



# Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality

By Thomas Barrie, Julio Bermudez

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Architecture has long been understood as a cultural discipline able to articulate the human condition and lift the human spirit, yet the spirituality of architecture is rarely directly addressed in academic scholarship. The seventeen chapters provide a diverse range of perspectives, grouped according to topical themes: Being in the World; Sacred, Secular, and the Contemporary Condition; Symbolic Engagements; Sacred Landscapes; and Spirituality and the Designed Environment. Even though the authors' approach the subject from a range of disciplines and theoretical positions, all share interests in the need to rediscover, redefine, or reclaim the sacred in everyday experience, scholarly analysis, and design.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

'Why a book about spirituality for architecture readers that does not focus primarily on religious buildings? The thesis presented here is provocative: spirituality is a dimension of the world, not only or always of organized religions and their spatial accommodation and representation. The old sense of the spiritual or transcendent as "beyond" the everyday won't work anymore. Grasping spirituality today requires attention to both organized religions and seemingly prosaic conditions: streets, some full of activity, others empty; also buildings, some marvelously complete, others in ruin; and much more. Although the book's five parts - ontological, historical, representational, topographical, and practical - are grounded by philosophical questioning, they also address contemporary design practice. Accordingly, spirituality is not an optional concern for architects but a key to the primary task of binding the individual work to the world.' David Leatherbarrow, University of Pennsylvania, USA

#### About the Author

Thomas Barrie AIA is a Professor of Architecture at North Carolina State University. His research focuses on alternative histories of architecture and, in particular, the interrelationship of a culture's architecture, its cultural/religious beliefs and its socio-political, doctrinal and ritual agendas. His research has brought him to sacred sites around the world and he has published numerous articles and lectured extensively on his subject area. He is the author of *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture* (Routledge, 2010) and *Spiritual Path, Sacred Place: Myth Ritual and Meaning in Architecture* (Shambhala, 1996). Julio Bermudez is an Associate Professor at the Catholic University of America School of Architecture and Planning where he directs the Sacred Space and Cultural Studies graduate concentration. He holds a Master of Architecture and a Ph.D. in Education degrees from the University of Minnesota. His expertise covers architectural phenomenology and the relationship between architecture, culture and spirituality. Bermudez has widely lectured, led symposia, and published in these areas. His current research includes a fMRI study of architecturally induced contemplative states and a large survey on profound experiences of place. His book *Transcending Architecture* published by CUA Press was released in Winter 2015. He co-founded the Forum for Architecture, Culture and Spirituality in 2007. Bermudez has received many recognitions including the 1998 AIA Education Honors Award, the 2004-05 ACSA Creative Achievement Award, the 2005 Premio Trayectoria Creativa Arturo Montagu (by SIGraDI, Latin America), and the 2010 Sasada Award (by CAADRIA, Asia). Phillip Tabb is Professor of Architecture at Texas A&M University where he is the holder of the Liz and Nelson Mitchell Professor of Residential Design. He served as Head of the Department from 2001-2005, and was Director of the School of Architecture and Construction Management at Washington St

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