

## Constructing Fame in a Town: The Case of Medieval Genoa

Rebecca Müller (Florence)

In 1406, an anonymous, probably Genoese author sang the praises of his town: "Genoa, time-honored city, powerful in arms, outstanding in trophies, many signs of honor will glorify you."<sup>1</sup> In a similar way, in 1514 Giovanni Maria Cattaneo in his poem "Genua" emphasized the "famous trophies of the ancestors."<sup>2</sup> So, beyond the topical, trophies in these "laudes urbium" are used to evoke Genoa's military victories and her fame.<sup>3</sup>

In this paper, I will investigate from an art historical perspective the way in which trophies and other media of self-representation connected with them were claimed not only by the city, but also by a family in Genoa, the Doria. In particular I will focus on the intersection of the fame of the family and fame of the town.

The Doria used their family church San Matteo as a scenography to represent themselves. Thus, the features of its façade program – started in the late thirteenth century – will be the focus of the first part of this paper. We then not only have to look for possible models and parallels, but also for the audience of this program. Finally, it is the way in which in the sixteenth century this church became both a source and medium of legitimation for the later Doria that will indicate the close connection between fame of the family and fame of the town.

The "nobiles de Auria" rose in the thirteenth century to be one of the four

<sup>1</sup> "Janua, ... / Urbs antiqua, potens armis, preclara tropheis / multa tibi ingente dabunt insignia laudes," see "Contribuzione alla storia di Genova specialmente nella poesia," ed. Luigi Tommaso Belgrano, *Atti della Società Ligure di storia patria* (hereafter *ASL*), 19 (1888): 653-678, 657; cf. Giovanna Petti Balbi, *Genova medievale vista dai contemporanei* (Genoa: Sagep editrice, 1978), 85, and 26 f. for the author.

<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Maria Cattaneo, "Genua. Poemetto del 1514," ed. Girolamo Bertolotto, *ASL*, 24 (1892): 727-881, 770: "maiorum clara trophaea," cf. Petti Balbi, *Genova medievale*, 170, and 52-55 for the author.

<sup>3</sup> For the "topoi" of "laudes urbium" see Eugen Giegler, *Das Genos der Laudes Urbium im lateinischen Mittelalter*, Diss. (Würzburg, 1953), 88-122; in general, see Carl J. Classen, *Die Stadt im Spiegel der Descriptiones und Laudes urbium in der antiken und mittelalterlichen Literatur bis zum Ende des zwölften Jahrhunderts* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1980); Klaus Arnold, "Städtelob und Stadtbeschreibung im späteren Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit," in *Städtische Geschichtsschreibung im Spätmittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Peter Johanek (Cologne: Böhlau, 2000): 247-268; Hartmut Kugler, "Städtelob," in *Realllexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*, 3 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003): 491-494.



most predominant families of the Genoese nobility, whose power and authority were based on estate, public offices, and clientel.<sup>4</sup> Together with the Spinola, the Doria sided with the Ghibelline faction, opposed – although without a continuous sharp demarcation – to the Guelf Fieschi and Grimaldi. The height of the family's power coincided with the most successful years of Genoa's domestic and especially foreign affairs.<sup>5</sup> After bloody internal conflicts and a Ghibelline revolt, in 1270 Oberto Doria (the Younger) and Oberto Spinola were established as dual captains. In his position as *Capitano del Popolo*, Oberto was succeeded by his son Corrado and, subsequently, by his brother Lamba, while another brother, Jacopo, was in charge of the municipal archive and continued the *Annales Ianuenses*. Naval victories over Pisa (1284 and 1290) and the short-lived triumph over Venice (1298) saw a Doria as a fortunate commander.

From the early twelfth century the Doria's family quarter began to take shape, located close to both the cathedral and a city gate (fig. 1<sup>6</sup>). As emphasized by Steven A. Epstein among others, factionalism was one of the main characteristics in Genoese history.<sup>7</sup> This is also revealed in the urban structure, in which the family quarters with the central square surrounded by the *domus* of the leading family members were decisive features.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The term “nobiles de Auria” is used among others in the *Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de' suoi continuatori*, 4 vols. (Fonti per la storia d'Italia 11-14bis) (Rome: Forzani, 1926), 4, 93. For a general idea of the Doria see Giuseppe Oreste, “I Doria,” in *Dibattito su Quattro Famiglie del Grande Patriziato Genovese*, ed. Geo Pistarino (Genoa: Accademia ligure di scienze e lettere, 1992): 34-48; the most comprehensive contributions concerning the important members of the family are the articles by Giovanni Nuti, Joachim Göbbels, Margherita Spampinato Beretta, Maristella Cavanna Ciappina and Edoardo Grendi s. v. “Doria” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 41 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1992), each with an extensive bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> For a recent historical overview see Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese 958-1528* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 140-187 (hereafter Epstein, *Genoa*), with further bibliography; for the period in question see especially Georg Caro, *Genua und die Mächte am Mittelmeer 1257-1311: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des XIII. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Halle: Niemeyer, 1895-99) (hereafter Caro, *Genua*) and, for the dual captains, Geo Pistarino, “Genova nell'epoca dei due capitani,” *Studi Genuensi*, 4 (1986): 3-21. The repeated naval battles between Genoa and Venice are treated by John Dotson, “Venice, Genoa and Control of the Seas in the 13th and 14th Centuries” (hereafter Dotson, “Venice”), in *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. John B. Hattendorf (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003): 119-135, cf. also Gherardo Ortalli, “Venezia-Genova. Percorsi paralleli, conflitti, incontri,” in *Genova, Venezia, il Levante nei secoli XII-XIV* (ASL 41, 1) (Genoa: Società Ligure di storia patria, and Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2001): 9-27, and the other contributions of this congress.

<sup>6</sup> Fig. 1 is a modified scheme after the most valid study on Genoese urbanism: Luciano Grossi Bianchi and Ennio Poleggi, *Una città portuale del medioevo. Genova nei secoli X-XVI*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Genoa: Sagep editrice, 1987) (hereafter Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una città*), 113.

<sup>7</sup> See in particular Epstein, *Genoa*, chapter 4.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. among others Ennio Poleggi, “Le contrade delle consorterie nobiliari a Genova tra il XII e il XIII secolo,” *Urbanistica*, 42-43 (1965): 15-20; Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una città*, 109-116; Jacques Heers, “Consorterie et Alberghi à Gênes: la ville et la campagne,” in *Sto-*



According to the sources, factionalism also seems to have been at the root of the Genoese family churches.<sup>9</sup> Altogether five churches are known, each under the *patronatus* of a single family, endowed by the Pope with a special canonical status, independent from the supervision of a parish church. These churches laid claim to a certain territory, mostly corresponding to the family quarter, thus enabling its members to go to church safely even in times of civil war. The Doria established San Matteo as their family church by taking over its *fundatio*, *aedificatio*, and *dos*.

Subsequent to a first building, whose outlines can be seen in the broken line on the ground plan (fig. 2),<sup>10</sup> in 1278 the Doria erected the church we see today (fig. 3, 4). Not by chance this was in a period of Dorian dominance, when Oberto was one of the two captains ruling the town. Although the church interior was largely refurbished in the sixteenth century, the medieval façade is preserved to a great extent.<sup>11</sup>

Let us begin with the marble spolia sarcophagus under the right window (fig. 5). This late Classical Season Sarcophagus was incorporated in the façade, probably as a whole.<sup>12</sup> It was reworked at some point; among other additions Genoa's coat of arms, the cross, and the arms of the Doria (the eagle) were carved in slabs of the lid. The sarcophagus' function is indicated by a Latin inscription. It runs on the two sides and above the sarcophagus and says: "Here lies the magnificent Lamba Doria deservedly...admiral of the Commune ...of

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*ria dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di studi sui ceti dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova* (Genoa, 1989): 45-63.

