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IL RITORNO DI ‘SIGNOR GIBBI’ IN PATRIA: JAMES GIBBS’S TRAINING IN ITALY AND ITS BEARING ON HIS LATER CAREER

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INTRODUCTION

It is rare for an architect to sign a building. But on the frieze of St Martin-in-the-Fields (Fig. 1) is inscribed in classicising majuscule lettering: ‘D[eo]. SACRAM AEDEM S[ancti]. MARTINI PAROCHIANI EXTRVI FEC[erunt]/ Iacobo Gibbs Architecto’, meaning ‘the parishioners caused the church of St Martin, sacred to God, to be built./ [By] James Gibbs, Architect’.¹ Gibbs was perhaps the first architect working in London to proclaim his authorship of a building in so bold and prominent a fashion; indeed, there are few who could rival his self-confidence in that respect.²

Gibbs was trained in Rome by Carlo Fontana (1638–1714), the successor as papal *capo architetto* to Gianlorenzo Bernini. During his years in Italy, from 1703 to 1708, it was still comparatively rare for the British to travel. When in 1704 Charles Talbot, first Duke of Shrewsbury hosted a dinner for English residents in Rome, only fourteen guests attended.³ And of the few other architects to have travelled abroad, none received Gibbs’s formal training in architecture.⁴ Thus, when he arrived in London in late 1708, he could already lay claim to being one of Britain’s most remarkable architects. Given these professional credentials, we can understand



Fig. 1. Detail from the frieze of St Martin’s-in-the-Fields, built to designs by James Gibbs, 1721–7. (*Author*)

why Gibbs would have the self-assurance to draw attention to himself – and his identity as an architect – in this way.

But Gibbs's confidence in himself is at odds with the prevailing attitude of the historiography, which has relegated him to the rank of an architect 'of very great ability, if not quite genius', in Sir John Summerson's words; or, to borrow Erwin Panofsky's memorable paraphrase of Gilbert and Sullivan, that of the 'very model of a major minor master'.⁵ Stylistically, Gibbs has been seen as a 'chameleon', one who disguised his Baroque predilections – supposedly inherited from his time in Italy – beneath a thin veneer of Palladianism.⁶ Perhaps none have summarised this position, which was first and most influentially set out by Summerson, better than Giles Worsley, who wrote: 'unfortunately, Gibbs had trained as a Baroque architect when taste was turning to Palladianism, and was a Roman Catholic in a Protestant country'.⁷ Stylistically, politically, religiously, therefore, Gibbs was on the wrong side of history – a Palladian wolf in a Baroque sheep's clothing, so to speak. This is the case even in recent revisionist accounts of the period, with one prominent historian describing Gibbs as 'the main victim of Palladian transformation'.⁸ The author of the most recent monograph on Gibbs, Terry Friedman, was himself a proponent of this view, even going as far as to suggest that 'Gibbs's training would not have done him much good in a building world increasingly dominated by Whiggish Classicism'.⁹

It is the intention of this article to challenge these assessments of Gibbs's career. Gibbs – of whom it was said within years of death that 'no architect, except Sir Christopher Wren, ever had a better opportunity of displaying his genius in the great stile of architecture' – was hardly an outsider.¹⁰ His career is best understood in a way that places the architect of St Martin's-in-the-Fields and the Radcliffe Library and author of the *Book of Architecture* (1728) at the heart of the architectural developments. By focussing on one aspect of Gibbs's

architectural practice – namely, his training in Italy – the article seeks to demonstrate that, if Gibbs was at all removed from his contemporaries, it was as one of the leading architectural designers of the period. By consequence, it is hoped that this interpretation will enhance our understanding of what might be termed the 'Palladian turn' more generally.

GIBBS'S YEARS IN ITALY

Gibbs left for continental Europe around 1699; he first spent time with an 'Ant [*sic*]' in Holland, before taking the land route to Rome via France, Germany and Switzerland.¹¹ His obituary in the *Scots Magazine* suggests that in Holland he entered into the service of an architect, but it is unclear how much truth there is in this account; his obituarist, writing under the soubriquet 'Palladio', makes no mention of the fact that Gibbs's first purpose in travelling to Rome was to train for the Catholic priesthood.¹² But this was indeed the case. His arrival in Rome by October 1703 is disclosed by the appearance of his name in the register of those enlisted at the Scots College, a Catholic seminary.¹³ The author of this obituary does not disguise Gibbs's Catholicism, so it may be that he was either unaware of this information or chose knowingly to exclude it.

