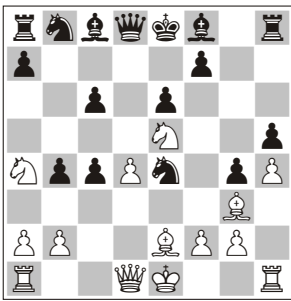


A Viable Sideline?

by Alexander Motylev

- | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. | d4 | d5 |
| 2. | c4 | c6 |
| 3. | ♘c3 | ♙f6 |
| 4. | ♙f3 | e6 |
| 5. | ♙g5 | h6 |
| 6. | ♙h4 | dc4 |
| 7. | e4 | g5 |
| 8. | ♙g3 | b5 |
| 9. | ♙e5 | h5 |
| 10. | h4 | g4 |
| 11. | ♙e2 | b4 |
| 12. | ♙a4 | ♙e4 |

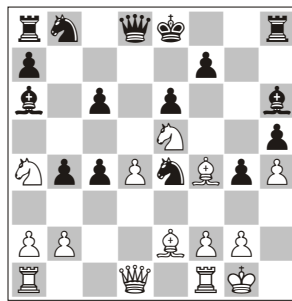


The Anti-Moscow Variation has always attracted me by the originality of the positions arising from it. In my opinion it's one of the rare variations in which you can try to think up something new with black without causing serious damage to the position. Usually, any experiments by Black in such forced lines will meet with cruel punishment. But not in this case! After the quite new move 11...b4!? it is White

who has to find the right way to fight against Black's strategy. As the statistics tell us, White has not done very well thus far: +0 =1 -4 – a terrible result! And in four of these games it looks as if White went astray immediately after 11...b4 12.♙a4 ♙e4 and was already having problems to even equalize. So this variation has proven its viability, at least as a surprise weapon.

Conclusion

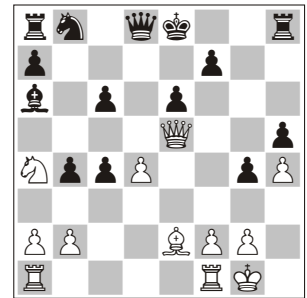
As regards a long-term assessment of the variation, there is still not enough material to give a definitive judgment. Perhaps the critical position arises after 11...b4 12.♙a4 ♙e4 13.0-0! ♙a6!? 14. ♙f4 ♙h6.



Now not 15.♙h6, as in the correspondence game Pohligh-Benti (2002), but 15.♙c2! ♙f4 16. ♙e4 ♙e5 17.♙e5.



Erwin I'Ami



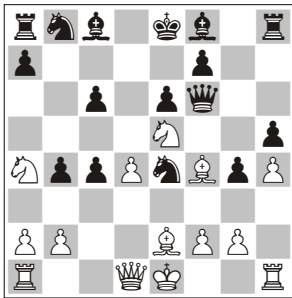
Of course, White has quite good compensation for the two pawns, but it's still not clear if he can claim more. If this position turns out to be playable for Black, then this rare sideline has chances of growing into one of the main branches of the Anti-Moscow variation. So let's wait – for new surprises perhaps!

Unfortunate 13.♟f4

l'Ami,Erwin
Motylev,Alexander

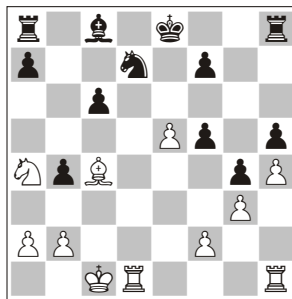
Wijk aan Zee B 2009 (6)

This game shows the 'nature' of modern chess. Even having the white pieces it's very dangerous to go into 'terra incognita' without proper home preparation. In complicated positions even a strong grandmaster will have difficulties guessing the right direction. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♟c3 ♘f6 4.♟f3 e6 5.♟g5 h6 6.♟h4 dc4 7.e4 g5 8.♟g3 b5 9.♟e5 h5 10.h4 g4 11.♟e2 b4!** [I have put an exclamation mark not for objective evaluation of the move but for its psychological effect. As Erwin said he had spent a lot of hours on the examination and memorization of his analysis in the main line of the Anti-Moscow Variation. The move I chose is a very rare continuation. So I managed to surprise my opponent first and a small advantage was already on my side] **12.♟a4 ♟e4 13.♟f4?!** [Here Erwin fell into deep thought. The move he chose is unfortunate but that's no wonder. It's very difficult to perceive the essence of the position over the board] **13...♟f6!**



