

the character of works of great value - independent of the value attributed to them by modern collectors, but this is another question.

Bonus Socius – Author

An open discussion concerns the provenance of the author known as Bonus Socius. The most plausible suggestions are linked with Lombardy: either a Flame living in Lombardy or a Lombard himself, thus his provenance and/or stay could be near to Bologna, the town of Civis, the *second* author. As for time, one would expect, at least on first sight, Socius could belong to the last quarter of the 13th century (and Civis could be one-and-a-half century more recent).

Different from Sevilla of Alfonso X, in the country of Bonus Socius the Arabic influence could be less: were he a Flame or a Lombard, time and place were far enough for an original European contribution to chess. From a cultural point of view, both regions were highly developed at the time - among several candidates, it is unavoidable to address our minds to the two greatest universities of the world, for centuries, Paris and Bologna.

Due to some parochialism, I would be glad to confirm for Bonus Socius a Florentine provenance (sometimes suggested in the past), but I am finding here no hint, apart from the general fact of the relatively narrow relations with the Islamic world. Some suggested attribution, for instance to Buoncompagno da Signa, has probably more points against than favourable ones. Moreover, the earliest Florentine codex seems to be less ancient and less Florentine than previously considered.

Bonus Socius wrote an introduction where his compilation is considered as a personal work, but there was already an established basic tradition onto which Bonus Socius probably added some *new* specimens. We can thus assume that he based his work on traditional knowledge, common among the best chess players.

Bonus Socius – Collection

Most of the following chess collections were based, at least in part, on Bonus Socius, the written source. We have however to distinguish between the collection first ordered by Bonus Socius (which could also be more limited in extension than usually considered) and the many different copies which have been named after him. The various specimens of the Bonus Socius collection are more different than could be expected. No couple of reasonably identical