

# Rūm millet\*

A road trip  
through two  
empires and  
a nation-  
state in  
Greece.

\*\* Before Greece acquired its independence (and the names "Greece" and "Hellas") in the 1820s, for about four centuries the Ottoman authorities referred to its Christian Orthodox population and its territories as "Rūm millet" (i.e. "Roman nation").



To architects and non-experts alike, the evocation of the name of Greece often brings to mind Classical temples, and white marble under blue skies. However, for several centuries (from the middle-ages and until the foundation of a modern Greek nation-state), the territory that is now called "Greece" was part of the Byzantine and then the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, architecture within this territory was built in a variety of styles: From medieval mutations of Corinthian columns to echoes of Ottoman Baroque, and from Post-Byzantine

vernaculars to the eventual evocation of Classical monuments through Neo-Classicism in the 19th century.

This seminar-trip will take the form of a road-trip\*\*: We will start in the north of Greece, in Thessaloniki, and end several kilometers to the south, in Athens. We will drive through cities traversing and villages, to look at Byzantine ruins, Ottoman mansions, Post-Byzantine churches and vernacular houses. After traversing these eight centuries of lesser-known Eastern architectures, we will

arrive in Athens. There, we will visit ancient Classical temples and Neoclassical modern projects, in order to see if the 19th-century myth of Greece as the "Land of the Classics" can still be convincing.

\*\* We are looking for potential drivers (in possession of a driver's license B). Please contact the chair if you are able and willing to drive.

Contact:  
nadya.vonmoos@arch.ethz.ch