

### Summary

**ZYGMUNT LUNIEWICZ (Department of Architecture, Wrocław University of Science and Technology) / Early Modern tower cupolas in Silesia – an attempt at reinterpreting the origins**

Until now the appearance of cupolas on the top of towers in Silesian architecture has been connected by the researchers with the era of Renaissance and activity of Comacine masters. However, perceiving the tower cupolas (*welsche haube*) solely in the category of a style novelty deletes their rich ideological contents and complicated genesis. Originally a cupola was an element of Byzantine and Muslim architecture, and incomers from Europe got to know it on the occasion of crusades and pilgrimages to the Holy Land. When visiting Jerusalem, partly by mistake, and partly for the need of contact with the places described in The Bible, they identified mosques with Jewish and ancient Christian sanctuaries. This way in the European conscience a building with a cupola was a synonym of holy ancient edifices, and in such a context they appeared in pictorial images and cult objects related with the Holy Land. Thanks to vivid contacts with the Levant also Venice played a crucial role in transferring Oriental patterns into the North. When a significant diversion from the present to the past took place at the turn of the Middle Ages, under the influence of the quest for ancient patterns, some elements of real and imagined Oriental buildings permeated to architecture. It was encouraged by the lack of ancient heritage in the countries north of The Alps. A clear imitation of specific buildings, e.g. Church of the Holy Sepulchre or Dome of the Rock, proves that cupolas were used not as a novelty in style but as a media of prestigious contents well settled in the era world view.