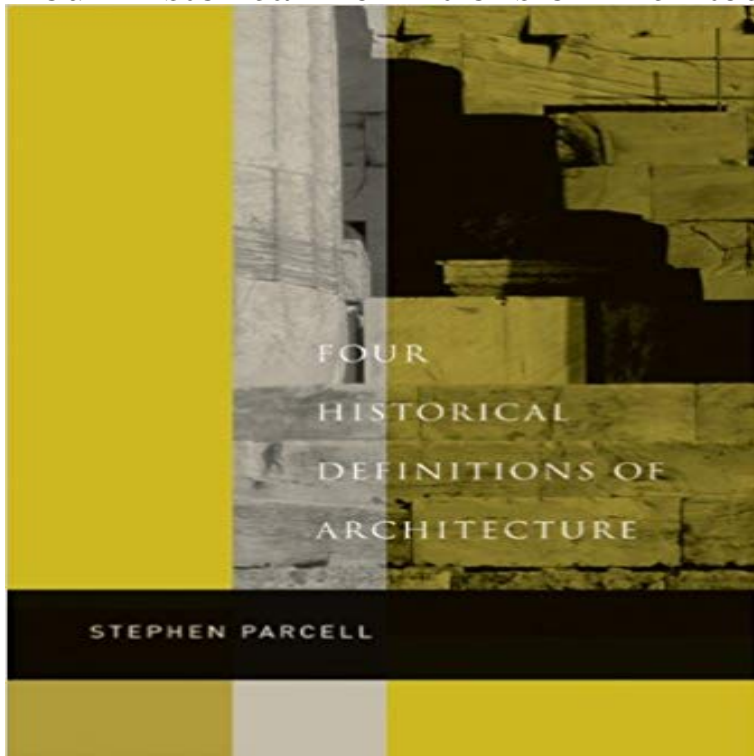


Four Historical Definitions of Architecture



Where does architecture belong in the larger scheme of things? Is it a liberal art? Is it related to painting, music, medicine, or horse training? Is it timeless, or does it have a beginning? To pursue such questions, Stephen Parcell investigates four historical definitions of Western architecture: as a *techne* in ancient Greece, a mechanical art in medieval Europe, an art of *disegno* in Renaissance Italy, and a fine art in eighteenth-century Europe. These definitions situated architecture within larger classifications of knowledge, establishing alliances between architecture and other disciplines. They also influenced elements of architectural practice that we now associate with three characters (designer, builder, and dweller) and three things (material, drawing, and building). Guided by current architectural questions, Parcell examines writings in these historical periods and focuses on practical implications of texts by Hugh of St Victor, Leon Battista Alberti, and Etienne-Louis Boullée. *Four Historical Definitions of Architecture* shows how the concept of architecture and elements of architectural practice have evolved over time. Even the word architecture has ambiguous roots.

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