In any case, Gibbs did not pursue his vocational studies for long. The Scots College was a difficult place to study in this period and accounts suggest that the atmosphere was hardly what one might term 'priestly'. The two college rectors who presided over Gibbs's time there were both habitual bullies, with one Scots Catholic in Rome reporting that the second rector had 'terrified [Gibbs] by his rudeness'.¹⁴ The situation soon became so intolerable for Gibbs that, by August 1704, he had decided to leave the College, instead securing an introduction to Carlo Fontana.¹⁵ At the same time, it seems that he also enlisted to study under Abramo or Abraham Paris (also Preiss, Preuss, Preuß, active 1684–1715). Little is currently

known about Paris, but it appears that he ran a separate school for foreign students of architecture with close ties to that of Fontana.¹⁶ Furthermore, if George Vertue's account is to be believed, Gibbs may also have studied perspective under Pier Francesco Garoli (1638–1716).¹⁷

Gibbs later wrote that he 'loved to live at Rome and would have stayed longer', but his stay was cut short.¹⁸ Late in 1708, news arrived of the terminal illness of his half-brother, William (dates unknown), forcing him to return to Britain; he did not return in time to see his brother still alive.¹⁹ In total, Gibbs's time in Rome had lasted some five years, and he had not set foot in Britain in almost a decade.

Carlo Fontana was responsible for the training for many of the brightest and best architects working in Europe in this period. Fellow alumni of the Fontana school – which might better be described as a workshop – include figures, to name but a few, such as Nicodemus Tessin, best known for his work in Stockholm; Johann Bernard Fischer von Erlach, who worked in Vienna, as did Lukas von Hildebrandt, another pupil; Filippo Juvarra, subsequently architect to the court of Turin; and Niccolò Michetti, one of the early architects of St Petersburg. With students coming travelling from near and far to study there, Fontana's workshop was highly competitive. Gibbs wrote to Sir John Perceval, later first Earl of Egmont, whom he had met in Rome, that 'there is such a pack of us, and so jealous of one another, that the one would see the other hanged'.²⁰

Historians have often looked for stylistic attributes, attributes that have been termed 'the flagrant effects of the Roman baroque', for evidence of Gibbs's time in Italy.²¹ But a study of Fontana's teaching method reveals that Gibbs did not just learn in Rome a series of Baroque clichés. Instead, what Fontana provided was a rigorous training in architectural design in a classical idiom from its foundational principles. We might here quote Gibbs's own succinct account of Fontana's curriculum, contained in a manuscript now kept in Sir John

Soane's Museum, London. This document was, as I have argued elsewhere, written by Gibbs at the end of his life, and comprises two sections: the first, a description of the most famous buildings of Europe, particularly those in Rome, the second

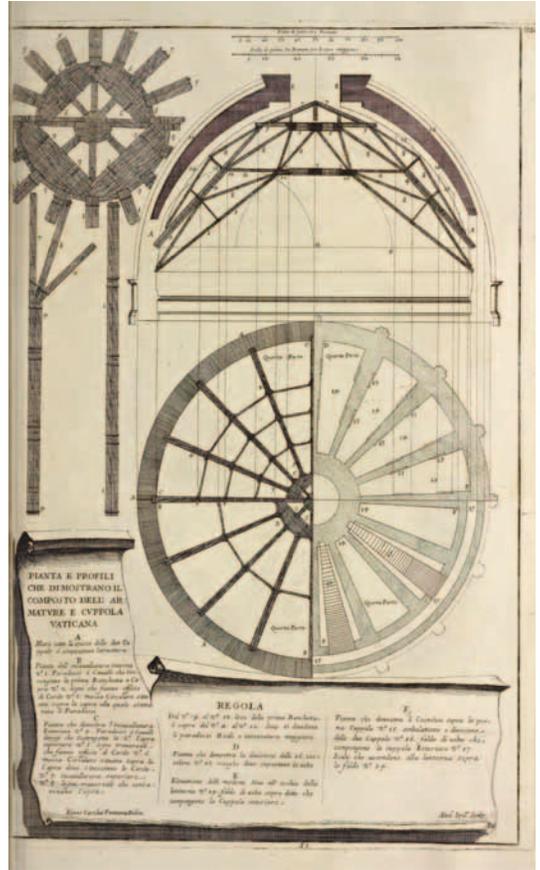


Fig. 2. Carlo Fontana, 'PIANTA E PROFILI CHE DIMONSTRANO IL COMPOSTO DELL' ARMATVRE E CVPPOLA VATICANA', plan and profile showing the composition of the framework and dome of the Vatican, from *Il Tempio Vaticano e sua Origine* (Roma, 1694), p. 321. Notably, Gibbs directly emulates this method of presentation in some plates of his 1747 work *Bibliotheca Radcliviana*. (Archive.org (https://archive.org/details/gri_33125008467413) [accessed 17th June 2019]).

