The Vernacular Moment: Eleanor Raymond, Walter Gropius, and New England Modernism between the Wars

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Figure 1 Walter Gropius, Gropius House, Lincoln, Mass., 1938, from north (photo: Jack Boucher 1986, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS MA, 9-Lin 16-7, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.)

The Vernacular Moment

Eleanor Raymond, Walter Gropius, and New England Modernism between the Wars

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The introduction of European modernist architecture to the United States in the late 1920s and 1930s was championed by prominent institutions, such as the Museum of Modern Art and Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, as well as by internationally recognized immigrant practitioners, led by Walter Gropius (1883–1969). The modern movement was widely perceived to be essentially foreign, but some of its promoters cannily made it seem, to some degree, familiar and acceptable by likening it to American traditions, most notably, to the great diversity of American vernacular architecture—from factories and grain elevators to cottages and barns.[1] This "other" architecture had already been construed by modernist writers and designers as aesthetically superior to architect-designed work, and they had widely embraced it as evidence of the timelessness of their ideals. In America, the modernist attachment to the vernacular also made the new forms seem consistent with established regional cultural practices and thus more acceptable to at least some skeptical observers.

Among the more notable architects who brought together modernist and vernacular architecture on the basis of what they perceived to be their shared qualities were Eleanor Raymond (1887–1989) and Gropius, both of whom executed influential projects in the Boston area in the 1920s and 1930s (Figures 1, 2). Although Gropius's own house in Lincoln, Massachusetts, has been widely recognized as an avant-garde example of an "organic" modernism that responded to the New England vernacular,[2] Raymond has received relatively little credit for having begun to explore the association between modern and vernacular ten years earlier in the Cambridge School of Architecture building (1928) and the Raymond-Kingsbury house (1931).

An appreciation of the work of Eleanor Raymond, a pioneering American modernist and one of the first graduates of the Cambridge School, an innovative architectural program designed specifically for women, challenges the customary assignment to Gropius of a soloist role in the vanguard that introduced European modernism to the United States. It also illuminates the moment in the late 1920s and 1930s when New England's domestic architectural tradition—which had been the subject of antiquarian interest and the source material for historicist designs for more than fifty years—exerted an important influence on modern design. Raymond's work for the Cambridge School of Architecture and Gropius's house in Lincoln showed young architects that vernacular models could be useful for modern architecture.[3] Although the two architects were associated only to the extent that Raymond expressed an interest in Gropius's work, they drew on vernacular precedent in similar ways, and both produced influential buildings.

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Figure 2 Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape, Cambridge, Mass.; Torrey Hancock House (1827) at right, offices and drafting room wing by Eleanor Raymond et al., 1928 (brochure, Smith College Archives, Smith College)

The assimilation of the vernacular in European professional architectural practice had begun in the mid-nineteenth century, when architects and theorists turned to it as a corrective to the increasingly embattled academic tradition. In his long essay of 1837, "The Poetry of Architecture: The Architecture of the Nations of Europe Considered in Its Association with Natural Scenery and National Character," John Ruskin argued that the rural peasant's house, built "how he likes" and in harmony with nature, was inevitably in "good taste," in contrast to the work of professional architects whom he decried for (among other things) profligate use of manufactured ornament whose design was disconnected from materials and structure.[4] Benjamin Bucknall, the translator of the 1876 English translation of Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, *depuis les temps préhistoriques jusqu'à nos jours* (1875), contrasted the domestic architecture of the past, when "charm" arose from "the free expression of a rational application of a means to an end," with modern, architect-designed buildings that rarely expressed "the charm of Art." Like other commentators of the period, Bucknall credited "purely engineering and naval constructions" with a similarly high level of achievement.[5]

As many argued in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in their unmediated engagement with materials perfected in the modern age—iron, steel, and glass—engineers achieved a kind of beauty that was beyond the reach of academically trained architects, who were steeped in pointless historicism and unwilling to let new materials and new methods define their aesthetic. For engineers, the argument went, a lack of traditional architectural education was a blessing. This point of view was epitomized by Le Corbusier, who wrote in 1923, "Aesthetic of the Engineer, Architecture: two things firmly allied, sequential, the one in full flower, the other in painful regression."[6] The advantageous perspective of the engineers was shared by the nonprofessional designers of vernacular architecture. Ignorant of irrelevant academic traditions, they met the needs of dwellers sensibly and economically—and therefore beautifully. Non-architects were seen as more functionalist in their approach to design, and so as operating according to basic modernist principles.

