Tishk International University
Engineering Faculty
Architecture Department

Theory of Architecture I

Lecture 2:

Architectural theory & Design theory

1ˢᵗ Grade **Instructor: Dr. Salem Mokhtar**

Introduction

Theories and theoretical work are of great importance to architecture, as they form the bases in which architecture depends on, or supposed to be.

At the end of this lecture, the students will have basic knowledge about the Architectural theory.

Definition of Architecture and Architect

Architecture is a very complex discipline. Most people live their lives in constant contact with architecture. It provides a place to live, work and play.

Architecture can be defined as:

- The art and science of designing and constructing buildings

Whereas an **Architect** is:

- One who has completed a course of study in building and design, and is licensed by the state as an architect.

Definition of theory

The meaning of '**theory**' is as a conception or mental scheme of something to be done, or of the method of doing it, and a systematic statement of rules or principles to be followed.

In order to make a scientific theory, we start with the recognition of a problem, and then put forward a hypothesis which needs to be tested in order to eliminate errors and end with a corroborated theory.

Architectural theory

Architectural theory began with Marcus Vitruvius' Ten Books on Architecture, written in the first century B.C.E.

Vitruvius explained "theory" as the ability to demonstrate and explain the productions of dexterity (skill in performing tasks) on the principles of proportion.

"theory" is the channel through which distinct (special) architectural beliefs, values, and attitudes are transmitted or actions are filtered, and out of which arise any qualities architecture is seen having.

- A theory of architecture must aim to capture the essence, and not the accidents, of architectural beauty.

many theorists and architects see that the architectural theory governs the architectural practice by legislating rules and criteria of building, one of them is Scruton, says:

 "Architectural theory consists in the attempt to formulate the maxims, rules and precepts which govern, or ought to govern, the practice of builder."

Although Architectural theory is often didactic, it must be categorised to one of these types:

- Prescriptive: relating to the imposition or enforcement of a rule or method

- Proscriptive: forbidding or restricting something

- Affirmative: supportive, hopeful, or encouraging

- Critical: expressing adverse or disapproving comments or judgments

- Descriptive: the most popular one, describing or classifying in an objective and non-judgmental way

Examples of Architectural Theories

Here are some architectural theories stated by different architects and theorists, some of them had a great range in architecture. They fall under several fields in architecture, some related to context, others related to region, functionalism, etc. as shown below.

Le Corbusier: Five points of Architecture

Robert Venturi: Complexity and Contradiction in architecture

Christian Norberg Schulz: The Phenomenon of Place

Peter Eisenman: Post Functionalism

Louis Sullivan: Form ever follows function

Mies Van Der Rohe: Universal Space theory

Kenneth Frampton: Critical Regionalism Theory

Geoffrey Broadbent: Theory of Signs

Design theory

theory of design argues about reasons that can explain, dictate (an order or principle that must be obeyed- *ex. the dictates of fashion*) or prove a design decision, such as the creation of a shape in an architectural work, related more to the investigations of systems of decision making in design than to the verbalization of different design decisions as such.

the **design theory** is considered to;

• Help in design or

• Change concepts of design or

• Rearrange design phases.

