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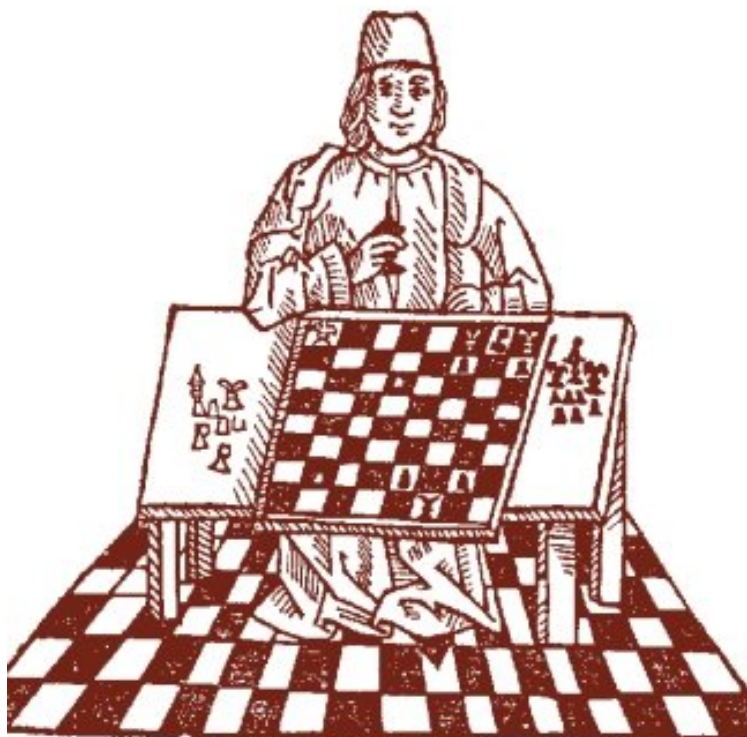
The Book of Chess

Jacob de Cessolis, H. L. Williams
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THE BOOK OF CHESS

BY
JACOB DE CESSOLIS

TRANSLATED & EDITED
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Jacob de Cessolis, H. L. Williams : The Book of Chess before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Book of Chess:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Ably translated and deftly editedBy Midwest Book ReviewAbly

translated and deftly edited by H. L. Williams, this Italica Press edition of Jacob de Cessolis' "The Book Of Chess" was famous in its time and translated into several languages. de Cessolis was a Dominican friar in the Lombard region of Italy who gave a remarkable sermon (*Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium -- Book of the Manners of Men and the Offices of the Nobility*) that became better known to subsequent generations as "The Book Of Chess" and provided readers with a primer on the use of chess as a metaphor for the game of life, ending only in the 'checkmate' of the reader's death. It presents, through the analogy of chess pieces, a contemporary's perspective of how medieval European social life and structure played out amongst the various classes that composed it, from the governed to the governors, and from the workers to the fighters. Beginning with an informative bibliographic essay, "The Book Of Chess" is divided into four main sections: Background of the Game; The Noble Figures; The Commoners; Openings and Moves. Enhanced with a series of woodcut images and a comprehensive index, "The Book Of Chess" is especially recommended for academic library Medieval Studies collections in general, and non-specialist general readers with an interest in medieval social structure in particular.

Chess is like life. And "Checkmate!" like death. Whether the game and pieces represent war, court society, or the world at large, in a general way and simply seen, the game has come to symbolize the world and death. This metaphor comes down from the thirteenth century when Jacob de Cessolis, a Dominican friar in the Lombard region of Italy, delivered a sermon based on the game. The sermon was so well received that his fellow friars insisted he write it out. His "*Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium*" (*Book of the Manners of Men and the Offices of the Nobility*), now simply called *The Book of Chess*, was famous throughout Europe. It was translated into numerous languages and presents readers with a primer on the game and a look into a contemporary's view of the structure and ways of medieval society. From kings and queens, to farmers and gamblers, Jacob outlined the virtues and vices, obligations and inclinations of various members of medieval society: those who governed, those who fought and those who worked, playing out their qualities on the chess board. This edition offers the first English translation of this famous work since Caxton's printing of 1474. Includes introduction, notes, bibliographic essay. 16 woodcuts from Caxton's 1474 edition.