The attractive features of European traditional architecture could also be found in America. In the preface to her 1931 book on Pennsylvania vernacular architecture, Eleanor Raymond wrote, "Observation of the modern movement, both abroad and at home, and a close study of these old Pennsylvania buildings will clearly show that the motives and ideals of both are the same."[7] Gropius made nearly the same point upon his arrival in Boston: "A very strong bond proved to be the beautiful architecture I have found in New England. My wife and I are similarly delighted with the old Puritan Colonial style which has so much in common with the principals [*sic*] of modern architecture."[8]

Raymond's book on Pennsylvania architecture was part of her multifaceted exploration of the vernacular, which the Wellesley graduate began when she completed her two years of course work at the Cambridge School of Domestic Architecture and Landscape Architecture in 1919.[9] Although she continued to thematize the vernacular in her built work throughout a long career, which lasted into the 1970s, the period between 1928 and 1935 was particularly important for her simultaneous engagement with earlier building traditions and modernist architecture. During those Depression years, Raymond saw herself as both introducing European modernism to the U.S. and drawing attention to vernacular architecture The economic restrictions of the period fostered this dualistic aesthetic project, compelling her to incorporate old outbuildings in the designs of houses whose modernist elements included open plans and corner windows, like the Stackpole Cottage in Biddeford Pool, Maine (Figures 3, 4). Gropius, on the other hand, from the time that he was brought to teach at Harvard by the dean of the Graduate School of Design, Joseph Hudnut, conceived his role more simply, as the broker of the Bauhaus aesthetic in America. His house in Lincoln, which was among his first projects in the U.S. and was widely publicized, was a persuasive argument for the appropriateness of modernism to the American context.[10] However, like Raymond, Gropius felt the need to make the new style palatable by allying it with regional architecture and by incorporating traditional design elements.

Although Raymond's view of the vernacular may have been ahistorical, insofar as she saw traditional architecture through a modernist lens, it was not entirely reductive.

Figure 3 Eleanor Raymond, Stackpole Cottage, Biddeford Pool, Maine, ca. 1930, south side, showing vernacular outbuildings connected by new construction (Eleanor Raymond papers, Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University)

Figure 4 Raymond, Stackpole Cottage, north side (Raymond papers, Harvard)

She recognized the various kinds of vernacular architecture, and they inflected the form of her work in various ways. Moreover, for her, the most modest sorts of vernacular architecture evinced a progressive, anti-Victorian domesticity that she also saw in the contemporary European buildings that she admired. Gropius was similarly drawn to New England houses that were characterized by simplicity and sameness rather than distinctive examples of high-style colonial architecture. While he could have admired the opulent mansions of the colonial grandees of Massachusetts, instead he praised the aesthetic harmony of what he saw as the unified and democratic architecture of New England's early settlements: "They had a conception of a totality: a [town] common in the center and every house a little bit different. There was an unspoken understanding not to try to triumph [architecturally] over the other person."[11] For Gropius, the New England village green lined with vernacular houses was consistent with the kinds of modernist housing developments he imagined, in which the ostentatious stylistic one-upmanship associated with nineteenth-century revival styles was rejected in favor of functionalism and visual consistency.

