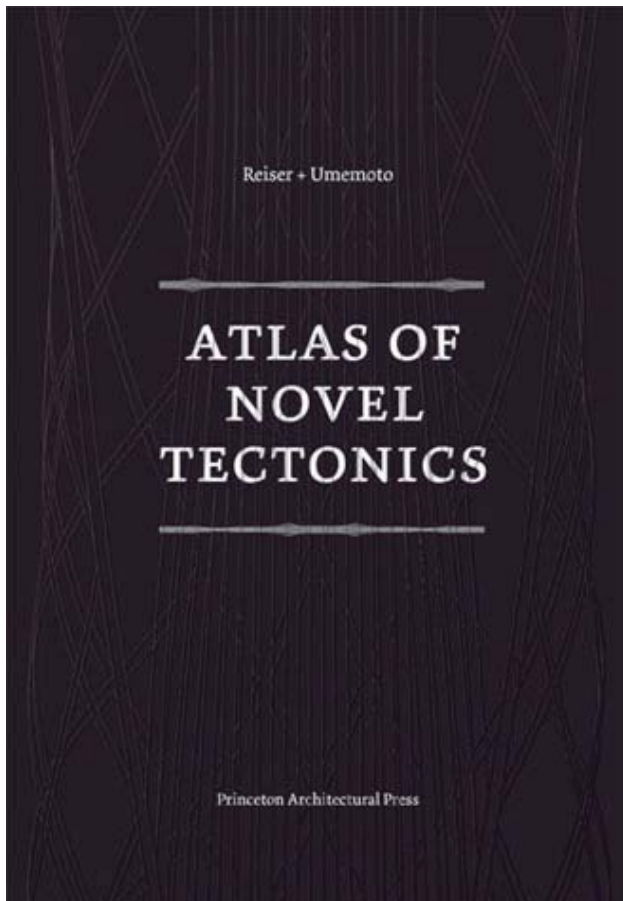


ON OPERATION



Function of a thing as having one predetermined meaning.
Ex a column acting as a structural element

Operation of a thing as how the thing actually is used and by interpretation being able to have multiple/any meanings.

For R&U the actual meaning is not of interest for the architect,
that is the process of unfolding of possible meanings.

Construction of meaning

“The ambient, like any material effect, influences meaning and interpretation but does not determine it and is not affected by it.” p164

As a material system, the buildings fabric and effects can be determined to the very detail by the architect, however the program of a buildings use is much more volatile.

It's up for the users **interpretation**, how the building will actually be used.
So architects are **not creating meaning but background for meaning to unfold** from the mind of the observer.

Asignifying Signs

“Rather than passing judgment and asking what a thing is, which has become the dominant mode of questioning in contemporary practice,..., the use of the asignifying sign doesn’t immediately fix the process in terms of a definition but rather leaves it open.” p173

“An architecture that has to explain itself, or be explained, has failed to present its own qualities.” p173

“that would be the fastest way to shut down development, foregrounding how a project looks, not how it behaves” – p180

“Our criticism of historical or material signification comes out of how it stops the process of architectural becoming by moving away from matter and into transcendent language.” p174

“architecture that displays certain qualities but does not mean any one thing.” p174

Promote the **production of the unforeseen** rather than representing the known.

Concerned with the **process of unfolding** rather than stability and meaning.

An **opposition to post modernism.**

Architecture and program

Operate under the assumption that a **weak relationship exists between architecture and program.**

Like the one between lyrics and music, where you can communicate opposing content with the same musical structure, but changed lyrics.

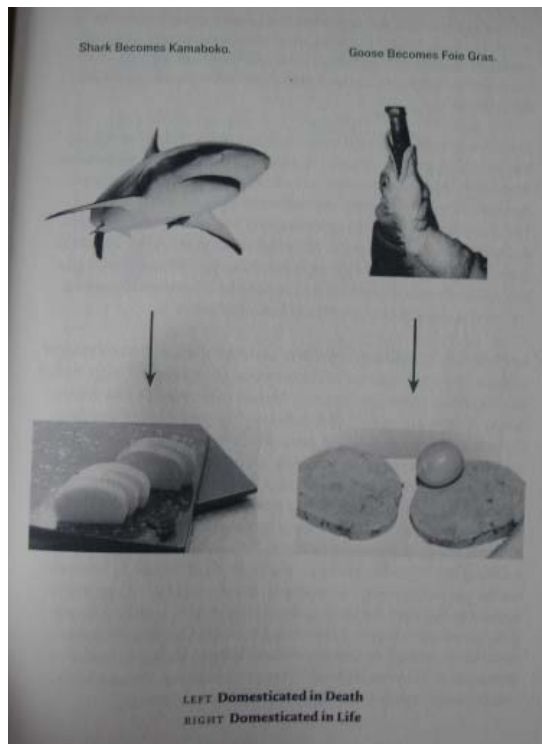
“If there is a precise fit, it is between certain programs and building systems such as plumbing, electricity, and gas. You don’t always eat at a table, but you always cook at the stove” p166

So programming can alter the narrative of space, but **people are also capable of doing almost anything anywhere.**

One of the main differences with the novel tectonics from the earlier theorists is that the program of the building have become much more complicated from the Caribbean hut of Semper.

