

The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World

Oratory and sermons had a fixed place in the religious and civic rituals of premodern Muslim societies and were indispensable for transmitting religious knowledge, legitimizing or challenging rulers, and inculcating the moral values associated with being part of the Muslim community. Although there has been abundant scholarship on medieval Christian and Jewish preaching, Linda G. Jones's book is the first to consider the significance of the tradition of pulpit oratory in the medieval Islamic world. Traversing Iberia and North Africa from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, the book analyzes the power of oratory, the ritual juridical and rhetorical features of premodern sermons, and the social profiles of the preachers and orators who delivered them. The biographical and historical sources, which form the basis of this remarkable study, offer abundant proof of cultural exchange between al-Andalus and the eastern regions of the Islamic empires, as preachers traveled back and forth between the great cities of Cordoba, Qayrawan, Baghdad, and Cairo. In this way, the book sheds light on different regional practices and the juridical debates between individual preachers around correct performance.

Linda G. Jones is Visiting Professor of History of Religions at the University of Barcelona. She is the coauthor with Madeline Pelter Cosman of *Handbook to Life in the Medieval World* (2007) and has been published in many journals, including *The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists*, *al-Qantara*, *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, *Medieval Sermon Studies*, and *Religion*.

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LINDA G. JONES

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*A Álvaro,
Por lo que tuvo que aguantar*

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