

ANTIQUITY · AND · THE · FORMATION OF · ISLAMIC · ARCHITECTURE

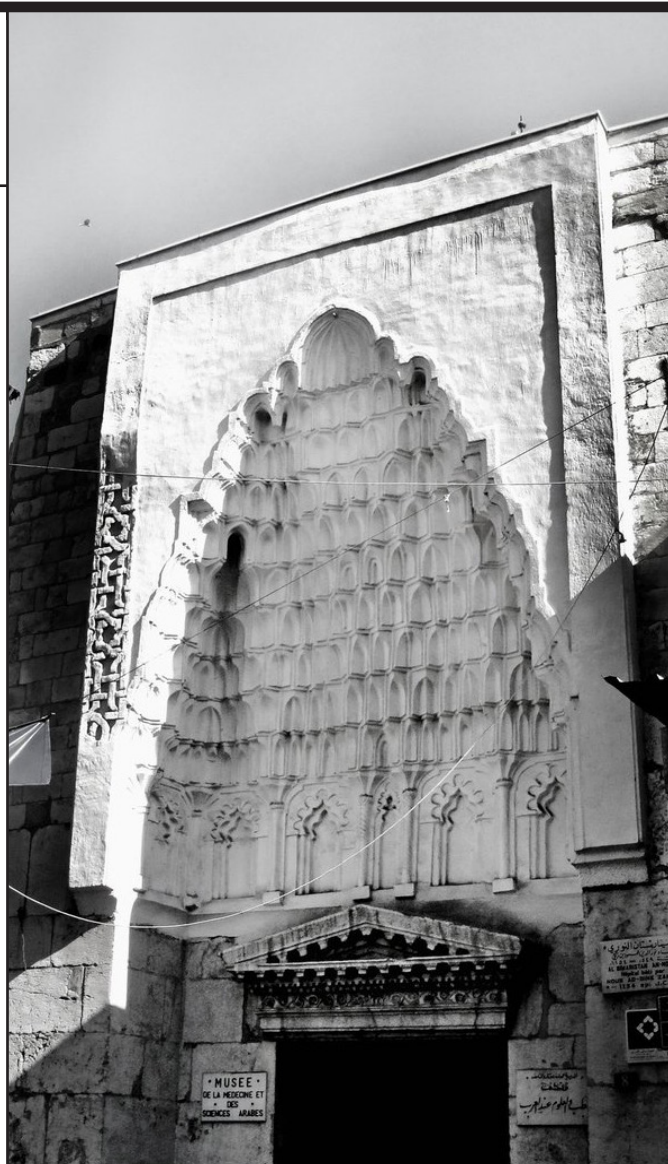
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In a remarkable book, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity*, Garth Fowden noted, “There are roads out of Antiquity that do not lead to the Renaissance.” This powerful statement challenges the dominant art historical narrative, which posits the West as the only heir to the classical tradition, and opens the door for other artistic cultures that share the descent from Antiquity like the Islamic culture to reclaim their heritage.

In this seminar, we will study Early Islamic, or Umayyad, Architecture and its relationship to Antiquity in depth. We will examine the sequence of well-known Umayyad monuments, which appear to have engaged in a vibrant referencing exercise that treated Antiquity as a model to copy, build upon, or, sometimes, to deconstruct. Thus we can begin to understand the patterns of appropriation, modification, transposition, scaling, and distortion of post-classical elements in Umayyad architecture as a conscious process to chart a new, or, perhaps more accurately, a post Post-Classical architecture. In other words, Umayyad architecture was one road out of Antiquity that did not lead to the Renaissance.

SPRING · 2014

TIME:	TUESDAY 2 - 5
ROOM:	5 - 216
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CLASS MECHANISM

Each session will include a lecture and a discussion. In the first few weeks, students will respond to historical and theoretical issues in 1-3 pp reports. In the second part of the seminar, each student will select one Late Antique, Early Islamic, or Umayyad site and present it in the corresponding class meeting. The final research paper will be a 25-page reworking of the presentation, or may be an investigation of a different example to be selected in consultation with the instructor. Readings, responses, and active class participation are meant to form the basis of the seminar and ensure its liveliness.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Garth Fowden. *Before and After Muhammad: The First Millennium Refocused* (Princeton University Press: 2014).
Oleg Grabar. *The Formation of Islamic Art* (Yale University Press, 2nd Edition: 1987).

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

G. W. Bowersock (ed.). *Interpreting Late Antiquity: Essays on the Postclassical World* (Harvard University Press: 2001)
F. B. Flood. *The Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* (E.J. Brill: 2000)
Garth Fowden. *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton University Press: 1994).
Nancy A. Khalek. *Damascus after the Muslim Conquest: Text and Image in Early Islam* (Oxford University Press: 2011).
Alan Walmsley. *Early Islamic Syria: An Archaeological Assess*

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