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VERLAG PHILIPP VON ZABERN · GEGRUNDET 1785 · MAINZ
Baron Philipp von Stossch's collections were widely dispersed after his death in 1757. The antique engraved gems for which he was so famous went to Berlin. The great 124-volume Atlas containing among other things the Borromini drawings eventually went to Vienna. The library was purchased by the Vatican and given a place among the recently arrived Ottoboni manuscripts. Stossch's volumes thus bear the numbers Ottob. lat. 265–1100, and many still show his bookplate.

It is an interesting collection. Being a spy, Stossch was most concerned with history, politics, diplomacy, conclave, embassies and relazioni from distant parts, but there are also important books on antiquities and the arts, including works by Leonardo, Poussin, Vincenzo Giustinianii, Bellori, Pietro Santi Bartoli, and so forth. The subject of this paper, Ottob. lat. 2682, is a collection of seventeenth-century material relating to the Ottoman empire. It bears Stossch's bookplate and was apparently assembled by him from miscellaneous sources. It opens with an anonymous and hitherto unmentioned Relazione della Gran Città di Costantinopolis, which can be dated by internal references to ca. 1586–1629. Then at the end of the volume are various reports on conditions in Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, the Holy Land and Cyprus. But in the middle is a small sheaf of seven pages of notes or drawings (fols. 100–159) with which we shall be concerned. It is held together by two common traits. First, all the pages have something to do with Hagia Sophia, and second, most bear inscriptions in pencil by the same hand, indicating that they formed a distinct collection before Stossch put them into his volume. Someone had obviously been trying to assemble a dossier on Hagia Sophia.

What is this material, and who put it together? One page of the dossier (fol. 121r) contains a reference to the drawings of Hagia Sophia done by Ciriaco d'Ancona on one of his later trips to Constantinople, possibly in 1444. The original drawings are lost but two of them were copied by Giuliano da Sangallo and another by his son Francesco into the famous libro now in the Vatican. This material was of tremendous importance, since after 1455 it would become almost impossible for architects to draw the church.

The Stossch dossier does not now contain copies of the Ciriaco-Sangallo drawings, but it does include translations of the inscriptions on them. For example, Ciriaco had observed a mosaic inscription in large letters on a tympanum of the nave of Hagia Sophia. It was placed there by Basil I and refers to a restoration of the ninth century. Ciriaco had the inscription translated into Latin and recorded it on his drawings, and Francesco da Sangallo copied it more or less faithfully into his father's libro. The compiler of the Stossch dossier translated it into Italian. Immediately following on the same page is a translation of another inscription that mentions 104 columns and gives the names of Justinian's architects. Thus, whoever was taking notes from the Sangallo volume could gather, through material twice or thrice removed from the original, some idea of the splendor of the Great Church, and also of the cycle of decay and restoration that had kept it alive in the nine centuries between its construction and the conquest.

My sincerest thanks to the NEH, to CASVA at the National Gallery of Art, to its Dean, Henry Millon, and to Anthony Cutler, Thomas Dale, Rudi Lindner, Almamaria Tintillo Mignosi and Silvia Foschi. The influence of Richard Krautheimer will be evident, especially his interests in the relation between copy and prototype and in the afterlife of Early Christian churches. But my special thanks would have been due to him for an unforgettable seminar on baroque Rome held at the Institute of Fine Arts just before his retirement in 1971, in which I found my field, and for twenty-three years of generous follow-up.

