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By Daniel E. O'Sullivan



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The game of chess was wildly popular in the Middle Ages, so much so that it became an important thought paradigm for thinkers and writers who utilized its vocabulary and imagery for commentaries on war, politics, love, and the social order. In this collection of essays, scholars investigate chess texts from numerous traditions - English, French, German, Latin, Persian, Spanish, Swedish, and Catalan - and argue that knowledge of chess is essential to understanding medieval culture. Such knowledge, however, cannot rely on the modern game, for today's rules were not developed until the late fifteenth century. Only through familiarity with earlier incarnations of the game can one fully appreciate the full import of chess to medieval society. The careful scholarship contained in this volume provides not only insight into the significance of chess in medieval European culture but also opens up avenues of inquiry for future work in this rich field.



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Daniel E. O'Sullivan, University of Mississippi, USA.

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