc1 or 23...♗xc5 24 ♖xa7! +−) 22 ♘b6+! ♕xb6 23 ♖xd8+ ♕xd8 24 ♕xe5 ♕d5+ 25 ♕xd5 exd5 26 ♖xa7 d4 27 ♗f4 with some initiative for White in the endgame, P.Nikolić-Timman, Dutch Ch (Rotterdam) 1998.

b) 19...♕c6+ 20 f3 cxb4 21 ♕e2 (21 ♕d4 ♘b6 22 ♘xb6+ axb6 23 ♕f2 ♗c5 24 ♗e3 ♗xe3 25 ♕xe3 ♖d3 26 ♕e2 ♖hd8 gives Black a clear advantage according to Beliavsky) 21...♗d6 22 ♖fd1 ♘e5 23 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 24 ♗f4 was played in Beliavsky-Khalifman, Yugoslavia 1998, and now 24...♕d3 25 ♕xe5 ♕c2+ 26 ♔f1 ♖d1+ 27 ♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 28 ♔g2 ♕c2+ 29 ♔f1 leads to a draw – Beliavsky.

18...♘e5 19 ♕e2

19 ♗xe6+? ♕xe6 20 ♕e2 ♖d3! wins for Black, but 19 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 20 axb4 ♗xf2+ 21 ♖xf2 leads to a complicated position; e.g., 21...♖xd5 22 ♕f1 ♕c6!? 23 ♖xa7!? (23 ♖e2? ♘f3+ 24 ♕xf3 ♖d1+ 25 ♕f1 ♖xf1+ 26 ♖xf1 ♖d8 was better for Black in Sapunov-Galliamova, Russian Ch (St Petersburg) 1998) 23...♘g4 (23...♘d3 is probably also a draw; e.g., 24 ♕a1 ♕b6 25 ♗e3 ♕xe3 26 ♕a6+ ♔d8 27 ♖a8+ and White has only a perpetual) 24 b5 ♖xb5 25 ♖a8+ ♕xa8 26 ♕xc4+ ♔d8 27 ♕xb5 ♕a7 28 ♕d3+ ♔e8 29 ♕b5+ = (Lutz).

19...♖xd5 20 axb4 cxb4 21 ♘c3 *(D)*
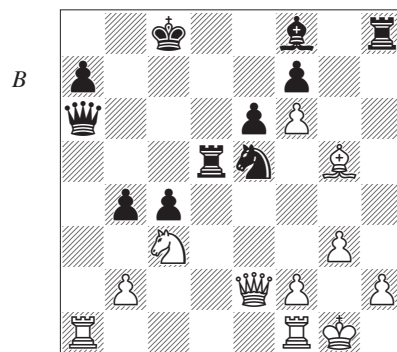
21...♕c6

This exchange sacrifice is best according to Shirov. Black gains a strong square for the knight on d3 and good attacking chances. However, Black has also been doing quite well with 21...♖a5!? 22 ♖xa5 ♕xa5 23 ♘e4 ♘d3 24 b3 ♕e5 and now: