

The

CHESS COLLECTOR

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Editor's Comment

The German CCI group held a regional meeting in Braunschweig recently, we hope to have a report and pictures in the next issue.

During a recent work visit to Glasgow, Scotland, I was entertained by two fellow CCI members and I got the opportunity to view their collections. I would like to thank Peter Armit and Guy Lyons for a most enjoyable time.

In this issue we have several articles of original research along with news and reviews. There is also an update on items previously reported on.

Do you know of a chess related website that could be reviewed in a future issue? Then send the web address to the editor.

Members comments and views are always welcome, so keep them coming in and make this YOUR magazine!

E-mail me at: jimjoannou@btconnect.com
 Jim Joannou.
 Editor

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## Front Cover

Pieces from an Italian ANRI carved and polychromed wooden set. King 9.5cm. Sold on eBay recently for £650.

## Members Comments

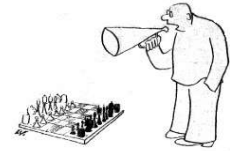
“With respect to Mr. Totaro's article (A Response to Mazzucco. VolXVII No 2. 2008) I appreciated that he treated me with respect, despite my own readily acknowledged neophyte / novice approach, knowledge, and experience in that particular field. He seemed to be very professional and tactful as well as very informative. I liked the way he broke down his response in ways that were specific to particular aspects of my article. While he expresses opinion on many things, such as what is "desirable" to collect and what is not so desirable, he backs up his reasoning... Further on the most recent issue of CCI's The Chess Collector, despite past claims by at least one lost CCI member that the quality of CCI had gone down over the years, I appreciate the (even increasing) efforts and successes of the many contributions to this publication. The varied nature of the articles lend to an atmosphere of a well rounded group of collectors.

John Mazzucco. USA

“I very much enjoyed your article on travelling chess sets and the excellent magazine you produce”

Chris Hall. UK

# YOUR MOVE !



## MEMBERS PAGE

### Harrwitz Find! Alan Fersht

Just as I was leaving a second-hand bookshop cum bric-a-bric, I noticed some sets on the bottom shelf of a floor-standing, half hidden dusty cabinet. A new looking Staunton was at the front, surrounded by old cardboard boxes, labelled St. George. Ignoring the Staunton, I rummaged through box after box of "St. Georges". They were all cheap Regence sets, in the usual state of having replaced pieces, with none of them complete, and all at high prices. As an afterthought, I asked to see the Staunton. The pieces were all bright and shiny, the white a light boxwood yellow, the black looking glossy absolutely pristine. They were unfelted and slight concave. But, they were all beautifully turned. Then came the knights: small and exquisite with drop jaws. This is now looking promising. The king, clearly 3.5" tall had a Jaques looking cross. Silly me, I hadn't noticed the first time I picked it up that there was the tell-tale **Jaques London** around the rim. I told the dealer it looked to me to be about 1860, which surprised him, and paid up, content that I had secured a nice playing set at a good price.

Driving back, my brain switched into the right gear as well. Unfelted? - I have never seen unfelted Jaques before. Those Bishops, that deep vertical slit in the only slightly bulbous mitre

– isn't that a hallmark of Frank Camaratta's Harrwitz, the one on his website which shows the knights at a 45 degree angle where you cannot make out what the faces are really like? And, he wrote that they were unfelted and had the Jaques 1849-1852 green circle stuck on the wooden base. Fortunately, Dario Perez had sent me a fine photo of a Harrwitz set for my book, and I remembered that his 2 7/8" set had green stickers that had been stuck on the bare wood and clearly been felted over subsequently.



The "Harrwitz" knights are the first of the "drop jaws", and have the upper teeth. The black are made of boxwood.

Home – straight to my book to check - yes, yes it is a very rare Harrwitz set, the only gap in my collection of early boxwood and ebony 3.5" sets and the only type that I have never directly handled. My knights were indeed Harrwitz! So, I can now show photos of a near complete set of early knights and bishops

<http://www.fersht.com/chess/index.html>



These sets are rare examples of being unfelted. Some still have their green registration stickers, indicating they are pre-1852.

## Updates on Previous Issues

*Jim Joannou*

### Picasa websites

In the last issue (VolXVII No 2. 2008), I informed members about a number of Picasa websites where a few members have put photo's of their collections up for everyone to see.

