

Gunnar Heinsohn (April 2018)

ARABS OF THE 8th CENTURY: CULTURAL IMITATORS OR ORIGINAL CREATORS?¹

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¹ Addition to Gunnar Heinsohn; *Islam and Arab Chronology - Were Arabs Really Ignorant of Writing and Coinage for 700 Years?*
 [Nov. 2013; <http://www.q-mag.org/gunnar-heinsohns-latest.html#5LhoTtDn>]

I Stratigraphic-chronological defense of Muhammad against revisionists and their textbook chronology

A straightforward way to understand the Muhammad-figure is as an Arab who wants to teach Judaism to other Arabs, i.e., who wants to be a prophet for them. That is why Moses (Mûsâ ibn' Imran), with 137 mentions, is the most frequently mentioned figure in the Quran. One could rightly call the Quranic text a Moses-inspired book focusing on highlights for whose long versions one would still have to consult the Hebrew Bible. The day that Moses and the Israelites escaped Pharaoh is remembered by the Sunni on Ashura, on the 10th day of Muharram.

Muhammad wants to do justice to a Prophet's duties by fulfilling that role in a way that is both understandable and entertaining for his Arab (future Sunni) listeners. It is precisely this approach that was accepted by some on the Jewish side. Other Jews, however, rejected Muhammed's method as a simplification and reduction of basic Hebrew texts by an insufficiently educated person. From them comes mockery of Muhammad as *ha-meshuggah* (Stillman 1979,236; to this day in Jerusalem this expression is used to refer to people who consider themselves to be Jesus-returnees or to those who are similarly possessed). In turn, Muhammed may have scorned his doubters as poor amateurs, while winning over a huge following.




Among Jewish acceptors of Muhammad, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai becomes significant for the chronology of Muhammad. During Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c.), Shimon was active after 70 CE (after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem's Temple), i.e. during the 1st and 2nd century. He calls Muhammad "a prophet sent to Ishmael according to God's will", in other words, a representative of the God of the Jews for Arabs. Interestingly, however, the report on Rabbi Shimon's positive assessment of Muhammad comes from the Early Middle Ages (8th-10th c.) some 700 years later, precisely from the 8th century (Prawer/Ben-Shammai 1994, 304). Since such a time setting for Rabbi Shimon's acceptance of Muhammad matches stratigraphy, Muhammad would have lived in the 8th/9th century. With that date, it would no longer be surprising that the earliest Arab-Islamic *sirahs* (texts on contracts, deeds and orders of the prophet) originate from the 8th/9th. With Muhammad in the 7th century of our textbooks, however, scholars, theologians and historians have never understood why there is no literature about him for another 150 years.

The denial of Muhammad's existence by the revisionist schools (Luxenberg 2000; Nevo/Koren 2003; Jansen 2005; Holland 2012) is primarily based on mainstream chronology, that may as well be called Christian chronology (see next page; cf. also Heinsohn 2017).

Textbook=Christian chronology of the 1st millennium CE (Roman sphere of influence [including ISRAEL])

Three Cataclysms supposedly hit the 1st millennium neatly dividing it into three major periods:

(1) **Imperial Antiquity [IA]**; (2) **Late Antiquity [LA]**; (3) **Early Middle Ages [EMA]**. Since **only one typical material Roman culture dominates all periods** a standstill of evolution is assumed from 200 to 900 CE

930s ff.	<i>HIGH MIDDLE AGES (modest and poor new beginnings)</i>		
<i>10th c. Collapse</i>	<i>Destruction, depopulation, dark or grey earth etc.</i>		
8th-10th c. CE EARLY MIDDLE AGES [EMA]	Internal evolution resembles Imperial Antiquity's. In the 860s, Italy is invaded by Hungarians in time of Vikings. Roman churches repeat groundplans of Late Antiquity. Moors invade Spain. Hebrew, Greek and Latin of 9th cent. is the same as in 2nd century.	PRES-LAV	
<i>6th/7th c. Crisis</i>	<i>Destruction, depopulation, dark or grey earth etc.</i>		
4th-6th c. CE LATE ANTIQUITY [LA]	Internal evolution resemble's Imperial Antiquity's. In the 440s ff (with Plague), Italy is invaded by Huns and Goths with the latter being settled around Ravenna. Massive conversion to Christianity (church building). Many cities decrease their urban space, and require repairs.	FELIX ROMULIANA	
<i>3rd cent. Crisis</i>	<i>Destruction, depopulation, dark or grey earth etc.</i>		
1st-3rd c. CE IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY [IA]	With internal evolution. In the 160s ff. (with plague and <i>Antonine Fires</i>), Italy is invaded by proto-Hun Iazyges and Quadi (Gothic culture) with the latter being settled around Ravenna. Moors invade Spain. Conversion to Christianity (churches not found) is met with persecution. Many cities decrease their urban space, and require repairs.	LONDI-NIUM	

Because the earliest texts appear one and a half centuries after Muhammad's generally accepted date of death (632 CE), the critics claim, these texts must simply be false. However, the stratigraphic approach to Muhammad connects both texts and chronology.

The confirmation of Muhammad by dating him stratigraphically allows, for the first time, a fruitful use of some indisputable findings by the revisionists. The observation (Puin 1996; Luxenberg 2000) that around 20 percent of the Quran's c. 6000 verses originally used the Aramaic language of the 1st century (=8th century stratigraphically), suddenly adds strong evidence for dating the rise of Islam to the 8th/9th century (instead of the 7th). The realization by Günther Lüling (1974) that many passages of the Quran resemble non-Trinitarian Christian hymns of the 1st century, which again belong stratigraphically to the 8th century, provides further confirmation for the later time setting.

The revisionist thesis (Gibson 2011) that Muhammad's Quranic geography is better suited to the Nabataean area around Petra than the area of Mecca and Medina, enables the identification of the enigmatic Umayyads with their neo-Hellenistic architecture, out of fashion for 700 years, in and near Jerusalem in the 8th century.

