

Workshop Young Researchers in Spolia Studies (Madrid, 25 Sep 25)

CCHS/CSIC, Calle Albasanz, 26-28, 28037, Madrid., Sep 25, 2025

Deadline: May 15, 2025

Jorge Elices Ocón, Madrid

I Workshop Young Researchers in Spolia Studies.

Institute of History (IH), Center of Social Sciences and Humanities (CCHS), Spanish National Research Council (CSIC).

Reuse is a widespread practice among medieval Mediterranean societies and has been the subject of research in recent decades, as a result of interest in the processes of urban transformation during Late Antiquity and Medieval times, due to growing social concern about the way in which societies consume resources, manage waste and relate to the vestiges of the past, or more recently due to the processes of cultural appropriation and management of heritage and collections in European museums.

The reuse of spolia would, however, be a different process: it is not mere bricolage, recycling or conspicuous reuse. Unlike these cases, spolia denote a recognizable difference (material, temporal, technical, cultural), so that “they must be considered products of at least two artistic moments, and of two different intentions.” Despite its original connotations as “spoils of conquest”, the term spolia is applied to all types of artifacts, contexts and reuse processes not necessarily linked to antiquity. D. Kinney's definition remains the tightest: spolia would be “any artifact incorporated into a cultural or chronological context different from that of its creation.” The use of spolia is therefore an intentional act and the difference that these pieces denote has to be managed or negotiated through their recontextualization and appropriation in a new reality, where it takes on a new value or meaning.

The project “Spolia Umayyads: the transcultural construction of legitimacy, memory and identity in medieval peninsular societies” (PID2023-151798NA-100), supported by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033/ and “ERDF A way of making Europe”, aims to understand the processes of reuse in medieval Iberia in a transcultural, comparative and diachronic perspective, taking the Umayyads and their legacy as a common thread and case study.

The Spolia-Omeyas project invites master's, doctoral and postdoctoral researchers to submit their proposals for the I Workshop Young Researchers in Spolia Studies. We are looking for studies focused on the Iberian Peninsula or the medieval Mediterranean, which preferably consider one or more of the basic questions around reuse and spolia: what, when, where, how, who and why are reused architectural, decorative pieces and even artifacts, being relocated and appropriated in a

context different from their original one. Proposals from diverse geographical and cultural contexts, addressing understudied sources and materials (including textual sources) and/or invisible aspects of artistic, artisanal or textual reuse practices, are welcome. So are those other proposals that attend to reuse and the processes of copying or mimesis from iconographic or visual perspectives, delving into the identification and analysis of spolia in se or spolia in re.

Submission:

Proposals must be sent to jorge.elices@cchs.csic.es before May 15, 2024 and must include the following information:

- title of the communication,
- full name
- detailed summary of the proposal (maximum 400 words)
- short CV

Reference:

CFP: Workshop Young Researchers in Spolia Studies (Madrid, 25 Sep 25). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 7, 2025 (accessed Dec 16, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/44122>>.