

Framed mother of pearl gaming counters

£145



Description

A fine framed set of 18th century Chinese carved mother-of-pearl gaming counters circa 1790.

Chinese mother-of-pearl gaming counters, popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, are intricately carved tokens used in Europe for card games and gambling. Crafted in Canton (now Guangzhou) for export, these counters were made from luminous nacre shells, delicately engraved and often shaped like circles, rectangles, or fish.

Many featured family crests, monograms, or decorative motifs such as flowers, dragons, and pagodas, reflecting both Chinese artistry and European tastes. They were prized luxury items among the wealthy, stored in fine boxes, and admired for their exquisite craftsmanship.

Today, they are collectible artefacts of cross-cultural trade and artistry.