By employing (with Tiberias as an example) the stratigraphy-based approach to the 1st millennium CE, early Christianity, early Islam as well as Rabbinical Tanakh-Judaism all develop side by side in the 1st/2nd c. CE, i.e. **8th/9th c. CE stratigraphically**. They emerge in the competition for finding the most appropriate way to lead a righteous Jewish life.

JEWISH EVIDENCE		
of 1st millennium CE TIBERIAS confirms the contemporaneity of its major periods in the time-span of the 8th-10th c. CE: Between 1 and the 930s CE there are only some 230 years with stratigraphy! [from Heinsohn 2018]		
IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY (IA; 1st-3rd) ends in cataclysm.	LATE ANTIQUITY (LA; 4th-6th/7th) ends in cataclysm.	EARLY MIDDLE AGES (EMA; 7th/8th-10th) end in cataclysm.
Jews thrive in Tiberias according to Jewish and non-Jewish reports.	Non-Jewish reports (Simeon Beth Arshan) on Jewish life in Tiberias	Non-Jewish text (Shurahbil) report on Jewish life in Tiberias.
Living quarters with latrines, streets etc. are built in Tiberias.	No living quarters with latrines etc. are built in Tiberias.	No living quarters with latrines etc. are built in Tiberias.
Hebrew Bible is codified in Tiberias.	No Hebrew Bibles are produced anywhere.	Bibles using 1st-3rd c. Hebrew receive vowel points in Tiberias.
No synagogues are found in Tiberias.	Synagogues are found in Tiberias albeit in style of 1st-3rd century.	No synagogues are found in Tiberias.
BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY	CODIFICATION OF TANAKH	BEGINNING OF ISLAM

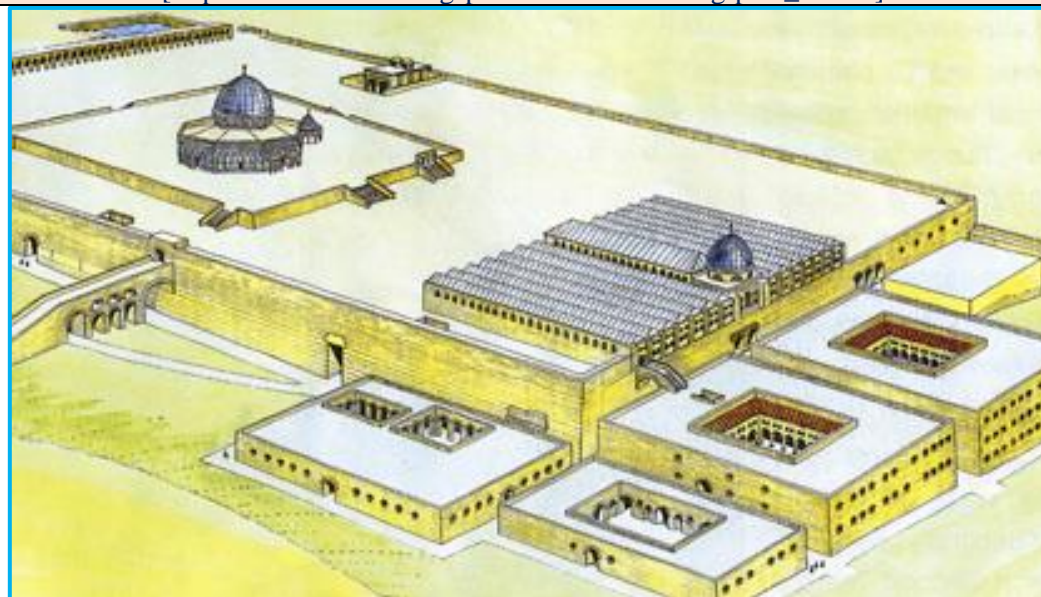
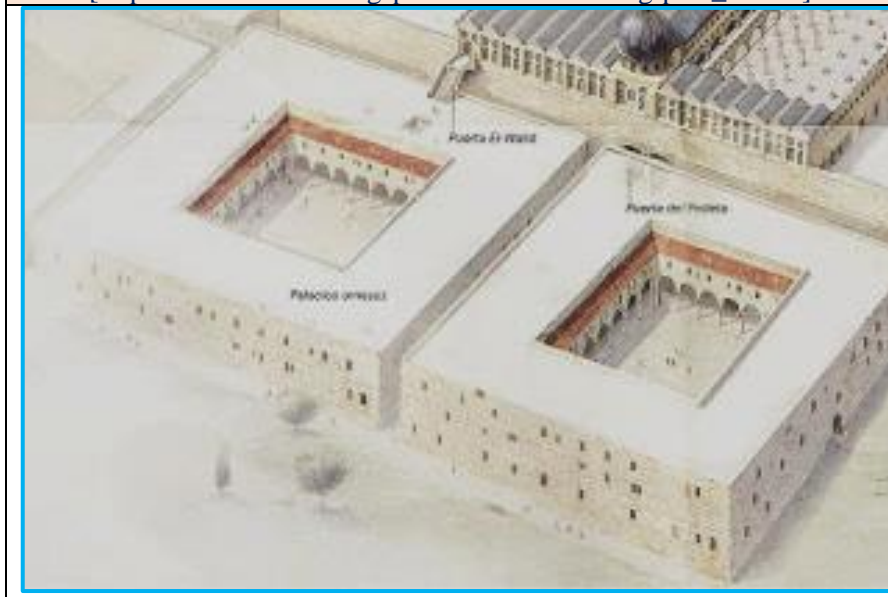
II Are Nabataean and Umayyad art styles really 700 years apart?

So, who was capable to place **15 m deep cement foundations** under Jerusalem's Umayyad palaces in front of the Temple Hill? Whose Arabic realm was located close enough to the Holy City to built there in such a massive way? Who were the Arabs well known for alliances with

Reconstruction of several of the six Umayyad Palaces (with 15 m deep cement foundations) that were, completely unexpected, discovered in the 1970s near the Western and Southern walls of Jerusalem's Temple Mount. Herodian, Roman, and Byzantine urban strata beneath the palaces are occasionally claimed but were never verified -- either here or anywhere else! Since no Abbasid palaces have been found super-imposed on Jerusalem's Umayyad palaces (only Abbasid "repairs" are claimed), the two Early Medieval Arab dynasties must have overlapped in the 8th-10th century period.