<sup>9</sup> For Genoese family churches see Mattia Moresco, "Le parrocchie gentilizie genovesi," *Rivista italiana per le scienze giuridiche*, 31 (1901): 163-191; Jacques Heers, *Le clan familial au Moyen Âge. Étude sur les structures politiques et sociales des milieux urbains* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974): 255-260; Lazzaro Maria De Bernardis, "Le parrocchie gentilizie di Genova," in *Storia dei Genovesi, Atti del Convegno di studi sui ceti dirigenti nelle istituzioni della Repubblica di Genova* (Genoa, 1982): 199-218, for *ius patronatus* in general see Peter Landau, *Ius patronatus. Studien zur Entwicklung des Patronats im Dekretalenrecht und der Kanonistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1975).

<sup>10</sup> The ground plan is a modified scheme after Paolo Montano, "La Piazza, la Chiesa e il Chiostro di S. Matteo," *Istituto di Elementi di Architettura e Rilievo dei Monumenti, Genova. Quaderni*, 4 (1970): 165-199, 172.

<sup>11</sup> The only and still valid comprehensive monograph on San Matteo is Jacopo d'Oria, *La chiesa di S. Matteo in Genova descritta ed illustrata* (Genoa, 1860) (hereafter d'Oria, *La chiesa*); see also the article by Barbara Bernabò and Rita Cavalli, "S. Matteo in Genova: chiesa gentilizia e 'Monumento' celebrativo della famiglia Doria," in *Verso Genova Medievale* (Genoa: Grafema, 1989) (hereafter Bernabò and Cavalli, *S. Matteo*): 25-40, and, esp. for the façade program, Rebecca Müller, *Sic Hostes Ianua frangi. Spolien und Trophäen im mittelalterlichen Genua* (Weimar: VDG, 2002) (hereafter Müller, *Spolien*), chapter 3. For the recent renovation see Lorenzo Gassa and Sergio Sfrecola, "Chiesa di San Matteo. Problematiche del restauro," in *Le pietre nell'architettura. Struttura e superfici*, ed. Guido Biscontin and Daniela Mietto (Padua: Libreria Progetto Ed., 1991): 715-730.

<sup>12</sup> For the sarcophagus see Peter Kranz, *Jahreszeiten-Sarkophage* (Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs 5, 4) (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1984), 207, Nr. 77, Müller, *Spolien*, 226-229, cat. 17.



Genoa who in the year of the Lord 1298 ... conquered the Venetians and died in 1323.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, Lamba was buried in a very prominent way, not only as other nobles in an antique spolia sarcophagus with all its possible implications of beauty and time-honored antiquity, but high above the piazza, before the public eye.<sup>14</sup> As Ingo Herklotz pointed out, in the fourteenth century tombs were placed high above ground level and meant for effect in the public urban space developed in cities such as Venice, Verona, and Bologna.<sup>15</sup> In Genoa, Lamba seems to have been the only one who achieved this eminence.

However, a closer look makes it clear that the medieval tomb was not originally designed for this place. The inscription is much smaller than the others, with which I will deal later, and thus becomes invisible for the beholder. It also runs in a very strange way starting not on the lid itself, but on two small ashlar at its left, and jumping in the second and third line over the sarcophagus. We also have to notice that the sarcophagus was installed in a rather crude way causing some damage to the parts with the coat of arms, which had been re-worked so carefully. I shall come back later to this third re-use and will continue now with the program of the façade, of which Lamba's tomb is only the most prominent component.

In 1284 the Genoese fleet commanded by Oberto Doria won one of the major naval engagements in medieval times, that is, the battle near the island Meloria against the Pisans.<sup>16</sup> The contemporary Genoese annals comment: “The

<sup>13</sup> The full text reads: “HIC IACET MAGNIFICUS D(OMI)N(U)S D(OMI)N(U)S LANBE (sic) DE AUR(IA) DIGNIS ME(R)ITIS CAPIT(ANEUS) ET ADMIRATUS COM(UN)IS ET P(O)P(U)LI IAN(UE) QUI ANNO D(OMI)NI M<sup>o</sup>CC<sup>o</sup>LXXXXVIII DIE VII SEPT(EMBR)IS DIVINA FA / VENTE GRA(TIA) VENETOS SUP(ER)AVIT ET OBIIT / MCCC XXIII DIE XVII OCTUBER”, cf. *Corpus Inscriptionum Medii Aevi Liguriaie*, 3 vols. (Genoa: Università di Genova, 1978-87), 3, 1987, n. 132.

<sup>14</sup> Among the many studies on spolia sarcophagi, only some comprehensive contributions can be named here, cf. Arnold Esch, “Spolien. Zur Wiederverwendung antiker Baustücke und Skulpturen im mittelalterlichen Italien,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 51 (1969): 1-64; Isa Ragusa, “The Re-use and Public Exhibition of Roman Sarcophagi during the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance,” Diss. (New York: New York University, 1951); *Colloquio sul reimpiego di sarcophagi romani nel Medioevo*, ed. Bernard Andreae and Salvatore Settis (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars, 1984); Lucilla De Lachenal, *Spolia. Uso e Reimpiego dell'Antico dal III al XIV secolo* (Milan: Longanesi, 1995); Arnold Esch, “Reimpiego,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 9 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1998): 876-883; Rebecca Müller, “Spolien,” in *Der Neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike. Rezeptions- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 15, 3 (Stuttgart: Metzler, forthcoming).

<sup>15</sup> Ingo Herklotz, “Grabmalstiftungen und städtische Öffentlichkeit im spätmittelalterlichen Italien,” in *Materielle Kultur und religiöse Stiftung im Spätmittelalter*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, ed. Gerhard Jaritz (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1997): 233-271, cf. for Venice Martin Gaier, *Facciate sacre a scopo profano. Venezia e la politica dei monumenti dal quattrocento al settecento* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2002) (hereafter Gaier, *Venezia*), 23-38.

<sup>16</sup> For the Meloria battle see esp. the contributions published on the occasion of its 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary in *Genova, Pisa e il mediterraneo tra Due e Trecento* (ASL 24, 2) (Genoa: Società Ligure di Storia Patria, 1984); *1284. L'anno della Meloria* (Pisa: ETS Editrice, 1984).



galley with the main standard of the commune of the Pisans fought with the Galley named "San Matteo" on which were the Doria, ... and after a long and dangerous combat the galley of the Doria won the Pisan standard. The standard was brought to the church of San Matteo by them and hangs in this church. Also captured was the podestà of the Pisans ... with the seal of the Pisan Commune. ... This seal was fixed in the church of San Matteo near to the aforesaid standard."<sup>17</sup> Other authors describe the standard, and its flagpole can be identified on an eighteenth-century drawing by Domenico Piaggio (fig. 6) as one of the metal posts with spherical head-pieces.<sup>18</sup> The banner itself, made of silk, hangs inside the church, where the seal was also kept.

What was the meaning of these trophies?<sup>19</sup> By displaying the standard, which originally should have brought victory to the Pisans, in their own city the Genoese made it a long-lasting testimony to their own superiority. Due to their straightforward symbolism, standards became widely used trophies, not only in medieval Italy.<sup>20</sup> The importance of the seal resulted from its legal meaning as

<sup>17</sup> *Annali Genovesi*, Fonti, 14bis, 55 f.: "galea uero ubi erat stantiarum comunis Pisarum, uenit ad pugnam cum galea Sancti Mathei ubi erant illi de Auria ... et post diuturnum et periculosum prelium captum fuit stantiarum Pisanorum ... captum per galeam illorum de Auria, fuit in ecclesia Beati Mathei per ipsos deportatum, pendetque in ecclesia antedicta. fuit autem ibidem captus potestas Pisanorum ... cum sigillo comunis Pisarum .... quod sigillum in ecclesia Beati Mathei in Ianua circa stantiarum antedictum dependet."