2. J. Bignami Odier, Premières recherches sur les fonds Ottoboni (Studi e testi 243), Città del Vaticano, 1966, 22–22. The printed catalogue in Ottob. lat. 3596, Biblioteca Storiche, Lucca, 1778 (prepared for the auction in Florence on 16 January 1779), has marginal notes assigning each book its current Ottoboni number; cf. also Var. lat. 7866A, fol. 8r–8v.
5. Cyril Mango renders the Greek as, "This has threatened to destroy this inimitable work; it has been hindered by our solicitude. Do Thou open Thy house, O most-high Lord, which time toucheth not," Materials for the Study of the Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 8), Washington, D.C., 1962, 64, n. 16).
Two drawings in the Stosch dossier show another, most unusual church (figs. 1 and 2). The elevation vaguely recalls Latin Renaissance architecture of the eastern Mediterranean, but the plan, with its strange colonnades that bend into sinuous, has no immediate parallels. A pencil inscription on the other side of the sheet (fol. 122r) reads, "[P]er Sta Sofia dipinta del Tempesta in Basano." This is a valuable lead. The drawing indeed shows the same church as a fresco roundel painted by Antonio Tempesta in 1602 in the courtyard of the Palazzo Giustiniani in Bassano di Sutri (fig. 3). What church might this be, and what might it have to do with Hagia Sophia? Unfortunately, an important clue has been lost — the pendant fresco, which has become illegible with time. It is likely that both roundels showed churches of symbolic importance to the patron, possibly pairing Genoa and Chios in the usual Giustinian way.  

Do we thus have, in the surviving fresco and in the drawings of the Stosch dossier, a Giustiniani church in Chios? Alas there is no graphic evidence to test this hypothesis, since the shrines of Chios were not well recorded as they gradually fell into decay after the Turkish conquest. The identity of the church remains a mystery, and all we can say is that a building of considerable importance to the gens Giustinianae, a clan that prided itself on direct descent from Justinian, somehow helped the compiler of the dossier see Hagia Sophia, however obliquely.  

The compiler followed other leads. He made enquiries in the Greek community of Rome. He was shown some sort of building portrait, possibly a painting in a Greek church in Rome, which he had copied in a quick ink sketch on fol. 129r, labelling it "[a]lta da delli Greci di Roma un pitura?[...]." This drawing (fig. 4) shows a strange vestibule-like structure, almost a broque in appearance, which one would never have associated with Byzantine architecture except for the inscription, "SANTA SOFIA / O NAOS THS AGIAS SOFIAS / Templum sanctae sofiae / id est sapientiae."  

On fol. 166v there are notes in ink on the problem of when the single altar of early Christian sanctuaries gave way to multiple altars. A pencil inscription on the verso reads, "Sta Sophia Constantino..."  

Finally on fol. 173r the compiler added his own rapid pencil sketch of a church widely held to be a copy of Hagia Sophia on Italian soil. On the drawing he wrote "Alta da del tempio / di Ravenna fatto allori di giustinianoi / a similitudine di Sta Sofia / in Constantino poli / al lato del padre Castello / di S.to Paolo." Although hardly recognizable at first sight as the famous church in Ravenna, the drawing alludes to show S. Vitale and claims to be of use in understanding Hagia Sophia (fig. 5).  

This drawing is complemented by a pencil plan of S. Vitale in the Albertina in Vienna, sketched by the same hand, with a similar inscription, "Alta da del Padre [sic] Castello di S.to Paolo / disse en[te] edicata in Ravenna / dellori di giustiniano / Imperatore / a similitudine di Sta Sofia in Constantino..." (fig. 6).  

The two drawings are easy to attribute, as is the distinctive pencil handwriting on them, which is the same as the pencil script on the sheets relating to Hagia Sophia. The author of the S. Vitale drawings and the compiler of the dossier was Francesco Borromini.  

Stosch acquired the full Borromini Nachlass in about 1730. The drawings went into Stosch's huge Atlas, but material of a more documentary character was put into other volumes in the library. It is easy to imagine how the two drawings of S. Vitale got separated, at first by not more than a few shelves, now by hundreds of miles.  