[http://siramuharafa.blogspot.com/2015/06/blog-post_3.html]

[http://siramuharafa.blogspot.com/2015/06/blog-post_3.html]



Left: Nabataean territory turned into Roman province *ARABIA PETRAEA*. Right: Ruins of Nabataean city of Avdat/Israel

[[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabia_Petraea#/media/File:Roman_Empire_-_Arabia_Petraea_\(125_AD\).svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabia_Petraea#/media/File:Roman_Empire_-_Arabia_Petraea_(125_AD).svg) / <https://de.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Avdat#/media/File:Avdat-v.jpg>]



Jews (e.g., Maccabees against Seleucids)? Only the Nabataeans fit that profile. The Greek language, adopted by the Nabataeans in the 1st c. CE, is — with no discernible evolution — employed some 700 years later for Umayyad inscriptions of the 8th century. Umayyad soldiers were dressed in Greek fashion. They used the *ballista* (*arradah*) as artillery although its technology was more than 700 years old. At Tiberias, they are on record for having been stratigraphic bedfellows of 700 years earlier Romans, blossoming right after Hellenism of the 1st c. BCE:

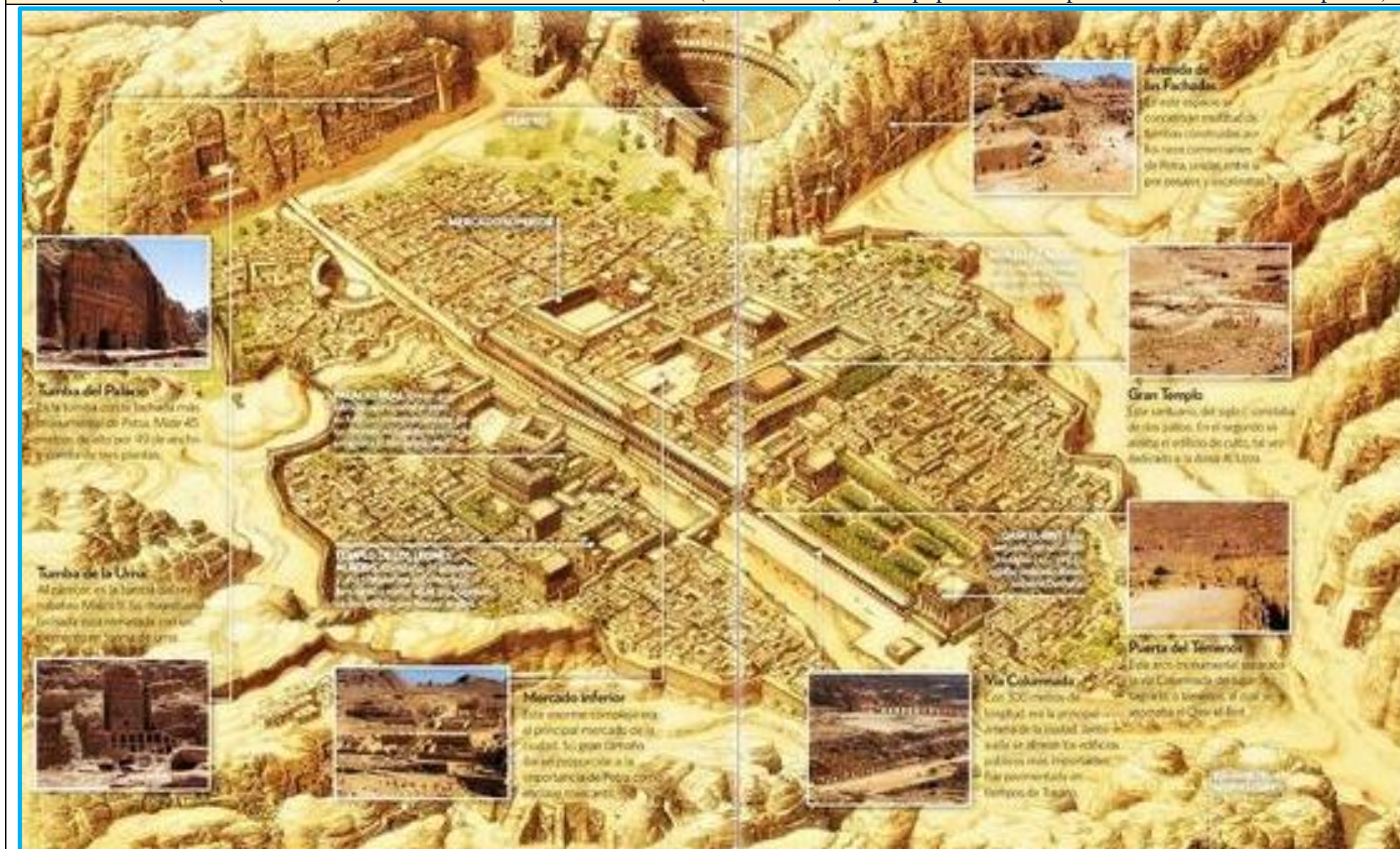
“During the course of a dig designed to facilitate the expansion of the Galei Kinneret Hotel, Hartal noticed a mysterious phenomenon: Alongside a layer of earth from the time of the Umayyad era (638-750[CE]), and at the same depth, the archaeologists found a layer of earth from the Ancient Roman era (37 B.C.E.-132[CE]). ‘I encountered a situation for which I had no explanation - two layers of earth from hundreds of years apart lying side by side,’ says Hartal. ‘I was simply dumbfounded’ “ (Barkat 2003).

