

# A journey through times and cultures? Ancient Greek forms in American nineteenth-century architecture: an archaeological view.

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## A journey through times and cultures? Ancient Greek forms in American nineteenth-century architecture: an archaeological view

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### Abstract

The presence of classical architectural features in modern Western architecture shows that knowledge is travelling through both space and time. Yet despite surface similarities, the architecture of revival was very different from that of antiquity. The classicistic architecture of nineteenth-century America provides a clear case. In contrast to the revivalism that affected the founding fathers, nineteenth century American architecture borrowed instead from the past not by archaeology and more by ideology, the American Greek revival saw the architectural forms divested of their original meaning and invested with the ideals of postrevolutionary America. Looking at the vectors by which the revival reached America shows a double distortion affecting the transmission of the signal from Ancient Greece, such that what is lost in the vast distances and times that separate the two societies is in the end a very different set of facts.

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