

Walter Gropius

Excerpts from *Apollo in the Democracy* and *The Scope of Total Architecture*

"In the meantime the Bauhaus idea has spread far and wide, but it also has been abused and distorted in such a manner that there is now a popular version of a fixed 'Bauhaus Style' which is tossed around in debate as if it had really existed as a rigidly defined formula. On the contrary. Our strength was that there was no dogma, no prescription – things that invariably go stale after a while – but only a guiding hand and an immensely stimulating setting for those who were willing to work concertedly, but without losing their identities."

— From "A New Pact with Life", Page 66

"Is the maker of the rose or the tulip an artist or a technician? Both, for in nature utility and beauty are constitutional qualities, mutually and truthfully interdependent. The organic form process in nature is the perpetual model for every human creation, whether it results from the mental strife of the inventive scientist or from the intuition of the artist."

— From "The Architect within our Industrial Society", Page 77

"As to the conception of the contemporary dwelling itself we must first start by checking up on our own attitude toward the human and psychological components of the problem and its ever changing aspects. Only a mature mind with deep understanding of the physical and psychological requirements of family life is able to conceive a shell for living to be efficient, inexpensive, beautiful and so flexible that it will be adequate for the ever changing life cycle of the family in all its stages of growth."

— From "Scope of Total Architecture", Page 183

"Harmonious integration, not regimentation, is the architectural goal."

— From "Tradition and Continuity in Architecture", Page 97

"Building is the fulfillment of practical requirements. Architecture interprets the emotional life of man."

— From "Designing Museum Buildings", Page 141

"After I have tried here to outline an approach to design as I see it, I want to put the greatest emphasis again on the necessity to integrate every new building, its shape and scale of design, with the environment of which it will be a part and to give it a character commensurate with its proper place in the social order."

— *From "Tradition & Continuity in Architecture", Page 104*

"The Bauhaus was not concerned with the formulation of time-bound, stylistic concepts, and its technical methods were not ends in themselves. It was created to show how a multitude of individuals, willing to work concertedly but without losing their identity, could evolve a kinship of expression in their response to the challenges of the day. Its aim was to give a basic demonstration of how to maintain unity and diversity, and it did this with the materials, techniques, and form concepts germane to its time."

— *From "The Role of the Architect in Modern Society", Page 51*

"My experiences during the Bauhaus years led me to a new conception of space in my own architectural work, away from the static space established unchangeably by enclosing walls toward a flowing space sequence, corresponding to the dynamic tendency of our time and seeking to combine the dimensions of space and time in architecture."

— *From "Apollo in the Democracy", Page 9*

"This brings up the question of our attitude toward tradition. Tradition, seen from the architectural point of view, has of course always meant more to me than the easy imitation of the outward forms of past periods or past modes of life. It has meant capturing the real spirit of a certain region as it evolves through long interaction between the natural setting, the type of people who inhabit it, and the dominant spiritual and practical factors that determine their way of life.

Approached in this way, any major shift in the production, techniques, and social order of such a region should find expression in its architecture so that the living issues can be read from its lines as well as those of the past.

The living issues . . . looking back into history it always seems that past periods were acutely conscious of what constituted their major concern, and only when we come down to our own period does it seem so fiendishly difficult to agree on what we would all consider to be our most important common motives and aims. But

unless we find out and bring material sacrifices in order to be able to demonstrate them clearly, we shall not understand ourselves, much less be understood by others."

— *From "A New Pact with Life", Pages 63–64*

"We cannot go on indefinitely reviving revivals. Architecture must move on or die. Its new life must come from the tremendous changes in the social and technical fields during the last two generations.

Neither medievalism nor colonialism can express the life of the twentieth-century man. There is no finality in architecture – only continuous change."

— *From "Archeology or Architecture?", Page 75*

"MODERN architecture is not a few branches of an old tree – it is new growth coming right from the roots."

— *From "Architect – Servant or Leader?", Page 91*