Roman Nabataean province *Arabia Petraea* in the 1st/2nd c. CE with Petra and Bostra (Bosra) as central cities

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabia_Petraea#/media/File:Roman_Empire_125_political_map.svg]



Late Hellenistic (1st c. BCE) urbanism at Nabataean Petra (reconstruction; <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/86483255324974458/?lp=true>)



Eventually, the Israeli scholars decided to invoke a geological miracle to obey Christian chronology and, at the same time, make sense of the stratigraphy of Tiberias. That mover of a higher order was identified as a mega-earthquake of 749 CE afflicting all the lands from Damascus to Egypt. With surgical precision that disaster had pushed the 1st c. BCE ff. Roman material upwards until it stopped precisely at the Umayyad level of the 7th/8th c. ff. CE. The Arab material, however, was kept in its position in such a wondrous manner that the Roman material was neither allowed to stop inappropriately below nor to move inappropriately above the Arab material believed to have arrived some 700 years later.

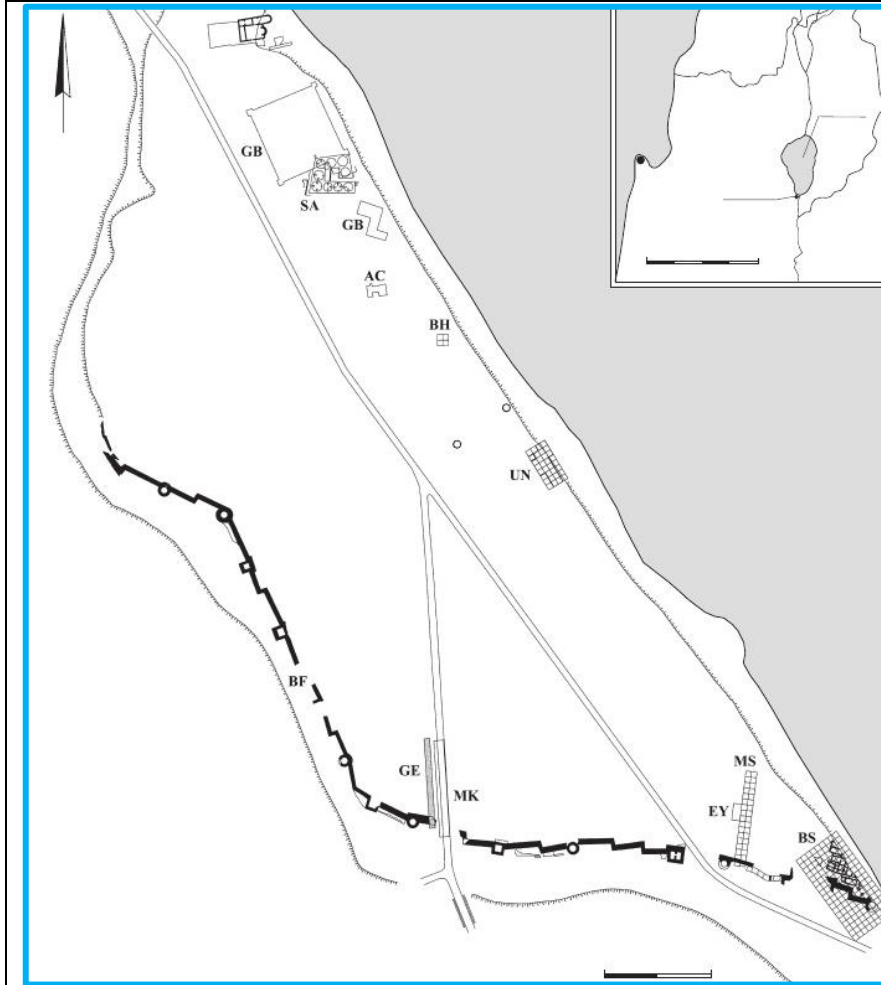
Yet, all the stratigraphic evidence does really show (for the period preceding the catastrophe that drowned the 2nd/3rd. c. CE Roman theatre of Tiberias) is the contemporaneity of 7th/8th ff. c. CE Arabs and 1st c. BCE to 2nd c. CE Romans. Thus, Early Medieval Umayyads followed as directly after Late Hellenisms (=Late Roman Republic = Late Latène of the 1st c. BCE) as Roman Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c. CE). However, misled by their stern belief in textbook chronology archaeologists have, time and again, distorted the situation laid bare by excavations to match their pre-conceived dates. Yet, the time to allow stratigraphy its say may be closer than ever.

A recent example for such fresh openness is provided by Bet Yerah on the southern tip of Lake Kinnereth. For decades, a large fortified enclosure on this site (sector **SA** on the map below) was misidentified as a synagogue from Byzantine Late Antiquity (4th-6th c.). Yet fresh excavations completed in 2013 point to the Umayyad *qasr* (*castrum*) of al-Sinnabra from the Early Middle Ages (8th-10th c.). That fortress cuts through the site's Hellenistic walls whose period is dated some 700 years earlier. Even the name of the place, *Al-Sinnabra* or *Sinn en-Nabra* (Umayyad Arabic), is still the same as in Hellenistic times (700 years earlier) when it was known as *Sennabris* (Greek):

“Post-Hellenistic presence on Tel Bet Yerah was quite limited in extent and did not produce massive deposits. Early excavators reported Roman remains, but virtually nothing of this period can be identified in the remaining collections. Byzantine occupation appears to be limited to the church excavated and published by Delougaz and Haines” (Greenberg/Tal/Da’adli 2017, 1).

LEFT: Excavation areas at Tel Bet Yerah (SA for Umayyad fortification; Greenberg/Tal/Da'adli 2017, 2).

RIGHT: Umayyad Fortification (8th c. BCE) with audience basilica (yellow; orange) cuts through Hellenistic walls (violet: 1st c. BCE) as well as remains of the Early Bronze Age (green) [Da'adli 2017b, 135].