Here are some additional chess related Picasa sites:

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/alfaman101>  
(The collection of USA collector Dennis Hunt)

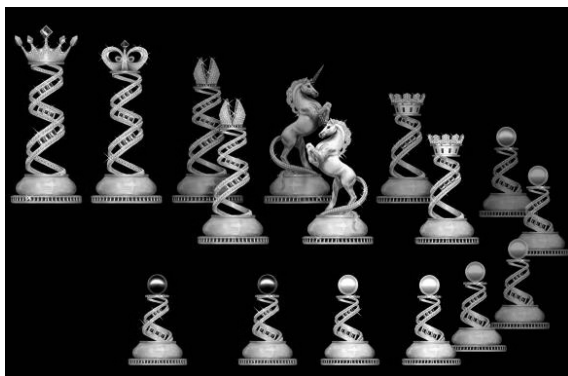
<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/thechesscollectors>  
(A site with a large number of pictures of chess sets by collector Robert Van De Veur from The Netherlands)

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/mickdeasey>  
(The collection of UK collector Mick Deasey)

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/baron.von.drivel>  
(A relatively new collector, Duncan Pohl from the USA)

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The Jewel Royale Chess set

In Vol XIV No 2 Winter 2005, we reported on a one-off chess set being made by noted London jewelers, Boodles. It was billed as



The Completed set worth over £5 million

“The most expensive chess set ever made”, but at the time only the King had been produced. The set, completed in 2006, is valued at over 5 million Pounds but a limited number of replicas will be priced at £20,000. Constructed in gold and platinum, it is set with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires and pearls.



Close-up of the Knights

The set's playing surface is made of yellow and white gold and set with diamonds. Award winning writer Clifford Thurlow has been commissioned to write a thriller entitled “Checkmate”, with the central plot based around the Jewel Royale chess set.



Detail of the Bishops mitre

The Mao Tse Tung Chess set

Rodolfo Pozzi

It is a well known fact that Mao Tse Tung prohibited chess in China, as would the Taliban years later in Afghanistan. We also know that later, when the game was liberalized, the Chinese were finally able to express their mastery of the game by ranking several of their male and female champions among the best in the world.

Mao (1893-1976) hosted many personalities, particularly from Russia, who wanted to play chess, so he had appropriate chess sets made to be played on a wooden chessboard. The pieces were made of cone-shaped bamboo bodies, with the western

reminiscent of the Great Wall of China.

These sets, which may be dated back to the mid-twentieth century, do not boast a particular aesthetic or high commercial value, but because they were conceivably produced in a limited edition, they undoubtedly serve as an interesting historical document.

Editors Note: A similar set with triangular bodies in place of the cone shaped bodies was also produced.



symbols at the top and light wood bases painted in white or black. To make them unmistakably Chinese, the torsos of figures enclosed in oval shapes were etched onto the bamboo and colored (the same figures in red and black, on the front and on the back). For example the King, 11.2 cm high, is a dignitary with a beard and a mustache and a Chinese hat, the queen is crowned and bejeweled, slightly taller than the King, the Pawns are young men and the Rook is



BCC or not BCC. That is the question.

Researched by Guy Lyons with help from Frank Camarrata and Mick Deasey. Edited by Jim Joannou.

How often have Collectors seen Staunton type sets, described as BCC (British Chess Company) on eBay? Maybe even purchased a set or two attributed to the BCC, but found little direct evidence? Maybe even asked a seller direct questions about the origin and got no satisfactory answer?

On searching through the CCI publications I found not one single article had been written on British Chess Company sets! All rather interesting! So I decided to put together a folder of images, of every set I could find and investigate. Thanks to Robert Stoller, I found out that the Cleveland Library had a copy of the 1891 BCC catalogue and on contacting them they very kindly mailed me a copy. (Fig 3) All this was over two years ago.

Fig 1, an advert from an 1890's British Chess Magazine (BCM), shows my preferred BCC set, The Royal Chessmen. But there have been suggestions that this was a copy of a Jaques set! However every piece in this pattern has a differing style to a Jaques. The Royal set was produced in wood in several sizes including the large club size. They were also made in ivory but these are extremely rare. Fig 2, a BCM advert also from the 1890's, shows The Staunton Chessmen, which are closer to a Jaques pattern except for the knights. This set was also offered with a Kings knop rather than a cross, which may have been due to break-ages. It is worth noting here that the British Chess Company was catering for the Chess Clubs rather than the retail market.