Process and Result

“Our relationship to architecture is less that of a driver to a vehicle than of a consumer to a meal. The consumer is concerned not with the evolutionary process and pressures that lead an animal to take a certain form but with what tastes and textures result from that process” p196



What it does rather than what it actually means.

Not interested in the process but the **results of the process.**

Process is not used as justification for the design.

I presume there is **no way to justify the design** as it has no fixed meaning and there is no way to evaluate the design as it only depends on the observers interpretation?

Optimization

They are not interested in structural optimization as performed by the engineers of the past to solve one problem alone, namely efficiency.

And this because it's too close to creating meaning and not multiplicity as it:

“ignores the whole range of transformations of which matter is capable and to which pure logic is oblivious (ignorant)” p175

“We in contrast, are interested in force delay, detour, and propagation – in short, an architectural elaboration of the force field” p175

“It approaches the efficiency of the optimum, but is not reducible to it. A probabilistic relationship to the minimal must be maintained” p176

“Multiple influences approaching equilibrium instead of a single influence... The result will be as minimal as it can be given that rich field.” p176

Last comment is somehow contradictory as they **want to use multiplicity to create a result that is as minimal as it can be given that rich field.**

Shouldn't it be as complex it can be given that rich field?

Optimization

Speaking on Nervi's structural optimization.

“Despite the appearance of an optimizing logic, this design by Nervi is architectural, as much an act of will as a solution to a problem of statics.” p90

“forces will go there matter will go” p90

“From structure, to program , to effects, we seek to proliferate this relationship between matter and force across all elements of a building.” p90

So they want to **work with the relationships** but without optimizing just playing around.

But then an engineer would probably ask, what should one choose if there is no reason to chose one above the other?

On materials of the future

“A manufactured material like steel can be standardized, resulting in an invariably uniform product, whereas wood develops out of a natural process that makes each piece vary, wood design codes include safety factors that take into account the weakest behaviors and design for the worst case, thus eliminating any intensive difference in specific pieces” p202

So they are looking forward for the

“material science promises to bridge the gap between natural variation and standardization through non-standard materials, the traits and performances of which can be manipulated even within a single member according to specific requirements. This will liberate the traits of steel from modernity’s homogeneity and paradoxically return them to the heterogeneity of traditional practices such as sword-making.” p203

From these statements they are somehow **valuing a return to nature with technology.**

But if one can generate variation with materials that can be specified at need, **what should this specification then try to fulfill?**

If you try to fulfill something then you’re saying that the result has a meaning, that it has to fulfill. Which is what they set out against in the first place.

Impersonal style

“Material processes and unfolding express an impersonal style through the interaction of their inherent resistances and tendencies. We pursue a management of this territory of material expression rather than a style linked only to personal expression of the psyche.”

p190

So they are talking about an **inherent quality, as there would be a truth**, but that was what they set out to be opposing

“Talent and intuition, interestingly, remain a dimension central to the expression of style... Selection and discrimination are crucial to working within any material system”

So intuition as a way of reasoning is still valid.

But how is that not just an expression of the psyche? which they wanted to depart from?

“the designer’s intuition operates not in terms of a pre-conscious retrieval, but rather through the active coordination of factors that cannot be held in the mind simultaneously” p206

As intuition is pre-conscious, it’s not the same as a universal truth?

By proposing freedom in choosing properties instead of style/form they’re just trying to justify style by properties and not by choosing from abundance.

Opposition to modernism

“Modernism, in resisting difference, pushes forward the military model of coherence to a homogeneous regimen. In challenging modernism we do not advocate disorder. Rather, we recognize that order can emerge out of different elements acting with a similar purpose, or out of similar elements acting differently” p210

Not pursuing the discontinuous but order and continuity ending up where they set out to departure.

speaking of the consequences of working with a variable spaceframe geometry:

“every element in the structure – every node, every strut – is unique , or better yet, is both similar and different, from every neighboring strut and node” p159

they are proposing continuity and difference as an opposition to modernism.
But it ends up as with the **same homogeneous results as of modernism repetition.**

It seems that they are advocating for a new tectonics as an opposition to modernism and especially post modernism with its signs.

But strangely they never refer directly to the history of tectonics as justification for the novel tectonics.

Modernism

Essence of things
universal truth
honesty of material use

temporal work in contrast to permanent architecture
abstract inherent in the design

predefined - program define space once

representing the known
stability and meaning

optimization

part to whole

poetics of structure & construction

repetition of elements

Novel Tectonics

construct new history
selection of truth
selection of properties to express

temporal entering into the very fabric of architecture
abstract perform to changing needs
space and matter being one
interpretation - program alters space continuously

production of the unforeseen
process of unfolding

neither pure classical models, nor pure structural
honesty, nor pure compositional formalism but a more
open-ended process

whole to whole

versatility of program & space

continuity and difference