We may begin to approximate a date for the dossier by noting that Padre Castelli, the monk who procured the S. Vitale material for Borromini, died (as we shall see below) in 1643. In general the early 1640s was a time when Borromini was exploring ancient apsidal plans with renewed interest in preparation for the design of S. Ivo alla Sapienza, which was begun in 1642. He apparently tried to learn about Hagia Sophia as well as related structures on Italian soil. Indeed, what could be more natural than an interest in the great Wisdom dedication in Constantinople at this time? As it says on the so-called "NAON" drawing, "Templum sanctae sofiae / id est sapientiae."  

Throughout his pontificate Urban VIII had promoted the union of the eastern and western churches under papal sovereignty. In 1642–44 the French Oratorian Jean Morin was summoned to Rome to work on the pope's plan for union. In 1643 a Greek scholar in the Barberini entourage, Leo Allatius, wrote a book on the liturgical usages of the eastern church, publishing his exchange of correspondence of 1643 with Morin. The interest in Hagia Sophia fits into a larger picture of opening to the east fostered in papal circles. Possibly Cardinal Francesco Barberini himself encouraged Borromini to have a look at the Great Church.

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10 See the frescoes in the music room at Bassano di Sutri and the print of Chios in Galliera Giustiniana, Rome, s. n.d. [ca. 1673], pl. 166.  
12 The Venetian and Genoese branches of the family were thought to descend from two brothers who lived around 720, Angelo and Marco Giustiniani, themselves direct heirs of Justinian (K. Hopf, Le Giustinianë dynaste de Chios, Paris, 1988, 173). A brief of Pius VI speaks of them as "classe, che da antica famiglia venete da Costantinopoli" (T. Avery-Den, La storia delle famiglie romane, Rome, 1921, 1: 144–146.  
13 Alb. 1445, mentioned by P. Portoscani, Francesco Borromini, Milan, 1990, 17. See also the thesis of Silvia Foschi cited in n. 11.  
Since 1453, however, it was extremely hard to obtain graphic material on Hagia Sophia. For all the many travellers' reports there are very few drawings. Even the French, who attempted to maintain good relations with the Porte, unanimously complain of the difficulties planted by the government and the populace in the way of anyone who tried to draw anything in Constantinople, especially the interior of a mosque.\footnote{For the bibliography of post-medieval European travel to Constantinople see M.H. Hauser, ed., Le voyage du Levant du Philipe Du Fresne-Caunes, Paris, 1897, 316-322 (hereafter Hauser); J. Ebersolt, Constantinople Byzantine et les Voyages du Levant, Paris, 1909, 93-107 (hereafter Ebersolt); Shirley Howard Weber, Voyages et Traveaux en Grèce, the Near East and Adjacent Regions Made Previous to the Year 1810, Princeton, 1953.} \footnote{Pierre Belon, Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Indes, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays étranges... Paris, 1553, c. 247.} \footnote{E.H. Freshfield, "Notes on a Vellum Album containing some original sketches of public buildings and monuments, drawn by a German artist who visited Constantinople in 1574." Archaeologia 71 (1922), 88-91; G. Nicopoulou, "The Life of an Imperial Monument: Hagia Sophia After Byzantium," in Hagia Sophia from the Age of Justinian to the Present, ed. R. Mark and A. Çakmak, Cambridge, 1992, 209, fig. 114; also 211 f., figs. 115-116 for views of ca. 1786 from the Lewesklau Album in Vienna (hereafter Nicopoulou).} Pierre Gilles, who resided in Constantinople in 1544-47 and wrote the guidebook carried by all future travellers from Della Valle to Grelot, recorded many instances of his work being hindered by the Turks, whom he had to deceive or bribe or ply with drink.\footnote{For the last years of his life, from 1550 to 1555, he lived in Rome preparing his books under the patronage of Cardinal d'Armagnac. However, Gilles left behind no known drawings of Hagia Sophia, a fact lamented a century later by his great successor Du Fresne Du Cange.} \footnote{Pierre Belon, Les observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Indes, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays étranges... Paris, 1553, c. 247.} For the last years of his life, from 1550 to 1555, he lived in Rome preparing his books under the patronage of Cardinal d'Armagnac. However, Gilles left behind no known drawings of Hagia Sophia, a fact lamented a century later by his great successor Du Fresne Du Cange.