Fig 1. Advertisement from the British Chess Magazine dated 1890.



Fig 2. Advertisement from the British Chess Magazine dated 1890.

BCC or Not BCC. That is the Question.

Continued

What was mighty puzzling was that the patterns bore little resemblance to many sets that were described as BCC. So I contacted Frank Camarrata, who has a fine collection of BCC sets. Frank was very helpful and spent considerable time mailing information to me. However I still could not grasp the obvious; The BCC Staunton, (Fig 2) was in fact the Imperial design or improved Staunton. (Fig 3. Right hand page) So any set “not” similar to this design but described as BCC, needed questioning. Frank simply told me I was probably looking for the Holy Grail, or the Ark of the Covenant, “Stick to the Knights, and the catalogue patterns illustrated” he told me. It was incredible but it took me two years to understand what he meant. I kept looking at sets described as BCC, which now appear to be incorrect. I then received help from a few other collectors, one in particular, Mick Deasey, needs a special mention. He spent considerable time researching the founders of the Company, and its probable life span. Between us we checked various 1890s publications including the British Chess Magazine, The Times Archives, etc. and then, upon the advice of Michael Mark, The Chess Amateur. Mike Darlows book “A study of Turned Chessmen” also helped.

The results of this research made for some interesting speculation.

It appears that the British Chess Company may have had a rather short life span, ~1888 -1905, but were only a serious maker for possibly 6 years. This at least makes some sense, as their factory at Rock Mill Stroud, was demolished in 1897. Also, as an exercise, I did a quick analysis of the numbers of known BCC sets (2004-2007 in auction catalogues) compared to Jaques sets and it came out as roughly 40/1. Now that is a huge difference. The competition in the 1890s was pretty fierce, as Jaques, and Ayers were very active, plus other copy makers of Staunton type sets, were about. Finally the Chess Amateur publication based in Stroud, UK from 1907 had a W Moffat on its staff and he was also a founding partner in the British Chess Company! It is strange that not a single advertisement for any BCC set can be found in this publication despite that fact that BCC sets were on offer from the Chess Amateur depot in Stroud after the demise of the BCC! There was no mention of the BCC name, so one can infer that by this time (1907) they were selling surplus stock from the 1890’s.

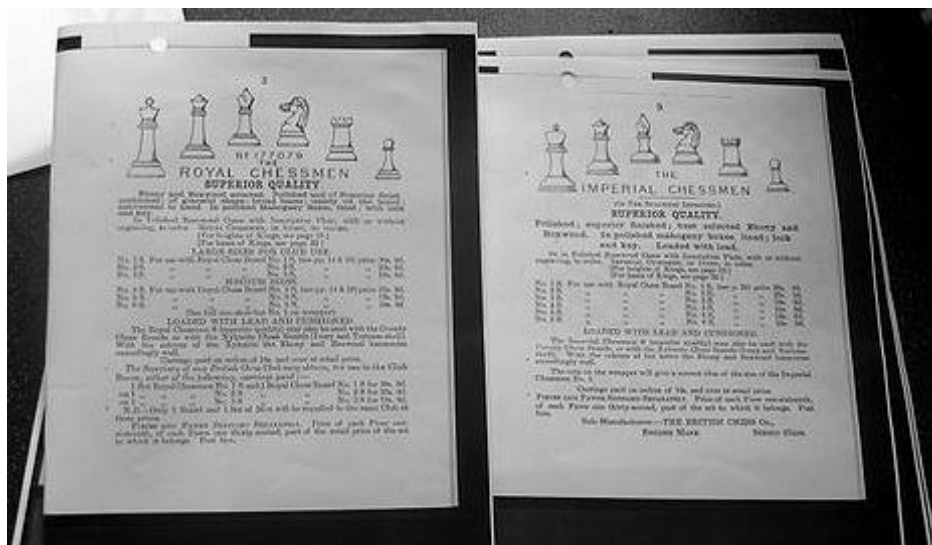


Fig 3. Photocopies of the BCC catalogue of 1891. Supplied by the Cleveland library.

BCC or Not BCC. That is the Question.

