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Ivana Jevtić and Suzan Yalman, eds., *Spolia Reincarnated: Afterlives of Objects, Materials, and Spaces in Anatolia from Antiquity to the Ottoman Era*. Istanbul: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, 2018. xiv+373 pages, 205 figures. ISBN: 9786052116142

Back in 2006, the art historian Dale Kinney declared that “*spolia* are hot,” with the “once obscure antiquarian subject” being thrust into the spotlight of academic theory.¹ Well, fast forward more than a decade later, and it seems that the topic of *spolia* is more popular than ever. The number of conferences, lectures, and publications all concerned with charting how and why people reuse materials in new contexts continues to expand, and the latest contribution to this corpus is the volume *Spolia Reincarnated: Afterlives of Objects, Materials, and Spaces in Anatolia from Antiquity to the Ottoman Era* (2018), edited by Ivana Jevtić and Suzan Yalman. As one may gather from the title, the authors in this volume have a specific geographic focus, examining case studies of reuse throughout the region of Anatolia, an area that today comprises most of modern Turkey. For this reason, this book is a welcome addition to the existing literature on *spolia* studies, which has traditionally focused on material from the Italian peninsula, tracing patterns of reuse from ancient Rome to the Renaissance.² Anatolia, with its historical trajectory from antiquity to Christian and Islamic polities, paired with the complexity of modern identity politics and heritage preservation, is a geographic zone ripe for the questions posed by *spolia*.

This book of collected essays is the final result of the 10th International Symposium held at Istanbul’s Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) in December 2015. One of the main strengths of this volume is how the organizers have invited contributions from scholars of many different

disciplines—primarily art history, archaeology, conservation, and history—to approach the topic of *spolia*, and this reflects the fact that several of the participants in the project are alumni of ANAMED’s fellowship program, distinguished by the interdisciplinarity of its cohorts.

Spolia Reincarnated includes thirteen essays along with an introduction by Ivana Jevtić and an epilogue by Paul Magdalino. With a few exceptions, the majority of the essays focus on examples of architectural and sculptural *spolia*, especially as they feature in religious monuments and in city walls. The editors have decided to group these chapters into five sections that cover various thematic aspects explored by *spolia* studies in the past few decades. These sections are not only an effort to make sense of a wide range of material, but also a sign that this volume has the ambition to engage with the historiography on *spolia* as it stands right now. As Jevtić explains in her introduction, one of the main goals of the volume is to introduce to *spolia* studies the two connected notions of “reincarnation” and “afterlives,” in the sense that “a new context—the ‘reincarnation’—would not be possible with the loss of the former setting” (p. 5). The authors of the resulting essays are thus concerned with the afterlives of objects, buildings, and ideas in these new contexts—and what this all means in regards to memories of the past as well as the aesthetic values of the present. The editors seem to reject outright the utilitarians who would say that ‘sometimes a column is just a column,’ insisting that instances of reuse play some kind of role in the creation of cultural meanings (p. 17).

The first part of the volume revisits the original and most traditional definition of *spolia*: trophies of war. Inge Uytterhoeven leads the way by surveying the different terms used in the Roman Empire to refer to the phenomenon of war spoils, including, but not limited to, *spolia*. Apparently, the decision of Renaissance antiquarians to use the word *spolia* to describe the recycling of building materials was a somewhat arbitrary one—*exuviae* or *praeda* would have also done the trick. Despite the nuances of these different terms deployed in the Roman period, it appears that all of them connoted a strong link to the military context in which objects were plundered. In the following essay, Mariya Kiprovska jumps ahead more

than a millennium to discuss *spolia* in the early Ottoman period. Seeking to offer a different model from the reigning interpretation of reused material as a sign of cultural continuity, the author sees *spolia* as symbols of triumph. Kiprovska examines three case studies, all building complexes sponsored by the Mihaloğlu clan of frontier warriors, which emphasize disruption and explicit campaigns to support a new political order. Finally, Tuğba Tanyeri-Erdemir adapts Arnold Esch’s term “extreme spoliation” to describe the conversion of entire buildings as *spolia*, emphasizing the grand scale of these gestures because of the “inevitable perceptibility” in shifting political contexts (p. 71). In a regime change, is there any gesture more dramatic and obvious than the appropriation of a monument? Tanyeri-Erdemir moves beyond the simple case of conquest, however, to explore more nuanced examples of conversion, including the adoption of churches by Muslim immigrants coming from Greece during the 1924 population exchange, and the “reconquest” of churches-that-became-mosques-and-then-museums in Erdoğan’s Turkey.

The papers in part two examine the biographies of monuments, reflecting the recent movement in art history to take a *longue durée* view of architecture and objects. Claudia Barsanti and Alessandra Guiglia offer a catalog of ‘*spolia* events’ in Hagia Sophia from the Byzantine to Ottoman periods, a valuable archive of material. Elif Keser-Kayaalp then moves to southeast Anatolia to take up a fascinating case study, the Great Mosque in Diyarbakir. The author is especially concerned with the east and west façades of the courtyard, which appear to be almost entirely comprised of spoliated materials. The fragments that compose these façades date from the sixth century, but their arrangement in the mosque simply has no parallel in late antiquity. In other words, no mosque visitor would have mistaken the place for an ancient site. Keser-Kayaalp argues, therefore, against the notion of classical revival and interprets the reuse of these late antique building elements in a novel arrangement as one of appropriation, in the sense that they maintain no overt connection with the past. The third essay in this section by Nicholas Melvani explores the reuse of building material from fifth- and sixth-century monuments in the Byzantine architecture of Istanbul, which apparently is a relatively

210 established phenomenon but has not been examined in depth for the Palaiologan period. Melvani maintains that, because there was an ongoing culture of reuse within Byzantine society, the recycling of material in later buildings is best understood as a kind of antiquarianism—"a timeless process of reinventing and reinterpreting older works of art" (p. 168).