Pierre Belon, naturalist and traveller, delights in putting Hagia Sophia before the Pantheon, which he felt any simple mason could have designed.\footnote{Müller-Werener, 34 f., figs. 8-9, 19, fig. 39.} With a light-filled vault, piers of multi-colored precious marble and as many doors as there are days in the year, Hagia Sophia was for Belon the great achievement of ancient architecture. But he still attempted no drawing.

The German artist who did the detailed renderings of the Column of Arcadius in the Freshfield album of 1574 drew three views of the interior of Hagia Sophia, but had to work from memory.\footnote{The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghedin de Busbecq Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople 1534-1561, trans. E.S. Forster from the 1653 Latin Elzevir ed., Oxford, 1927, 1968 reprint, 34.} Melchior Lorich drew his great eleven-meter panorama of Constantinople in 1557-61 from the safety of the towers of Pera.\footnote{Kind reference of J. Unglaub and D. Freedberg. Cf. W. Greely, The Painting of Simon Voutet, New Haven and London, 1986, 6, J. Thullier, with B. Brejon de Laverrière and D. Lavall, Voutet, (cat.), Paris, Grand Palais, 1990, 91 f.} Similarly the Imperial ambassador Busbecq says he could gain admission only as a special favor, for the entry of a Christian was held to profane the place of worship.\footnote{Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino, visited Constantinople in 1614 as the first stage in an adventurous sequence of voyages to the Holy Land, Egypt, Syria, Persia and India in 1614-26.} In 1611-12 the French ambassador Achille de Harlay took with him to Constantinople the young Simon Voutet, then twenty-one, in order to do the portrait of the Sultan "et des lieux considérable de Constantinople... mais il y trouvait de la difficulté, à cause que la loy des Turcs defend les Images." Voutet completed a portrait of Sultan Ahmet after a single audience, but if he had other material from Constantinople to show off during his subsequent sojourn in Rome it has not yet come to light.\footnote{Pietro della Valle, Viaggi, Rome, 1, 1650; 2, 1658; 3, 1661 (hereafter Viaggio). The Vita by Gio. Pietro Bellori, dated 31 October 1662, occurs in vol. 3, and also in the second ed., (1668)-1666, 4. On Harlay and della Valle see: G. Brice, Description de la ville de Paris, 7th ed., Amsterdam, 1718, 1310. The extensive modern literature begins with L. Ciampi, Della vita e delle opere di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino, ed. P.E. Castagnola, Rome, 1880. There is extensive bibliography in C. Micocci and S. La Vin, "Pietro della Valle," Dizionario biografico diegl'Italiari 57(1980), 764-771, and a new study in preparation by R. Lindner.} .

Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino, visited Constantinople in 1614 as the first stage in an adventurous sequence of voyages to the Holy Land, Egypt, Syria, Persia and India in 1614-26.\footnote{Pietro della Valle, il pellegrino, visited Constantinople in 1614 as the first stage in an adventurous sequence of voyages to the Holy Land, Egypt, Syria, Persia and India in 1614-26.} His impressions of Hagia Sophia are contained in a long letter of 25 October 1614.\footnote{Pietro della Valle, Viaggi, Rome, 1, 1650: 2, 1658; 3, 1661 (hereafter Viaggio).} Whereas for Belon the term of comparison was the Pantheon, for Della Valle it is St. Peter's. The entrance portico of Hagia Sophia reminded him of the atrium of old St. Peter's, which Maderno had demolished not long before. The great Ottoman mosques remind him of Michelangelo's new church. On his return to Rome he hoped that both Hagia Sophia and the imperial mosques could serve as a stimulus to Italian architects, and he hoped to bring back paintings of them, perhaps even "tutta Costantinopoli" for modern architects to emulate.\footnote{Viaggio, 419 f.; he returned for a second visit in 1615, 289.} \footnote{Viaggio, 419 f.} Might Borromini have learned anything about Hagia Sophia from Pietro Della Valle? When the inattentive traveller returned to Rome in 1626 he established a museum in Palazzo Della Valle, and whether or not "tutta Costantinopoli" was visible there, until his death in 1629 Della Valle was a living resource for anyone who wanted to know about the lore of the east. A deep interest in music brought Della Valle to the first performances in Borromini's new Oratorio dei Filippini in 1640. He spoke to the priests and offered to make them an organ. For the moment we are left to guess whether someone introduced him to the architect, or whether Borromini took the initiative and sought out this interesting polymath, fluent in so many languages. But when Borromini needed to find out about Hagia Sophia in 1642 there was no one in Rome better equipped to inform him. In any case a transcript of Della Valle's letter of 1641 on Hagia Sophia forms part of the Stosch dossier.\footnote{A passage in ink in a scribe's hand on fol. 12r2r may come from the printed edition, vol. IV, 1662, pp. 24-26, and thus would have been placed in the dossier later than the rest of the material, which seems to gravitate around 1642. However, the possibility remains open that the passage was copied earlier from Della Valle's own manuscripts.}
Joseph Connors

The trouble with literary descriptions of the great church is that they are vague and inexact, of almost no use to an architect. In 1681 Guillaume Joseph Grelot, author of the first printed plan and views of Hagia Sophia, would look back on all these travellers with harsh words, “des descriptions trop avantageuses[2] & trop éloignées de la vérité.” Too many historians left only words, “sans avoir donné jamais un seul crayon de ce qu’ils nous ont tant de fois décrit.” [2] It was difficult for Christians to enter Hagia Sophia and almost impossible for them to draw it, and even agents sent by the French king expressly for this purpose returned home empty-handed. Both Grelot and his contemporary Du Loir resorted to bribery and could only measure the church, in secret, at gallery level. [21] Grelot’s vividly related experiences of being driven out as an infidel, and once even in terror of his life when caught drawing in the galleries, show why there was such a paucity of graphic material on the Great Church. Du Fresno Du Cange suspended publication of his Constantinopolis Christiana in 1688, ecstatic that he had finally found a plan, elevation and section of Hagia Sophia, something which he found lacking in all the Greek writers and which neither “the learned Gylius nor men skilled in architecture” had succeeded in producing. But all he had found was the Ciriaco material in the Sangallo code. [22]

No wonder then that Borromini turned to S. Vitale for a glimpse of Justinianic architecture. [23] He did not travel to Ravenna himself, but relied on drawings supplied by Padre Castelli, who was a member of the Congregazione Cassinese di S. Giustina, the branch of the Benedictines established both at S. Paolo F.I.M. and at S. Vitale. The drawings the good monk supplied were not paragons of care, and Borromini copied them quickly. The section (fig. 5) is hardly recognizable as S. Vitale. If anything, it is more like an imagined section of the little model that Bishop Ecclesius is shown holding in the mosaic inside the church. [29] The sprightly cock at the summit comes as a surprise, since S. Vitale had a bronze clock on the peak of the roof. [30] Only the most generic features of the interior are conveyed, such as the double-height exedra and the side aisles. The drum is puzzlingly shown with spiral columns and an alternation of monofore and bifore that no other source represents. [31]

In contrast to the section, the plan of S. Vitale (fig. 6) is at least in part dependable, and its major inaccuracies can be explained by reference to the monastic community for which its prototype had been drawn. By the ninth century S. Vitale had passed into the hands of the Benedictines, who began to englobe the church into what became a very large monastery. Gradually the monks transformed patterns of entrance. In Justinianic times one entered through an atrium that gave access in turn to the arista, the wide apse-ended vestibule which is so strangely set at an oblique angle to the main axis of the church. [29] The entrance on the left-hand side of the arista opened onto the main axis and the line of sight ended in the great apse, going from six o’clock to noon, so to speak. But the entrance on the right-hand side of the arista aligned with a different axis, from five o’clock to eleven. This was, or at least by the late Middle Ages came to be, the “martyrial” axis, passing first through the exedra with the shrine of S. Vitale (who was always venerated here and never at the high altar), and then through the opposite exedra, where at least by the Middle Ages there was a memorial to the martyr Ursinus.

