Abstract

This bachelor thesis focuses on the St. Francis of Assissi Church in the Old Town of Prague as a building with the first true dome on a drum, constructed by Jean Baptiste Mathey who was originally a painter. Thanks to him Prague got a building that is architecturally as significant as Rome’s St. Peter’s Basilica.

The thesis also researches the attempts to emulate Roman architecture. Architects active in Bohemia had been trying to construct a dome over the nave from the beginning of the 17th century. However, they only accomplished a true dome with the arrival of Mathey. Even Carlo Lurago, who was the best-known architect of the time, didn’t succeed to place a dome over the nave, although he tried it on many buildings. Giovanni Domenico Orsi, on the other hand, managed to include a dome-like shape in his buildings, but many of his projects didn’t survive to this day or remained on paper.

Besides the St. Francis Church itself, this thesis also deals with Roman inspirations. The construction of this church wouldn’t have been possible if Mathey hadn’t brought with him from Rome the latest knowledge about Roman architecture and buildings being constructed back then. He was undoubtedly influenced by Carlo Rainaldi and other outstanding Roman architects who were active at that time.