Continued

Now when one studies the two well-known designs of BCC, the Royal and the Imperial, it is mainly the Xylonite knights, (See 1891 catalogue in Fig 3) plus their labeled boxes, that offer clues to the maker. Xylonite was an early plastic, and the company was so keen on this new material, they even, made some complete sets of Xylonite and even a chessboard. The evidence suggests that it was not accepted by the club players of the time and none too many of these sets appear to have survived.

Fig 4 shows the BCC Imperial chessmen, which was a new pattern introduced in 1900. It was unique in that the height of the pieces reflected their relative strength. Hence the Rooks are taller than the Bishops and Knights. There is some evidence that this set was produced with a “notched” Maltese style Kings cross instead of a round finial and also with two versions of the knight.

The BCC produced two basic designs, The Imperial and The Royal but there were also variations on these two styles, e.g. The Staunton Chessmen set. (Fig2) Both of the two main designs featured the unique Xylonite heads on the knights, although the knights could be “upgraded” to hand carved boxwood and ebony, which according to Frank Camarrata, are magnificently carved. Fig 4 shows an Imperial BCC set which was itself a variation of the Staunton design (Also referred to as Improved Staunton) and replaced an earlier Imperial style, which did not have Xylonite knights.

Other identifying features include large base diameters on all BCC sets, Rooks with four castellations, which on the Royal sets were slightly angled inwards and doubled large collars on the Imperial (Improved Staunton) designs.

Like Jaques sets, all BCC sets came with the red crown mark on the summit of the Kings rooks but the knights were marked on the sides of their bases.



Fig 4. A BCC Imperial set (Improved Staunton) with the Xylonite Knights heads

The boxes that BCC sets came in are also important for identification. (Fig 5) Many of their boxes had “The British Chess Company, Stroud” impressed along the edge of the lower half of the box next to



Fig 5. Two BCC sets in their boxes. Note the rounded corners and White labels.



Fig 6. A collectable set described as BCC but close inspection confirmed that it couldn't be BCC.

BCC or Not BCC. That is the Question.

Continued

the top plate of the lock. Some boxes came with rounded corners, a semi-mortice lock, were lined inside and also came with a white label although some pale green labels have also been seen. An upgrade to a polished rosewood box was also offered.

They also produced a square cornered box with thinner walls and an "hook & eye" fastener for the lid. These were not lined but still came with the white label. After the demise of the BCC in approx 1907, it is strongly suspected that their old stock was sold off (as already mentioned above) by the Chess Amateur depot, and the boxes probably had their labels removed.

Fig 6 shows a collectable set, which was described by a dealer as BCC. However on examination one notes that the rooks have five castellations instead of four, detailed study of the "turning signature" has little resemblance to other BCC sets and the knights, carved in wood, are nothing like the styles noted in the BCC catalogues. (See fig 1,2 & 3) and finally the knights have the red crown stamped on the top and not on the bases. Therefore, although still a fine set, it cannot be of British Chess company origin.

I cannot be 100% sure BCC did not make any copy Jaques look-alike sets in the 1890s, but if they did, it does seem odd that no adverts for these can be found in the Chess Amateur, and why would they have changed their unique design! Again, if they did make copy sets, and there is no shortage of unknown Staunton pattern sets about on eBay each week, why do they appear to have disappeared by 1905? Every Illustration I have seen in old publications, show either the Royal or Imperial design and unlike some makers, including Jaques, they were pretty accurate too.

I purchased three sets attributed to BCC in 2005, and now I am pretty convinced these sets were not made by that company, however they are still collectable sets, either Antique or early Vintage, and I suspect the sellers, simply did not do the in-depth research, that both myself, and fellow collectors have now managed to complete. Today the Internet offers us collectors a tremendous opportunity to source information that simply was nothing like as easy to obtain previously.

To summarise, here is a list of clues that will help identify a BCC set:

- 1) Kings have a rounded Knop or a notched Maltese style Cross
- 2) Wide Bases on all pieces
- 3) Xylonite Knights' heads or similar styles in Boxwood and Ebony
- 4) Rooks have four Castellations
- 5) Red Crown Stamped on the Knights' bases
- 6) The boxes are stamped and have white labels and the best boxes have rounded corners

I hope BCC collectors in the CCI will appreciate that this article is not designed to "have a go" at Chess Dealers or sellers. It is simply the work of a collector, who wished to research a known company, with welcome and much appreciated help from other CCI members. I cannot claim to have established absolute proof that I am correct in my article, but then again I have seen little, if any, evidence that many chess sets attributed to BCC are in fact correct. I do hope my good friend Mick Deasey, does a more detailed article on British Chess Company for the CCI in a future issue, as it sure would be a welcome addition for BCC collectors like myself.

