



## Time

Left  
**Balthasar Neumann,**  
Pilgrimage Church,  
Vierzehnheiligen,  
Germany 1743 – 72,  
interior looking east

The eleventh edition of Sir Banister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method* published in 1943, which was my student copy bought second hand about five years later, does not list Balthasar Neumann's Vierzehnheiligen or the Assam Brothers' S. Johannes Nepomuk Church in Munich, to take two exuberant examples of South German Baroque. Ever since the first edition of 1896, these buildings were clearly not considered sufficiently significant to be included. The twentieth and centenary edition of 1996 describes both churches and moreover devotes space to illustrations. The earlier editions also made a clear distinction between two curiously labelled divisions: the historical styles derived from Egypt and the classical world of the Mediterranean and the non-historical styles which embraced any non-European architecture. The latest edition makes no such distinction and takes a much more global view. Such a change in approach owes as much to politics and an awareness of where the market is to be found as to art history.

All buildings have meanings that are deeply enmeshed with their appearance. That can surely be taken as axiomatic. But that appearance is itself read differently at different times and to some extent depends on what we want to see, what our eye expects to have presented.

In 1938 – 39 Sigfried Giedion delivered the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard which were subsequently published in his highly influential *Space, Time and Architecture: the growth of a new tradition*. The third and enlarged edition of 1954 gives considerable emphasis to the baroque both in architecture and urban planning. Francesco Borromini, Guarino Guarini and Balthasar Neumann are prominent. Vierzehnheiligen, for example, is discussed in terms of the control of clear light on curved surfaces, and in the relation of architecture, sculpture and decoration. The main reason for its inclusion, as of the other examples from the baroque, is, however, that there is a freedom of planning and an exploitation of non-euclidean geometry.