By the thirteenth century the old atrium had been converted into a cloister, and when this was rebuilt in 1562 by Andrea della Valle, the arista was largely demolished and its portals sealed up. Indeed on Alb. 1433 no entrances are shown here at all, the two stairtowers that once flanked the arista are shown as isolated cylinders, with the stairtower on the right mispositioned and labelled “campanile.” [32] The Justinianic arista was not destined to be rediscovered until 1782.

25 Guillaume Joseph Grelot, Relation nouvelle d’un voyage de Constantinople, Paris, 1685, 166; see Ebersolt, 190–192, and Nispogoli, 76 & 214, fig. 118.
26 Les voyages du sieur Du Loir, Paris, 1654, 47–49; Du Loir was in Constantinople in 1659–61, according to Ebersolt, 128.
27 C. Du Fresno Du Cange, Constantinopolis Christiana seu descriptio Urbis Constantinopolitanae, Paris, 1680, three plates inserted between Books 2 and 3.
29 Deichmann, III, 353.
30 Deichmann, I, fig. 218; it is difficult to discern from the reproduction (Ifig. 13) whether the drawing by L. Ricci of 1866 shows a clock on top of the cross.
31 A brief chronology of the cupola decoration: (1) “gracianici operis vetustissimae imaginis,” cupola frescoes of tenth century or earlier (Deichmann, II, 157) (2) Bertucci and Tonducci frescoes, 1400–45, including the Gloria of angels and saints “alla mosaica” in the cupola, right large figures between the windows, plans for mosaics in the niches vaults, scenes from the lives of Vitale and Ursinus below new bualutarses (Vasari–Milanesi, 726 and 426); the monofore shown ca. 1568 by Sangallo (Ulfichi, 1354a, Deichmann, Ifig. 8) becomes the arista at this time; (3) G. Maioli, 1665, new vault fresco, vaguely visible in the section in Coronelli, ca. 1708, but cf. also the fanciful view by Robert Adam of 1771 in J. Fleming, Robert Adam and His Circle in Edinburgh and Rome, Cambridge, Mass., 1964, 170, fig. 471; (4) Guarana and Barocci, 1708–81, complete repainting of cupola, drum and niches (F. Beltrami, Il forestiere instruito delle cose notabili della città di Ravenna, Ravenna, 1785, 165).
33 The right stair tower was converted to a campanile in the tenth century.
The principal lay entrance of the Middle Ages was through the "Porta[?]" shown at eleven o'clock on Borromini's plan. His door opened onto the old "martyrial" axis in reverse, passing over the slab commemorating the decapitation of Ursinus in one exedra and terminating in the shrine of St. Vitale on the exedra opposite. There was a memorial to St. Vitale in the position shown on Alb. 1433 even before Justinianic times, built over and around the well in which the martyr had been last while still alive. The Justinianic plan brilliantly accommodated this pre-existing shrine. A medieval altar is mentioned here in 1534, and Barocci's great altarpiece was installed in 1583. It was an unusually site-specific painting, and it got more as the artist proceeded from sketches to the final work. The saint is shown flung upside down, hovering for a split second in mid-air before plummeting into the well, the same scene that stood behind the altar. Like the bedroom in the "camera dii matrimonii" wedding the whole circuit of the church was frescoed in two spherical slabs of black paragona, polished to mirror finish and mounted on either side of the altar. The altar's march through the church and arrival at the altar, here he could see the saint being martyred before his eyes and link from the very well, must have been a vivid experience indeed.