Chess: The artists who want a piece of the action

(Extracts from Telegraph online 13th Aug 2008)

A recently formed art company called RS&A commissioned five prominent artists, including Damien Hirst and the Chapman brothers, to create bespoke sets that have been exhibited all over the world.

Japanese-born Yayoi Kusama adapted an 18th-century design with her trademark painted polka dots. The mischievous Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan, best known for his 1999 waxwork mannequin of the Pope being squashed by a meteorite, replaced traditional chess figures with delicate porcelain figurines depicting recognisable people and characters associated in his mind with good and evil.

The RS&A chess sets were inspired by a similar project that happened nearly six decades earlier. In 1944, the artist, photographer and chess obsessive Man Ray staged an exhibition called *The Imagery of Chess* at Julien Levy's gallery in New York, featuring sets and boards by a number of celebrated Modernist artists including Alexander Calder and Max Ernst.

But why have so many artists wanted to design chess sets? "Chess is often used as a metaphor for all kinds of things, such as politics, war and even family strife," says Malcolm Pein, chess correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*. "And that appeals to artists." That's certainly the case with Damien Hirst. His 2003 set, *Mental Escapology*, consists of ranks of medicine bottles cast in silver and glass, with modified labels sandblasted and etched on each side. "Damien sees a link between powerful medical companies and power play in chess," says Julia Royse of RS&A.

Over the past five years, Royse has commissioned seven more artists to produce chess sets, which are sold in editions of seven for between £25,000 and £150,000 each. The sets bear the distinctive stylistic fingerprints

of the artists who made them, demonstrating that, in the right hands, chessmen can be tiny sculptures. Five of the sets have already been exhibited in Moscow and New York, but two more are about to be unveiled.

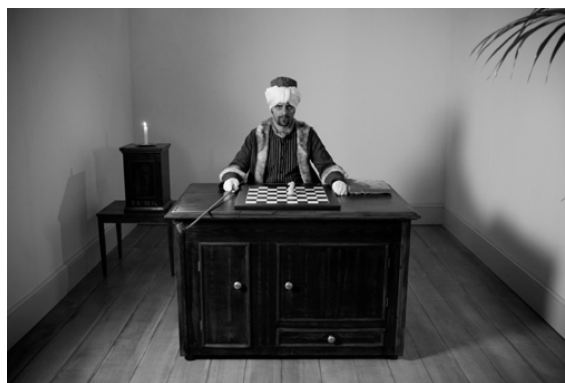
Tracey Emin is working on a travelling chess set, with bronze pieces and a multi-coloured board of quilted fabric that can be rolled up and placed inside an embroidered cloth bag. "The last time I played was in Africa in the middle of nowhere, so I like the idea of producing a travelling chess set," says Emin.

Gavin Turk, another artist closely associated with the YBAs, is responding tangentially to RS&A's commission, by producing a 20-minute film instead of a chess set that was screened in Dublin as part of the *Art of Chess* exhibition at the Sebastian Guinness Gallery. In the film, the artist dresses up as the famous "Mechanical Turk", a chess-playing automaton constructed in 1770 by the Austrian nobleman Wolfgang von Kempelen.

Further info:

www.r-s-a.co.uk

www.sebastianguinnessgallery.com/site/home.php?ID=1



Gavin Turk as "The Turk" in his 2008 film.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New Gold and Diamond chess set unveiled

New in designer Charles Hollander's collection is a chess set made out of gold with the king and queen set with diamonds. This time the king and queen actually feature fake figurines to make the set more interesting. *(No word on price as yet but I bet I will not be able to afford one! - Editor)*



Chess sets on eBay

Listed as a "vintage travelling set" (Fig 1) this small folding board with Staunton style pieces in good condition sold for just £77. A similar set sold at Christie's in 2006 for £200!



Fig 1

Two listings of Red and Butterscotch Bakelite Chess sets were up for sale recently one sold for \$380 and the other for \$285.

A good German woodset (King 8.5cm) sold for £102, including a board, and an old Austrian wooden set from the same seller went for £103. Fig 2 shows a rare ivory set in a quality wooden casket which sold for £480.



