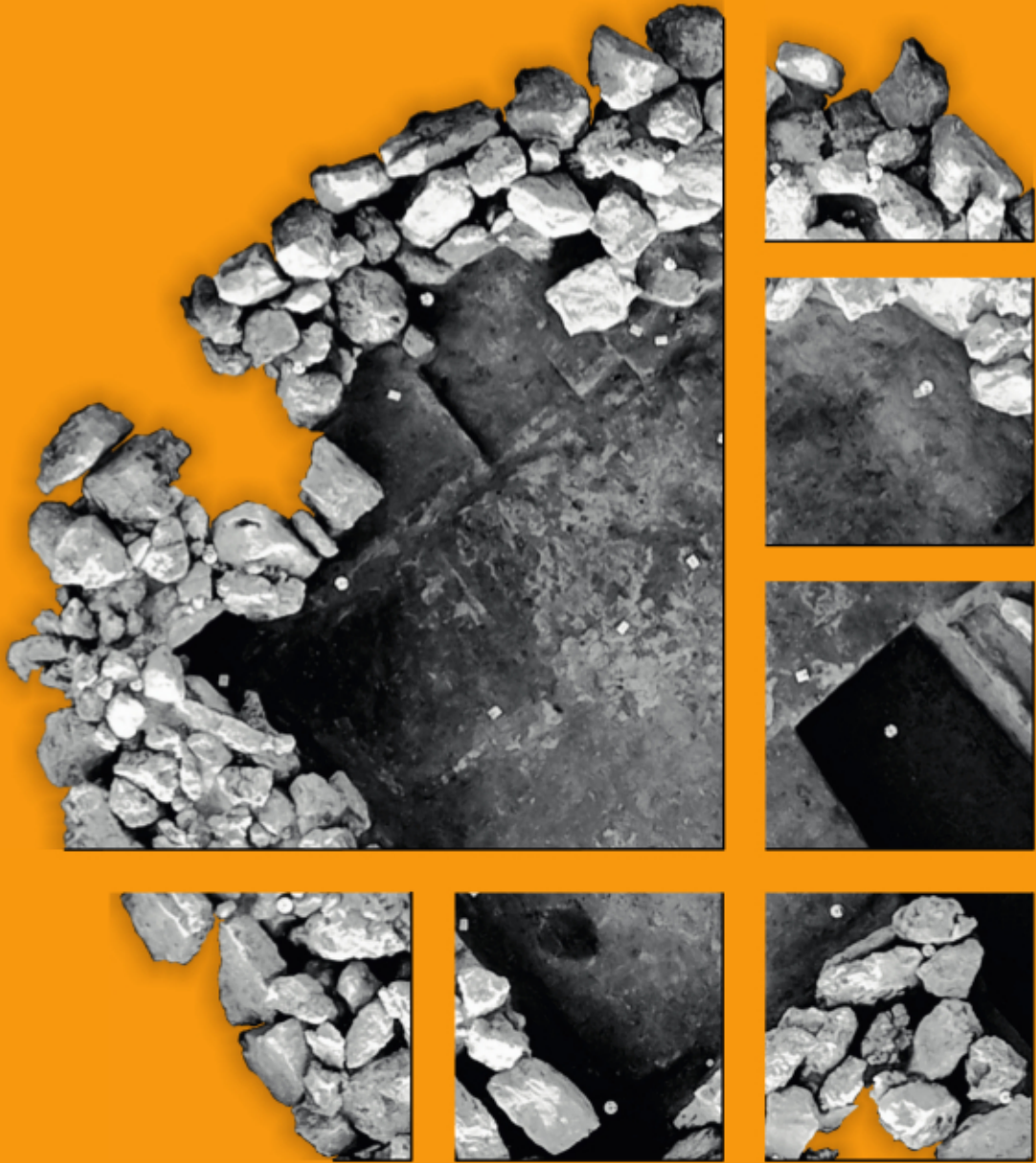


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<i>Marder, T. A. – Wilson Jones, M.: The Pantheon: From Antiquity to the Present. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 2015. Pp. xix + 471, 24 coloured plates and 165 figures. ISBN 978-0-521-80932-0</i>	

Marder, T. A. – Wilson Jones, M.: The Pantheon: From Antiquity to the Present. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 2015. Pp. xix + 471, 24 coloured plates and 165 figures. ISBN 978-0-521-80932-0

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One of the most fascinating masterpieces of European architecture, the Pantheon has had a turbulent past. With its history starting in the first century BC, it is the best-preserved building from classical antiquity, still in use today. This volume offers a summary of the latest research on the Pantheon, concerning both its building and re-building in the Roman era and its long history of spoliations and reconstructions in the post-antique period up to the 21st century. The authors of all thirteen chapters are authoritative scholars in their fields of study, thus making the book an excellent reading for archaeologists, art historians and architects, as well as the general public.

Chapter 1 provides a detailed and well-illustrated introduction by the two editors, T. A. Marder and M. Wilson Jones. While going through the two thousand years of the Pantheon's history, they refer to the fundamental questions and problems faced by the researchers, and allude to the specific chapters where they are discussed in depth.

Drawing on the results of the 1996–1997 excavations led by P. Virgini and P. Battistelli along the façade of the Pantheon, E. La Rocca gives a new picture of Agrippa's Pantheon built in 27 or 25 BC. In opposition to R. Lanciani's earlier reconstruction, which visualized a south-facing oblong building under the existing portico with a circular vestibule, the new archaeological evidence points to a north-facing building in plan very much like its Hadrianic successor. The Augustan rotunda behind the rectangular portico, however, could not have been covered by a concrete dome, but rather with a trussed roof, perhaps with an *oculus* in the middle. A parallel to such a construction would be an elliptical timber-roofed building at the Roman military base of Chester, England, according to E. La Rocca.