a brief autobiography followed by an inventory of Gibbs's buildings.²² The prominence with which Gibbs's training in Rome is foregrounded in this manuscript itself attests to the central position that he believed it held for his career. In it, he describes how he 'studed in [Fontana's] school some years, wher he was taught Architectur, geometry, and perspective, so by the Assistance of his Master reading of Books, and constant application to drawing, became proficient in that profession'.²³ Gibbs's account suggests that there were two parts to Fontana's teaching method. First, students – were taught the fundamentals of architecture – geometry and perspective. They were then expected to perfect their understanding by way of directed self-study and practice. This might be by copying from books or, most importantly, by making studies of buildings.²⁴

Fontana's lessons in draughtsmanship – refined by 'constant application' on the part of the student, as Gibbs puts it – were of paramount importance. His was very much a working studio; he taught, in part, to ease the burden placed on him by his many commitments as papal architect.²⁵ These commitments were made more strenuous by the fact that, as an architect, he paid close attention to the intricacies and minutiae of his commissions. This is reflected in his publications, which show a detailed knowledge of and interest in engineering (Fig. 2).²⁶ In order efficiently to handle this demanding workload, Fontana taught a standardised method of draughtsmanship so that multiple hands could work across project drawings without obvious discrepancies in style.²⁷ As a result, moreover, of his wide-ranging interests, students were given a particularly thorough grounding on the potential challenges that could be faced by the practising architect.

The hallmarks of this can directly be seen in Gibbs's skills as a draughtsman and in his attitude towards project supervision. He was a highly accomplished draughtsman, a fact that is readily visible when one studies the large collection of

his drawings that is now held in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Fig. 3).²⁸ Many of these are highly-finished presentational studies, which attest to Gibbs's high level of technical skill. A drawing (Fig. 4) in these collections indicates how a student in Fontana's workshop might have been taught to draw. It depicts a project that Fontana submitted in 1699 for the façade of San Giovanni in Laterano, and is the only record of this design. Once thought to have been the work of Fontana himself, infelicities in the draughtsmanship instead show the hand of a student copying from Fontana's originals. It has been suggested that this student might even have been a young Gibbs, but for now this must remain speculation.²⁹

Gibbs's work on the Commission for Fifty New Churches bears witness to the technical facility that he had acquired in Italy. With this in mind, it is noteworthy that, when in 1714 he was appointed to the post of Surveyor to the Commission, it was over the head of a more experienced, older architect – John James, who had worked with Wren on St Paul's – and that it saw him elevated to the same rank as his fellow-Surveyor, Nicholas Hawksmoor, around twenty years his senior. Gibbs seems to have had no difficulty in performing the same tasks as Hawksmoor, like him assessing the suitability of land for purchases, making technical observations on churches that were in structural danger, and even bartering with householders to secure additional plots.³⁰ This was complex work that was beyond the capabilities of some of his colleagues. Thomas Archer, for instance, never more than a Commissioner, called on the services of the Surveyors to assist him in technical matters, with Gibbs reporting on the setting of mortar at the marshy site of St John's Smith Square.³¹ Gibbs even provided specialised advice to Hawksmoor himself, suggesting a more cost-effective and watertight means of vaulting his church of St Alphege, Greenwich.³²

Fontana's training had left Gibbs a highly

proficient technician of architecture. But of arguably greater importance was the second strand of the education provided by Fontana: the study of esteemed exemplars both ancient and modern. Fontana's pupils were expected to apply their theoretical education by making measured drawings of the buildings with which they were surrounded. Most highly prized among these were the remains of classical antiquity. It ought here to be remembered that these ruins were the ultimate source of all of the

most fashionable architectural styles of this period throughout Europe, whether we call them Palladian or Baroque. To have studied them as closely as did Gibbs gave a great claim to architectural expertise. In the Preface to the *Book of Architecture* he stated that 'a cursory View of those August Remains can no more qualify the Spectator, or Admirer, than the Air of the Country can inspire him with the knowledge of Architecture'.³³ In other words, it was only by the study of 'many Years' that one could gain a sufficient



Fig. 3. James Gibbs, 'Design for the side upright of the "Round Draught being of the Ionick Order", of St Martin in the Fields, London'. (© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, WA1925.340.30)



Fig. 4. 'Design of a proposed façade for S. Giovanni in Laterano', school of Carlo Fontana.
(© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, WA1925.342.36)

understanding of the principles upon which they were built. Gibbs soon became expert on these ruins. He would make use of his expertise by working as a *cicerone* to touring aristocrats such as Perceval, and also, as he recounts in the Soane manuscript, by making drawings for them.³⁴ Indeed, in a letter written to the painter Edward Gouge (d.1735) in Rome following his return, Perceval remembered

Gibbs as a man of scholarly bent, writing that he hoped 'that Mr. Gibbs finds scholars to his mind'.³⁵

