

PAUL SCHEERBART, *GLASS ARCHITECTURE* (1914)

SOURCE: DENNIS SHARP, ED., *GLASS ARCHITECTURE* (NEW YORK: PRAEGER, 1972).

chapter 1 environment and its influence on the development of culture

We live for the most part in closed rooms. These form the environment from which our culture grows. Our culture is to a certain extent the product of our architecture. If we want our culture to rise to a higher level, we are obliged, for better or for worse, to change our architecture. And this only becomes possible if we take away the closed character from the rooms in which we live. We can only do that by introducing glass architecture, which lets in the light of the sun, the moon, and the stars, not merely through a few windows, but through every possible wall, which will be made entirely of glass – of colored glass. The new refinement, which we thus create, must bring us a new culture.

chapter 13 the functional style

The reader might gain the impression that glass architecture is rather cold, but in warm weather, coolness is not unpleasant. Anyhow, let me make it clear that colors in glass can produce a most glowing effect, shedding perhaps a new warmth. What has been said up to now takes on a somewhat warmer atmosphere. I should like to resist most vehemently the undecorated “functional style,” for it is inartistic. It has often been adopted before in other contexts, and this is happening once again.

For a transition period, the functional style seems to me acceptable; at all events it has done away with imitations of older styles, which are simply products of brick architecture and wooden furniture. Ornamentation in the glass house will evolve entirely of its own accord – the oriental decoration, the carpets and the majolica will be so transformed that in glass architecture we shall never, I trust, have to speak of copying. At least, let’s hope so!

chapter 19 gothic cathedrals and castles

Glass architecture is unthinkable without Gothic. In the days when Gothic cathedrals and castles were rising, an architecture of glass was also tried. It was not completely realized, because iron was not yet available. In Gothic times, glass was entirely unknown in most private houses. Today it is a principal factor in the architecture of every house. But it still lacks color. Color, however, will come.

chapter 111 glass culture

After all the above, we can indeed speak of a glass culture. The new glass environment will completely transform mankind, and it remains only to wish that the new glass culture will not find too many opponents. It is to be hoped that glass culture will have even fewer opponents; to cling to the old is in many matters a good thing; in this way at any rate the old is preserved. We, too, want to cling to the old – the pyramids of ancient Egypt should most certainly not be abolished.