<sup>18</sup> Domenico Piaggio, *Epitaphia, sepulcra et inscriptiones cum stemmatibus* ..., 7 vols. (manuscript about 1720, Bibliotheca Centrale Berio, m.r. V, 4.1-7). See the descriptions by the *Annali Genovesi*, Fonti, 14, 2, 55 f.; Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta, 3 vols. (Parma: Fondazione di Pietro Bembo, 1990), 1, 551, and the *Cronaca del Tempore di Tiro (1243-1314). La caduta degli Stati Crociati nel racconto di un testimone oculare*, ed. Laura Minevini (Naples: Liguori, 2000), 178; cf. Camillo Manfroni, *Storia della marina italiana dal trattato di Ninfio alla caduta di Costantinopoli (1261-1453)*, 1. *Dal trattato di ninfio alle nuove crociate* (Livorno: Reale Accademia Navale Editrice, 1902), 129, 131 (hereafter Manfroni, *Storia*); Girolamo Arnaldi, "Gli annali di Iacopo d'Oria, il cronista della Meloria," in *Genova, Pisa e il mediterraneo*, 585-620, 618 f.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of trophies in general see Ingo Herklotz, "Sepulcra" e "Monumenta" del medioevo. *Studi sull'arte sepolcrale in Italia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (Naples: Liguori, 2001) (hereafter Herklotz, "Sepulcra"), esp. 296-304; Avinoam Shalem, *Islam Christianized. Islamic Portable Objects in the Medieval Church Treasuries of the Latin West*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1998), esp. 72-87; Müller, *Spolien*, esp. chapter 2.

<sup>20</sup> For standards as trophies see Florens Deuchler, *Die Burgunderbeute. Inventar der Beutestücke aus den Schlachten von Grandson, Murten und Nancy 1476/77* (Bern: Stämpfli, 1963), 222 f.; Otfried Neubecker, "Fahne (militärisch)," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Druckenmüller, 1973): 1060-1168, 1150; for the related phenomenon of "carrocci" (standard-bearing war chariots) as trophies see Hannelore Zug Tucci, "Der Fahnenwagen in der mittelalterlichen italienischen Militäremblematik (11.-13. Jahrhundert)," in *Les origines des armoiries, IIe Colloque International d'Héraldique* (Paris: Léopard d'Or, 1983): 163-172, 166; eadem, "Il Carroccio nella vita comunale italiana," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Bibliotheken und Archiven*, 65 (1985): 1-104, 49; Tilman Struve, "Heinrich IV, Bischof Milo von Padua und der Paduaner Fahnenwagen," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 30 (1996): 294-314, 306.



an instrument of certification of an authority, in this case the Pisan Commune. By losing it, the defeated enemy also symbolically lost a part of its authority.

But the drawing shows still another trophy, a piece of a huge iron chain. What was its origin? In 1290, the Genoese destroyed the harbour of Pisa. As the "Fragmenta Historiae Pisanae" report, the Genoese took away the chain that blocked the harbour.<sup>21</sup> Single pieces of the chain were displayed in Genoa on the city gates and on some churches.<sup>22</sup> This naval battle, too, was won under the command of a Doria and thus the chain once to be seen on the façade of San Matteo was another trophy from Pisa. As an indication of the significance which trophies could also hold in modern times, it is noteworthy that the chains were returned during the Italian Risorgimento and are now to be found in the Pisan Camposanto (fig. 7). Why the rather 'ugly' chain? Means of defence, for example the wings of city gates, were frequent trophies. Their loss left the city unprotected, and as a symbol of defencelessness of the other, they were displayed in the victorious city. In the case of Portopisano, we must take into account the great importance of the harbour to Pisa, which until the Meloria battle ranked among the leading sea powers.

The trophies, however, were not only displayed in and on San Matteo, but were also commented upon. The façade shows five long inscriptions (fig. 8, n. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8; fig. 9).<sup>23</sup> With three lines each, they run on marble slabs all along the façade reaching a length of about nine meters each. The upper four can be dated

<sup>21</sup> "Avute le Torre, le disfecieno (i.e. the Genoese), e disfecieno tutto lo Porto, e portonnone li Genovesi ... le catene de le porte," "Fragmenta historiae Pisanae," in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. Ludovico Antonio Muratori, 24 (Milan: Societas Palatinae 1738): 641-694, 659.

<sup>22</sup> For a further discussion of the chains see Müller, *Spolien*, 91-100 and cat. 13.

<sup>23</sup> For medieval inscriptions in general, see the recent bibliographical overview: *Literaturbericht zur mittelalterlichen und neuzeitlichen Epigraphik (1992-1997)*, ed. Walter Koch, Maria Glaser, and Franz-Albrecht Bornschlegel (Hannover: Hahn, 2000); for Italy among others Ottavio Banti, "Epigrafi e propaganda politica ai primi del Trecento," *Quaderni Ticinesi di numismatica e antichità classiche*, 12 (1983): 257-276; *Testo e immagine nell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1994); Armando Petrucci, *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy. Studies in the History of Written Culture*, ed. Charles M. Raddy (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995); "Visibile parlare: le scritture esposte nei volgari italiani dal Medioevo al Rinascimento," ed. Claudio Ciociola (Napoli: Ed. Scientifiche Italiane, 1997); Julian Gardner, "Inscriptions and Imagination in late mediaeval Italy," in *Épigraphie et iconographie*, ed. Robert Favreau (Poitiers: Centre d'Études Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, 1996): 101-110; and esp. Nicoletta Giovè Marchioli, "L'epigrafia comunale cittadina," in *Le forme della propaganda politica nel Due e nel Trecento*, ed. Paolo Cammarosano (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 1994): 263-286, here 276 for San Matteo, cf. also *La scultura a Genova e in Liguria*, 1. *Dalle origini al Cinquecento* (Genoa: Cassa di Risparmio di Genova e Imperia, 1987), 138, 173 f. (Anna Dagnino); eadem, "Marmo di Carrara, ardesia e pietra di Promontorio nell'arredo urbano," in *Niveo de marmore: l'uso artistico dal marmo di Carrara dall'XI al XV secolo*, ed. Enrico Castelnovo (Genoa: Edizioni Colombo, 1992): 192-199, 192 f. Figure 8 is a modified scheme after Montano, "La Piazza," 183.



to medieval times, the lower one dates from the sixteenth century. They all describe naval victories of Doria admirals, giving their names, the date and place of the respective battles, and enumerate the participating galleys and the prisoners taken.

Of particular interest is their reference to the trophies. The inscription concerning the battle against Pisa says: "... it was captured, the podestà ... of the Pisan Commune along with the standard of this Commune, captured by the galley of the Doria. It was brought to this church together with the seal of the aforesaid Commune ...."<sup>24</sup>

Another trophy is mentioned in the inscription which glorifies the victory of Lamba against Venice in 1298, that is the naval battle near the – today Croatian – island of Korcula.<sup>25</sup> Incidentally, this was the battle that brought the Venetian Marco Polo into Genoese captivity, where he dictated his *Il Milione* to a Pisan prisoner, obviously captured in the Meloria battle fourteen years before.

The inscription includes the following part: in 1298 "this angel was captured ... in the city of Korcula."<sup>26</sup> It should also be stressed that 1323, the year of Lamba's death, is mentioned. Unfortunately, the identification of *iste angelus* causes some problems. To overcome this, we have to look at a further inscription on Lamba's palace (figs. 10, 11).<sup>27</sup> The interesting point about this inscription is that it also honors Lamba and his victory near Korcula by using almost the same wording as the last-mentioned inscription on the church. The part to be seen on fig. 11 reads: *iste angelus captus fuit*, a phrase already familiar. In contrast to the Korcula inscription on the church, the one on the palace does not mention the death of Lamba. But as *iste* refers to something placed nearby, we have to assume that the trophy, that is *iste angelus*, was first placed in front of the palace, and then near the Korcula inscription on the church façade. In my opinion, for good reason the *angelus* should be identified with Lamba's sarcophagus.<sup>28</sup> As I emphasized above, there are clear indications that the sarcophagus as a medieval tomb changed its place, and right next to the sarcophagus is a further inscription, saying that Lambino – that is, the son or the grandson of Lamba – put something there that was previously fixed in another

<sup>24</sup> "... POTESTAS ... CO(MUN)IS PISAR(UM) CU(M) STA(N)TARIO D(IC)TI COMU(N)IS CAPTO P(ER) GALEA(M) IL(L)OR(UM) D(E) AU(R)IA (ET) I(N) HA(N)C ECCLEXIA(M) APO(R)TATO CU(M) SIGILO D(IC)TI CO(MUNI)S ..." (*Corpus Inscriptionum*, 3, n. 122).