Fig 2

Earth vs Space Chess match!

An astronaut aboard the International Space Station began the chess match on Sept. 29, playing against the public on Earth. The play being led by Schools and Clubs in the USA suggest 4 moves and then the public vote on which move goes out into space. Anyone can vote via the Web site: www.uschess.org/nasa2008.

The online voting is being hosted by the U.S. Chess Federation (UCSF).

CHESS SETS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Part 1.

Modern Playing Sets & The Moro Mystery Revealed.

Jim Joannou

Introduction

The Philippines has a long history with Chess^{1,2}. There are many organised competitions and some strong international players have, and still are, emerging from this interesting and diverse country. We will look at the different chess designs that have developed and emerged from this far eastern country in two parts and discover what they represent or how they developed. The one golden rule that will emerge from these articles, when studying sets from the Philippines is: When in doubt, study the culture of the people!

The Philippines are a group of approx 7100 islands off the south coast of China and is classed as sub-tropical. The nature of the country (Mountainous regions, remote islands and high poverty levels) has resulted in some diverse and mixed cultures. For example, the major religion is Catholicism but there is a high Muslim population in the far south of the country. Despite the Filipino's being quite religious there also exists a degree of symbolism and pagan style imagery. In this first article we look at the modern playing set design and then tackle the mysterious "Moro" sets from the southern Philippine islands.

Modern Playing Sets.

The design of modern playing sets in the Philippines, are based on the Staunton pattern, but with some notable differences. (Fig 1) The Rooks generally have flat tops although some sets show small castellations. (Fig 2) The knights, depicted as a horse, have long noses and "sticky up" ears. Some knights can be quite crudely carved.



Fig 1. Traditional playing set. Photo courtesy of Rick Knowlton.

The King, Queen and Bishop have slender tapering stems and the crown on the king can be described as a "Catholic Rosary Cross". The bases of all the pieces tend to be quite "chunky", which gives stability. Some modern sets can be quite crudely made, however sets from the early to mid 20th C are of a higher quality (Fig 2) and can be quite collectable, although only rarely come up for sale.

Moro sets from the South

The "Moro" sets (Fig 3), which are generally made from a local hardwood (Known as Kamagong or Banti wood) and buffalo horn, are probably the most well known style of the many varieties from the Philippines, yet the real origin of the design has never been fully explained. They have been mentioned in a number of texts and websites^{3,4,5} and many different theories have been put forward as to the unusual design of the knights. In order to fully understand these sets you have to look at the culture, religion, history and the people of these islands.

CHESS SETS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Continued



Fig 2. Modern style set from 1950's-60's.
From the Duncan Pohl Collection.

Over the centuries they have been occupied / ruled by many different nations, most notably in the 16th Century with the Spanish and more recently during the 20th C by the Americans. The southern most islands, where these "Moro" sets originate, are quite remote and have a different culture and religion to the majority of other Filipino islands. They have a degree of autonomy in that they have their own military structure and they have a Muslim based culture instead of the mainly Catholic religion of the central and northern islands. It is this religious influence that gives rise to the mainly Muslim style pieces of the Moro sets. The most striking pieces of these sets are, of course, the

knights and these have generated many different ideas as to their origin.

Here is a list of some of the differing and sometimes conflicting theories:

- 1) They originate from the island of Moro
- 2) They originate from the island of Mindanao
- 3) They are produced by the Marano (or Moranao) people
- 4) They are produced by the Moro people



Fig 3. White pieces of a Moro set showing the mainly Muslim style pieces and the elaborate knights.



Fig 4. Map of Philippines showing Lake Lanao on the Island of Mindanao.

CHESS SETS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Continued

- 5) They are produced by the Mindanao people
- 6) The design represents the sea
- 7) The design represents a serpent
- 8) The design represents a horse's mane
- 9) The design represents the wind
- 10) The design is a symbol of good luck
- 11) The design is a symbol of status
- 12) The design is used to adorn houses and protect against storms and hurricanes
- 13) The design comes from the "Okir" pattern
- 14) The design come from the "Naga" pattern
- 15) The design comes from the "Tarragon" pattern

Some of these are true or partly true, others are either guesses or an individual's interpretation of the design.