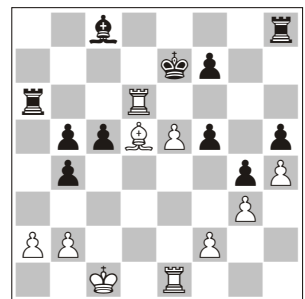
14.g3 [It seems that worse is 14.♟e3 ♟h6! 15.♟c1 (15.0-0? g3!) and here probably the best is 15...♟d7 (not so clear is 15...♟f2 16.♟f1 g3 17.♟c5± or 15...g3 16.f4±) 16.♟c4 (16.♟d7 ♟d7 17.0-0 g3!) 17.fg3 ♟g3 19.♟f6 ♟e2 20.♟f2 ♟c1?) 16...♟a6 17.♟d2 (17.♟d6 ♟d6 18.♟a6 ♟e3?) 17...♟e3 18.♟e4 ♟c1 19.♟f6 ♟f6 20.♟c1 ♟b5±. After 14.g3 the game transposes to a complicated ending where for the missing pawn White still has some, but probably not enough compensation] **14...♟h6! 15.♟c2!** [The only move.

15.♟c5? ♟c5 16.dc5 ♟f4 17.gf4 ♟f4] **15...♟f4** [15...♟f5? 16.♟c4 ♟f4 17.gf4 ♟f4 (17...♟e7 18.♟d3+)] 18.♟e4 is impossible, while dubious is 15...♟f2! 16.♟h6 (16.♟f2 ♟f4 17.gf4 ♟f4 18.♟g2±) 16...♟h1 17.♟f4±] **16.♟e4 ♟e5 17.de5 ♟f5! 18.♟f5** [Otherwise White just loses the e5 pawn: 18.♟e3 ♟d7] **18...ef5 19.♟c4 ♟d7** [Also possible was 19...♟e7, preventing 20.e6, but allowing 20.♟c5!? ♟d7 21.♟d7 (21.♟d3 ♟b6 22.♟b3 a5±) 21...♟d7 22.♟e2 and maybe this is a slightly better version of the endgame for White. In any case I was not worried too much about 20.e6] **20.0-0-0** [This is stronger than 20.e6 fe6 (weaker is 20...♟e5 21.e7 ♟e7 22.♟b3 ♟f3 23.♟e2 ♟e6 24.♟e6 ♟e6 25.♟hd1±) 21...♟e6 ♟e5 22.♟c8 (22.0-0-0 ♟e6 23.♟he1 0-0 24.♟e5 ♟a2±) 22...♟f3 23.♟f1 ♟c8±]



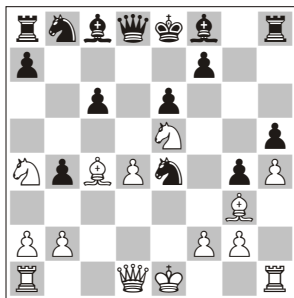
20...♟e7! [Black is not tempted to take the second pawn. After that White could gain a serious initiative, e.g. 20...♟e5! 21.♟he1 f6 22.♟c5 ♟h7 (22...♟f8 23.b3!? ♟g7 24.♟d3±) 23.♟b3 (or 23.♟d3 ♟e7 24.♟e5 ♟e5 25.♟e5 fe5 26.♟d6 ♟d7 27.♟h6 ♟e7 28.♟h5 and the position is almost equal) 23...♟e7 24.♟d6 ♟c4 25.♟dd1±] **21.♟he1** [Interesting was 21.♟b3!?, preventing 21...♟b6!, but then Black could have taken the pawn and defended the knight with his king, viz. 21...♟e5 22.♟he1 ♟f6 (22...f6 23.♟c5±) 23.♟c5 ♟e8! (a mistake would be 23...♟e6? in view of 24.♟e6 fe6 25.♟e2!) and it seems that White's activity is not enough for equality: 24.♟b1 (24.♟e3 a5!? 25.♟d6 (25.♟de1 a4 26.♟f7 ♟e7 27.♟c4 ♟a5) 25...♟e6 26.♟e6 fe6 27.♟d1 ♟g6±) 24...♟e6 25.♟e6 fe6 26.♟e3 ♟a8 27.♟de1 ♟f3 28.♟e6 ♟e6 29.♟e6 ♟f7 30.♟c6 ♟d1 31.♟c2 ♟d2 32.♟c1 ♟f2±]

