

Theory of Architecture

Fourth Stage

Architecture Engineering Department

Theory

- The word 'theory' derives from the Greek 'theorein', which means 'to look at' as in terms of 'looking at' a theatre stage, which may explain why sometimes 'theory' is used as something not completely resembling real.
- The verb theorize is "to perceive."
- an ideal or hypothetical set of facts, principles, or circumstances —often used in the phrase *in theory*
- the general or abstract principles of a body of fact, a science, or an art.
- the analysis of a set of facts in their relation to one another
- Theorem (n.)

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/theory>

<https://orgtheory.wordpress.com/2006/07/11/etymology-of-theory/>

<https://www.etymonline.com/word/theorem>

Architecture

- **Architecture** is both the process and the product of planning, designing, and constructing buildings or any other structures. Architectural works, in the material form of buildings, are often perceived as cultural symbols and as works of art. Historical civilizations are often identified with their surviving architectural achievements.

Architecture

- Architecture is not a purely practical discipline. Every design decision is a thought, something that has to be decided, based on an array of values and factors, that come from several sources.
- Some of those factors can be easily decoded and given an automatic, appropriate solution, like for example, facts coming from the terrain such as the sun position, which would dictate the best orientation of your building.
- But some other factors and questions will require you to take decisions based on much less obvious grounds, or even very controversial decisions. For example, making a new building in a very old historic place, or having religious issues involved in your project. The project will get different opinions of criticism.

Architectural Theory

- **Architectural theory** is the act of thinking, discussing, and writing about architecture.
- *"Practice and theory are its parents. Practice is the frequent and continued contemplation of the mode of executing any given work, or of the mere operation of the hands, for the conversion of the material in the best and readiest way. Theory is the result of that reasoning which demonstrates and explains that the material wrought has been so converted as to answer the end proposed. Wherefore the mere practical architect is not able to assign sufficient reasons for the forms he adopts; and the theoretic architect also fails, grasping the shadow instead of the substance. He who is theoretic as well as practical, is therefore doubly armed; able not only to prove the propriety of his design, but equally so to carry it into execution." Vitruvius.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architectural_theory

The Theorist

- This is the person who is very active in the field of Architecture criticism. Knowing about theorist and critics and how they see architecture is a key to building your own idea of architecture.

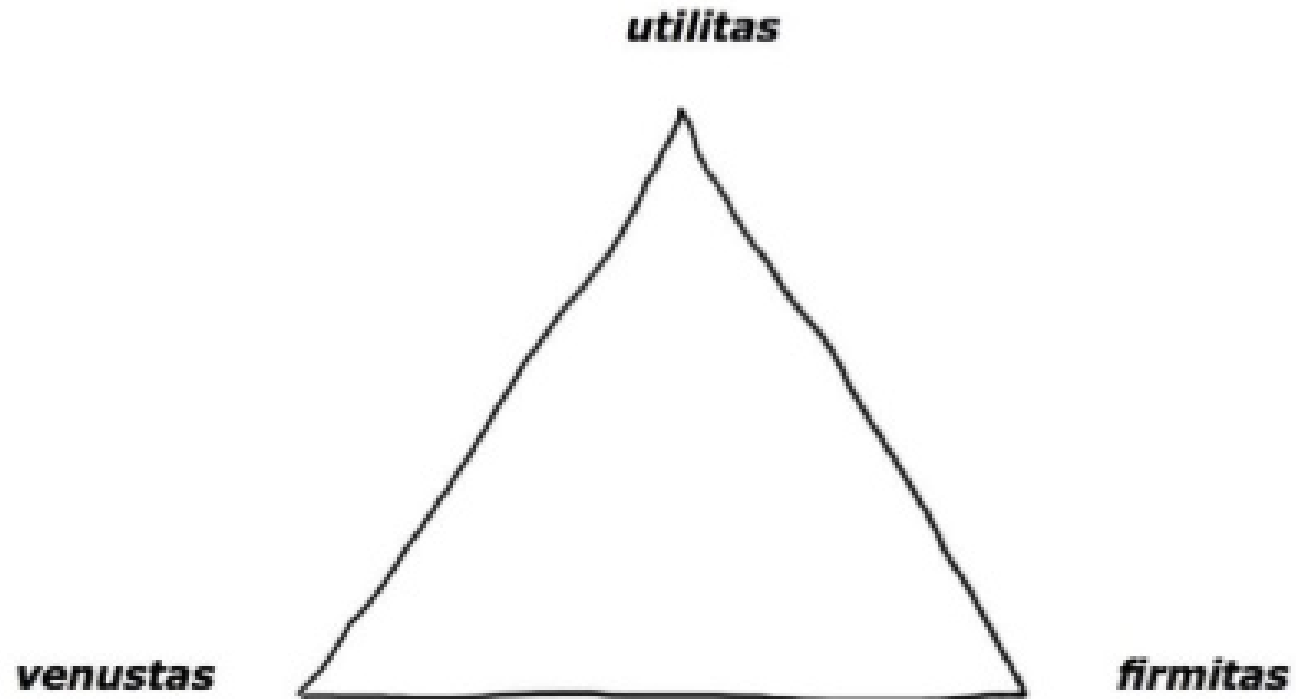
The History of Architectural Theory

- The earliest surviving written work on the subject of architecture is *De architectura*, by the Roman architect Vitruvius in the early 1st century AD.
- According to Vitruvius, a good building should satisfy the three principles of *firmitas, utilitas, venustas*, commonly known by the original translation – *firmness, commodity and delight*. An equivalent in modern English would be:
 - Durability – a building should stand up strongly and remain in good condition.
 - Utility – it should be suitable for the purposes for which it is used.
 - Beauty – it should be aesthetically pleasing.