Gibbs would have found his scholarly disposition encouraged by the environment in which he found himself. The Rome of Gibbs's day was possessed by something of a mania for the study of classical remains, particularly the early Christian churches.³⁶ Fontana, who published innovative

excursuses on Roman architecture, was one of the foremost figures of this antiquarian culture.³⁷ Indeed, the profession of architect held a position of great importance in this period of antiquarian revival.³⁸ Acquiring what has been described as the status of imaginative interpreter, the architect was increasingly expected to have a knowledge of textual sources as well as of the physical remains of antiquity. As a consequence, the architect was expected to be able to think about the remains historically, with the ruins metaphorically speaking to him 'in several tenses: past, present and future'.³⁹ This can be seen in Fontana's publications, such as *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato* (1725); here Fontana not only provided measured drawings of the ancient ruins like those of Palladio or Antoine Desgodetz, but also used his extensive knowledge of the classical source material to give hypothesised reconstructions of buildings such as the Colosseum.⁴⁰ Thus, when Gibbs writes of his 'Master reading of Books', he meant works of practical instruction, theory and perhaps even works of history.⁴¹ This is borne out in the remarkable breadth of interest represented in the library of 'near seven hundred Volums' that Gibbs had assembled by the time of his death.⁴²

This critical attitude towards antiquity would have been taken into account when it came to the study of the architecture of the 'moderns'. Fontana was selective in the modern examples that he commended to his pupils. His personal aesthetic preferences were relatively sober: 'respectable, competent, restrained', in Anthony Blunt's words.⁴³ A story from a biography of Filippo Juvarra – written by an acquaintance, Scipione Maffei, and published in 1738 – is instructive here. According to this, when Juvarra arrived in Fontana's studio in 1704, he was instructed by the *maestro* to unlearn everything that he had seen in his native Messina, known for its exuberant architectural forms, and to study 'praised-but-simple' architecture instead. By this, Fontana meant the works of the High Renaissance, epitomised in the architecture of Bramante, Raphael

and Michelangelo Buonarroti.⁴⁴ Gibbs later wrote of his own disapproval of the Baroque of southern Italy, criticising Neapolitan buildings that are 'over charged with too many Ornaments and incrusted with variety of Marbles without judgement'.⁴⁵ Neither was Fontana a great exponent of the dynamic concave and convex forms of Francesco Borromini (his façade of the Church of San Marcello in Corso is notably restrained by comparison Borromini's work) a view that Gibbs also shared. Of Borromini's niches of San Giovanni in Laterano, Gibbs writes that they are 'a little bordering upon the gothick' (a term that he regularly deployed in its pejorative sense).⁴⁶

THE BENEFITS OF AN ITALIAN TRAINING

We have already seen the technical advantages with which Gibbs's training presented him, but it also allowed him to claim intellectual advantage over his rivals. Gibbs consistently promoted himself by reference to his Italian training for the remainder of his career. When he returned to London in 1708, the architectural climate in which he found himself 'was noticeably concerned with knowledge about architecture, and the accumulation of that knowledge'.⁴⁷ In this context, Gibbs's Italian training – with the attendant knowledge that it had furnished him of both the theoretical and technical aspects of architecture – could be said to have provided him with a kind of cultural capital. Architectural knowledge held a particular value in this period as it came to be increasingly invested with connotations of gentility.⁴⁸ So, throughout his career, Gibbs promoted himself explicitly by reference to his training in Rome. Self-image was clearly of great concern to Gibbs as is evidenced by the fact that, other than Sir William Chambers (1722–1796), no architect commissioned so many portraits of himself in this period.⁴⁹ We see this in his own petition to the Surveyorship for the Fifty New Churches, where he advertised his suitability for the post by reference to

the fact that he had 'studied architecture abroad for several years under the greatest masters at Rome, and especially that parte that relates to churches'.⁵⁰ Gibbs was even known to his early patron, the Earl of Mar, as 'Signor Gibbi' – as William Kent was 'Kentino' or the 'honest Signor' to Lord Burlington – and signed his name in various Italianised forms such as 'Jacopo Gibbs', or in Latin as in the frieze of St Martin's.⁵¹ It was also by reference to this 'knowledge' that Sir Christopher Wren, in a petition of support for Gibbs's application to the Surveyorship to the Commission for Fifty New Churches in 1713, promoted Gibbs's cause, writing that he had had 'opportunities to observe his knowledge in Architecture and what relates thereto'.⁵²