<sup>25</sup> For the historical background see Caro, *Genua*, 2, 243-256; Manfroni, *Storia*, 188-217; Dotson, "Venice," 127 f., and for a valuation see Michel Balard, "La lotta contro Genova," in *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, 3. *La formazione dello stato patrizio*, ed. Girolamo Arnaldi et al. (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e zecca dello stato, 1997): 87-126.

<sup>26</sup> "... ISTE ANGELUS CAPTUS FUT ... IN CIVITATE SCURZOLE ..." (*Corpus Inscriptionum*, 3, n. 125).

<sup>27</sup> *Corpus Inscriptionum*, 3, n. 126.

<sup>28</sup> On that point, I disagree with Lucia Faedo, "Conoscenza dell'antico e reimpiego dei sarcofagi in Liguria," in *Colloquio sul reimpiego di sarcophagi*, 133-153, 142, 151, n. 59.



place.<sup>29</sup> But a discussion of this would go beyond the scope of this paper. So here I will just summarize that besides the Pisan standard and seal there was a Venetian trophy from Korcula displayed at San Matteo and named in an inscription.

Thus a reference system was established: trophies and inscriptions confirmed one another. The texts explain the origin of the trophies; the objects themselves give evidence for the texts' contents. Through this, the trophies also seem to confirm the circumstances mentioned in the inscriptions: the qualities of the Doria admiral – *nobilis, egregius et potens* – the enemy overwhelmed in spite of his superiority in numbers, and the multitude of both the captured galleys and captives. The homogeneous epigraphic formula of the inscriptions probably also contributed to the certification of those texts, which do not mention trophies, that is, the inscriptions for the later fourteenth century, Doria Pagano and Luciano (fig. 8, n. 5, 6). At the same time, this interweaving also suggests to the beholder that the objects for which we have no sources, that is, the two fragments of antique statuary on the top of the façade, came here as trophies.<sup>30</sup>

The most remarkable thing is the fact that these trophies were won in communal service, but – except for the dividable chain – were not displayed on communal buildings. Thus an appropriation of them as a sort of “private” booty becomes manifest. The connection of communal and private also emerges in the arms of the city, not only on the tomb of Lamba, but also next to the coats of arms of the Doria, flanking the inscriptions (fig. 12). Unfortunately, we do not know anything about regulations concerning the use of Genoa's arms, which could have been restricted, as Peter Seiler pointed out for Florence.<sup>31</sup> Thus, their exact implications remain uncertain, but the Doria arms themselves already possessed the implication of honor, as the eagle as heraldic figure was probably granted to the family by Henry VII in 1311, when the emperor took over the “signoria” of Genoa.<sup>32</sup>

It is not by chance that it is within the rival city of Venice where one finds at least slight parallels for a monopolisation of trophies by a family. According to Marino Sanuto, the admiral Domenico Morosini *per memoria* kept a part of a leg from one of the horses captured at Constantinople – known today as the

<sup>29</sup> The inscription is cited in footnote 42. For a further discussion see Müller, *Spolien*, 119–121.

<sup>30</sup> The Classical spolia are discussed *ibidem*, 144–148, with further bibliography.

<sup>31</sup> Peter Seiler, “Mittelalterliche Reitermonumente in Italien: Studien zu personalen Monumentsetzungen in den italienischen Kommunen und Signorien des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts,” Diss. 1989 (Heidelberg: microfiche, 1995) (hereafter Seiler, “Reitermonumente”), 118.

<sup>32</sup> *Georgii et Iohannis Stellae Annales Genuenses*, ed. Giovanna Petti Balbi (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, Nuova edizione, 17,2) (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1975) (hereafter Stella, *Annales*), 77; Geo Pistarino, “Enrico VII di Lussemburgo signore di Genova,” in *Giovanni Pisano a Genova*, ed. Max Seidel (Genoa: Sagep Editrice, 1987): 275–289, 282, but see also Bernarbò and Cavalli, *S. Matteo*, 34, footnote 8.



horses of San Marco – and his descendants displayed it at their palace. The foot was characterized by Marilyn Perry as an “object for public attention,” “proudly posted in memory of the glorious deeds of a distinguished forbear.”<sup>33</sup> The bronze keys of the cities of Padua and Verona also became personal trophies when fixed on the tomb of the Venetian doge Michele Steno (†1413), who, in the service of his city, made these cities subject to the rule of Venice.<sup>34</sup> These Venetian trophies, however, were not embedded in any program on a larger scale.

The inscriptions on San Matteo, however, not only function as a mere frame of reference for the trophies. First of all, we should remember that the percentage of inhabitants that were able to read in the centers of trade was relatively high.<sup>35</sup> As Ottavio Banti made clear with reference to Pisa, inscriptions were designed as representative media, and could serve also in a profane context as means of communication.<sup>36</sup>

A further level of meaning results from the following source. In his chronicle of Italy, written in about 1330, the notary Ferreto de' Ferreti from Vincenza depicts the honors granted to Lamba after his Korcula victory: “and lest his fame, aroused from such a great victory, in a later age fall into oblivion, they – that is the magistrates of Genoa – decided that a high palace of marble and plaster stone [?] be built at public expense in favor of the eternal glory of his name. And they ordered to be written on the palace ... engraved on stone, with golden letters, both the nature and reason of the battle, and the numbers of the galleys and the prisoners ...”<sup>37</sup>

From Ferreto not only do we learn that the palace and the inscription functioned as an honorary monument, but also that it had been the city's wish to commemorate the *fama* of her famous son. The author continues: “above the

<sup>33</sup> Marino Sanuto, “Vitæ Ducum Venetorum Italice scriptæ ab origine Urbis, sive ab anno 421 usque ad annum 1493,” in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. Antonio Ludovico Muratori, 22 (Milan: Societas Palatinae, 1733): 405-1252, 534; Marilyn Perry, “The Pride of Venice,” *Aquileia Nostra*, 45-46 (1974-75): 786-802, 798; Krzysztof Pomian, “Collezionisti e collezioni dal XIII al XVIII secolo,” in *Storia di Venezia dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima. Temi: L'Arte* (2), ed. Rodolfo Pallucchini (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e zecca dello stato, 1997): 673-767, 683.

<sup>34</sup> Andrea Da Mosto, *I dogi di Venezia con particolare riguardo alle loro tombe* (Venice: Ongania, 1939), 104 f.; for the accompanying epigraph cf. Sanuto, *Vitæ Ducum*, 885. The keys are now to be found in the Seminario Patriarcale, Venice.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Alfred Wendehorst, “Wer konnte im Mittelalter lesen und schreiben?,” in *Schulen und Studium im sozialen Wandel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, ed. Johannes Fried (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1986): 9-34.

<sup>36</sup> Banti, *Epigrafi*.

<sup>37</sup> Ferreto de Ferreti Vicentino, *Le opere*, ed. Carlo Cipolla, 3 vols. (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 42-44) (Rome: Forzani, 1908), 1, 122: “ne fama eius, ob tantam sibi partam victoriam, evo subeunte, immemorabilis extingatur, illi atrium sublime marmore gispove [sic] contextum ad perpetuam sui nominis gloriam construi sumptibus publicis statuere, in quo ... litteris aureis, belli modum et causam, captivorumque et ratiū numerum, ceso lapide, imprimi mandavere.”



portico of the palace ... the incident in its entirety can be read."<sup>38</sup> So as Ferreto sees it, the inscription also serves as evidence for the events he describes. The function of epigraphic records as sources for historiography is strengthened by a statement of the early fifteenth century annalist Stella. After his report on the battle of Korcula, he adds: "in Genoa, I found these things engraved."<sup>39</sup> This once more highlights the impact of the inscriptions at San Matteo as lasting memory;<sup>40</sup> the intersection of public honors and personal glory becomes even clearer. The long inscriptions at the church repeat the epigraphic formula of the palace's inscription, and in one case even the wording. The glory intended for Lamba by the magistrates was thus transferred to other members of the family. The blank marble layers suggest that further victories, worthy of public memory, were to follow.

