

Part I

Theory and Practice: The Weimar Republic

These studies (of Gropius) in prefabrication demonstrate a theme, a clearly defined pattern. The emerging theme embraces a trilogy. It is the simultaneous satisfaction of the technical function: "to accept the challenge of the machine in all fields of production"; the aesthetic function: "the prefabrication of houses on a unified artistic basis"; and the human function: "the satisfaction of the public desire for a home with an individual appearance." The theme is the unification of technology, art and life, the fundamental unity upon which the entire structure of Gropius' concepts and works is based.

Gilbert Herbert, The Synthetic Vision of Walter Gropius, 1959

Wachsmann's grasp of the industrialized process as one of transformation of our social and economic resources has always extended quite specifically to the transformation of our available energy media through new machine and management techniques. To harness the expanding potential of our machines and our industrialized technology, Wachsmann has long argued for a greater awareness of all aspects of the process. Unless we know the tools, we cannot possibly control them nor begin to sense the limits and possibilities out of which solutions can emerge.

Robertson Ward, "Konrad Wachsmann," AIA Journal, 1972