Gibbs's knowledge of Italy also provided him with a critical distance to recent architectural developments in England. Having grown up – as far as we are aware – exclusively in Scotland, it is likely that his arrival in London in 1708 would have provided him with his first personal exposure to English iterations of what might be termed elite classical-style architecture. Gibbs is often cited as an exponent of the 'English Baroque', but the documentary evidence suggests that he was far from wholly complimentary towards this style of building. Writing to Robert Harley, first Earl of Oxford in 1713, before he had attained his Surveyorship, he described architecture as 'a science that every body criticises here, and in all the Countrys that ever I was in, never did I see worse performers'.⁵³ He expressed this opinion elsewhere, writing to the Earl of Mar in 1716 to inform him that their 'brothers of the brush' were well, but that they 'go on in the same style of building as formerly. I wish some of them would travel to improve their knowledge in that science, for it is but Gothick and best [...] although this Gothick style costs them ten times more'.⁵⁴ This was a concern that he again expressed in the 1728 *Book of Architecture*, where he lamented: 'what heaps of stone, and even Marble, are daily seen in Monuments, Chimneys, and other

Ornamental pieces of Architecture, without the least Symmetry or Order'.⁵⁵ Gibbs then explained that the designs in the book are 'in the best Taste I could form upon the Instructions of the greatest Masters in *Italy*, as well as my own Observations on the antient Buildings there'.⁵⁶ Clearly, therefore, he found little to admire in the buildings of the 'English Baroque'. This should give us cause to be cautious when talking, as some have done, of Gibbs's 'earlier Baroque manner', or characterising him as a reluctant convert to a new, plainer, 'Palladian' style of building.⁵⁷

Gibbs's views on contemporary English architecture were less straightforward than has previously been suggested. But this is also true of British attitudes towards Italian architecture more generally. Hitherto, historians have at times made the assumption that the 'blatantly Roman associations' supposedly be seen in Gibbs's early work, such as the church of St Mary-le-Strand, would have been universally seen as a negative by contemporaries.⁵⁸ But English attitudes towards 'modern' Roman architecture were more nuanced than that, and even at times bore a resemblance to Carlo Fontana's views on the topic. Fontana's reported belief in a 'golden age' of Italian architecture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a trope that was repeated by Colen Campbell. Campbell is a figure who is usually taken to be diametrically opposed to Fontana: a claim that he himself made when he termed 'affected and licentious [...] the Works of *Bernini* and *Fontana*'.⁵⁹ But Campbell also wrote of his high esteem for Bramante, Raphael and Michelangelo – views similar to those that had been expressed by John Evelyn in his edition of Roland Fréart, Sieur de Chambray's *Parallèle de l'Architecture* – and would perhaps only differ from Gibbs's master by citing Palladio as the last great architect, other than Inigo Jones, until his own day.⁶⁰ Indeed, Campbell himself claimed, perhaps falsely, that he had travelled to Europe in his own petition to the Commission for Fifty New Churches.⁶¹ It is evident, therefore, that, in the eyes

of Gibbs's contemporaries, to have travelled abroad – particularly to Italy – was highly desirable.

It is also significant that James Ralph (d.1762), who is usually numbered as one of the Lord Burlington's 'Palladian' acolytes, identified Italy as the ultimate source of good taste in building.⁶² In his description to the entrance of old Somerset House, when commenting on the faults of a building that he hailed as 'the first dawning of taste in *England*', he wondered whether the architect perhaps 'had not opportunity to review the *Italian* models, or form his judgement on the plans of the antients'.⁶³ For Ralph, even an explicitly religious building such as St Peter's Basilica in Rome was 'a model which the most finish'd architect need not have been ashamed to imitate, and as all its particular beauties have long publickly been known and admir'd'.⁶⁴ In his view, the opportunity presented by the new St Paul's Cathedral was wasted; although he admired the cathedral as a great piece of architecture, he lamented the fact that an opportunity to surpass St Peter's in architectural excellence had been missed. Campbell also shared this view, hailing St Peter's as a 'Majestick Building' and including it as the only non-English work to be illustrated in *Vitruvius Britannicus*.⁶⁵

We might here conclude by turning to the architects of the generation that followed Gibbs: that represented by Sir William Chambers and Robert Adam. Like Gibbs, both men trained on the Continent and then subsequently promoted themselves by reference to this period of study, making shrewd use of publications to this end. Indeed, as the century progressed, this story becomes an ever more familiar tale. But Gibbs was the first to have trained in this way. For Summerson, he was the last in a line, the 'delayed fulfilment of Wren'.⁶⁶ But perhaps instead he was the first of a new breed.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 My thanks both to Frank Salmon for having drawn this to my attention, and to Oren Margolis for translating the Latin.
- 2 Henry Flitcroft emulated Gibbs when he placed an inscription 'H. Flitcroft Architectus' on the façade of St Giles-in-the-Fields not long after the completion of St Martin's. His lettering is, incidentally, less classicising, being carved in a lower-case font. One imagines that this would have rankled for Gibbs, since Flitcroft had beaten him to the commission: see T. Friedman, 'Baroque into Palladian: The Designing of St Giles-in-the-Fields', *Architectural History* 40 (1997), pp. 115–143. An interesting precedent comes in the work of Andrea Palladio, some of whose buildings bear inscriptions identifying him as the architect.
- 3 I. Pears, 'Patronage and Learning in the Virtuoso Republic: John Talman in Italy', *The Oxford Art Journal* 5/1 (1982), p. 28.
- 4 Sir Christopher Wren made only one known visit to the Continent: to France in 1665–6. Thomas Archer, the most recent British architect to have travelled to Italy, had returned some seventeen years prior to Gibbs' departure. William Kent, who left for Italy in the year of Gibbs's return to London, was trained in Rome, but as a painter, receiving little formal tuition in architecture.
- 5 J. Summerson, *Georgian London*, 6th edn, ed. H. M. Colvin (London, 2003), p. 76; E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: its Origins and Character* (2 vols., Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1966), i, p. 347. Panofsky's comment refers to the fifteenth-century Flemish painter, Hans Memling.
- 6 J. Summerson, 'The Great Chameleon', *Times Literary Supplement* 4261 (1984), p. 1363. On Gibbs's place in the historiography of this period, see A. Echlin elsewhere in this volume.
- 7 Summerson set Gibbs apart from his story of British architecture, placing him in a separate

