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Review of "*Sic hostes Ianua frangit*": *Spolien und Trophäen im mittelalterlichen Genua*, by Rebecca Müller

Dale Kinney
Bryn Mawr College, dkinney@brynmawr.edu

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strategy. Thus, a catalog of invited guests to a marriage festival or a list of vassals attending a major council provides the audience with a relatively concise impression of the power, wealth, and dignity of the character who convenes those events. Even more significantly, the catalog is the author's principal tool for defining the quality and quantity of major groups important in his story, a singularly crucial task when writing for a medieval noble public characterized by its collective, group-oriented worldview. Additionally, the medieval catalog receives from its roots in the catalog tradition of Greek and Roman epic a historiographic function. For example, the frequent battle catalogs of medieval narrative achieve pseudohistorical veracity and a degree of neutral objectivity by listing battle captains of friend and foe alike. Similarly, the commonly occurring catalogs of attendees to assemblies or witnesses to legal judgments lend those fictional juridical events an air of reality.

Probably the most valuable of Müller's discussions is that of lists of Round Table knights in Middle High German Arthurian romances. Thus he answers many long-standing questions about where various works borrowed the names of their knights; his comparative discussion of the sources of knights in Chrétien's and Hartmann's *Erec* romances is particularly thorough. Perhaps most significantly, however, Müller convincingly develops here the idea of *Interfiguralität*, that is, an intertextuality of names of central characters that serves a critical function in cycle building in Arthurian romance.

In the second portion of his book, the author charts the steady decline in use of catalogs from 1300 to 1600. Among the reasons he posits for that trend is the transition from recited verse narratives to prose texts. For Müller, the high-medieval catalog of verse narrative was a vestige of older oral poetry in which the catalog was a mnemonic tool and a critical organizing component. Furthermore, throughout the high-medieval period, texts were performance pieces with narrator figures interacting with live audiences who could both take acoustic delight in the sound of catalogs being recited and appreciate the summaries of key characters and events that those catalogs afforded. But with the rise of prose and the increase of more private reading, the oral and performative nature of narrative receded and with it much of the *raison d'être* of the catalog. Also contributing to the catalog's decreasing importance is the increasing value attached to *brevisitas* among audiences that evidently perceived extended catalogs as superfluous detail. Lastly, Müller suggests that the fall of the literary catalog is linked to the more general rise of the individual in European society: the high-medieval catalog, which tended to describe and valorize groups, no longer held much appeal for audiences that increasingly found their identity as individuals outside the group.

It should also be noted that the author has done an admirable job both of considering important primary texts outside the medieval German tradition and of surveying Anglo-American and French secondary scholarship. He can thus be commended on a well-researched, comprehensive, and convincing study on the mechanics and decline of a central phenomenon of premodern narrative.

JOSEPH M. SULLIVAN, University of Oklahoma

REBECCA MÜLLER, "*Sic hostes Ianua frangit*": *Spolien und Trophäen im mittelalterlichen Genua*. (Marburger Studien zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte, 5.) Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2002. Pp. 364; 94 black-and-white figures. €46.

As recently as fifteen years ago, *spolia* was an arcane term denoting a practice of little concern to mainstream art historians. Now, following a rash of publications in the 1990s, the word is familiar and even fashionable. Originally a metaphor for artifacts (columns, capitals, reliefs) "stripped" from ancient Roman monuments for medieval reuse, *spolia* is now synonymous with *reimpieghi*, *remplois*, *Wiederverwendungen*—terms that embrace

almost anything found in secondary employment or display. The more restrictive application to classical remains lingers on, however, as in Lucilla De Lachenal's book of 1995—to date the only comprehensive book on *spolia*—which states its brief to be the study “of the survival, as well as of the recovery and the reuse of antiquity (understood as a whole comprising objects, monuments, and iconographies, as well as clearly defined ideologies) throughout the Middle Ages” (*Spolia: Uso e reimpiego dell'antico dal III al XIV secolo* [Milan, 1995], p. 7).

The word *spolia* did not have those connotations in the Middle Ages, when it was used as it was in classical Latin to denote military booty or trophies. The art-historical metaphor is an innovation of the Italian Renaissance. Art can be *spolia* in both senses, of course, as artworks were often among the loot brought home by conquering armies. Although it is arguable whether the display of artifacts “captured” from another culture *always* had triumphalist connotations, in the Middle Ages it was sometimes demonstrably so, notably at Pisa and Venice. De Lachenal's summary of “the case of Genoa” suggests a comparable intention in a different register, positing that the newly rich and powerful commune sought to express its “new identity” through the display of recognizable “symbols of power and wealth.” Her characterization is based largely on the Roman architectural sculpture reused in Genoa's twelfth-century churches.