Contiguous Hellenistic and Early Islamic remains, supposedly 700 years apart, were excavated all over the site. In a sounding of tower four, “we found that its foundation trench cut several walls of Hellenistic and Early Bronze date”. The western wall of tower five “was founded on an earlier Hellenistic wall”. Tower six covered a “portion of a water channel that appears to have drained the fortified area. The soil inside the channel was reported to contain ‘Roman’ glass and pottery” (all quotes from Da’adli 2017 b).

Stratigraphies at different locations of Bet Yerah. Only in “DK” the stratigraphy remains unsettled. Wherever, however, Hellenistic remains (ending 1st c. BCE) are confirmed, Umayyad remains (beginning 7th/8th c. CE) are super-imposed with nothing to show for the 700 years in between (Greenberg/Tal/Da’adli 2017, 3).

<i>Area</i>	<i>DK</i> <i>(Church)</i>	<i>GB</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>AC +</i> <i>BH</i>	<i>UN</i>	<i>MS/EY</i>	<i>BS</i>	<i>MK/GE</i>	<i>BF</i>
<i>Bet Yerah</i> <i>Period^l</i>									
H (Hellenistic)	?	2–3	2	2–3	Pits	2	2	1	Re-use of Wall C
J (Byzantine)	1					Coins			
K (Early Islamic)	2	2	2			1 (?)	Burials?		

Such Roman remains of Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c.) are, indeed, to be expected on top of Late Hellenism buildings (ending in the 1st c. BCE). Yet, they are contemporary with the Umayyad Early Middle Ages (8th-10th c.), too. No less intriguing are the mosaics of the Umayyad audience basilica. Stratigraphically, they belong to Bet Yerah’s Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c. CE succeeding Hellenistic 1st c. BCE). Yet, they are very similar to Late Antique mosaics from “the second half of the fifth century CE” (Lower Chapel at Khirbat al-Mukhayyat [Mount Nebo]) as well as from “535-536” (Saint George at Kh. al-Mukhayyat). Finally, they resemble Early Medieval mosaics from the “eighth century CE” (Jabalal-Akhdar chapel at Amman) as well as the “eighth/ninth centuries” (Ramla; all quotes from Da’adli 2017 b). Thus, the mosaics belong to three periods at the same time: (1) Imperial Antiquity (in stratigraphy), (2) Late Antiquity (in style), and (3) Early Middle Ages (in style). They can do this only if all three periods represent facets of the 8th-10th c. time-span.

A search for Arabs of the Hellenistic period, directly preceding 700 years later Ummayyads, in and around Israel/Palestine, again, lands at the Nabataeans. Though they acted as vital players between Egypt and Syria, they were suddenly and mysteriously forgotten around the 1st/2nd c. CE. No less mysteriously striking similarities between images of Nabataean and Umayyad sculptures over a

700-year period have long been seen by art historians (e.g., Avi-Jonah 1942). Indeed, there are "close relations between the art of Ahnas and the Nabataean sculptural school reflected at Khirbat et Tannur. Despite the time gap between the sites, this affinity cannot be fortuitous" (Talgam 2004,100).

Nabataean Atargatis from *Khirbat et Tannur*: 1st c. CE
 (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8c/Atargatis%2C_Nabatean%2C_c.100_AD%2C_Jordan_Archaeological_Museum.jpg)



Head from Umayyad desert castle *Khirbat al-Maffjar* (Jericho): 8th c. CE
 (<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/523473156669816787/>)
Desert castles repeat square palaces similar to 700 year earlier Roman forts!



Overcoming chronological anachronisms of [ARABIC/ AL-' ARABIYYA] by invoking the stratigraphic contemporaneity of Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c.) and the Early Middle Ages (8th-10th c.) in the time-span of the latter: <i>“The Arabic language (al-' Arabiyya) comes to life [in verbal form] all of a sudden in the 6th century A. D. with its highly developed poetry, without us being able to grasp its formative phases that definitely must have preceded it“ (Hahn 2004, 18f.; cf. Robin 2012).</i>			
11 th cent.	WESTERN ARABIA ABDUL QAYS powerful in Arabia and Bahrein	NORTHERN ARABIA Equation of JEDUR with ITUR aeans commonly accepted.	SOUTHEAST ARABIA
10 th cent.			1 st text mentioning HIMYAR
9 th cent.		Almagest is translated into 9 th c. Arabic + becomes	basis for modern Ptolemy translations
8 th cent.	Arab millefiori glass Umayyads continue Nabataean art	NORTHERN ARABIC „all of a sudden“ appears as sophisticated idiom of Qasida (=poems)	
Conv. 622	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources 624 Mohammed in Hejaz-war with QURAISH	No written Arabic sources
Early 7 th cent.	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources (maybe pre-Islamic N.-Arabic Qasida [=poems] verbally transmitted)	No written Arabic sources
6 th cent.	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources (maybe pre-Islamic N.-Arabic Qasida [=poems] verbally transmitted)	No written Arabic sources
5 th cent.	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources
4 th cent.	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources	"Ilān, Heaven's Lord (only HIMYAR-Jewish text); no other written sources
3 rd cent.	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources	No written Arabic sources
2 nd cent.	No written Arabic sources Almagest	No written Arabic sources contains 9th c.	data. No written Arabic sources
1 st cent. CE	No written Arabic sources ABUCAEI=ABD AL-QAYS=ABDUL QAYS	No written Arabic sources THAEMI =Banu Tahim from QURAISH tribe	No written Arabic sources
Late 1 st cent. BCE	25/24 BCE campaign of 10,000 Romans against Western Arabia (<i>Arabia deserta</i>).	“Eastern Mediterranean” millefiori glass	HIMYAR (Yemen; Sabaeen script) rule Southeast Arabia (<i>Arabia Felix</i>).
Early 1 st cent. BCE	Strabo (-63/+24) knows the ABDUL QAYS as ABUCAEI	Strabo (-63/+24) knows Arabic BANU TAHIM from QURAISH tribe as THAEMI .	
2 nd cent. BCE	Late Hellenism (2 nd +1 st cent. BCE) produces several thousand “PROTO-ARABIC“ MONUMENTAL TEXTS (Hejaz, Asir, Sinai, Israel-Palestine, Jordan in DEDANIC-LIHYANIC SCRIPT (Winnet 1937; Winnet/Reed 1970; Lozachmeur 1995), + THAMUDIC SCRIPT . Both are PRE-CURSORS OF NORTHERN ARABIC SCRIPT OF THE 8th CENT. CE . W.-ARAB NABATAEANS anticipate Umayyad art + WRITE ARABIC IN ARAMAIC SCRIPT . Against Seleucid Hellenism Arab ITUR aeans (Strabo) conquer parts of Lebanon and Galilee.		