- chapter titled, in its most recent edition, 'The Individuality of James Gibbs': J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530–1830*, 9th edn. (London, 1993); G. Worsley, 'Master builder: James Gibbs 1682–1754', in *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 Jan 2002, p. 12.
- 8 B. Arciszewska, *Classicism and Modernity: Architectural Thought in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Warszawa, 2010), p. 195. For an overview of these positions, see A. Echlin in this volume. Some prominent accounts include: J. Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, his Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (London & New Haven, 1994); G. Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age* (London, 1995); R. Hewlings, 'Chiswick House: Appearance and Meaning', in J. Clark (ed.), *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life* (London, 1995), pp. 1–151; J. Clark, "'Lord Burlington is Here'", in *Idem.*, pp. 251–311; E. Corp (ed.), *Lord Burlington: The Man and his Politics – Questions of Loyalty* (Lampeter, 1998); B. Arciszewska, *The Hanoverian Court and the Triumph of Palladio: The Palladian Revival in Hanover and England c. 1700* (Warszawa, 2002); R. Hewlings, 'Does "Palladian" Architecture Exist?', *Newsletter of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain* 88 (2006), pp. 1–5; Arciszewska, *Classicism and Modernity*; A. Echlin and W. Kelley, 'A "Shaftesburian Agenda"? Lord Burlington, Lord Shaftesbury and the Intellectual Origins of English Palladianism', *Architectural History* 59 (2016), pp. 221–252; B. Arciszewska, 'The Office of the King's Works and Modernisation of Architectural Patronage in England', in C. van Eck and S. de Jong (eds.), *The Companions to the History of Architecture, Volume II, Eighteenth-Century Architecture* (Online, 2017), <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118887226.wbcha046/full> [accessed 10/11/2018].
- 9 T. Friedman, 'James Gibbs and 'this most miserable business of architecture'', in *Georgian Architectural Practice: Papers Given at the Georgian Group Symposium* (London, 1992), p. 13.
- 10 J. Gwynn, *London and Westminster Improved, Illustrated by Plans. To which is Prefixed a Discourse on Public Magnificence [...]* (London, 1761), p. 45.
- 11 Sir John Soane's Museum, London, SM Vol. 26, 'James Gibbs's notebook', f. 43(r). Friedman observes that, until the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, this journey was only available to Catholics: T. Friedman, *James Gibbs* (New Haven and London, 1984), p. 5.
- 12 "'Palladio'", 'To the author of the Scots Magazine', *Scots Magazine* 22, 1760, p. 475.
- 13 Friedman, *James Gibbs*, pp. 5–6.
- 14 The most complete account of Gibbs's abortive training for the priesthood is given in B. Little, *The Life and Work of James Gibbs 1682–1754* (London, 1954), pp. 10–15.
- 15 As is disclosed by a letter written by Gibbs to his (now-exiled) former patron, John Erskine 6th Earl of Mar (1675–1732) quoted in Friedman, *James Gibbs*, pp. 5–6.
- 16 Friedman, *James Gibbs*, pp. 6, 12; E. Kieven, 'Paris Abraham (doc. 1684–1715)', in *In Urbe Architectus: Modelli, Disegni, Misure: La Professione dell'architetto Roma 1680–1750* (exh. cat., Roma, 1991), p. 416; G. Bonaccorso, 'Un atelier alternativo a quello di Carlo Fontana: la scuola del "misterioso" Abraham Paris', in M. Faggiolo and G. Bonaccorso (eds.), *Studi sui Fontana: una dinastia di architetti ticinesi a Roma tra Manierismo e Barocco* (Roma, 2009), pp. 257–260; E. Kieven, 'Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach und die zeitgenössische Architektenausbildung in Rom: Abraham Paris (Preiß/Preuss) und Nikodemus Tessin', in *BAROCKBERICHTE – Informationsblätter des Salzburger Barockmuseums zur bildenden Kunst des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* 50 (2008), pp. 279–290.
- 17 Vertue also mentions both a portrait of Garoli by Michael Dahl and a 'brass meddal cast of' the artist; neither the whereabouts or appearance of either of these works is now known; 'Vertue Notebooks: Volume III', *Walpole Society* 22 (1933), p. 15.
- 18 'James Gibbs's notebook', f. 43(v).
- 19 *Ibid.*; Friedman, *James Gibbs*, p. 7.
- 20 Royal Commission for Historical Manuscripts (hereafter HMC), *Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont* (2 vols., London, 1909), ii, p. 218.
- 21 Friedman, referring to the Church of St Mary-le-Strand in Friedman, *James Gibbs*, p. 50.

