



In Praise of Song: The Making of Courtly Culture in Al-Andalus and Provence, 1005-1134 A.D (Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World)

Cynthia Robinson

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This volume offers a reconstruction of the court culture of the taifa kings of al-Andalus (11th century A.D.), using both visual and textual evidence. A focus of particular attention is the court of the Ban? H?d at Zaragoza, and that dynasty's palace, the Aljaferia. Principle written sources are not histories and chronicles, but the untranslated poetic anthologies of al-?imyar? and al-Fat? ibn Kh?q?n. The first part of the book addresses taifa visual and literary languages, with especial emphasis on connections between the literary and visual aspects of taifa aesthetics. The sections on the Aljaferia's ornamental program will be of particular interest, not only to historians of Islamic art, but to students of all visual traditions with strong non-figural components. In addition, Part One also proposes that taifa court culture has been considered as a culture of "courtly love," and this argument also forms the point of departure for Part Two. The second part of the study uses luxury objects of Islamic and Limousine production as a point of departure for a detailed comparison of the thematics of taifa poetry in classical Arabic on the themes of courtly love and pleasures with those of the better-known Provençal tradition.

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