After all, it is to design with; it is to address aspects of imagination and creativity and introduces the channels one can use to achieve creativity in architectural design.
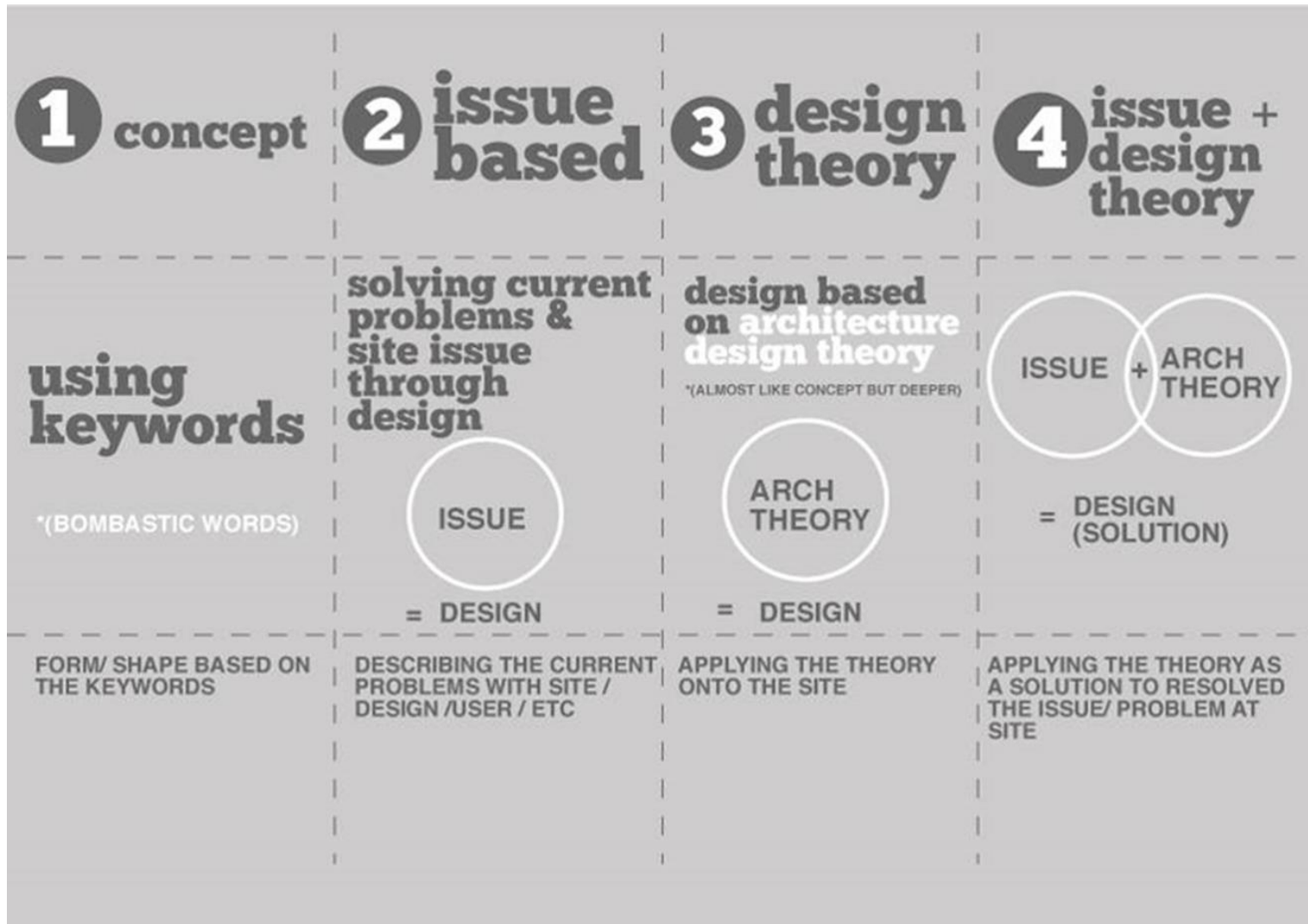
Antioniades presented some factors that could help in the design process in order to reach creativity in architecture. He tried by this theory to navigate the channels of creativity through which one can move, in order to stimulate one's imagination and create design. He **identified and divided the metaphor used in architectural design into three broad categories:**

Intangible metaphors, those in which the metaphorical departure for the creation is a concept, an idea, a human condition, or a particular quality (individuality, naturalness, community, tradition, and culture),

Tangible metaphors, those in which the metaphorical departure stems strictly from some visual or material character.

Combined metaphors, those in which the conceptual and the visual overlap as ingredients of the point of departure.

Design theory

In conclusion, this lecture presented the Architectural theory; Definition of theory, categorisation of Architectural theory and design theory.

Thank you

Quiz 2

- Theories form the bases in which architecture depends on, or supposed to be.
- **'theory'** is as a conception or mental scheme of something to be done, or of the method of doing it, and a systematic statement of rules or principles to be followed.
- Architectural theory began with Marcus Vitruvius' Ten Books on Architecture, written in the first century… Le Corbusier: Five points of Architecture, or Mies Van Der Rohe: Universal Space theory

- A theory of architecture must aim to capture the essence, and not the accidents, of architectural beauty
- Define Architecture?

the **design theory** is considered to;

- Help in design or Change concepts of design or Rearrange design phases.

- Architectural theory must be categorised to one of five types:
Prescriptive – Proscriptive – Affirmative – Critical - Descriptive