- 22 On the Soane manuscript, see W. Aslet, 'A James Gibbs Autobiography Revisited: Rome and Self-Memorialisation in the Gibbs Manuscript in Sir John Soane's Museum', *Georgian Group Journal* 25 (2017), pp. 113–130.
- 23 'James Gibbs's notebook', f. 43(r).
- 24 For further insights into architectural education in early eighteenth-century Rome, see H.A. Millon, 'Filippo Juvarra and Architectural Education in Rome in the Eighteenth Century', in *American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 35, no. 7 (1981), pp. 27–45.
- 25 E. Kieven, "Mostrar l'Invenzione – The Role of Roman Architects in the Baroque Period: Plans and Models", in H. A. Millon (ed.), *The Triumph of the Baroque: Architecture in Europe 1600–1750* (London, 1999), pp. 192, 196.
- 26 H. Hager, 'Carlo Fontana: Pupil, Partner, Principal, Preceptor', in P.M. Lukehart (ed.), *The Artist's Workshop* (London & Washington D.C., 1993), pp. 138, 140.
- 27 J. Pinto, 'Architecture and Urbanism', in E. P. Bowron and J.J. Rishel (eds.), *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 119.
- 28 Christine Casey has recently raised the important question of the role of Johann ('John') C. Borlach, to whom Gibbs left money in his will as his draughtsman of many years. It seems likely that drawings by Borlach exist in the Gibbs volumes in Oxford, but previous historians have been unable to find definite examples: T. Friedman, 'Gibbs, James (1682–1754)', in J. Lever (ed.), *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (20 vols, London, 1969–1989), iii, p. 21. The appearance in 1724 of Borlach's name in Gibbs's accounts coincides with the preparation of the plates for Gibbs's *Book of Architecture*, and his role preparing Gibbs's drawings is demonstrated by his work for Gibbs elsewhere: Friedman, *James Gibbs*, pp. 24–5 and p. 336, n. 20. Nevertheless, there are extant drawings in the Gibbs collection which are securely datable to before 1724 and are, therefore, highly likely to be by Gibbs. These include the side elevation of one of the 'round' plans for St Martin-in-the-Fields, here illustrated, which dates to c. 1720, and which is inscribed in black chalk at the bottom left with an unambiguous statement of authorship: 'Ja: Gibbs Arch delin[eavit]' (James Gibbs, architect, drew this): Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Gibbs Collection, i, f. 15(r). The relevant plate after this drawing in the *Book of Architecture* also bears this description: Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture*, pl. 10. To me, this suffices to reaffirm the extensive presence of Gibbs's hand in the Ashmolean Museum drawings; Borlach's hand remains, for now, elusive.
- 29 Ashmolean, Museum, Gibbs Collection, iv, f. 32(r); H. Hager, 'On a Project Ascribed to Carlo Fontana for the Façade of S. Giovanni in Laterano', *The Burlington Magazine*, 117 (1975), pp. 105–107.
- 30 For instance, M. H. Port (ed.), *The Commissions for Building Fifty New Churches: The Minute Books 1711–27, A Calendar* (London, 1986), p. 32.
- 31 Friedman, 'James Gibbs and "this miserable business"', p. 16.
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 J. Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture* (London, 1728), p. iii.
- 34 Soane Museum, 'James Gibbs's notebook', f. 43(v). None of these drawings is known to survive.
- 35 Hist. MS Comm., *Egmont*, ii, p. 217.
- 36 M. S. Johns, *Papal Art and Cultural Politics: Rome in the Age of Clement XI* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 94–194.
- 37 J. Pinto, *Speaking Ruins: Piranesi, Architects, and Antiquity in Eighteenth-Century Rome* (Michigan, 2012), pp. 12–32.
- 38 Pinto, *Speaking Ruins*, p. 275.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 40 For Fontana's publications, also see K. Skelton, 'Wondrous Inversion: Empiricism and Carlo Fontana's Tempio Vaticano', in G. Bonaccorso and F. Moschini (eds.), *Carlo Fontana 1638–1714: Celebrato Architetto: Convegno internazionale, Roma, Palazzo Carpegna 22–24 ottobre 2014* (Roma, 2017), pp. 115–164.
- 41 Soane Museum, 'James Gibbs's Notebook', f. 43(r).
- 42 'James Gibbs's notebook', ff. 52(r)–52(v); Friedman, *James Gibbs*, p. 2.
- 43 A. Blunt, *Borromini* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, 5th edn, 2001), p. 214; A. Braham and H. Hager, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle* (London, 1977), p. 19.