However, the inscriptions – and in particular the long church inscriptions – are obviously not only designed to be read, as to do so you have to walk nearly 45 meters. Engraved with much care and well proportioned in the snow-white marble, they are striking for their aesthetic quality. The ornamental impact could have been strengthened further by a gilding, attested by Ferreto for the palace's inscription.<sup>41</sup>

A topic that I can only mention is that of the authority and power of public writing. This aspect was further brought out by the flanking cities' arms. They give these inscriptions the character of public decrees, such as were published on cathedral walls.

To sum up, the inscriptions on San Matteo can be read in very different ways. With their impact as a means of maintaining profane memory, their aesthetic qualities and their authority as written text, they are efficient media to promote the trophies.

Research until now has paid little attention to San Matteo or to the motivations of the façade's program and its historical background. Thus, we now have to discuss the dating. So few clues come from the epigraphic evidence that all we can deduce from the form of the letters is that the Korcula inscription of the palace is prior to the inscriptions on the church. In general, scholars – and I think they are right – have connected the erection of Lamba's sarcophagus on the façade with the aforesaid small inscription, which reports Lambino's placing

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem: "supra ipsum atrii vestibulum ..., res tota legi possit."

<sup>39</sup> Stella, *Annales*, 36: "... quibusdam locis Ianue sculptum inveni."

<sup>40</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the relevant studies on "memoria", especially profane "memoria;" cf. for a survey Tanja Michalsky, *Memoria und Repräsentation: die Grabmäler des Königshauses Anjou in Italien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 19 f., and the remarks in Herklotz, "Sepulcra," 3-5 (preface to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

<sup>41</sup> Some examples of medieval *litterae aureae* following the Classical tradition are known, cf. for the epigraph accompanying the statue of Alberto d'Este: Wolfgang Liebenwein, "Die Statue des Markgrafen Alberto d'Este (1393). Ein Denkmal des frühen Humanismus," in *Literatur, Musik und Kunst im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit: Bericht über Kolloquien der Kommission zur Erforschung der Kultur des Spätmittelalters 1989 bis 1992*, ed. Hartmut Boockmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995): 262-300, 262 f.



of an undefined *opus*.<sup>42</sup> “Lambino” was the name of the son, but also of the grandson of Lamba. Only recently has it emerged that both these men were already dead before 1352.<sup>43</sup> Thus the middle of the fourteenth century results as *terminus ante quem* for the placement of the sarcophagus. From here, I should like to try a first interpretation of the façade’s programme against the historical background.

At the time of the death of Lamba in 1323, Genoa was under the sway of Robert of Anjou, and the Ghibellines were in exile. Thus, at the time that Lamba died in Savona, a festive burial of a leading Ghibelline was hardly probable in Genoa.

Only after a peace treaty in 1331 did his burial in a tomb in Genoa become possible. Eight years later, in the popular revolt that led to the election of the first doge, the annalist Stella reports some pillaging in the quarter of the Doria.<sup>44</sup> This could very well be the moment when the tomb of Lamba, at this time a detached monument probably located on the piazza before the church, was a target for the riots.<sup>45</sup> When the situation quieted down under the doge, the Doria were allowed to stay in town but not to resume important political offices. Therefore, in my opinion the period of the 1340s was the most probable moment for starting a façade program glorifying the ancestors, with the sarcophagus of the most prominent member as its focal point. The Doria of those years thus made visual the great feats which formed the basis for the most glorious period of Genoa by embedding the existing trophies in an epigraphic program. In a clever way municipal honor was the key starting point: the inscription at Lamba’s palace served as a model for those on the church. The connection between the Doria and the city herself became manifest by the presence of the arms of both. The inscription for Oberto’s victory was placed, as is easy to understand, slightly above eye level (fig. 8, n. 1), whereas the inscription glorifying the Korcula battle (fig. 8, n. 2) was put up directly under the sarcophagus to which it refers. The two inscriptions for Pagano’s and Luciano’s victories over Venice followed gradually from the top downwards, resulting in the order which we see today. This upholding of tradition, however, negated the actual political situation. Neither Pagano nor Luciano were – or even could be – statesmen as eminent as Oberto was, and the battles they won were not that decisive, as since the Genoese defeat at Chioggia and the peace of Torino 1381 the Venetians had dominated the sea.

<sup>42</sup> *Corpus Inscriptionum*, 3, n. 154; “OPUS DE DOMO DE / STRUCTU(M) P(ER) LAMBINU(M) / HIC EST REDUCTUM.” Cf. among others Federico Alizeri, *Guida artistica per la città di Genova*, 3 vols. (Genoa: 1846/47), vol. 2, 602.

<sup>43</sup> *Liber Iurium Reipublicae Genuensis* (Historiae Patriae Monumenta, 9) (Turin: ex officina regia, 1857), doc. 205; cf. Enrico Basso, *Un’abbazia e la sua città: Santo Stefano di Genova, sec. 10.-15.* (Cavallermaggiore: Gribaudo, 1997), 64-67.

<sup>44</sup> Stella, *Annales*, 130.

<sup>45</sup> For other examples of violence against tombs see Seiler, “Reitermonumente,” 47 f., Herklotz, “*Sepulcra*,” 222 f.



Are there some models or parallels that can be recognized? When thinking of the program as a whole, I would say no. A close connection between trophies and inscriptions can be found at Pisa cathedral, and – even nearer – at the Genoese municipal palace.<sup>46</sup> But to dedicate this to just one family which was not holding the “Signoria” of the city, seems unique. However, especially in the field of profane family representation, destruction cannot be excluded. In my opinion, the characteristic traits of San Matteo result from the special situation of *this* family in *this* town: The Doria succeeded in increasing their political power by military successes in the service of the Commune. These victories gave them the possibility of winning trophies, which, in a milieu traditionally without a strong central force, could be claimed as trophies for the family. Then, in fourteenth century, the desire arose to make visual what seemed to be a continuous tradition. This could be done on the family church, which by its special status allowed a profane appropriation.

However, it was not only this monumental evidence which immortalizes the fame of the family. As Lamba achieved his victory on September 7, that is the day before Our Lady’s Nativity, an annual donation of a golden altar cloth for her altar in San Matteo was established by the Commune.<sup>47</sup> Not only is the offering itself remarkable, but the palium’s display at Lamba’s palace for one day until it was accompanied to the church. The liturgical memory of the battle, the “Schlachtengedenken,” was thus linked for the longer term with the honoring of the Doria.<sup>48</sup>

The piazza thereby served as impressive setting. By relocating the actual church – in relation to the previous building – back eleven meters, a square of remarkably regular shape and size emerged.<sup>49</sup> Stella explained this as a conscious creation. The Doria did so “to have more space in front of (the church) and a more beautiful site.”<sup>50</sup> The covering of all the façades at the piazza with

<sup>46</sup> For Pisa see *Il duomo di Pisa*, ed. Adriano Peroni, 3 vols. (Modena: Panini, 1995), *passim*; Ottavio Banti, *Monumenta epigraphica Pisana saeculi XV. antiquiora* (Ospedaletto: Pacini Editore, 2000); for the Genoese municipal palace and its trophies see Müller, *Spolien*, 86–91.

<sup>47</sup> Stella, *Annales*, 36.

<sup>48</sup> Stella, *Annales*, 36: “... cum aureo offerendo palio ipsius triumphus memoriam renovantes.” The monopolisation of a civic ritual to a lesser extent is paralleled in the ceremonial roles played by the Visdomini and the Buondelmoni in Florence, cf. Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 69 f. The phenomenon of “Schlachtengedenken” is discussed by Klaus Graf, “Schlachtengedenken in der Stadt,” in *Stadt und Krieg*, ed. Bernhard Kirchgässner (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1989): 83–104; cf. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, “Schlachten und ihre ‘memoria’ in Bild und Wort,” in *Bild und Geschichte: Studien zur politischen Ikonographie; Festschrift für Hansmartin Schwarzmair zum fünfundsiebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Konrad Krimm (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1997): 181–196.

<sup>49</sup> *Iacopo da Varigine e la sua Cronaca di Genova: dalle origini al 1297*, ed. Giovanni Monleone, 3 vols. (Fonti per la storia d’Italia, 84–86) (Rome: Forzani, 1941), 3, 330.