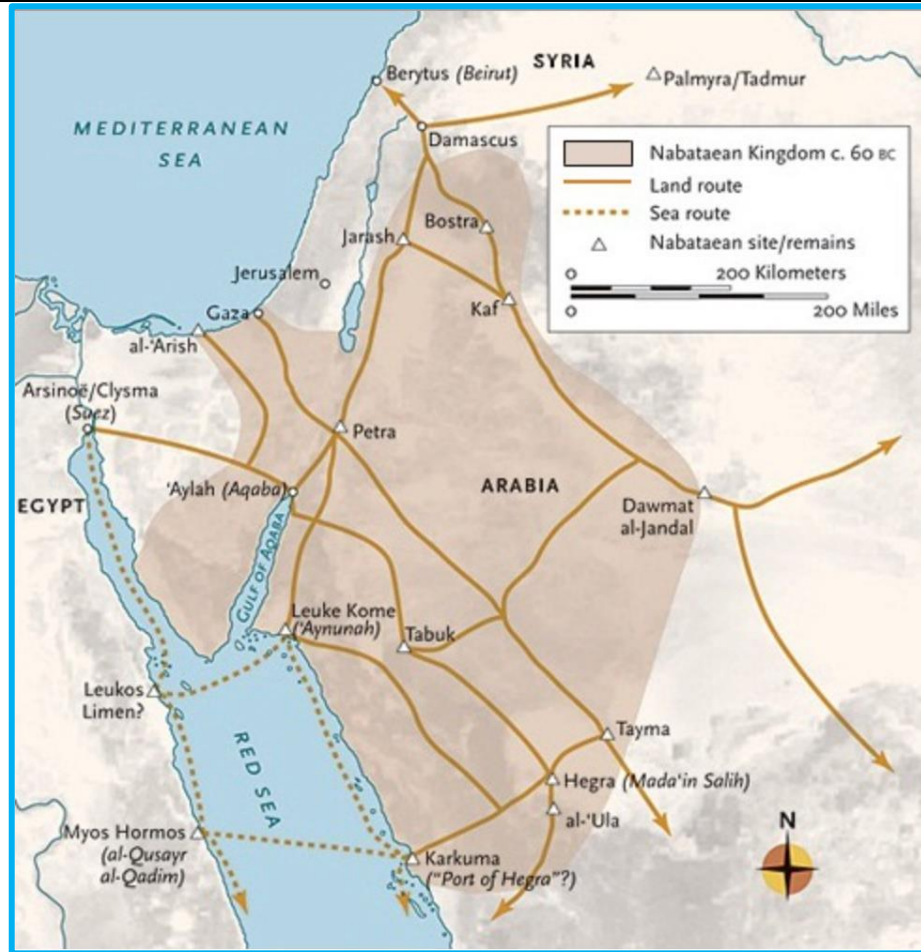
III Is Arab millefiori glass as old or even older than Roman items?

ARABS OF THE 1 st MILLENNIUM IN GREATER SYRIA: CONTEMPORANEITY <i>VERSUS</i> TEXTBOOK CHRONOLOGY		
<p>“The history of the Arabs before Islam remains exasperatingly obscure” (Hoberman 1983). “[It] is easy to see the Ghassanids as forerunners of the Umayyad strategies for political and territorial control: these ‘Bedouin politics’ and the related clientelar policy of subsidies and alliances were actually of capital importance for the Umayyads” (Arce 2012, 69).</p>		
Late Hellenism/Imperial Antiquity	Late Antiquity	Early Middle Ages
NABATAEANS (1 st -3 rd cent.)	GHASSANIDS (3 rd /4 th cent. ff.)	UMAYYADS (7 th /8 th cent. ff.)
STRATIGRAPHY: 1 st cent. CE Nabataeans upon LATE HELLENISM strata		STRATIGRAPHY: Bet Yerah palace upon LATE HELLENISM strata
ARETAS (prominent royal name; contemporaries of Jerusalem’s HERODS)	AL-HARITH, ARETHAS (prominent royal names)	Internal conflict with an AL-HARITH
ARCHITECTURE: “Qasr [<i>castrum</i>] Hallabat has provided / the physical transformation and the changes of use of a Roman fort from the 2 nd -3 rd century, enlarged in Tetrarchic period, and later transformed into a monastery and palatine structure by the Ghassanids , before being refurbished in Umayyad period“ (Arce 2012, 55).	ARCHITECTURE: Mysteriously few desert castles . The central element of the Ghassanid-Umayyad symbiosis “is the all-pervasive Ghassanid presence in the structure of the Umayyad state which might be termed the Ghassanid heritage. This is the right context for understanding of the Ghassanid-Umayyad architectural relationship” (Shahid 2002, 378).	ARCHITECTURE: Umayyad desert castles consist of a square palace similar to Roman forts (“castra”) , a bath house, water reservoir or dam; they often include Roman and Ghassanid elements. Roman aqueducts still in use.
LIMES ARABICUS began in 1 st c. CE. Forts were connected by 1st cent. Flavian <i>Via Nova Traiana</i> .	LIMES-ARABICUS -fort Sergiopolis (Resafa; best preserved Ghassanid town) is built since 1st cent. Flavian period. Mysteriously few cities .	“We can conclude that from the 6 th through the 8 th c. AD many military structures from the LIMES ARABICUS [1 st c. CE] underwent a process of transformation and re-use ” (Morillo et al. 2009, 178).
RELIGION: Conversion to Christianity. No coins since 1st c. CE!	RELIGION: Conversion to Monophysitic Christianity. No coins!	RELIGION: Christian symbols on coins and columns.
ART: Late/Post-Hellenistic	Mysteriously little ART known!	ART: Late/Post-Hellenistic Heinsohn, 04-18