Eleanor Raymond and the Vernacular

"I like things simple," Eleanor Raymond was reported to have said, and *Early Domestic Architecture in Pennsylvania*, her most extended essay on the relationship between historic and modern architecture, makes that clear.[12] Eschewing many of the state's well-known high-style buildings, Raymond, as architect Brongard Okie (1875–1945) put it in the book's introduction, chose to focus on the previously neglected "smaller or more primitive houses [and] the barns and out-buildings that are so typical of Eastern Pennsylvania in particular, and that add so much to the attractiveness of the countryside."[13] For Raymond, the barns, spring houses, smoke houses, and bake houses that she recorded in photographs corresponded quite directly to her modernist view. As she wrote in the book's foreword, "an unstudied directness in fitting form to function, which seems to have been guided by an instinctive appreciation of proportion, and by skill in the use of materials have then resulted in the excellent design shown in these buildings."[14] In that sentence Raymond managed to touch on three central modernist tenets: functionalism, a rejection of academic formulae, and an honest engagement with materials. This admiring view of vernacular architecture, which grew out of nineteenth-century conceptions, of course ignored the fact that apparently naive rural architecture was frequently shaped by the kinds of formula-imposing professional discourse that constrained academic architecture, stifling individual creativity and innate good sense. For example, many of the farm buildings that Raymond admired as intuitive and natural products, were in fact shaped by the intense debate about agricultural architecture that was carried out in both popular and specialist publications during the nineteenth century.[15] But while it was probably inaccurate to think of farm buildings as modernist architecture *avant la lettre*, Raymond effectively used the idea of the rural vernacular to support her modern architecture—both intellectually and materially—throughout her career.

Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania joined a long series of publications on historic American architecture, often focused on specific regions, which had begun to appear in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Among the first of these was William E. Barry's *Pen Sketches of Old Houses*, which was published in a small 1874 edition by James R. Osgood and Co. of Boston. Despite its title, Barry's book prefigured Raymond's broad interest in building types, which extended to barns and other subsidiary structures.[16] Other early scholars of early American architecture focused on the grand Georgian and Federal examples that demonstrated the extension of the classical tradition in North America. The interest in earlier buildings that reflected this

architectural continuity between Europe and the United States is evidenced in such works as Fiske Kimball's *Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic* (1922), John Frederick Kelly's *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut* (1924), the *White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs* (1915–40), and Charles Morse Stotz's *Early Architecture of Western Pennsylvania* (1936).[17] Raymond thanked Kimball in the foreword for his support of her project, whose emphasis on the vernacular was very different from his work.

Brongard Okie shared Raymond's interest in the regional vernacular, and his architectural practice included many interpretations and expansions of typical Pennsylvania stone farmhouses. He was a noted restorer of early buildings in the area, including the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia, and he reconstructed the estate of William Penn, Pennsbury Manor. Raymond may well have come to know of Okie through an exhibition of photographs of work by his firm—then Duhring, Okie and Ziegler—which was sponsored by the Cambridge School during the 1916–17 academic year.[18]

Antiquarian publications of the interwar period show that the interest of professional architects in colonial architecture had continued uninterrupted since the nineteenth century, when the rediscovery of earlier American architectural traditions had begun. As William Jordy observed of the 1930s, however, and as the works of Raymond and Gropius demonstrate, "not since McKim, Mead & White and other academic architects had more literally investigated a riper colonial and early national tradition did the exploration of the New England past prove as consequential for current design."[19]

To establish the connections between traditional and modern architecture, Raymond used both photographs and measured drawings. In her foreword, she reported that she and her "field scout," Ruth Crook, had taken a thousand photographs during the course of their 8,000-mile tour of Pennsylvania.[20] The published photographs were mostly the work of P. B. Wallace of Philadelphia, although it seems likely that Raymond had a role in selecting the subjects and viewpoints. Despite the fact that her special conception of the vernacular sometimes creeps into the selection of measured drawings for publication, for instance, the austere elevation of a Chester County barn, most document the kinds of features focused on by other publications of the period (Figure 5). The measured drawings in *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania* overwhelmingly depict the most elaborate details, such as stairways, windows, and paneled fireplace walls. Similar details had been the focus of previous architectural books, going back as far as Arthur Little's *Early New England Interiors*, published in 1878. While some of the photographs in Raymond's monograph also document such features, others capture the massive timber frame roofs and other distinctive aspects of building technology, which had also been the subject of antiquarian interest since the nineteenth century. Many of the photos are three-quarter views of exteriors. Raymond was particularly drawn to the stone farmhouses of Lancaster, Berks, and Chester Counties and elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