<sup>50</sup> Stella, *Annales*, 23: “... ut latius ante ipsum [i.e. the church building] haberent spatium et plateam pulcriorem.”



alternating layers of white marble and grey limestone was not only a sumptuous decoration, but according to the sixteenth century annalist Agostino Giustiniani, was also connected with high social prestige. He stresses that, "if there are some (houses) designed with these sorts of stones up to the roof that means that the owner has done an excellent deed for the home town."<sup>51</sup> To sum up, it can be said that the Doria succeeded in establishing a multifaceted system interweaving buildings, trophies, inscriptions and ceremony, in which public honors and self-glorification were accumulated and inseparably connected.

Who was the public for this message? Obviously it affirmed the self-consciousness of the Doria clan itself. The wider circle which moved in the Doria quarter is difficult to reconstruct. The annual Korcula feast, however, was a civic ceremony with a presumed wider audience, so the interpenetration of the public sphere and that of familial celebration becomes evident.<sup>52</sup>

A final look at the later history of the church can stress the efficacy of its program. The mere conservation of the façade is remarkable, and not by chance is San Matteo the only family church in Genoa to preserve its medieval façade. But it was not only preserved. In the 1540s, Andrea Doria commissioned a portrait bust from the Michelangelo protégé Montorsoli.<sup>53</sup> It was placed, flanked by huge arms, in the left window (fig. 6). With that, he not only re-used the representative space, but presented himself as a successor of Lamba, whose bust was standing in the right window. Notwithstanding the problematic dating of Lamba's bust,<sup>54</sup> Andrea's wish to put himself in the tradition of his glorious ancestor is all too clear. An inscription under the bust refers to the *memoria maiorum*, and Andrea made the city donate to him the palace next to Lamba's palace. In addition an honorary statue was planned to be placed on the square of San Matteo.<sup>55</sup> Thus, to legitimate his sovereign-like position, Andrea propagated a continuity which originated from the deeds of his ancestors. But it cannot escape our notice that Andrea, born in Oneglia, was descended from a rather dis-

<sup>51</sup> Agostino Giustiniani, *Castigatissimi annali con la loro copiosa tavola della ... repubblica di Genova* (Genoa: Lomellino, 1537), 14r: "se vi ne sono alcune lavorate di simiglianti pietre insino al tetto, li e stato concesso per lavere operato qualche fatto egregio in utilita della patria."

<sup>52</sup> Regarding the concept of "public" see Alfred Haverkamp, "'... an die große Glocke hängen.' Über Öffentlichkeit im Mittelalter," *Jahrbuch des historischen Kollegs* (1995): 71-112.

<sup>53</sup> Birgit Laschke, *Fra Giovan Angelo da Montorsoli: ein Florentiner Bildhauer des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1993), 60.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of the bust in favour of a probable medieval dating see Müller, *Spolien*, 133-139.

<sup>55</sup> Piero Boccardo, *Andrea Doria e le arti: committenza e mecenatismo a Genova nel Rinascimento* (Rome: Palombi, 1989), deals with Andrea as patron; for the recently discovered statue, see Gaier, *Venezia*, 197-199; for the palace, see Ennio Poleggi, *Genova: una civiltà di palazzi* (Milan: Silvana, 2002), 23-26.



tant, impoverished branch of the family.<sup>56</sup> This is also true for his cousin Filippo, who has a long inscription on the church façade honoring his naval victory in 1528. Filippo succeeded in “following the tracks of the ancestors.”<sup>57</sup> Thus the *res gestae* of the Doria were continued. The past served as justification and model for the present.

At the same time, San Matteo became an example of an efficient monopolization of a decisive part of a city’s history by means of visual propaganda. The memory of Genoa’s most successful period was not maintained at the cathedral or the doge’s palace, but on the piazza of the Doria.

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<sup>56</sup> *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 41, s.v. “Doria, Andrea,” (Edoardo Grendi) 264, with the distinction between “Doria di San Matteo” and “Doria dei feudi.”

<sup>57</sup> “... VESTIGIA MAIORUM SEQUENS ...” the inscription is published in d’Oria, *La chiesa*, 54.



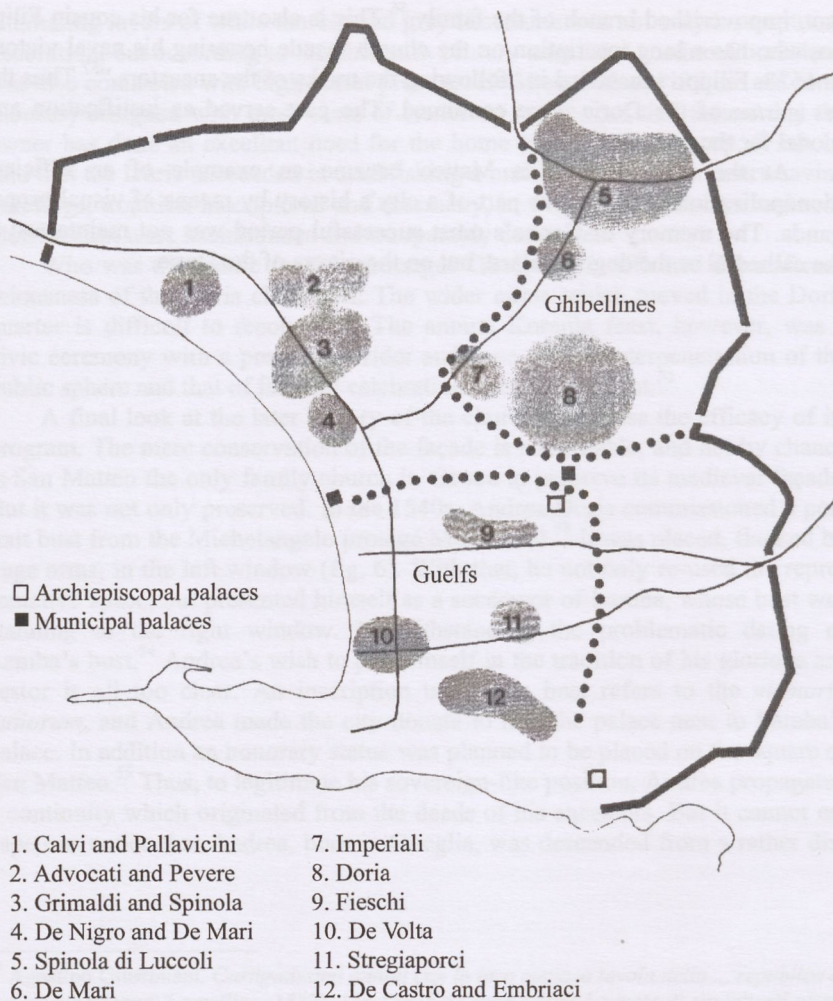


Figure 1: The family quarters in Genoa  
(modified scheme after Grossi Bianchi and Poleggi, *Una città*, 113)



