

The Millennial Absence of Dome Construction in Medieval Rome

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Abstract For almost one thousand years during the Middle Ages no dome was constructed in Rome. This is shocking for a period marked by domical exuberance—whether around the Mediterranean basin or in Rome’s vicinity—and in the case of a city that today is crisscrossed by a dazzling display of Ancient and Early Modern domes. In the process of accounting for this glaring lacuna, this paper offers insights into the broader meaning of domes and more specifically posits what a dome meant to medieval Roman builders and patrons.

Keywords Rome, Dome, Middle Ages, Basilica