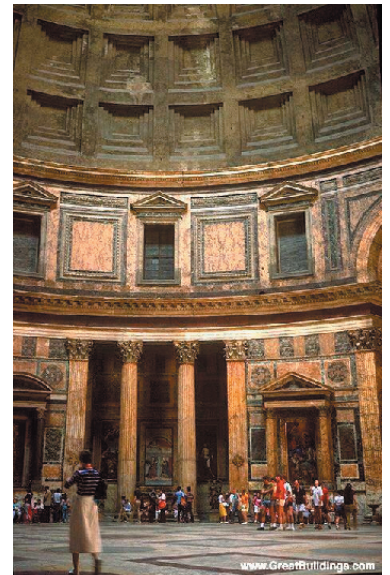


The process of design involves seeing and abstracting the building. Seeing a building includes seeing the forms and the intention. Abstraction is to remove all not is essential of buildings. But how about the essential? It is used to help us to UNDERSTAND the buildings. How to understand? Different people may have different interpretation to UNDERSTAND. But there is a way to begin. We could first deconstruct the building.

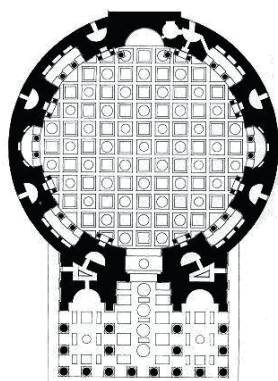
After seeing a building, we could deconstruct the building into parts. Studying parts as a whole is a way to understand the building. Each part would have its intention. The PANTHEON located in Rome, Italy could *deconstruct* into parts.



From external view, there is a square in front of the PANTHEON. Three rows with eight columns each are used to support the entablature. Inside the PANTHEON is a hemispherical dome resting on a cylinder. This forms a circular room. There is a hole in the center of the dome.

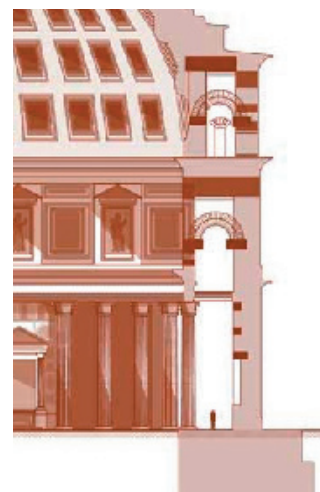


In front of the PANTHEON, the square is to allow people to gather. With such larger area of open space, people can gather here and chat during their leisure time. The stairs allows people to sit. However, it may not intend to design for people to sit. It seems that the height of stairs is so low that the people may not sit comfortably. This may probably be the reason that there are a lot of restaurants around the PANTHEON.



Plan of interior room

There is natural sunlight during daytime, hence extra street lamps are not needed. In the center of the square, there is a cross status. It might relat to the purpose of PANTHEON. The PANTHEON was built as a Roman temple and later consecrated as a Catholic Church. The columns are tall. We can imagine that the room inside is large. The appearance of the exterior give us an idea of what is interior.



Section of Pantheon

The great center hole of the dome revealed the sky. In this way, there is connection between human in the ground and god in the sky. The center hole would allow prayers to reach the God like smoke rise to the sky. This temple is considered as opened and enclosed, just like the mysterious gods. Rains drop through the dome will form a pool, breaking the distinct boundaries of man-made buildings and nature. No matter what intention the dome is built, in the matter of facts, the hole of the dome do provides light to the room.

The materials used to make dome could also be a problem. In the way that such large dome is constructed, there must be special techniques to support. Otherwise, it might collapse. I guess it might use special materials which is strong to support. The thickness of wall gets thinner and thinner at the top might also be one of the reasons. Or perhaps inside the layered concentric rings might have some supporting structure?

Whatever the reasons, the PANTHEON is the only structure of its age, size and able to last for several hundreds of years. We can look at the PANTHEON and marvel that it looks more like the work of angels, not men.

By abstracting the buildings, that is deconstructing it into parts, it makes us easier to understand the buildings. In the process of designing, this is the way to study a building. Our design can then be developed from these study.