Rebecca Müller's book, which began as a dissertation at the University of Marburg (1999), provides a detailed account of Genoese *spolia* in ecclesiastical and secular reuse from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries. Her rigorously historical method required that some well-known examples be excluded because of a lack of acceptable documentation, including most of the artistic *spolia* in the twelfth-century cathedral of San Lorenzo. Müller justifies the omission by her purpose, which is not to inventory but to forge contextual explanations. As one would expect of a dissertation, arguments are meticulously worked out and annotated. The bibliography fills forty-one pages and is a significant contribution in itself.

The book is organized in four major chapters and a catalogue that discusses twenty-five items individually. The first chapter (“*Spolia* in Churches”) treats selected examples from the twelfth century; the second (“The City and Its Trophies”) ranges from the twelfth to the fourteenth century; the third (“The Family and Its Trophies”) treats monuments connected with the Doria family in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and the fourth discusses the tomb of Francesco Spinola (d. 1442), originally in San Domenico. The objects that feature in these chapters include the normal sorts of art-historical *spolia*: Roman marble cornices, sarcophagi, and figural sculpture, but also kufic inscriptions, iron chains, a bell, military standards, and keys. The implication is that all of these objects are constituents of one compound interpretive category, or perhaps two intersecting ones: “*spolia* and trophies.”

The first chapter isolates the purely metaphorical *spolia* and is closest in its approach and conclusions to the work of other scholars. This chapter treats four antique cornices—all evidently imported from Rome—incorporated into twelfth-century church doorways. Like many other interpreters, Müller maintains that such distinctively Roman products must have stood, *pars pro toto*, for Rome itself, not, as at Pisa, the Rome of antiquity but contemporary papal Rome, which periodically supported Genoa in its conflicts with Pisa.

The following chapter introduces a much more heterogeneous array of objects, including the *sacro catino*, a possibly late-antique green glass plate captured by crusaders in Caesarea (Palestine) in 1101; bronze doors and candelabra taken from Islamic Almería (Spain) in 1147; inscriptions from the Pisan settlement of Lerici captured in 1256; lion's-head gargoyles and other stones from a palace of the Venetians in Constantinople that was demolished by the Genoese in 1261; harbor chains from the port of Pisa, destroyed by a Genoese navy in 1290; and limestone reliefs of Venice's emblematic lion seized at Pula and Trieste

in 1380. These things were—and in some cases still are—publicly displayed on church walls, city gates, the original communal palace (Palazzo di San Giorgio), and elsewhere, in a contumelious spirit that is epitomized by the inscription excerpted by Müller for her title: “Griphus ut has angit, sic hostes Janua frangit” (As the griffin throttles these [beasts], so Genoa crushes her foes). It comes from Genoa’s seal, showing a griffin subduing an eagle and a fox, which was also represented in relief on the facade of the communal palace.

Müller draws a sharp distinction between the twelfth-century *spolia* treated in this chapter, which she associates with the ancient tradition of *Kunstraub* (art plunder), and the trophies of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which in her view lacked aesthetic value and functioned solely as triumphalist propaganda. She remarks two absences as distinctively Genoese: the lack of aesthetic value just noted and the lack of antiquity. She contends that while the public display of *spolia* in Genoa seems to echo practices of ancient Rome, its intentions were not retrospective. Unlike medieval Rome, where triumphal art and ceremony self-consciously emulated ancient models, Genoa was presentist, taking and displaying trophies in a purely contemporary frame of reference defined by a fierce competition with other Italian maritime powers.

Chapter 3, which reconstructs the exhibition of *spolia* on the facade of the seignorial church (*chiesa gentilizia*) of the Doria family, San Matteo, is exceptionally successful in its combination of skillful research and judicious contextual explanation. Using archival sources, Müller adds to the extant antique elements on the facade—a headless bust, a torso, and a sarcophagus—some military standards captured from Pisa by Oberto Doria in 1284 and part of the harbor chains seized by Corrado Doria in 1290, as well as a contemporary bust of the principal hero Lamba Doria (d. 1323), whose remains are enshrined in the sarcophagus. She argues that this unique project of familial glorification was initiated in the 1340s, when the Doria were temporarily out of power, and was expanded by additional inscriptions commemorating victories of Pagano Doria (1352–54) and Luciano Doria (1379). Against arguments that the antique bust and torso were part of a sixteenth-century overlay sponsored by Andrea Doria, Müller defends the view that they were medieval trophies, possibly captured by Pagano or Luciano. Consistent with the previous chapter, she maintains that antiquity was not the motivating factor in their installation on San Matteo and stresses instead the unparalleled imbrication of private (familial) and public (communal) interests exhibited not only in the decoration of San Matteo but in the use of the space in front of it.

Chapter 4 treats the tomb of the admiral Francesco Spinola, which was originally in the choir of the church of San Domenico (now destroyed) and included a Roman sarcophagus decorated with a Dionysiac procession. It is the only fifteenth-century monument to a condottiere in which the sarcophagus is antique. Accepting later testimony that it was a gift from the city of Gaeta in thanks for Spinola’s protection in 1435, Müller concludes that in its material connection to the site of victory, the sarcophagus was functionally a trophy. As such it is yet another example of military value overriding aesthetic or age value and provides a fitting final example for her book.