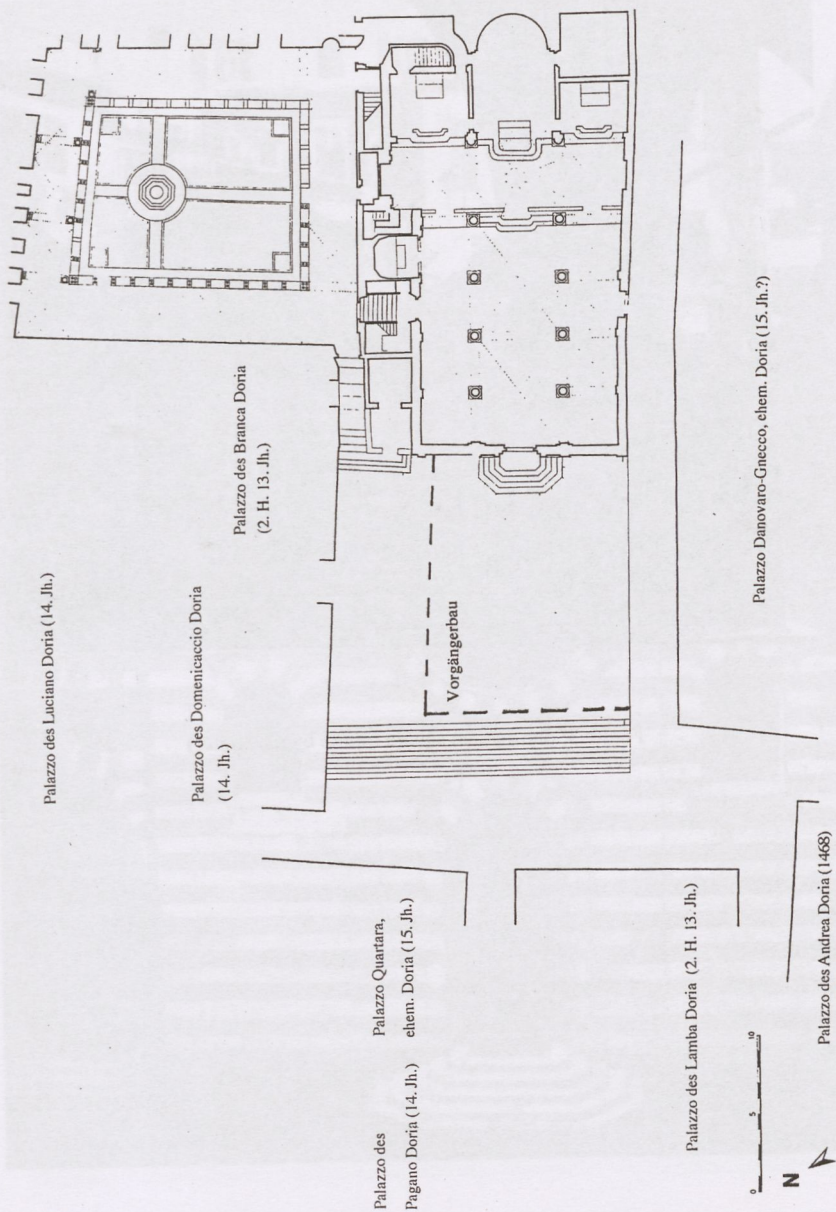


Figure 2: San Matteo square, schematic ground plan  
(modified after Montano, "La Piazza", 172)

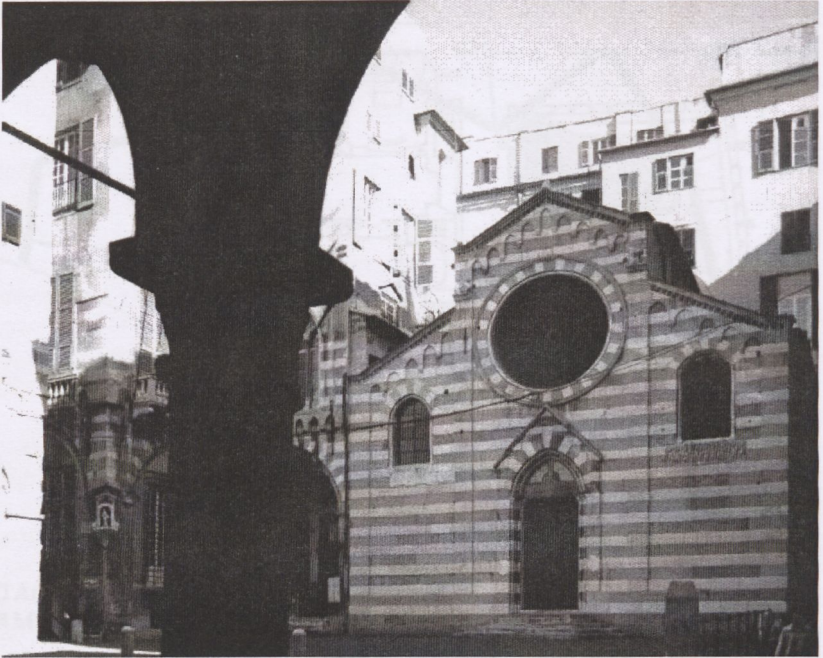


Figure 3: San Matteo square (photo by the author)



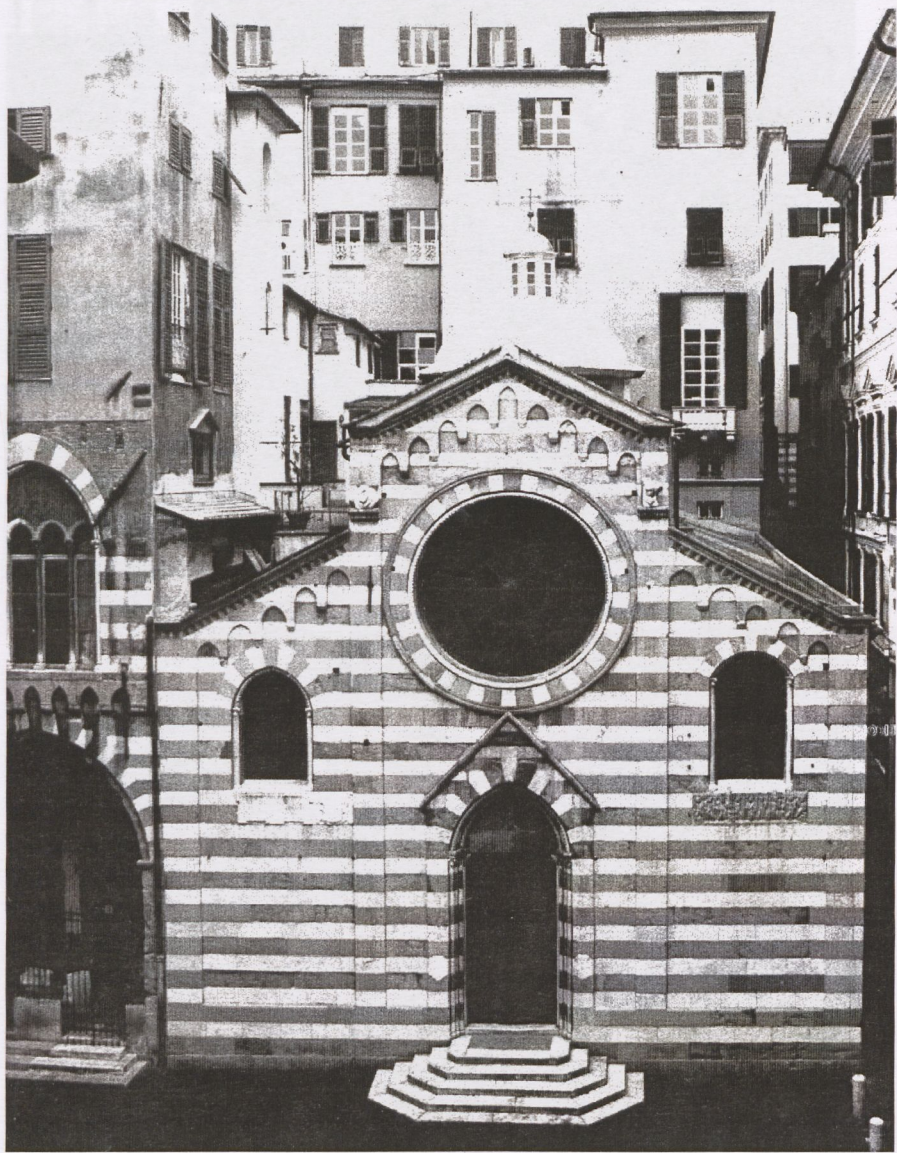


Figure 4: San Matteo (photo by the author)



Figure 5: Antique sarcophagus used as tomb of Lamba Doria  
(photo DAI Inst.Neg. 68.1363, Singer)