Leon Battista Alberti, who elaborates on the ideas of Vitruvius in his treatise, *The Ten Books of Architecture*

- * Durability
- * Utility
- * Beauty
(Delight)

VITRUVIAN PRINCIPLES of architecture



Brunelleschi, in the building of the dome of Florence Cathedral (Italy) in the early 15th century, not only transformed the building and the city, but also the role and status of the architect.

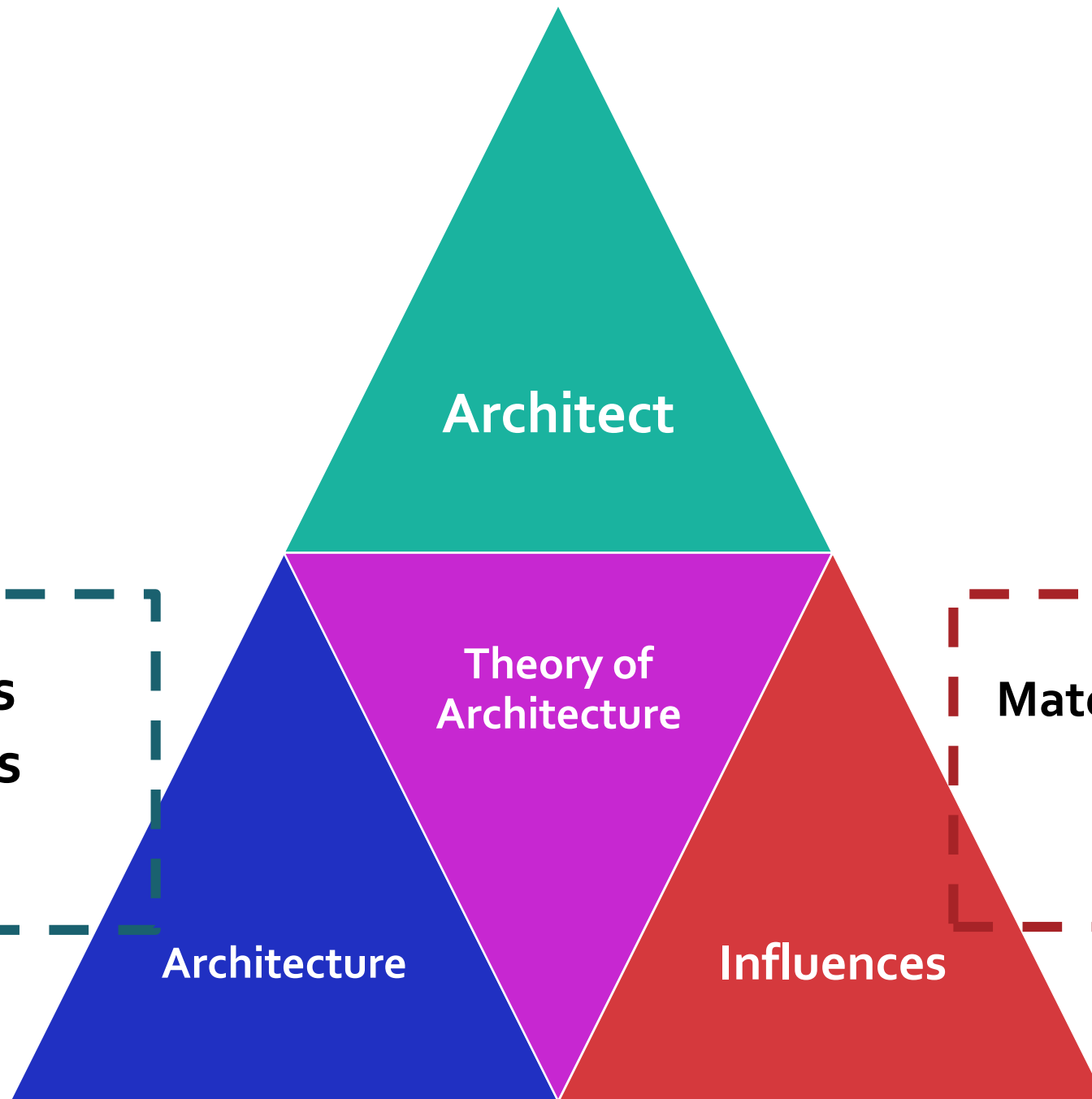


Criticism

- Criticism is the action of emitting a judgement over someone's work. Architecture criticism is a very important tool in theory of architecture, because it is the ground of what can be considered as the "common sense". Very famous buildings are usually criticized by several important critics, and observing this can give us very important clues for building our own opinion.

The Difference between theory and history of architecture

- the difference was developed by the 15th-century Renaissance architect Leon Battista Alberti.
- The distinction between the history and theory of architecture did not emerge until the mid-18th century.
- Vitruvius emphasized on the importance of history as a source of knowledge for the designer.
- It is impossible to discuss meaningfully the buildings of the immediate past without discussing the ideals of those who built them, just as it is impossible to discuss the ideals of architects without reference to the structures they designed.



**Buildings
Examples
Spaces**

**Spirit of the age
Materials and Technology
Society
Principles
etc.**