- 44 Another, longer biography of Juvarra, probably written by his brother, also states that Fontana instructed the young architect to study Michelangelo: H. A. Millon, ‘Filippo Juvarra and Architectural Education in Rome in the Eighteenth Century’, in *American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 35, no. 7 (1981), p. 29.
- 45 Soane Museum, ‘James Gibbs’s notebook’, f. 30(r).
- 46 *Ibid.*, f. 21(v).
- 47 M. Walker, *Architects and Intellectual Culture in Post-Restoration England* (Oxford, 2017), p. 193.
- 48 On the rising status of architecture in this period see M. McCarthy, ‘The Education in Architecture of the Man of Taste’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 5 (1976), pp. 337–53. On attitudes to the classical past, see P. Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1997).
- 49 A. Oswald, ‘James Gibbs and his Portraits’, *Country Life Annual* (1963), p. 12.
- 50 Lambeth Palace Library, London, Commissioners for Building Fifty New Churches Papers, MS 2726, f. 73.
- 51 Hist. MSS Comm., *Stuart Papers*, ii, p. 92; ‘Iacopo Gibbs’ was, for instance, the name by which Gibbs subscribed to the Academy of Great Queen Street; I. Bignamini, ‘George Vertue, Art Historian & Art Institutions in London 1678–1768’, *Walpole Society* 54 (1988), p. 74.
- 52 Lambeth Palace Library, London, Commissioners for Building Fifty New Churches Papers, MS 2726, f. 71(r).
- 53 ‘James Gibbs to Lord Oxford’, *Wren Society* 17 (1940), p. 46.
- 54 Hist. MSS Comm., *Calendar of the Stuart Papers Belonging to his Majesty the King* (6 vols., 1902), ii, p. 404. The editor of this volume chose to read the ‘brothers of the brush’ as a code for Jacobite sympathisers, with the discussion of architecture conveying an elaborate secret message, which seems far-fetched.
- 55 Gibbs, *Book of Architecture*, p. ii.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. iii.
- 57 Worsley, *Classical Architecture*, p. 123.
- 58 Friedman, *James Gibbs*, p. 51. I have elsewhere argued that St Mary-le-Strand owes far more to the architecture of Wren than it does to late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Rome: W. K. S. Aslet, ‘James Gibbs and the City: Establishing an Architectural Career in Rome and London’ (University of Cambridge, MPhil Thesis, 2017); W. Aslet, ‘On the Threshold of the City: The Church of St Mary le Strand’, *Country Life*, 7 November 2018, pp. 56–61.
- 59 C. Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus* (2 vols, London, 1717), i, p. 1.; Worsley, *Classical Architecture*, p. 95.
- 60 Worsley, *Classical Architecture*, p. 95. This is not to say that Fontana held an unfavourable view of Palladio, of whom he had a sophisticated appreciation: see for instance L. F. Gherzi, ‘Carlo Fontana e Palladio: il progetto per “un casino in Venetia”’, in Bonaccorso and Moschini (eds.), *Carlo Fontana 1638–1714: Celebrato Architetto*, pp. 251–255.
- 61 In counterargument to Colvin’s confident assertion that ‘it would be perverse any longer to believe that he had not visited the buildings of Palladio and Scamozzi in the Veneto’, O’Hara observes that such extensive travel would have been made difficult by Campbell’s obligations as a practising lawyer. If he did travel abroad, it was certainly not as extensively as he claimed in his petition: H. M. Colvin, ‘Colen Campbell Abroad’, *Architectural History* 17 (1974), p. 13; J. O’Hara, ‘Colen Campbell and the Preparatory Drawings for Vitruvius Britannicus’ (University of York, PhD Thesis, 2010), pp. 115–116.
- 62 For James Ralph’s relationship with Burlington, see M. Craske, ‘From Burlington Gate to Billingsgate: James Ralph’s Attempt to Impose Burlingtonian Classicism as a Canon of Public Taste’, in E. McKellar and Barbara Arciszewska (eds.), *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 97–119.
- 63 J. Ralph, *A Critical Review of the Publick Buildings, Statues and Ornaments In, and about London and Westminster* (London, 1734), pp. 38–9.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 65 Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, p. 3.
- 66 Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, p. 333.