

In my opinion, in case of American atria we can speak of the syncretic combination of two architectural solutions. On the one hand, there are vast ritual areas of sacred character in pre-Columbian complexes that, in spite of their variety and multicultural character, were typical of the whole of Latin America, and on the other hand, European atrium derived from the architecture of early Christian basilica. I believe these are two equal sources for the specific creation of atrium in colonial churches in America. It is definitely an individual form. Stress must be put on the uniqueness of function, as well as architecture, elements complementing the establishment's programme – 'posas', 'capillas abiertas', 'capillas Miserere'. On the whole, it should be said that atrium in Latin America is certainly an individual contribution of colonial builders to the history of architecture.

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