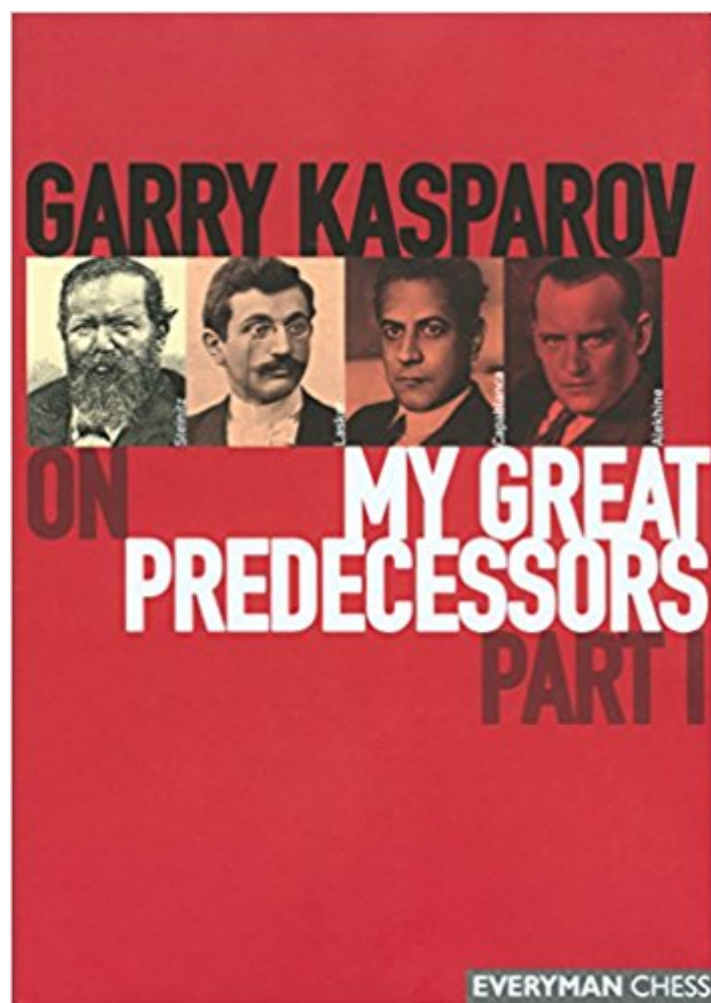


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Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors, Part 1



Synopsis

The battle for the World Chess Championship has witnessed numerous titanic struggles which have engaged the interest not only of chess enthusiasts but also of the public at large. The chessboard is the ultimate mental battleground and the world champions themselves are supreme intellectual gladiators. These magnificent compilations of chess form the basis of the first two parts of Garry Kasparov's definitive history of the World Chess Championship. Garry Kasparov, who is universally acclaimed as the greatest chessplayer ever, subjects the play of his predecessors to a rigorous analysis. Part one features the play of champions Wilhelm Steinitz (1886-1894), Emanuel Lasker (1894-1921), Jose Capablanca (1921-1927) and Alexander Alekhine (1927-1935 and 1937-1946). Part two features the play of champions Max Euwe (1935-1937) Mikhail Botvinnik (1946-1957, 1958-1961 and 1961-1963), Vassily Smyslov (1957-1958) and Mikhail Tal (1960-1961). These books are more than just a compilation of the games of these champions. Kasparov's biographies place them in a fascinating historical, political and cultural context. Kasparov explains how each champion brought his own distinctive style to the chessboard and enriched the theory of the game with new ideas. All these games have been thoroughly reassessed with the aid of modern software technology and the new light this sheds on these classic masterpieces is fascinating.

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Customer Reviews

My father bought me this book (thanks, Dad!) while I was in California recently. I wanted to share some thoughts with you from my experience as both a teacher and a student of Chess. I'm about

100-150 pages into it, and I like this book. It's not for the faint of heart, however, and I haven't delved into much of the analysis and variations because I simply don't have the time. However, the book is quite readable, and Kasparov's effort of putting the games in context with a history and description of many of the many players and events surrounding the world champions is a welcome relief from the monotony of page after page of annotations and "informant" symbols found in comparable books of this level. It should be noted however, that this book is not for junior students. In fact, I wouldn't recommend it to anyone under 1600 (perhaps even 1800), simply because there are other books out there that do a better job of catering to what junior players need to develop their game. That having been said, anyone who simply plays through the games and reads Kasparov's histories of the various world champions and their matches will be amply rewarded. Some of the features of the book that I like: (1) at the end of each chapter on each world champ, Kasparov summarizes with comments from other world champions regarding that individual. (2) the moves to each game are printed in bold face so that it is much easier to distinguish the actual moves from the analysis. (3) The analysis itself is insightful, and from what I have been able to ascertain, seems to be generally accurate. Of course, one should expect some errors as with any book.

First I should let you know that I am a chess master ... and that I have made my income mostly from chess for over 10 years now. I also have one of the world's biggest and best private (chess) web sites. (Many of my long reviews are posted there.) This is a widely acclaimed book, it has generated a lot of fervor in the press. I have had the book now for almost a month; it is no exaggeration to say that I could not put it down for the first two weeks or so. I should inform you that it is an unfortunate fact of life that most of the (chess) books coming out of the old/former Soviet Union are "ghost-written" by minor players, trainers, etc. And if you check the dust-jacket, you will see that D. Plisetsky (and friends?) had a large hand in writing this book. And we are never really sure how much of the writing here is actually Garry Kasparov's work. I hate to say it, but this book is positively riddled with errors. Kingston, Winter, and others have already pointed out numerous errors in their book reviews on the Internet - there is no need for me to delve into them here. (Except for the fact that Morphy did NOT "settle" in New York, as the authors here claim.) There are also MANY analytical errors, I found some in nearly every game that I examined!! For example: Take the game Pillsbury - Lasker; Cambridge Springs, 1904. After the move 21...Qc5!; we find the note: "But not 21...Rc8; 22.Qd4, Bc6; 23.Rxf6+!" The move ...Rc8; is one of the main tries here for Black. But 22.Qd4? is probably the SECOND or THIRD best move here. And 22...Bc6?? is simply a terrible move, it changes the computer's evaluations - FOR THE WORSE - by at least 5-to-10 points!

(Forced was 22...Qd5; or even 22...Rxc4.

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