

ARCH, DOMES AND VAULTS IN THE HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

Giorgio Croci

Abstract The first real domes arise and develop with the Romans, the dome of the Octagonal Room in the Domus Aurea (I cent.) is the first important example. But the Pantheon (II cent.), inspired by the Domus Aurea, more than 40 meters in diameter, is the true originator of the large domes, that will be built in the Western world. The next step takes place several centuries afterward with Hagia Sofia (VI cent.). We must wait for the dawn of the Renaissance to have a breakthrough in the structural design, with the dome of Saint Mary of the Flowers (XIV cent.) and then with the dome of St. Peter, clearly inspired to the Gothic. After St. Peter, the momentum of building and the seamless integration between structure and architecture seems to vanish.