

2023-09-16

Folke Røgard, President of FIDE - the lawyer who organised chess in the shadow of the Cold War



Jean Olivier Leconte

Here is the presentation given by Mr Henrik Lindberg (Sweden) at the CH&LS association's general meeting in Belfort.

Extract from the presentation at the AGM on Saturday 2 September: [Annual Meeting of the CH&LS in Belfort](#)

In German on the ChessBase website, by Herbert Bastian: [Jahrestreffen der CH&LS in Belfort](#)

Henrik Lindberg, assistant professor for economic history in Stockholm, reported in an extremely interesting lecture on the life story of the Swede Folke Røgard (*1899-†1973), lawyer and FIDE President from 1949-1970. Those who are interested in chess history during the Cold War can already look forward to the hopefully imminent publication of Henrik's book, as the title of the lecture reveals: Folke Røgard: organiser of modern world chess in the shadow of the cold war. Røgard was a well-known personality and made headlines, among other things, as the lawyer of the famous Swedish actress Ingrid Bergman (*1915-†1982), who was seen in the 1942 film Casablanca alongside Humphrey Bogart (*1899-†1957), incidentally also a chess enthusiast. Røgard got the FIDE World Championship cycle off the ground when the first interzonal tournament went to Saltsjöbaden in Sweden (1948). Through his good contacts on both sides, he also repeatedly succeeded in bringing the Soviet Union and the USA together, for example by preparing the bilateral match of 1955.



This is where Folke starts his career as an organizer, who is then still called Folke Rosengren. He begins to organize chess at the University. He starts a club called Stockholm University Chess Association and it is soon looking for membership in the Stockholm Chess Federation. Trains to become a lawyer and excels in organizing lawyers and gets to represent the university's student union in Turku and Uppsala among other places.



What to say about Rogard's relationship with Fischer? Well, to begin with, we can state that Rogard gets in touch with Fischer very early. Already in early 1957, he receives reports from Herman Helms and other American chess friends about the star of the United States. Then Mama Regina shows up.

Henrik Lindberg: Folke Rogard, President of FIDE

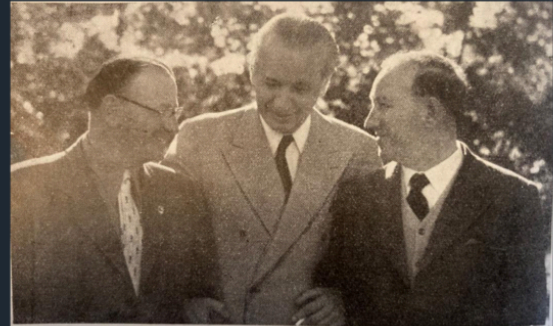


CHESS HISTORY & LITERATURE SOCIETY

founded as Ken Whyld Association

FIDE-president Folke Rogard –
the lawyer who organized
chess in the shadow of the
cold war

Henrik Malm Lindberg (2023-09-02)



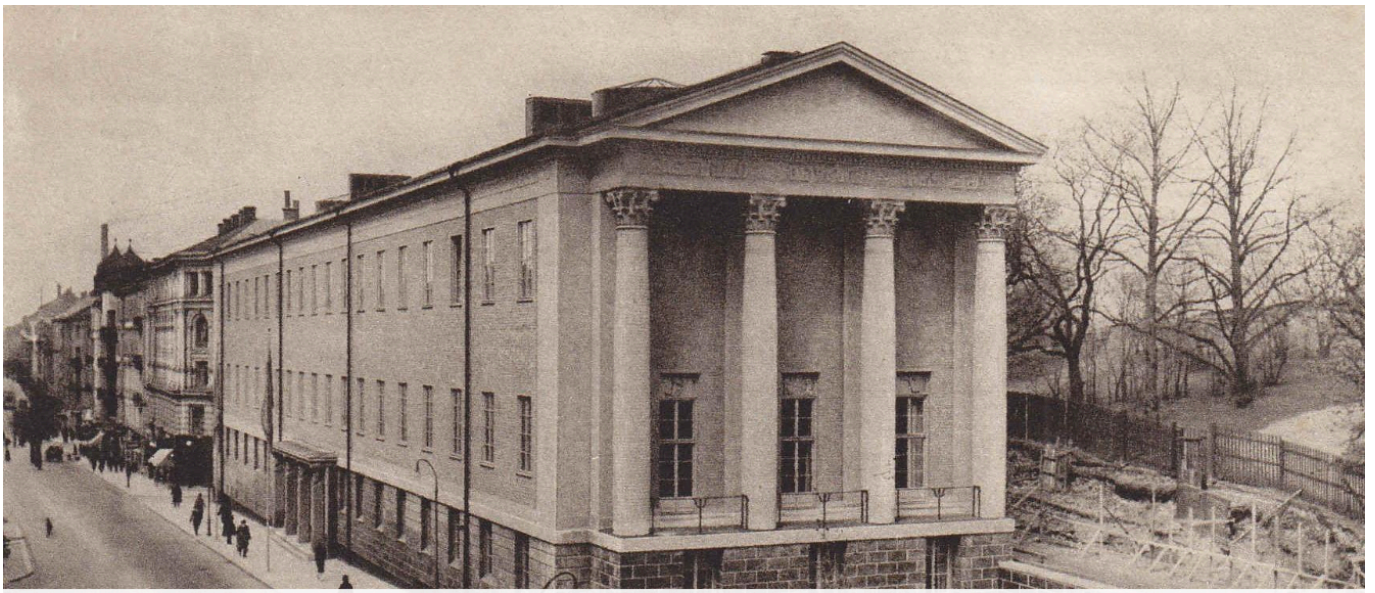
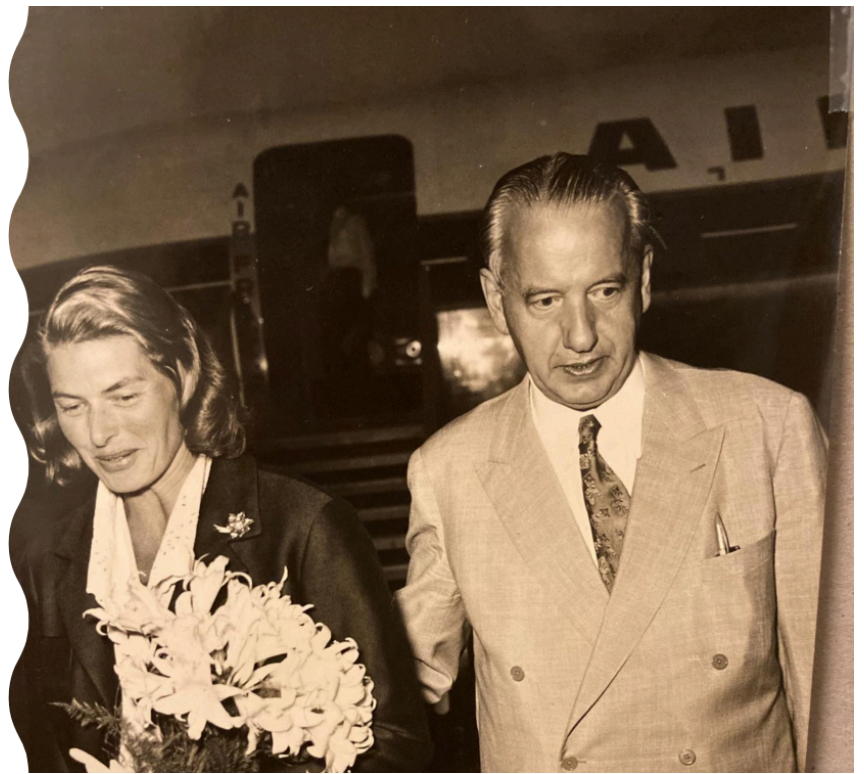
Cold war and chess

