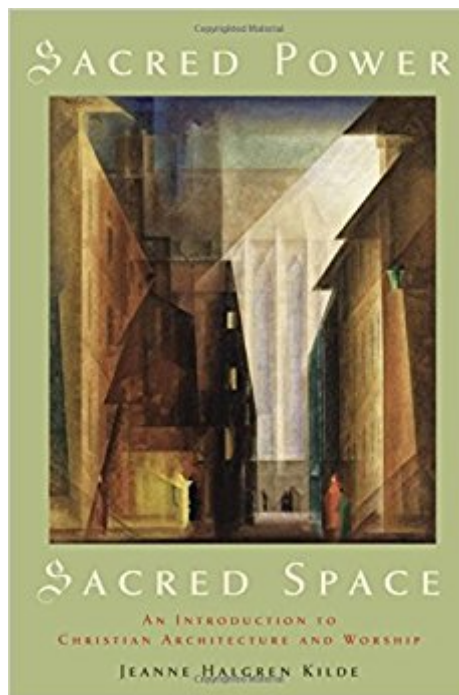




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Sacred Power, Sacred Space: An Introduction To Christian Architecture And Worship



Synopsis

Jeanne Halgren Kilde's survey of church architecture is unlike any other. Her main concern is not the buildings themselves, but rather the dynamic character of Christianity and how church buildings shape and influence the religion. Kilde argues that a primary function of church buildings is to represent and reify three different types of power: divine power, or ideas about God; personal empowerment as manifested in the individual's perceived relationship to the divine; and social power, meaning the relationships between groups such as clergy and laity. Each type intersects with notions of Christian creed, cult, and code, and is represented spatially and materially in church buildings. Kilde explores these categories chronologically, from the early church to the twentieth century. She considers the form, organization, and use of worship rooms; the location of churches; and the interaction between churches and the wider culture. Church buildings have been integral to Christianity, and Kilde's important study sheds new light on the way they impact all aspects of the religion. Neither mere witnesses to transformations of religious thought or nor simple backgrounds for religious practice, church buildings are, in Kilde's view, dynamic participants in religious change and goldmines of information on Christianity itself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Jeanne Kilde is a gifted teacher and a mature scholar who has been studying and writing about material culture since before it was fashionable to do so. Her works are careful, imaginative, and daring, and this treatment of the linkages of power and space is brilliant. The book's depth and reach are breathtaking, and its implications are manifold." --Calvin J. Roetzel, Sundet Professor of

New Testament and Christian Studies, University of Minnesota"Kilde's book is one that has long been needed. It provides a concise introduction to the periods of church-building, enlivened by a clearly articulated point of view. It is focused on a selection of important churches. And it is informed by an interpretive grid that readers will find tremendously useful as a starting point for analysis and discussion. This book will be welcomed warmly as an interesting, accessible introduction to the subject." --Richard Kieckhefer, author of *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley*

Jeanne Halgren Kilde is the author of *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America*. She is the Director of the Religious Studies Program at the University of Minnesota.

This is a solid survey of christian architecture from the early church on up to contemporary buildings in the United States. The underlying approach is to critique architectural moves in terms of their effect on different constituents: lay members, the uninitiated, the clergy, and so on. There is an interesting discussion of the differences between longitudinally oriented spaces versus centrally organized spaces. More graphics would have made the book easier to read.

The book arrived quickly and was as described

Interesting survey of worship space from the beginnings of Christianity to the present time. The book is concerned not only with the obvious connection between theology and sacred space, but also the way other social factors influence space.

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