

## Abstract

Diploma thesis „Chess and chess-players in the Soviet society - the case of Mikhail Botvinnik“ deals with the position of chess and chess-players in Soviet Union mostly in the years 1930-1960. The first chapter describes those factors that lead to mass popularity of chess in the Soviet society and rapid improvement of masters and grandmasters. State and party support was the key influence, especially Nikolai Krylenko, feared state prosecutor, who was in charge of Soviet chess organization for most of the inter-war period, played very important role. Thanks to this support Soviet chess-players could maintain quite wide international contacts, which was unique compared to other Soviet sports in that time. Second chapter shows the connections between chess and politics on the example of M. Botvinnik. It introduces his correspondence with CC RCP(b)/CPSU and examines two cases in detail: the discussion about possible match Botvinnik - Aljechin (1948) and Botvinnik's letters to CC CPSU secretary Pospelov on political topics (1954). The third chapter focuses on presentation of chess-players, mostly again M. Botvinnik, in Soviet media (the daily Pravda and magazine Shakhmaty v SSSR). The last chapter briefly describes chess in the context of Soviet culture, particularly its connections to sport, art and science.