Sic hostes Ianua frangit is an impressive debut and has already been awarded the signal compliment of a favorable review by the dean of *spolia* studies, Arnold Esch (*Kunstchronik* 57 [2004], 521–25). In Esch’s reading, *Spolien und Trophäen* delimits successive phases: a twelfth-century use of *spolia*, including war booty, as decoration, and a subsequent thirteenth–fourteenth-century use of booty, including artistic *spolia*, as trophies. He welcomes the shift to the study of *Trophäenwesen*—the nature of trophies—rightly, as this is the book’s most distinctive contribution. The complementary *Spolienwesen*, as mapped out in masterly fashion by Esch himself (“Spolien: Zur Wiederverwendung antiker Baustücke und Skulpturen im mittelalterlichen Italien,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 51 [1969], 1–64), is a more complex, variable, and above all more ambiguous phenomenon. Associating *spolia*

with trophies, therefore, tends to limit the interpretive range of *spolia*, even as it expands the reach of trophies. If this is a flaw, it is a minor one in a book that represents a formidable depth and breadth of scholarship, a remarkable achievement for an author at the very beginning of her scholarly career.

DALE KINNEY, Bryn Mawr College

BRIAN MURDOCH, *The Medieval Popular Bible: Expansions of Genesis in the Middle Ages*. Woodbridge, Eng., and Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell and Brewer, 2003. Pp. ix, 209. \$85.

This book is the latest in a series of authoritative studies by Brian Murdoch on Genesis and medieval biblical issues, including *Adam's Grace: Fall and Redemption in Medieval Literature* in 2000 and a student edition of *The Apocryphal Lives of Adam and Eve* (two Middle English fourteenth-century writings, with extensive commentary) in 2002. With *The Medieval Popular Bible* Murdoch investigates the many ways the received Bible was elaborated from the earliest Christian centuries to the Reformation (and to an extent beyond).

Murdoch organizes his study logically around major figures, events, and issues in Genesis: the problem of the Devil in paradise (chap. 1, "Bedevilling Paradise"); the immediate postlapsarian experience (chap. 2, "What Adam and Eve Did Next"); the Cainite and Sethite Lamechs (chap. 3, "Lamech and the Other Lamech"); the two parts of the Noah legend (chap. 4, "Noah: Navigator and Vintner"); Nimrod, the Tower of Babel, and speech issues (chap. 5, "The Tower of Babel and the Courteous Vengeance"); storytelling aspects of the Jacob and Joseph episodes (chap. 6, "Patriarchal Trickery: Jacob and Joseph"); and a brief conclusion. Murdoch includes useful bibliographies of primary works (by languages) and secondary literature. A biblical index and general index conclude the volume.

The Medieval Popular Bible is especially valuable for Murdoch's close attention to details in the Genesis stories and to his wide reading in diverse languages. Murdoch is a skilled expositor of the biblical literal level. He moves through the familiar biblical stories chronologically, as events occur, with the intent to sort out what medieval writers added to (or omitted from) those tales as related in the Vulgate. He is most interested in stories that engender fictional elaborations; he will include allegorical explanations when the allegory comes to influence the literal level. Let me illustrate from the section on the raven and dove in the Noah chapter. Murdoch observes that some writers develop moral dimensions to the birds: "The ark contained good and bad birds just as the Church contains good and bad people, says Latin exegesis (such as the *Glossa Ordinaria*, PL 113, 109), and the raven is in any case notorious as a procrastinator, its cry being 'cras' rather than the mellifluous and cooing 'hodie' of the dove, tomorrow rather than today, an idea found in Peter Riga's biblical poem *Aurora*, which works beautifully, at least as long as the birds call in Latin" (p. 116). Of the raven's fate after Noah sends it forth, Murdoch points out that the Vulgate text reads either "revertebatur" or "non revertebatur" at Gen. 8.7, but most medieval writers assumed either that the raven just flies off or that it finds carrion, perhaps floating on the waters as they subside. For the latter view Murdoch brings to bear an impressive array of witnesses, including Augustine's exegesis, Comestor's *Historia scholastica*, and "apocryphal and rabbinic writings." "It is there, too," he adds, in "the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis A*, the German *Wiener Genesis*, Jansen Enikel, the *Holkham Bible*, Wyntoun [Andrew of Wyntoun's Scottish chronicle], and very many other places; the *Saltair na Rann* and the German *Vorau Genesis* mention that it finds its own food, presumably meaning carrion, and link this with its general faithlessness. Noah guesses that it has found or will find carrion in the Wakefield play, the N-Town play and in Arnold Immessen's Low German drama, and Shem says so in the Cornish *Ordinalia* and the *Mistère du Viel Testament*. The