



## Jacopo da Firenze's Tractatus Algorismi and Early Italian Abbacus Culture [

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Monografía

In the city republics of Renaissance Italy, it was a common practice among the merchant class to send sons for a two-year course of study at an "abbacus school", where they learned practical, mostly commercial mathematics, known as *abbaco*. From this school institution, several hundred manuscripts survive, all in Italian, often containing not only what the masters needed in their teaching but also algebra or other advanced mathematical material. A signal feature of the book by Jens Hyrup is the first translation of one of these *abbacus* manuscripts into English. The *abbacus* books have long been supposed to be reduced versions of Leonardo Fibonacci's *Liber abbaci*. Analysis of early *abbacus* books, not least of the first specimen treating of algebra &#x2013; Jacopo da Firenze's *Tractatus algorismi* from 1307 &#x2013; shows instead that *abbacus* mathematics was an exponent of a more widespread culture of commercial mathematics, already known by Fibonacci, and probably flourishing in Provence and/or Catalonia before it reached Italy. *Abbacus algebra* &#x2013; eventually the main inspiration for the algebraic breakthrough of the 16th and 17th centuries &#x2013; was inspired from a Romance-speaking region outside Italy, most likely located in the Provençal-Catalan area, and ultimately from a similar practitioners' level of Arabic mathematics. The book contains, along with the English translation, an edition of Jacopo's *Tractatus* and a commentary analyzing Jacopo's mathematics and its links to Provençal, Catalan, Arabic, Indian and Latin medieval mathematics. It will provide historians of mathematics and mathematics teachers with a new perspective on a period and on processes which eventually reshaped the whole mathematical enterprise in the 17th century

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