The monks became accustomed to entering the church from the right, via a passage from the large cloister. Their axis of light, running from three o'clock to nine, terminated at the altar of the Chapel of S. Benedict, the biggest of the three late medieval accretions on the left side of the church. Here the crenel was reserved in a gilt bronze ciborium with silver statues, made in Rome and said to be based on a design of Michelangelo. The chapel, embellished with still more precious cimeli in the eighteenth century, was demolished by Borromini in 1598.

The center of monastic life in the church was the choir, which at first seems to be shown with glaring inaccuracy on Alb. 1433. It protrudes much too far beyond the outer walls of the church. Indeed the plan would be more accurate if the choir were "pushed" into the ambulatory and the eight exedra eliminated. But the distortions are in some sense understandable if we remember that the choir was a relatively unused space, cut off from the church by a partition behind the altar. The three arches on either side of the presbytery were closed, once a wall and two by grilles. The tall choir stalls increased the hermetic feeling. It is quite understandable that monk who spent most of his time in one of these thirty-three stalls might impressionistically draw it as we see it on Alb. 1433. Alb. 1435 shows four columns on either side of the esberty. It fails to make clear that two columns on each side are closer to the apse) form arcades and are part of the portico of the church, while the other two pairs (those closer to the center) merely frame monuments inserted into the esberty wall in 1585 (fig. 7). These latter columns came from the dismantled baldachino over the early Christian altar and were considered very precious. The monuments into which they were incorporated contain the famous Throne of Nep-
great experts on hydraulics, inventor of the concept of velocity of flow. He was called to Rome by Urban VIII in 1636 to advise on water regulation in the Papal State and to tutor to the young Taddeo Barberini in mathematics. He stayed faithful to Galileo through the dark days of the trial and remained his lifelong correspondent. But as much as he wished to join Galileo in his confinement in Arcetri or to accept the Grand Duke’s offer of a professorship in Pisa, he was too valuable to the Barberini to obtain release from their service. In 1641 he travelled to Venice for the Chapter General of his order and advised the Senate on problems of the conservation of the water level in the lagoon. On the way to Venice he could easily have stayed with his fellow Benedictines at S. Vitale and procured the drawings that Borromini copied.

Padre Castelli’s presence makes the Stosch dossier more interesting than it would have been for just its oblique reflections of Hagia Sophia. These stray papers show us a great architect indulging in a moment of historical research before embarking on a commission in which historical sources were left behind or profoundly transformed. Padre Castelli, on the other hand, the man who made geometry popular at the Barberini court — indeed the pursuit even of gentlemen and princes — brings us close to the Galilean roots of Borromini’s design.41

41 As intuited by A. Blunt, Borromini, London, 1979, 47.

Credits

1. Anonymous, elevation of an unidentified church, pencil, 26.9 x 20.0 (BAV, Ottob. lat. 2682, fol. 108r)

2. Anonymous, plan of the church in figure 1, with a pencil inscription by Francesco Borromini on the reverse: "[Fer] S.ta Sofia dipinta del Tempesta in Basano," ink on pencil, 26.7 x 20.0 (BAV, Ottob. lat. 2682, fol. 100v)

3. Antonio Tempesta, fresco in the courtyard of Palazzo Giustiniani at Bassano di Sutri, 1602

4. Anonymous, sketch of a "naos" with a pencil inscription by Borromini at the top: "a\\'avuta del[e] Greci di Roma un pitura ... (?) ..." ink with pencil, 27.3 x 20.8 (BAV, Ottob. lat. 2682, fol. 109r)
1. Borromini, section of a church approximating S. Vitale in Ravenna, pencil, 37.5 x 26.5 (BAV, Ottob. lat. 2682, fol. 107v)

2. Borromini, plan of S. Vitale in Ravenna, pencil (BA 143)

Presbytery of S. Vitale, before 1898