

Iberian Jewish Literature: Between al-Andalus and Christian Europe

Jonathan P. Decter

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This stimulating and graceful book explores Iberian Jewish attitudes toward cultural transition during the 12th and 13th centuries, when growing intolerance toward Jews in Islamic al-Andalus and the southward expansion of the Christian Reconquista led to the relocation of Jews from Islamic to Christian domains. By engaging literary topics such as imagery, structure, voice, landscape, and geography, Jonathan P. Decter traces attitudes toward transition that range from tenacious longing for the Islamic past to comfort in the Christian environment. Through comparison with Arabic and European vernacular literatures, Decter elucidates a medieval Hebrew poetics of estrangement and nostalgia, poetic responses to catastrophe, and the refraction of social issues in fictional narratives.

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