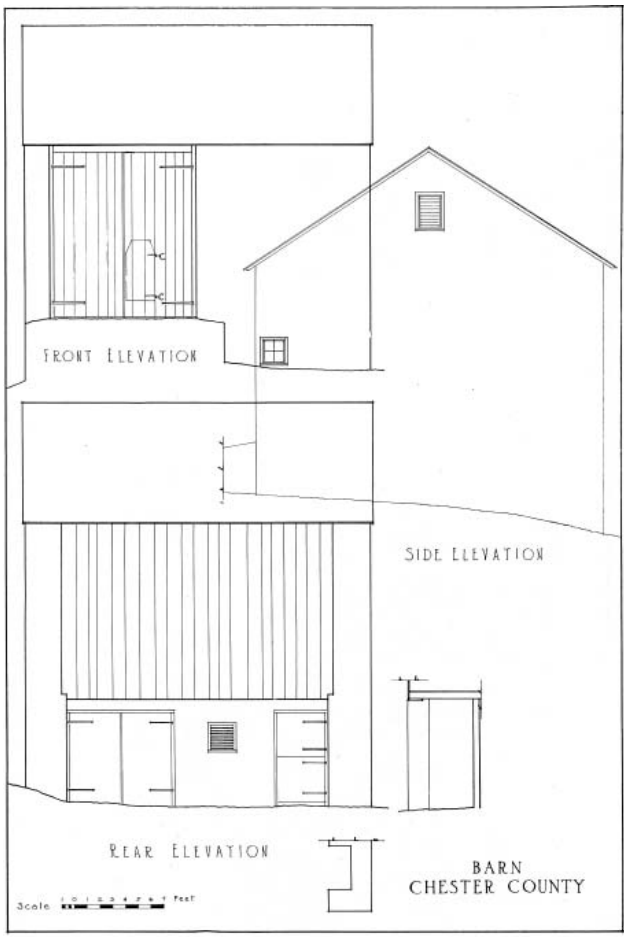

Figure 5 Raymond, Chester County barn, elevations (*Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania*, 1931, plate 152)

The photos that seem to reveal the most about Raymond's sensibility are the depictions of modest outbuildings whose whitewashed board siding or stone walls, minimal detailing, and lack of architectural pretension achieve the aesthetic that she admired in the domestic architecture of Le Corbusier, Robert Mallet-Stevens, André Lurçat, and other modernists, which she saw when touring France in 1928 with her life partner, Ethel B. Power (1881–1969). Power, also a Cambridge School graduate, was the long-time editor of *House Beautiful*. From the early twenties until Power's resignation in 1934, that magazine illustrated many of Raymond's projects, whose modernist elements were inspired by their

trip to Europe.[21] Starting in 1927, *House Beautiful* also published a number of articles that dealt directly with European modernism, including a piece on French and German modernist houses by Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr.[22]

Raymond's vision of the fundamental similarity of vernacular and modernist architecture saturates the *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania*. A notable example of her commitment is a pair of photographs of an outbuilding at Pine Forge, Berks County (Figure 6). The building is long and narrow, one story in height, with a gabled roof and a lean-to addition that runs about one-half its length. The astonishing façade of this building has a central entrance and porch, over which the main roof is extended, calling to mind the daring cantilevers of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie houses. Economy has led to an almost modernist simplicity in the handling of the stairs and porch railing. The steps are constructed of whitewashed stone, like the rest of the building, and their simple geometry is accentuated by the lack of railings and detailing of any kind. The porch rests on a single post. The building is read as an elegant composition of simple, white geometric volumes, against which the horizontal lines of the porch railing provide a dynamic linear contrast. The photographs capture the pure aesthetic appeal that the vernacular had for early twentieth-century modernists. Although Gropius did not produce a parallel study of early American architecture, his scattered comments on the New England vernacular demonstrate his sympathy with Raymond's point of view. Both architects would produce designs that enlisted familiar New England traditions in order to warm the reception of European modernism.