Assumed borders of Nabataeans (1st cent. CE)

Core Territory of Umayyads

[https://freesoulontheroad.blogspot.com/2017/07/giordania-petra.html]



Assumed borders of Ghassanids (6th cent. CE; no art known)

Core Territory of Umayyads

[https://richardodixon.com/2013/04/26/the-ghassanid-empire-paradigm-of-transition-in-the-late-antique-levant-6/]



Modern scholars see Arabs as non-creative imitators of 700 year earlier Roman elements and crafts. Although the Levant has been the cradle of glassmaking its most sophisticated varieties, like millefiori bowls, are believed to have been mastered in the Levant only 700 years after they were pioneered in Italy. The region, we are taught, went from avantgarde to extreme backwardness:

“Islamic glass did not begin to develop a recognizable expression until the late 8th or early 9th century AD. [...] During the first centuries of Islamic rule, glassmakers in the Eastern Mediterranean **continued to use the Roman recipe** consisting of calcium-rich sand (providing the silica and lime) and mineral natron (soda component) from the Wādi el-Natrūn in Egypt. [...] **Roman glassmaking traditions** that are important in the Islamic period include the application of glass trails as a surface embellishment. / The glass industry in the Early Islamic Period can initially be characterized as a **continuation of [700 years] older traditions**. / The Eastern Mediterranean remained a center of glass production, as it had been for centuries. / Mold-blowing, **based on Roman traditions from the 1st century CE**, is another specialized technique that spread widely throughout the Islamic Mediterranean world during this period” (Islamic Glass 2018).

Roman millefiori glass bowl (1st c. CE)

<http://www.thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/en/collections/work/H2901>



Abbasid millefiori glass bowl 8th/9th c. CE

<http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections/454030>



However, Arabs – together with their Jewish competitors – may well have been the originators of some of the most sophisticated glass techniques employed in Rome’s 1st/2nd c. CE, i.e. in the Early Middle Ages of the 8th/9th c. CE stratigraphically when Levantine glassmaking was unquestionably blossoming:

“Recent archaeological and chemical investigations have revealed that manufacturers in the eastern Mediterranean supplied surprisingly large quantities of raw glass (and the Natron processed in its manufacture) to late antiquity and early medieval Europe. The export of raw glass from Egypt and Palestine to distant parts implies production on a large scale, and this has been confirmed by the discovery of four industrial-scale sites with furnaces on the short coastal stretch between Acre in Israel and Tyrus in Lebanon. All these furnaces functioned in Late Antiquity or the Early Middle Ages – the dates are not yet certain [because they are stratigraphically indistinguishable; GH]. [...] A Genizah document of 1011 [High Middle Ages; GH] mentions 37 bales of glass sent by three Jewish firms from Tyrus“ (Toch 2013, 24).

Roman millefiori glass bowl (1st c. CE)

<https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/555772410240364695/?lp=true>



Abbasid millefiori glass bowl from Samarra (9th c. CE)



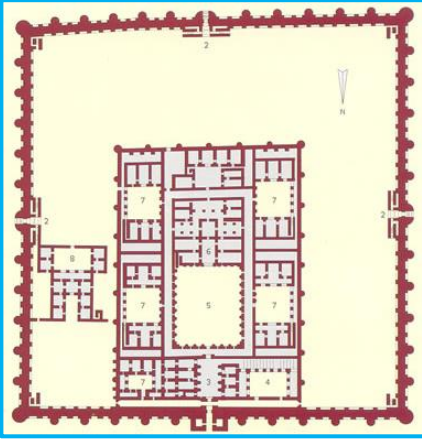


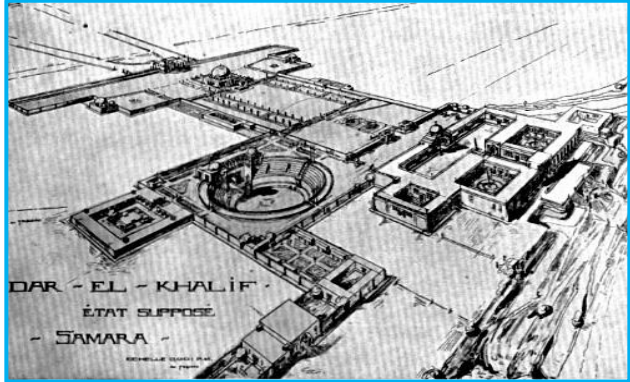
<http://www.paycemadden.com/samarra/artworks.htm>



Millefiori glass beads from Roman Egypt (1st c. BCE/CE)	Abbasid millefiori glass fragment from Samarra (9 th c. CE)
http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/nine-egyptian-millefiori-glass-beads-roman-period-6108388-details.aspx	https://terraeantiquae.com/m/group/discussion?id=2043782%3ATopic%3A244037
	

By employing the stratigraphy-based approach to the 1st millennium CE, early Christianity, early Islam as well as Rabbinical Tanakh-Judaism all develop side by side in the 1st/2nd c. CE, i.e. **8th/9th c. CE stratigraphically**.