21...♟b6! [The necessary exchange. Now White can choose the structure of Black's queenside pawns] **22.♟b6?!** [This doesn't look like White's best choice. Black now strengthens his advantage by a series of energetic moves. Better was 22.♟b3 ♟a4 (22...♟e6? 23.♟c5 ♟hd8 24.♟e6 fe6 25.♟d6! ♟d5 26.♟c6 ♟ac8 27.♟c8 ♟c8 28.♟d2=) 23.♟a4 ♟e6 24.♟d6! (it's hard to evaluate Black's advantage but White seems to have more chances for a draw than in the game. 24.♟c6? ♟ac8 25.♟d6 f6!) 24...♟ac8 (24...♟hd8 25.♟ed1 (25.♟c6 ♟ac8 (25...♟d7 26.♟c7 ♟ac8 27.♟c8 ♟c8 28.♟c2 ♟a4 29.b3 ♟b5±) 26.♟c8 ♟c8 27.♟d2 ♟a2 28.b3 ♟c3 29.♟e3 ♟e3 30.♟e3 ♟e6 31.♟f4 f6 32.ef6 ♟f6±) 25...♟ac8 (25...♟d6?! 26.♟d6 f6 27.♟c6! fe5 28.♟a6± f4 29.♟c2) 26.♟c2 (26.♟c6?? ♟d6 27.♟d6 f6; not so clear is the bishop ending after 26.♟d8!? ♟d8 27.♟d8 ♟d8 28.a3 ba3 29.ba3 c5; 26.♟b3 ♟d6 27.♟d6 ♟d8) 26...♟d6 27.♟d6 f6 28.♟b3 ♟b3 29.ab3 (29.♟b3 fe5 30.♟h6 ♟d8 31.♟c2 e4 32.♟h5 ♟e6 33.♟h6 ♟e5 34.♟c6 ♟d3±) 29...fe5 30.♟h6 with some counterplay) 25.♟b3 (perhaps White should have refrained from exchanging his bishops: 25.♟c2!? c5 26.♟ed1, keeping good chances for a draw) 25...♟hd8 26.♟e6 fe6 27.♟ed1 a5 28.♟c2 and here White is still far from equality as in case of 28...c5 or 28...♟d6 29.♟d6 f4 30.gf4 ♟f8 31.♟d4 c5 32.♟c4 ♟d7] **22...ab6 23.♟d6 b5! 24.♟b3** [Bad was 24.♟f1 ♟a2 25.♟b1 b3!? 26.♟g2 ♟e6+)] **24...c5! 25.♟d5** [Black has a large advantage in case of 25.♟b6 c4! (but not 25...♟a5? 26.e6!) 26.♟c2 ♟a2 27.♟b5 ♟a1 28.♟b1 b3] **25...♟a6**



26.♟a6 [26.♟d1!? and now probably the stronger reply is 26...♟d6 27.ed6 ♟d6 28.♟f7 ♟e7± but even after 26...♟h6 (a

