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### The Sacred and the Secular

Minority religious groups commonly experience difficulty sustaining independent places of worship in the United States. If such groups are able to organize a congregation at all, worship is often held in the space of another faith or in a space leased to the group by a secular hall.

This project proposes to serve the needs of three such religious groups: the Maronite Catholic, Melkite Catholic, and Greek Orthodox faiths. The site is that of an existing Arab Greek Orthodox church in the suburban town of Orinda, California. By pooling the resources of the three groups, the project proposes to replace the existing nondescript building with a structure that provides three independent spaces of worship (sanctuaries), as well as a series of shared spaces.

The fact that no one faith can lay exclusive claim to the structure suggests that it cannot be understood as a religious building, *per se*, but rather as a building, within which three groups practice their faith. It can be said, therefore, that the building has dual natures: a sacred one that dwells within the sanctuaries and a secular one that governs the building as an entity.

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