My recent research has led me to the following conclusions on the correct origin. These sets are made by the "Maranao" people on the main southern island of Mindanao. The Maranao are one of several Muslim based ethnic groupings of the Moro people, which is the general name for the occupants of Mindanao. (The name "Moro" is Spanish for "Moor", which is a general term for Muslims from North Africa⁶) The Maranao people mainly reside in one or two areas of Mindanao, centered around Lake Lanao (See Fig 4). The Knights design comes from the "Okir" pattern and is a symbol of good luck and also of status or power⁷. This pattern is also used on the traditional Filipino dress called the "Barong Tagalog" (Fig 5). The Okir design is described as a flowery pattern with serpent influences. In the village communities of the Maranao, the village chiefs use this design on their houses (Known as Tarragon) to show their status and prestige. (Fig 6)

This raises another question:

If this Okir design is a symbol of status and power, why then is it that the Knight has this design and not the King or maybe the queen (The most powerful piece on the board)?



Fig 5. Traditional "Barong Tagalog" shirt worn by men on special occasions with the Okir pattern

To answer this we again look to the culture and the people of the Philippines.

Firstly the national animal of the Philippines is the "Carabao" or Water Buffalo and these powerful animals are mainly used on farms to do the heavy work. A farmer who owns a water buffalo can be considered to be relatively wealthy and has a certain status in the community. Therefore a "Carabao" has a similar standing in Filipino culture as the okir pattern. (ie: Both are national symbols and both represent power and status) Second, chess sets from other parts of the Philippines tend to utilise the Carabao

CHESS SETS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Continued



Fig 6. Chiefs house or Tarragon showing the Okir symbols. Marawi City, Mindanao.⁸

image as the knight (Fig 7) and so it is both a cultural and a natural progression that the Okir design is used for the knight in the Moro sets.

Another interesting feature of these Moro sets, which was raised by a fellow collector, is the differences in relative size and design shapes within a complete set. For example, sometimes the elaborate knight is taller than the king, (Fig 3 & 8) sometimes it is of equal height and in other sets it is smaller, but it is almost always taller than every other piece on the board. This, I believe, is partly due to the high cultural status of the okir pattern as already discussed. The Maranao people “believe” the symbolic power and status of the Okir-Knight-Carabao-Knight imagery being more powerful than any royal type figure.

Differences in the carvings can also be seen between the knights of a set and even between pieces of the opposing side within a set. Fig 9 shows the differences between two Moro knights and Fig 10 shows an early Moro set where differences

can be seen on the bases of the knights and other parts (ie: Number of holes on the top arm) and also on the shape of the pawns. Fig 11 shows another set with marked differences with the pawns and again on the bases of the knights. My research has revealed that the local carvers of these sets are generally poor and do not work to any predetermined pattern. They work from memory and may take several weeks to complete a set as they work mainly with hand tools or basic hand driven lathes.

They may also have apprentice carvers who practice by making the easier pieces like the pawns and also one carver may work on one half of the set whilst another works on the other half. These carvers would also make furniture, utensils, religious statues etc and after making one chess set it may be over a year later before he makes another one. So I conclude that it is normal and acceptable for there to be these differences in carving and design for these Moro sets.

In the next issue we will look at the various designs that are found from the northern and central Philippine islands

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- 8) <http://richardtsb.multiply.com/photos/album/21/marawi>)

CHESS SETS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Continued



Fig 7. Pieces from a northern Filipino set.
Knight as a water buffalo far right.
(This set will be discussed in detail in the
part 2 of this article in the next issue)



Fig 9. Comparison of two knights from the
same set.



Fig 8. Size comparison between Moro
Knights and Kings. All 4 sets from the
collection of Jon Crumiller.



Fig 10. Horn Moro set C1850. (White
pawn top right, Black pawn bottom left)
From the collection of Gareth Williams.²



Fig 11. Moro set showing differences in
Pawns and Knights. From the Jon
Crumiller collection

‘A Cunning Move’

Novello Williams

The political situation in the UK regarding Fox Hunting has been a source of unrest between country folk and the government in recent years and this has inspired this delightful limited edition solid Bronze sculpture (16 inches long by 9 inches high)



It consists of two dogs pitting their wits against the cunning fox. The artist Julian Jeffery based his work on two hounds from the renown Meynell Hunt pack namely Growler and Game Boy. Both of whom he has portrayed in full hunting pink waiting patiently for the wily old fox to make his move. A number of discarded chess pieces lay on the ground. Chess has been used many times over the centuries as an allegory for some political situation relevant at the time. Who will make ‘a cunning move’ and finally win the game, the fox (UK Parliament), or the hounds (members of the hunt)?