nice blow) 27...♙b7! doesn't yield White full relief: 27...♙b7 28.♞d7 ♜e6 29.♞b7 ♜e5 30.♞f7 ♜e4!? (30...♞hf6) 31.♞e1 ♜f3 32.♞f5 ♜g2 and White's kingside pawns are most likely going to fall) **26...♙a6 27.♞d1** [Weaker is 27.e6 f6 28.♙c6 ♞c8 29.♙d7 ♞b8 and Black has a large advantage] **27...♙c8!** [A very important move without which Black could hardly contend for a win. 27...♞d8? 28.♙c6! ♞d1 29.♜d1 ♜e6 30.f4! (weaker was 30.♙e8 ♙b7 (30...b3 31.a3! b4 32.ab4 cb4 33.♜d2 ♙c4 34.♜e3 ♜e5 and it seems that White has a fortress) 31.♙b5 ♜e5 32.a4 ba3 33.ba3 f4!) 30...gf3 31.♙f3 with good chances of drawing] **28.♙c6** [The exchange of the pawns b5 and a2 hardly favours White, but it's difficult to suggest something better: 28.f4 gf3 29.♙f3 ♙e6] **28...♙e6 29.♙b5 ♞a8!** [29...♙a2 30.♞d7 ♜e6 31.♞c7 ♜e5 32.♞c5 ♜e4 is slightly worse but also leads to an advantage] **30.♞d6 ♞a2 31.♞c6** [After 31.♞a6 the bishop ending is winning for Black: 31...♞a6 32.♙a6 ♜d7 33.♙b5 (33.♙e2 ♙d5) 33...♜c7 34.♜d2 ♜b6 35.♙e2 c4 36.♜e3 ♜c5, but also possible is the simple 31...b3. 31.♞b6 ♜d8! (the king is hunting for the rook!) 32.♞c6 (32.♞b8 ♜c7 33.♞h8 c4 34.♞h5 c3 35.bc3 bc3--+) 32...♞a5 leads to the game continuation] **31...♞a5! 32.♙d3** [More stubborn was 32.♙e2 ♜d7 33.♞d6 ♜c7 34.♜d2 but here Black has to find the win: 34...♞a2 35.♜c2 ♞a1 36.♞d1 ♞d1 37.♙d1 c4 38.♜d2 ♜c6 39.♜e3 ♜c5--+; 32.♞c5? ♙d7] **32...♜d7! 33.♞a6** [Equally bad was 33.♞d6 ♜c7 34.♙e2 c4!? 35.♞d4 ♜c6 36.♞d6 ♜c5 or 36.♙c4 ♜c5] **33...♞a6 34.♙a6 ♜c6 35.♙e2 ♜d5 36.f4 ♜d4 37.♜d2 ♙c4** [White resigned. After 38.♙d7 there will follow 38...b3] 0-1



[Just like 13.♙f4 this is not the best continuation] **13...♙g3 14.fg3 ♙g7! 15.♙c5!** [The best way, but White is already fighting for equality. 15.0-0 ♙e5 16.de5 ♞d1 17.♞ad1 ♜d7] **15...a5!? 16.♞f1** [16.♞d2 ♙e5 17.de5 ♞d2 18.♜d2 ♜d7 19.♜d7 ♜d7 20.♜e3] **16...0-0 17.♙d3?!** [I think much more dangerous for Black was 17.♞f4! and exchanging queens now does not favour Black: 17...♙e5 18.de5 ♞d1 19.♞d1±. If Black refrains from the exchange, then White will just have good compensation for the pawn] **17...♙e5! 18.de5 ♞d3 19.♜d3?!** [≥ 19.♙d3 ♞a7] **19...♜d7 20.♞c1 a4!? 21.♞f2 ♞a5 22.♞e2 ♙b7 23.♞e3 ♜g7 24.a3 c5 25.♞e2 ♞b8 26.♙f4 ♜h6 27.♞e3 ♙a6 28.♞d1 ♞b7 29.♙a2 ba3 30.ba3 c4!+- 31.♞d6 ♜c5 32.♜d1 ♞b2 33.♞d2 ♞b3 34.♞de2 ♞b6 35.♞d2 ♜d3 36.♞e4 ♙e5 37.♞ed4 ♜d3 0-1**

**Amura, Claudia Noemi
Delgado Crespo, Mairelys**
San Felipe 1999 (7)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♙f3 ♙f6 4.♙c3 e6 5.♙g5 h6 6.♙h4 dc4 7.e4 g5 8.♙g3 b5 9.h4 g4 10.♙e5 h5 11.♙e2 b4 12.♙a4 ♙e4 13.♙c4?! ♙g3 14.fg3 ♙g7! 15.♙c5!

