

Sacred Spaces: The Evolution of Architecture, Interior Design and Human-centered Approaches in Spiritual Environments

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ABSTRACT

Sacral architecture has long served as a bridge between humans and the ethereal power, having shaped spaces that foster spiritual connection, contemplation, and transcendence. Throughout history, religious structures have evolved in response to cultural, philosophical, and technological advancements while maintaining their essential purpose: to create an environment that facilitates reflection. The design of spiritual spaces ranging from the grand temples of Classical Civilizations to the intimate chapels and minimalist meditation spaces of contemporary times, reflect diverse interpretations of human connection to the divine. This research explores the fundamental aspects of sacral architecture from an interdisciplinary approach between architectural evolution, interior design and design thinking placing the human at the center of sacral architectural design. This paper will examine how architectural monumentality, interior spatial configurations, materials, light, and ornamentation influence spiritual experience and human perception. It investigates the human approach from a design thinking point of view, underlining the connection between the involvement of the societal community in shaping the “space” that links them to the divine consciousness. Additionally, the study considers the integration of sustainability in modern sacral design, addressing how innovations in materials and both ecological and societal consciousness shape contemporary sacred spaces. By tracing the evolution of sacral architecture across time, this research highlights key design innovations and their impact on human spirituality.

Keywords: Community; Design Thinking Skills; Monumentalism; Spiritual Connection; Sustainability