The third section of the volume addresses the rewriting of history through the specific act of embedding *spolia* in city gates. Livia Bevilacqua looks at thirteenth-century Nicaea during the Latin Conquest (1204-1261), when the Byzantine rulers were forced to flee Istanbul and find refuge in other regional centers. It seems that these emperors in exile arranged to have *spolia* decorate the gates of Nicaea that geographically faced the main political enemies of Byzantium—the Latin rulers in Constantinople and the Seljuks in Konya, and this practice interestingly mirrors a similar use of *spolia* in Sicily under Frederick II (1211-1250), who apparently also liked to confront his opponents in Rome with ancient sculpture. Scott Redford then heads south to dissect the complex architecture of the Seljuks of Rum. In this essay, the author addresses the Seljuk display of ancient sarcophagi in their monuments in Konya. He suggests that this practice may have been in response to the Byzantine reuse of materials from the earlier Roman and Hellenistic eras, thus engaging in a long-range aesthetic preference for the recycling of ancient building materials, an exploration of the "decorative possibilities of spoliation" (p. 197). Suzan Yalman, the co-editor of the volume, expands on Redford's paper by presenting a fascinating look at how the Seljuk practice of spoliation could be interpreted through mystical tenets of Sufism, specifically the teachings of the Neoplatonist Sufi mystic Suhrawardi (d. 1191). In this interpretation, the author stresses how the walls of Konya could be a built excursus on this figure's conscious attempts to fuse ancient Greek and Persian principles under the umbrella of Islamic mysticism.

Part Four extends this discussion on the aesthetics of *spolia*, with Philipp Niewöhner delving into the concept of *varietas*, a Latin term that art historians have adopted to talk specifically about the combination of reused column shafts in Italy's late antique churches. The author extends

this discussion to Constantinople and Anatolia, observing that an aesthetic of variety did not necessarily work to undermine the ancient canon, in the sense that late antique builders were more or less continuing on with the same aesthetic principles as in earlier centuries. Nikolaos Vryzidis and Elena Papastravrou then move on to explore a completely different but no less interesting subject, and that is the reuse of textiles in Greek liturgical vestments during the Ottoman period. The authors stress the utter ubiquity of this practice, and how the sacralized nature of these objects (you can't just throw out the bishop's robe, once it has been blessed) gave rise to what they call a "patchwork aesthetic" (p. 269).

The fifth and final section takes up Richard Brilliant's well-known distinction between *spolia in se* (spoliation as material fact) and *spolia in re* (conceptual spoliation). Ünver Rüstem explores how in eighteenth-century Istanbul the emergence of the Ottoman Baroque in mosque architecture was necessarily coupled with explicit citations of Byzantine architecture. This conceptual *spolia* was marshalled, the author argues, in order to lay claim to a Greco-Roman heritage that in turn granted them access to the classically-derived baroque aesthetic coming from Western Europe—the unification of novelty and antiquity. Suna Çağaptay turns back to medieval Anatolia to explore how the insignia of the double-headed eagle migrated across confessional lines in Byzantine and Seljuk architecture.

The historian Paul Magdalino wraps up the papers in an epilogue that acknowledges *spolia* as not only a phenomenon in art history and archaeology, but also for cultural history writ large. He observes that reuse is simply a historical phenomenon while *spolia* is a cultural construct—"reuse with value added and articulated"—that ultimately implicates any agents who have commented on this process of recycling, including scholars of the present day (p. 342).

While I highly appreciated the extensive engagement with scholars thinking about the late antique, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman contexts, I could not help but feel that this publication, coming out of a research center on Anatolian civilizations, was missing a civilization or two. As the authors admit, there is a gap of Armenian and

Crusader material, and I also believe that essays examining themes of reuse in the classical period or even the ancient Near East would have been fascinating additions. This being said, *Spolia Reincarnated* is all in all a high-quality publication, affording authors an impressive number of color images that is quite lavish for an edited volume. The book includes an index but, unfortunately, not a bibliography: if readers want to create a list of publications for future study, they will have to comb through the footnotes of individual essays.

The main audience for this volume is researchers who may have a general interest in *spolia* and could benefit from learning about different case studies for the sake of comparison. Individual essays could also be assigned in classroom settings, especially for courses in archaeology and art history. The volume could be productively read alongside the edited volume *Reuse Value*.³ I am also convinced that *spolia* studies have something to contribute to the wider trend in art history to take a more diachronic approach to objects and buildings, and thus this volume could naturally find a place on the syllabi of courses looking at thing theory or historic preservation practices. Finally, this book arrives at a time when there is an increased interest in different modes of antiquarianism in the premodern Eastern Mediterranean, and in that respect could be paired with volumes like *Scramble for the Past* or *Antiquarianisms: Contact, Conflict, Comparison*.⁴

In one way or another, the papers of this volume deal with the 'multilayered meanings' of architectural reuse, bringing an in-depth and much-needed discussion to the lands of Anatolia.

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1 Dale Kinney, "The Concept of Spolia," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, edited by Conrad Rudolph (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 233.

2 And, thanks to scholars such as Finbarr Barry Flood, *spolia* studies have also made notable inroads into the art and architecture of the Islamic world, especially in Southeast Asia.

3 Richard Brilliant and Dale Kinney, eds., *Reuse Value: Spolia and Appropriation in Art and Architecture from Constantine to Sherrie Levine* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011).

4 Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, and Edhem Eldem, eds., *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914* (Istanbul: SALT, 2011); Benjamin Anderson and Felipe Rojas, *Antiquarianisms: Contact, Conflict, Comparison* (Oxford: Philadelphia Oxbow Books, 2017).