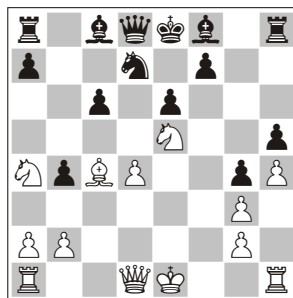


15...♙e5 [This way Black secures a small advantage. 15...a5 is also possible, as played in the game Lo Nigro-Onder] **16.de5 ♞d1 17.♞d1 ♜d7 18.♜d7 ♜d7 19.♙a6 ♞b8** [Better was 19...♜e7 immediately] **20.♞c1 ♜e7 21.♞f1 ♞b6 22.♙c4 c5 23.♙e2 ♞c8 24.♞f4 ♙b5?! 25.♞b4! cb4?!** [25...♙e2 26.♞b6 ab6 27.♜e2 ♞d8 28.♞c3 ♞d5 29.♞b3] **26.♞c8 ♙e2 27.♜e2** 1/2-1/2

**Maletin, Pavel
Kobalia, Mikhail**

Novokuznetsk 2008 (6)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♙f3 ♙f6 4.♙c3 e6 5.♙g5 h6 6.♙h4 dc4 7.e4 g5 8.♙g3 b5 9.♙e5 h5 10.h4 g4 11.♙e2 b4 12.♙a4 ♙e4 13.♙c4?! ♙g3 14.fg3 ♙d7 [This looks like an inaccuracy. I think that a simple and strong reaction is 14...♙g7, as seen in the games Amura-Delgado Crespo and Lo Nigro-Onder. After the text move White will have strong compensation for the pawn]



15.♜d7 [Also quite good was 15.♞e2 ♙e5 (15...♙d6?! 16.0-0 (playable but probably not enough for a win is 16.♙f7 ♙g3 17.♜d2 ♜f7 18.♞e6 ♜g7 19.♞f7 ♜h6 20.♞af1 ♞f8 21.♞e6 ♙f6 22.♞e3 ♜g7) 16...♙e5 17.de5 ♞a5 18.b3 ♞e5 19.♞f2 0-0 20.♞ae1→) 16.♞e5 (16.de5 ♙g7 (16...♞a5 17.♞e4 ♙b7 18.0-0-0) 17.0-0 ♜d4 18.♜h2 ♞e5 19.♞f2 0-0 20.♞ad1∞) 16...♞h6 17.0-0-0 ♞d6 18.♞e4±. After the text move things are not so clear either] **15...♞d7** [15...♙d7 16.0-0 ♞a5 17.♞c2±] **16.0-0 ♙b7 17.♞e2 ♙g7** [17...0-0-0 18.♜h2 ♜b8 19.♜c5 yields White good attacking prospects] **18.♞ad1 ♞e7 19.♙c5!** [It seems that White is just better here. But in

**Also Not The Best
13.♙c4**

**Lo Nigro, Filippo
Onder, Evren**

ICCF webserver WS/M/055 2006

1.d4 ♙f6 2.c4 e6 3.♙f3 d5 4.♙c3 c6 5.♙g5 h6 6.♙h4 dc4 7.e4 g5 8.♙g3 b5 9.h4 g4 10.♙e5 h5 11.♙e2 b4 12.♙a4 ♙e4 13.♙c4?!

a long fight Black succeeds to survive and even win the game) **19...♖h6** [19...0-0-0?! 20.♖f7 ♘d4 21.♗h2 ♖c5 22.♙a6±] **20.♗h2** [Strong was 20.♗d2! intending 20...a5? (20...♖f6 21.♖fe1 a5 22.♗g5!) 21.♗g5!+-] **20...♗d8 21.♗e4?!** [21.♗d2?!] **21...♗d6 22.a3 ba3 23.ba3 ♘c8 24.♗e3 ♗d8 25.♗e4 ♗g6 26.♗g5?** [26.♗c3!?] **26...♙h6!±** **27.♗e4 ♗g5 28.hg5 ♗g5 29.♗c6 ♘d7 30.♗e4 h4 31.d5 ♖h6 32.de6 hg3 33.♗g3 ♗h4 34.♗f4 ♙e6 35.♗c6?** [Necessary was 35.♗d8 ♘d8 (35...♗d8 36.♗e5) 36.♙e6 ♖e6 37.♗d5 ♗e8 38.♗b5 ♗f8 39.♗c5 ♗g7 40.♗g5 with good chances for a draw; 35.♙e6? ♖e6 36.♗a4 ♗f8 37.♗d8 ♗d8 38.♗g4 ♗g7!→] **35...♗f8 36.♗c5 ♗g7 37.♙e6 ♗d1! 38.♗d1 g3! 39.♗g4 ♖f6 40.♗e3 ♗g4 41.♗d4 ♗f5 42.♗b2 ♗h6 43.♗b4 ♖e6 44.♗d4**

