

Arts & Humanities

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Arts

Dodds, Jerrilynn D. & others. **The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture.** Yale Univ. 2008. 416p. illus. bibliog. index. ISBN 978-0-300-10609-1. \$40. FINE ARTS

This handsomely produced and generously illustrated book explores the praxis of medieval Castilian culture inherited by Catholic kings. Iberia's great medieval cities—Córdoba, Seville, and Toledo—forged via the confrontations of the existing Arabic, Jewish, and Latin cultures a unique cultural identity from the 11th through the 14th centuries. Dodds (*The Art of Medieval Spain, A.D. 500–1200*) and others closely examine the arts, architecture, and literary products created in "Christian" Castile and make a compelling case for the so-called whole being greater than the sum of its parts. This impressive work of scholarship offers a vision of a complex albeit paradoxical relationship among the monotheistic religions that was so essential to the production of the cultural artifacts produced in pre-Columbian Iberia. In fact, it becomes obvious that the remarkable "golden age" of arts and culture of 16th- and 17th-century Spanish culture could not have existed had it not been for the multilingual culture that had preceded it. An important addition to the scholarship of medieval Iberia.—**Herbert E. Shapiro, Empire State Coll., SUNY Rochester**