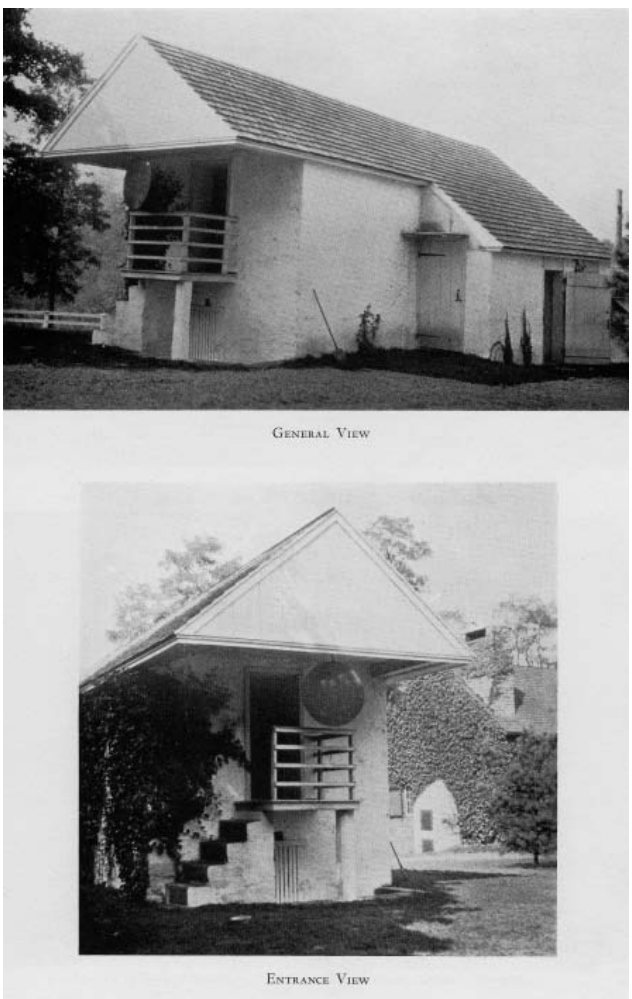

Figure 6 Outbuilding at Pine Forge, Berks County (*Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania*, 1931, plate 85)

The Cambridge School

The first building in which Eleanor Raymond's productive engagement with the vernacular was expressed was the home of her alma mater, the Cambridge School, an institution that played an important role in both her personal and professional lives. She evidently shared in the design of the building that was created for the school in 1928, a complex that married a drafting wing patterned on a factory with a simple early nineteenth-century house—thus embracing two vernaculars, pre-industrial and industrial (Figure 7).

The Cambridge School had its start in the living room of Katherine Brooks Norcross in 1915. A graduate of Radcliffe College, Norcross wanted to study landscape architecture, but as a woman had no access to professional education. At the suggestion of Norcross and James Sturgis Pray, the head of the Harvard landscape architecture program,

Figure 7 Torrey Hancock House, 1827, later Cambridge School, Cambridge, Mass. (Smith College Archives)

Harvard architecture instructor Henry Atherton Frost began to provide instruction to Norcross in her home.[23] The early history of the Cambridge School thus paralleled that of Radcliffe College, which had begun in the nineteenth century as an independent "Annex" to Harvard in which Harvard faculty were hired to teach women students.[24]

Norcross's early studies focused on both history and design, as she recalled having had "a good-sized replica of a Greek temple with Doric columns" to "copy." Eventually the accommodation of Norcross's drawing board and equipment in the family apartment proved impractical and Frost invited Norcross to work at a drafting table in the professional office that he shared with partner Bremer Whidden Pond.[25] The Cambridge School operated in Frost and Pond's Cambridge office from 1916, but expanding enrollment soon required the rental of additional space near Harvard Square. In 1919, when Eleanor Raymond completed her studies, the school boasted "well lighted, clean" facilities with "modern conveniences." These were not adequate, however, and space problems plagued the institution until 1928, when alumna Faith Bemis (1902–1989) purchased the Torrey Hancock House (1827) at 53 Church Street, near Harvard Square, which she leased to the school.