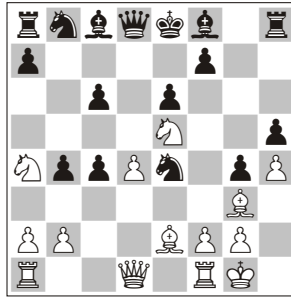
O-1

**One Step Ahead
13.0-0**

**Pohlig,Bernd
Benti,Riccardo**

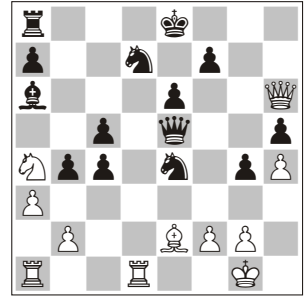
cr Email EM/CL/Q19-2 2002

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 c6 4.♗c3 d5 5.♗g5 h6 6.♙h4 dc4 7.e4 g5 8.♗g3 b5 9.h4 g4 10.♗e5 h5 11.♙e2 b4 12.♗a4 ♗e4 13.0-0!



[Of course, in correspondence chess they are one step ahead! This seems to be the best continuation and the real test for this line] **13...♙a6!** [Perhaps the best. 13...♗g3?! 14.fg3 ♗g7 15.♗f7 ♗d4 16.♗h2 ♗d1 17.♖ad1 0-0 18.♗g5 is too dangerous for Black and just bad is 13...♙d6?! 14.♗c2 ♗g3 15.fg3 ♙e5 16.de5 ♗d4 17.♗h2 ♗e5 18.♙c4. Things are not so clear in case of 13...♗g7 14.♙f4 ♗h4 15.♙c4 but of course White has good attacking prospects here too] **14.♙f4!?** [Neither 14.♗c4 ♗g3 15.fg3 ♗g7 nor 14.♙c4 ♙c4 15.♗c4 ♗g3 16.fg3 ♗g7 looks harmful to Black] **14...♙h6** [Very dubious is 14...♗h4?! 15.♗c2 ♗d6 16.♗c5] **15.♙h6?!** [Possibly stronger is 15.♗c2! ♙f4 (≤ 15...f5 16.♙h6 ♖h6 17.♙c4 ♙c4 18.♗c4 ♗h4 19.♗c5 ♗d2 20.♗c1! g3 21.fg3 ♗d4 22.♖f2±) 16.♗e4 ♙e5 17.♗e5 Perhaps this is the crucial position for the variation. Black is now two pawns up but White has good positional compensation. Still Black has a lot of defensive resources, so only the future can establish the final

evaluation of this line] **15...♖h6 16.♗c1 ♗d4!** [By sacrificing the exchange Black is taking the initiative] **17.♗h6 ♗e5 18.a3** [Stronger was 18.♗e3! and matters are still not so clear in case of both 18...♙b5 19.♗c5 ♗c5 20.♗e4 ♗d7 and 18...♗d7 19.a3 b3 20.♖fd1 f5] **18...c5! 19.♖fd1** [Now 19.♗e3 will be met by 19...♗d4] **19...♗d7**



20.f4 [This was probably the last chance to play 20.♗e3 ♙b5 21.ab4 cb4 22.♗d4 ♗ef6 23.♙c4 ♗e3 24.fe3 e5 25.♗d7 ♙d7 26.♗b6 ♗d8 27.♗d7 ♗d7 28.♖a7 and the position is close to equal] **20...gf3 21.♙f3 ♙b7 22.♗e3** [Too late! But 22.♗h5 doesn't help that much either in view of 22...♗h5 23.♙h5 ♗e5! – Black's pieces are dominating in the ending] **22...♗df6!** [Black has successfully regrouped his pieces] **23.♗e1 ♗g4 24.♗g4 hg4 25.ab4 cb4** [Now the computer shows that Black has a decisive attack, so it was justified for White to resign] O-1