- The cold war as an obstacle
- Dividing the chess community
- Chess as one of the front lines
“winning the hearts and minds”
- The propaganda value of chess



A man with more
than one string to
his bow

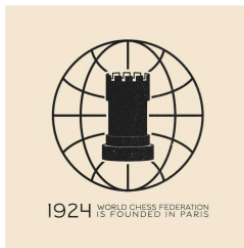
- A precocious student
- The chess player
- Politics
- High profiled lawyer
- Arts collector
- Businessman/entrepreneur
- The family man



The years at Stockholm university 1917-22 were formative



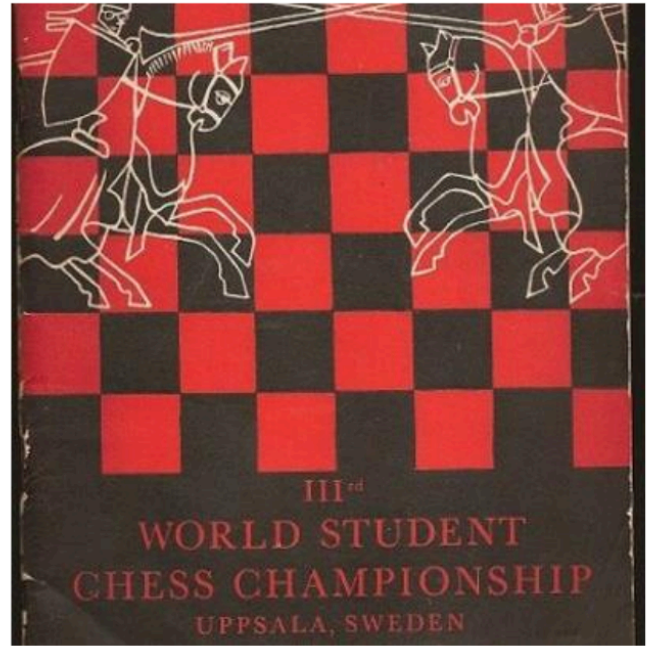
- Rogard and the road to the FIDE-chairmanship
 - Stockholm Ol 1937, the comeback
 - Stockholm Chess Federation chairman 1939
 - The congress in Salzburg 1942
 - Swedich Chess Federation chairman 1946
 - FIDE-congress in Winterthur 1947
 - Arranging Interzonal in Saltsjöbaden 1948
 - Rueb in need of a successor after celebrating 25 years in Paris 1949



- A mediator, but in lack of means to bridge the gap between East and West
- Building confidence is a necessary condition although not enough
- Controlling FIDE without controlling the chess world







TELEGRAM VIA SVERIGERADIO olo=eke
 pr28 praha 33/32w 27/5 1830

elt = folke rogard president fide 16 kungstradgardsgatan
 stockholm

request immediate clarification if fourteen years old
 high school student fischer from usa is eligible
 for participation reykjavik stop urgent thanks

vogel ius pesd

ANKOM TILL





Thanks for your attention!

henrik.malm.lindberg@gmail.com

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jQuery.fn.rstSlider) { init(); } else { document.addEventListener('DOMContentLoaded', init); } function  
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[The presentation as PDF file:](#)

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[FIDE-president Folke Rogard - Henrik Lindberg \(2.6 MiB\)](#)