*Ecclesia Abbatialis Sancti Mathei*

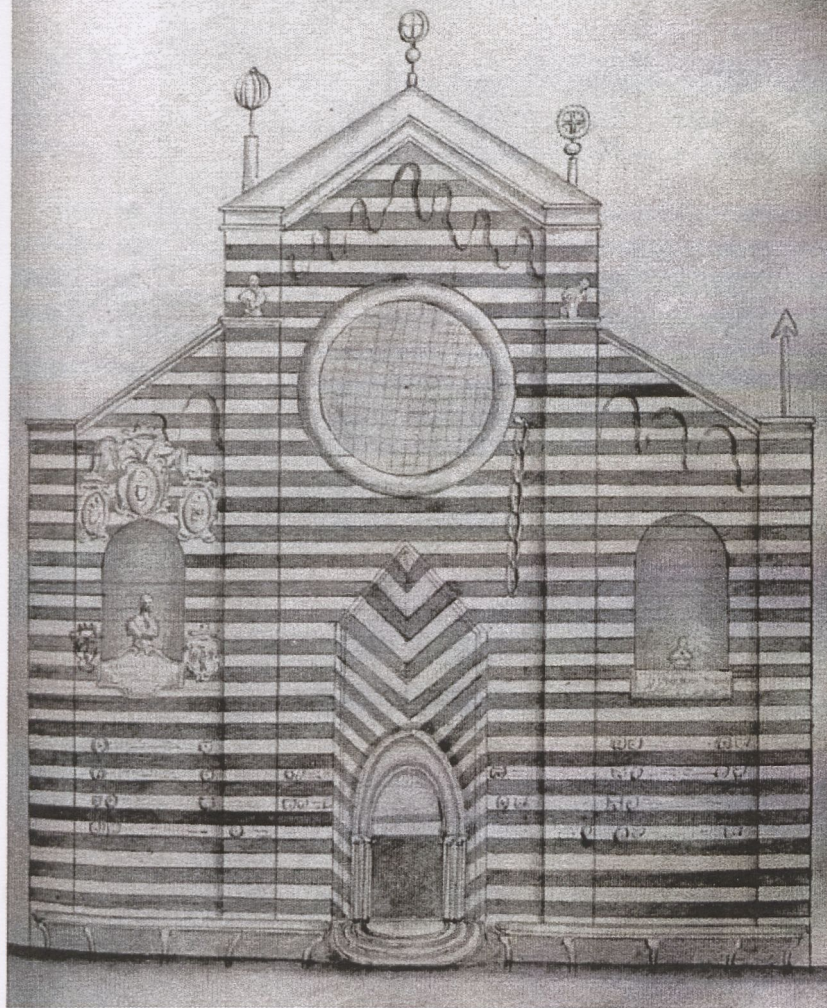


Figure 6: Domenico Piaggio, San Matteo, about 1720  
(Genoa, Bibliotheca Centrale Berio, m. r. V, 4. 1, 125r)

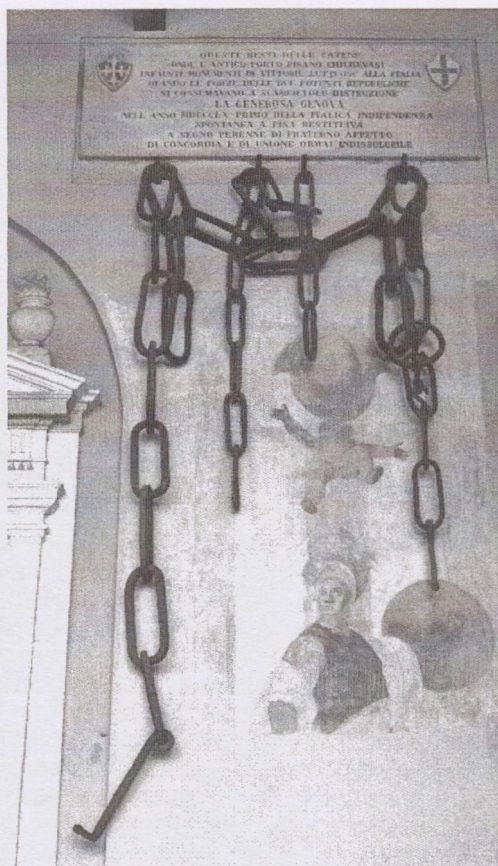
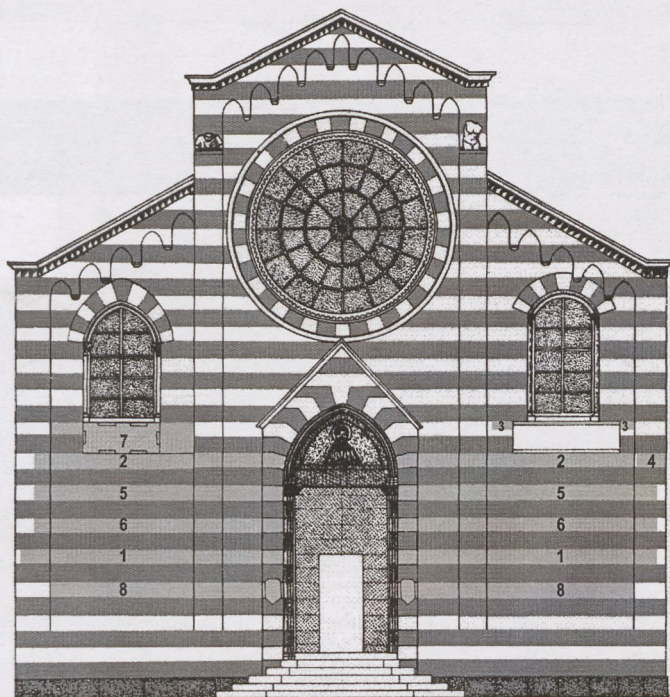


Figure 7: Pisa, Camposanto, chains of Portopisano (photo by the author)





1. Honorary inscription for Oberto Doria: victory over Pisa (1284, near Meloria island).
2. Hon. inscription for Lamba Doria: victory over Venice (1298, near Korçula island).
3. Inscription on the tomb of Lamba Doria († 1323).
4. Inscription of Lambino Doria.
5. Hon. inscription for Pagano Doria: victories near Constantinople (1352) and Sapienza island (1354).
6. Hon. inscription for Luciano Doria: victory over Venice (1379, near Pula).
7. Hon. inscription for Andrea Doria.
8. Hon. inscription for Filippo Doria: victory over the French (1528, near Salerno).

Figure 8: Scheme of the façade of San Matteo (modified after Montano, “La Piazza”, 183)



Figure 9: Medieval inscriptions on the façade of San Matteo (photo by the author)





Figure 10: Palazzo Lamba Doria (photo by the author)

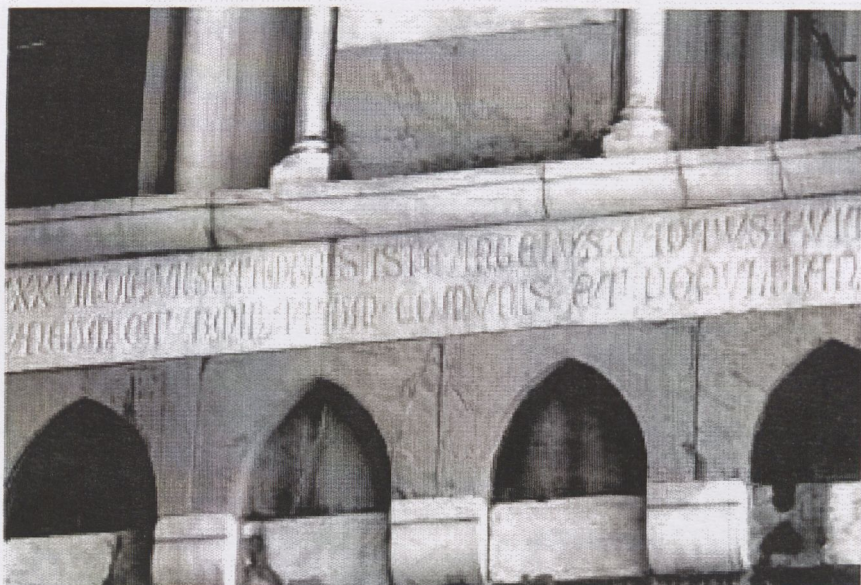


Figure 11: Palazzo Lamba Doria, medieval inscription above the porticus  
(photo by the author)



Figure 12: San Matteo, façade, coats of arms to the right of the inscription for Luciano Doria  
(photo by the author)