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Luke Honey (seated) preparing the auction

## Auction Review

*Jim Joannou*

**Bonhams, Knightsbridge, UK.  
14th Oct 2008.**

The latest chess auction organised by Luke Honey and Bonhams occurred on 14th Oct 2008. (Pictured) But how do you measure “a successful auction”? You can get different views depending on who you speak to! Some say that the prices were strong, others say the prices were not great. Despite a turnout of over 60 people in the room, there was a noticeable reduction of telephone bidders, and prior to the auction, Luke said that there was a distinct lack of interest from the USA. Only a few chess lots went unsold and so, for Bonhams, it was probably a good sale, with the majority of items selling on or around their estimate. Does this mean that they read the market well and fixed good estimates or is this a reflection of the current financial climate?

There were at least 16 CCI members present on the day from several countries and they got together both before and after the sale to socialize and chat about their latest acquisitions.



Waiting patiently for the saleroom to open, Tony Raynes (Right) chats to Ian Allen (Far Left) and Alan Dewey. (Pictures courtesy of Patrick Singmin)

## Auction Review

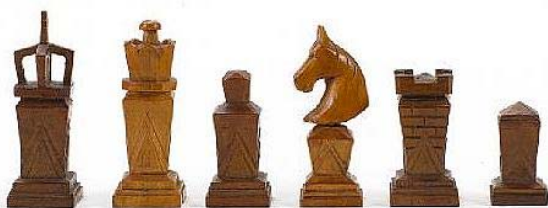
*Continued*

The sale, which also included playing cards and games, comprised over 200 items, which started with a few books, games and boards. Most of these items sold on or near their estimate but Lot 24, (Pictured) a Scottish chessboard dated to C1865 was bought by an American collector for £2500 against an £800-£1200 estimate.



**Lot 24. A Penwork decorated Gothic revival board. Scotland. C1865.**

Most of the Staunton style sets sold well and a rare “ships” set with urn-shaped bases sold over estimate at £1350, while a Calvert pattern ivory set only reached £850 against a £1000-£1500 estimate. An old English pattern ebony & boxwood set by Leuchars of Picadilly (Lot 105) went for nearly three times it’s lowest estimate of £500 but a German boxwood “pedestal” set (Pictured) sold for a modest £130.



**Lot 119. A boxwood “pedestal” set. German. C1920.**

There were a number of “Regence” style sets in this sale and they all sold on or just below estimate. One surprise on the day was a Swiss figural part set (Missing two Knights) (Pictured), that sold for £5500, which was approx. 5 times it’s estimate.



**Lot 134. Two Kings and one Queen from a Swiss Boxwood set. C1870.**

A very nice Chinese “Macao” bust set (Lot 175), dated to 1810 sold on estimate at £2500, but the highest price on the day was £7800, which was paid for a rare Chinese “Napoleon” ivory figural set (Lot 197). An Ivory “disc” set listed as Chinese (Lot 179) and considered by some to be English was sold just above estimate at £370. An Islamic Ivory set with box / board (Pictured) sold mid estimate at £4000, while two African “tribal” sets (Lot 208 & 209) failed to sell at £120.



**Lot 191. Islamic painted ivory set. India. Late 18th/Early 19th C.**

## CCI DIARY

### Schaakkunst European Touring Chess Art Exhibition

Enschede: October, November, December, 2008 at the office of DGT Projects

Further details from: [www.schaakkunst.nl](http://www.schaakkunst.nl) and [www.chess-art.eu](http://www.chess-art.eu)

### The Art of Chess Exhibition

22nd Jan—11th April 2009  
Reykjavik Art Museum, Iceland.

[http://www.artmuseum.is/  
desktopdefault.aspx](http://www.artmuseum.is/desktopdefault.aspx)

### Bonhams London Chess Auction

May 2009  
Knightsbridge, London

Details to be announced

### The 14th CCI Biennial Convention.

2010  
Cambridge, UK

Details to be announced

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As a fellow collector and CCI Member, I am also prepared to buy old English Pottery Chess Sets or odd pieces.



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