Agrippa's Pantheon was damaged by fire in 80 AD, and thirty years later it burnt down in consequence of a lightning strike. The total rebuilding after the devastation of 110 AD resulted in the so-called Hadrianic Pantheon that stands today. Although the edifice has been attributed to emperor Hadrian (117–138 AD) for over a century, in Chapter 3, L. Hetland challenges this dating first given by G. Chedanne in 1892 on the basis of brick stamps and immediately accepted by other scholars. After the re-examination of the brick stamps, however, L. Hetland has come to the conclusion that from the 70 brick stamps found in situ in the Pantheon, only one can be securely dated to Hadrian's reign (123 AD), while most of them are either Trajanic or late Trajanic/early Hadrianic. Thus, the construction of the building probably started around 114 instead of 118/119 and was mainly finished during Trajan's reign (98–117 AD). The revision of

the dating rises another question: namely, whether Apollodorus of Damascus, Trajan's master architect could have been the designer of the Pantheon, as suggested by W-D. Heilmeyer in the 1970's based on stylistic evidence.

The structure and construction process of the Pantheon are discussed in the next four chapters. In Chapter 4, G. Martines describes the main parts of the rotunda, the drum and the dome in terms of materials, structure, and mathematical proportions. In Chapter 5, G. Waddell explores the parallels of the building from the Domus Aurea and Mausoleum of Augustus to Trajan's Markets, Forum and Baths and the domed buildings at Baiae. She points out that the design and structure of the Pantheon combined the features used in six different Roman building types: baths, tombs, theatres, basilicas, triumphal arches, and temples.

An interesting thought experiment can be read in Chapter 6, where J. DeLaine gives an estimate of manpower and of the time needed for the construction of the Pantheon. Using the same method she developed for the Baths of Caracalla in Rome, she suggested a time schedule for nine years (114–123) and a minimum workforce of 240 men. She uses these results to show that the construction of the Pantheon was not, in fact, a 'mammoth undertaking' as is generally believed.

In Chapter 7, M. Wilson Jones gives a further refinement to the chronology of the construction. He focuses his attention on the so-called *grottoni* and intermediate block. His observations led to the conclusion that the construction of the *grottoni* had only started when the drum of the rotunda had risen to a third of its height, as opposed to the construction of the intermediate block, which started at the same time as the drum but stopped halfway up. To explain the latter phenomenon, he offers the 'compromise hypothesis', and argues that the front of the Pantheon was built differently as originally intended, using 40 feet high monolithic columns instead of 50 feet high ones in the portico. The 'compromise hypothesis', first published in 1987, also explains the puzzling anomalies of the façade. M. Wilson Jones' relative chronology of the construction is in accordance with the hypotheses of L. Hetland and J. DeLaine, and he also finds it probable that Apollodorus of Damascus might have been the designer of the edifice.

After centuries of slow decay the Pantheon was transformed to a Christian church during the pontificate of Boniface IV (608–615). In Chapter 8, E. Thuno describes the medieval Pantheon, the *S. Mariae ad martyres* or as generally called, the *Sanctae Mariae Rotundae*, which functioned as a stational church where the pope held services three times a year. While the inside of the building suffered no significant alterations in consequence of the conversion, a bell tower erected in 1270 contorted its look on the outside. E. Thuno also explores, how the centralized plan of the Pantheon became a source of inspiration for a number of centralized Marian sanctuaries in medieval Europe.

As more and more modifications were carried out on the building over the centuries, it no longer recalled the ancient temple by the end of the Renaissance. In Chapter 9, A. Nesselrath discusses the Renaissance drawings and paintings of the Pantheon, some of which reflected the actual state of the edifice, thus making it possible to trace the alterations, others, however, omitted some of the Christian installations (like the main altar) and visualized an idealistic version of the Roman temple. This was also the time for the first scientific studies made by artists and architects and followed by imitations of the building both as a whole and in detail.

The 17th century brought about another wave of spoliation during the Barberini pope, Urban VIII (1623–1644). Drawing on recent studies of L. Rice, T. A. Marder describes in Chapter 10 how the bronze from the portico's truss found its way to the cannons of the Castel Sant'Angelo, instead of the Baldacchino in St. Peter's basilica. The compensatory repairs ordered by the pope included the partial reconstruction of the portico by F. Borromini and the building of two new bell-towers, generally attributed to Bernini, but in reality designed by C. Moderno. The towers soon earned the nickname '*l'orecchie d'asino*'.

The inside of the Pantheon could not escape its fate either. In Chapter 11, S. Pasquali guides us through the history of the Neoclassical remodeling of the interior of the rotunda, which is all the more important, for the result of that work is basically what we see today. The attic was robbed of the ancient marble and porphyry veneer, the whole architectural scheme was redesigned, and the new decoration realized in painted stucco and *grisaille* paintings in *trompe l'oeil*.

In the late 19th century the Pantheon gained a new function with the unification of Italy. After the funeral of the first king of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele I in 1878, the building became an imperial mausoleum and was accordingly redecorated both on the exterior and in the interior. In Chapter 12, R. B. Williams describes the role of the Pantheon in the political struggles during the first decades of the Italian Monarchy.

The last chapter, Chapter 13, offers an overview of the influence of the Pantheon on modern architecture. R. A. Etlin explores how the Pantheon was used as an inspiration for a variety of different building types from government buildings to public libraries from the mid-18th century to the 20th century.

Overall, this volume provides a thoroughly fascinating account of the Pantheon's history for any reader, and offers an invaluable starting point to stimulate future research.