



TRANSCENDING ARCHITECTURE. Contemporary Views on Sacred Space

*Edited by Julio Bermudez, PhD **
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Architecture is called to do a lot more than to guarantee the public health, safety and welfare of building users. In fact, the promise of architecture begins fulfillment when such expectations have been met and transcended. At its highest, architecture has the ability to turn geometric proportions into shivers, stone into tears, rituals into revelation, light into grace, space into contemplation, and time into divine presence. A transcending architecture disappears in the very act of delivering us into the awesome and timeless nonspace of the holy. Louis Kahn called it the 'immeasurable', Le Corbusier the 'ineffable', and Rudolf Otto the 'numinous'.

In an age obsessed with speed, consumerism, technology, immediacy, and quantity, an architecture that transcends constitutes a radical and risky act of love and compassion born out of a spiritual and cultural awakening. By providing us with a respite, such environments afford us the rare opportunity to re-discover our bearings and, in so doing, frame our existential condition within the larger matters of life and the divine. This book thus considers the aesthetics and ethics that move us from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from the profane to the sacred. Far from avoiding the charged issues of subjectivity, culture and intangibility, it examines the phenomenological, symbolic, and designerly ways in which the holy gets fixed and transmitted through buildings, landscapes, and urban forms, and not just in institutionally defined "religious" or "sacred" places.

Acknowledging that no individual voice or discipline can exhaust the topic, "*Transcending Architecture*" brings together a stellar group of scholars and practitioners from within and without architecture to share their insights. The result is the most direct, clear, and subtle scholarly text solely focused on the transcendental dimension of architecture available. The ultimate goal is that, by engaging such a provocative and timely topic, readers will find ample opportunities for intellectual, spiritual, and professional growth. For more information, visit: http://www.sacred-space.net/transcending_architecture/

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Photo credit. Between Cathedrals, Cadiz (2009), project by architect Alberto Campo Baeza