

protagonists in Poussin's picture. Based on this evidence, Unglaub pairs a musical mode with each of the four main figures in the painting. These modes, he argues, served as the wellspring for the artist's theory.

The authors/curators have staged a welcome exhibition of Poussin's paintings, drawings, and antique visual sources, some of which are rarely seen by the public.

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Riemenschneider in Rothenburg: Sacred Space and Civic Identity in the Late Medieval City. Katherine M. Boivin.

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The literature on Tilman Riemenschneider is vast. Much of it focuses on issues of attribution—specifically, whether a carving is by the master and/or his large workshop, when it was produced, and what materials were used. Katherine Boivin's wonderful book offers a refreshingly different approach. It is a richly nuanced contextual study that is as much about the Franconian city of Rothenburg as it is about Riemenschneider. Between about 1485 and 1514, the Würzburg sculptor and his atelier created at least nine altarpieces for Rothenburg's churches and chapels. This represents about a quarter of all known altarpieces displayed in the city during this period. Boivin asks three basic questions: Why did Riemenschneider receive so many of these commissions? What was the role of the city council in shaping the town's religious landscape? And how were artworks experienced on both personal and communal levels? Boivin argues for meaningful correspondences between art, architecture, and civic aspirations as the council pursued an "agenda of community formation and civic beautification over the course of two centuries" (13).

Chapter 1 ("The City as Patron") charts the council's successful campaign, starting in the fourteenth century, to assert its control over local religious establishments and practices. St. Jakob, Rothenburg's sole parish church, was also a collegiate church for the Teutonic Order. It was the council and its appointed supervisor, not the knights, who directed much of the rebuilding of the church and its decoration.

Chapter 2 ("A Pilgrimage Environment") explores how the completion of St. Jakob's west end (1453–71) corresponded with the recent veneration of a local blood relic, drops of consecrated wine spilt on an altar cloth in the mid-thirteenth century. Miracles started to be recorded in 1442. Prior to this, Rothenburg was not an active pilgrimage site. The council promoted the relic and its promise of salvation through the Eucharist. The west end of St. Jakob, built up and over Klingengasse, includes two spaces for pilgrims: a relics chamber (*Heiltumskammer*), accessed through the exterior of the church and the elevated Chapel of the Holy Cross. Riemenschneider's *Altar*

of the *Holy Blood* (1499–1505), which displays the blood relic encased in a crystal cross, was designed for this chapel. Boivin provides a sensitive discussion of the retable, its elaborate frame made by the local joiner Erhart Harschner, and how its position related to the movement of pilgrims up the north staircase into the chapel, where ocular communion was permitted, and then down the south staircase.

Chapter 3 (“The Urban Complex”) posits a spatial interdependence between St. Jakob, the adjoining cemetery, and the charnel house, with its ossuary on the ground floor and two-tiered Chapel of St. Michael above. This precinct, which largely disappeared in the early nineteenth century, contained stained-glass windows in the choir of St. Jakob, numerous sculptures, such as the *Mount of Olives* and *Christ in Judgment*, and numerous family tombs and memorials depicting Christ’s passion and the salvific nature of his blood. Riemenschneider’s now cut-down *Crucifixion Altar* (between 1508 and 1513), today in nearby Detwang, likely stood in the Chapel of St. Michael. Boivin proposes that, together, these spaces offered a “miniature Jerusalem” (123) to the faithful. She stresses this was not a single decision of the council’s oversight committee of the parish *fabrica* but a structured programming process over many generations to create a meaningful religious complex in the heart of Rothenburg.

Chapter 4 (“Remapping the City”) extends the council’s promotion of pilgrimage to other sites across Rothenburg in the later fifteenth century. Boivin terms this an “ongoing process of civic self-formation” (131). Riemenschneider and his workshop supplied altarpieces to the St. Wolfgang Chapel, the Franciscan church, the Dominican convent, and the Chapel of Our Lady in Kobolzell, which stands by the river in the valley beneath Rothenburg. Boivin discusses what is known about the processional and pilgrimage routes in and immediately around Rothenburg. She renews the argument that Riemenschneider’s *Assumption of the Virgin Altarpiece* in Creglingen originally served as the lay altar in St. Jakob. Riemenschneider’s sculptures, both polychromed and unpainted, were visible throughout the city. Rothenburg, never a major artistic center, imported its art from Würzburg and other nearby towns. Riemenschneider’s ability to produce altarpieces promptly was certainly a factor. Yet the stylistic uniformity of his art, intentionally or unintentionally, gave continuity to the visual experience as viewers progressed to the religious sites across Rothenburg.

The story ends in 1525. Rothenburg embraced Lutheranism, pilgrimages stopped, and the need for religious art was questioned. Fortunately, most of Riemenschneider’s altarpieces survived intact or in parts, albeit often dispersed across museums in Europe and the United States. Besides smartly discussing Riemenschneider’s art, Boivin creates a compelling portrait of the complex social and religious dynamics of Rothenburg around 1500. She provides the body and blood of the living city at its peak, before its subsequent decline and romanticized rediscovery in the mid-nineteenth century.

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