Since there is no doubt that glassmaking is much older in the Levant than in Italy some of the millefiori items excavated in Rome may well have been imported from the Semitic realm of the Eastern Mediterranean. Within textbook chronology the Levantine glass makers appear to be boring imitators, but also as ingenious experts. One could blame them for a lack of originality. Yet, one cannot help but admire them for recreating rare skills out of nothing. After all, Imperial Rome and towering Byzantium had been crushed long before, and there were no specialists left to teach them the secrets of these demanding crafts. To develop them in a long evolu-

<p>Roman millefiori glass bowl of the 1st c. CE. (http://www.e-tiquities.com/sites/default/files/imagecache/product/SC21653-2.jpg.) [see already Hensohn 2014c, p.</p>	<p>Fragment of Abbasid millefiori glass bowl from 8th/9th c CE in 1st/2nd c. style and chemistry believed to have been pioneered in Italy (http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/ZoomImage.aspx?image=http://www.christies.com/lotfinderimages/d56712/d5671208&IntObjectID=5671208).</p>	<p>Abbasid 8th c. fortress, Ukhaidir (West of Kerbala/Iraq), with a 1st c. “Roman military” layout (http://www.almendron.com/artes/arquitectura/islam/cap_06/imagenes/ukhaidir_01.htm).</p>
		
<p>Late 1st c. CE Roman glass vase of from Cologne (Harden, 1988, 191).</p>	<p>Fragment of 8th/9th c. Abbasid glass plate in 1st/2nd c. style and chemistry believed to have been pioneered in Italy 700 years earlier (Whitehouse 2010, 269).</p>	<p>Samarra’s “Jawsaq al-Khaqani” (836 CE ff.). 2nd c Roman style water pipes, baths, latrines, arena; crushed soon after 900 CE [http://www.gardenvisit.com/assets/madge/tem7352seg221/original/tem7352seg221_original.jpg].</p>
	 <p>“A ninth-10th-century is certainly possible. [...] Similar motifs [...] are found on a Roman relief-cut vessel from Cologne” [left] Whitehouse 2010, 270).</p>	 <p>DAR - EL - KHALIF ÉTAT SUPPOSÉ - SAMARRA -</p>

tion, as it is assumed for the Romans learning from Hellenism, is impressive enough. But to decipher, after a profound cultural rupture, the chemical composition of all the metal oxides for coloring the glass, comes close to a miracle.

Hellenistic/"Eastern Mediterranean" glass bowl of 2nd or 1st c. BCE
(<https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/91.1.1303/>)



Hellenistic/"Eastern Mediterranean" glass bowl of mid 1st c. BCE
(<https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/17.194.560/>)



A comparable miracle is claimed for wall paintings. It is not understood how Umayyad Damascus of the eighth century could recreate, in style as well as in execution, 700 year earlier Italian art. At the same time, it remains an enigma why Damascus of the 1st/2nd c. has no such art whilst that very city manages to generate some of Rome's finest architects, like Apollodorus of Damascus

(50/60-130 CE). Nobody understands why Damascus lacks 1st/2nd c. art during its Roman period of the 1st/2nd c. but recreates Roman art 700 years later.

Italy's 1st c. wall paintings reappear in 8th c. Umayyad Damascus (Syria)

1st c. CE fresco from *Villa Arianna* in BOSCOREALE

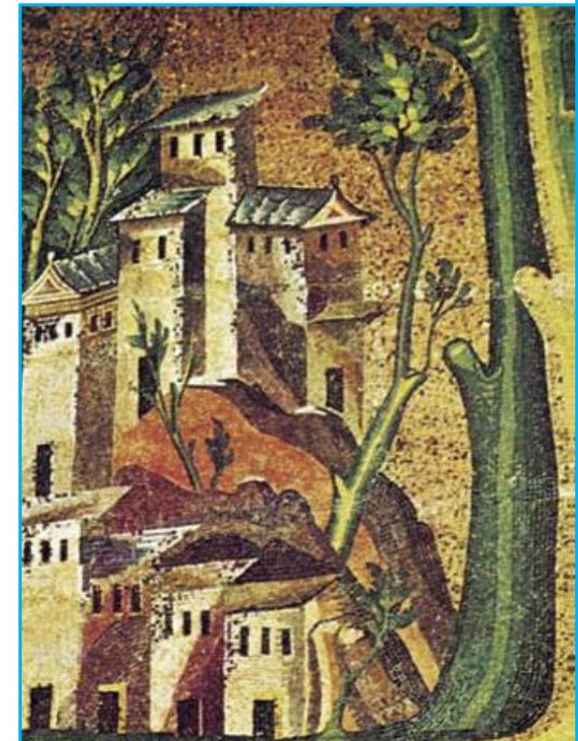
[<http://www.thecultureconcept.com/circle/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Fresco-from-Boscoreale.jpg>.]

Mosaic of the Umayyad mosque (DAMASCUS; early 8th c. CE)

[<http://southbankmosaics.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/damascus-mosaic.jpg>.]

“The famous [8th c. Damascus] frescoes resort to antique motifs, / show parallels with the motifs on the [1st c.] frescoes in Pompei and Boscoreale“ [Trinks 2014, 264 f.]

“Depicting vine tendrils, Corinthian acanthus scrolls, gemmed vases and even fantastic Pompeian-like Roman palaces ensured the survival of such [700 year older] motifs in Islam's nascent art“ [Michaud et al. 1996, 255 f.].



SUMMARY

The mysteriously missing Arab material culture between Greater Syria's 1st and 8th century is due to chronological dogma. Whilst Early Medieval Arab chronology — *cum grano salis* — matches its stratigraphy, Imperial Rome's 1st-3rd century textbook time-span has to move to the 8th-10th century time-span to do the same. Arabic art styles and architectural forms of the 8th century resemble their Roman counterparts of the 1st century so amazing because they were made at the same time of the 8th to 10th century CE.

Once the sources — divided over three periods (Imperial Antiquity, Late Antiquity, Early Middle Ages) — are re-united, comprehensible historical narratives emerge. For example, the poorly documented Berber-Moorish invasion of *Baetica* (Roman Spain with its capital *Corduba*) in the plague-crisis under Marcus Aurelius (171 CE; Cornell/Bispham 2013, 641) will be further illuminated by invoking the sources dealing with the Berber-Umayyad invasion of Spain in the Early Middle Ages. The mystery of the extreme scarcity of Umayyad buildings in Spain will be solved by looking for them in the strata of Imperial Antiquity (1st-3rd c.; being 8th-10th c. stratigraphically). It is that 1st c. post-Hellenistic location where the 8th c. Umayyads of Bet Yerah have been found.

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