In 1924 the Cambridge School of Domestic Architecture and Landscape Architecture was incorporated in Massachusetts, and Henry Frost pushed for further professionalization of the training. He entered into a cooperative agreement with Smith College in 1932, at which point the name of the Cambridge School was changed to the Smith College Graduate School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture in Cambridge. Under the agreement with Smith, the Cambridge School awarded certificates to students who had completed the course of training without an undergraduate degree, and graduate degrees to those who entered with a BA. The arrangement with Smith College was curtailed for financial reasons, and the Cambridge School closed in 1942.[26]

The Cambridge School's second published catalogue (for the academic year 1917–18) succinctly described the intentions of its faculty: "The purpose of the instruction is to train students of the architectural and landscape professions. The courses offered are a) the theory and practice of domestic architectural design, b) the theory and practice of landscape design with particular reference to domestic work, or c) the combination of these two in the study of the house and garden."[27] Students, who typically spent three years at the school, received instruction from Frost, Pond, and other Harvard faculty. The course of instruction included both landscape and architectural subjects, which constituted a unique interdisciplinarity. As Frost explained in 1943, "[We] accepted the principle that design . . . was inclusive . . . that the building *and* its surroundings comprised the design, rather than the building *or* its surroundings."[28] Frost deemed that this combination of architecture and landscape design was essential for women who had "shown especial qualifications for what we term private practice, or estate work, both in architecture and landscape architecture. They have a natural aptitude for the more intimate type of designs that one finds in domestic work, coupled with an instinct for plant design and groupings."[29] The perceived affinity of women for domestic design also justified the school's location in a house.

The building that housed the Cambridge School, comprising the Torrey Hancock House and a substantial addition built in 1928, cannot be attributed to one architect; its design was likely the combined effort of Henry Frost, Eleanor Raymond, Laura Cox, and Faith Bemis. In Cambridge city records, Frost and Raymond, who were then in partnership, are listed as the architects. However, Raymond never listed the building in her body of work, perhaps because it was the product of collaboration with a number of designers, and in his discussion of the project, in the December 1928 issue of the school's *Bulletin*, Henry Frost said nothing of his and Raymond's involvement, instead emphasizing the role of Laura Cox, another early graduate of the school: "On June 19th when I sailed to conduct the Oxford Summer School the land had been bought and the plans for the additions were well underway, under the direction of Miss Cox and with Miss Bemis' assistance. Not until after the first of July was ground broken, but on the seventeenth of September when I returned, the work was practically completed and the building very nearly ready for our use . . . . Miss Cox was in charge throughout the summer and accomplished wonders." Frost also recounted that the new stairway in the old house had been "carried out from Miss Cox's design."[30]

Laura Cox (1895–1986), to whom Frost attributed so much responsibility for the design of the school, left no statement of philosophy about architectural modernism, but her long and close personal and professional ties to Eleanor Raymond suggest the nature of her beliefs, and they also suggest that Raymond must have been involved in the design of the school. Cox was a 1917 graduate of the Bradford (Massachusetts) Academy and among the first six women to receive certificates in architecture from the Cambridge School, in June 1920. Her thesis was a project for "The Estate and Office of an Architect" located on the fictitious "Hoosicwhisick Pond in the Blue Hill Region," and among her fellow students were Esther L. Kilton (d. 1983), with whom Cox lived at the foot of Beacon Hill, and Eleanor Raymond. For more than

thirty years, Cox would occupy an especially significant place in Raymond's office, which was established in 1928, when the school was being completed. Doris Cole, Raymond's biographer, reports that Cox "stayed the longest and contributed the most" and "helped on most of the Raymond projects." In addition to working for Raymond, Cox had her own practice, which operated initially out of Raymond's office and which eventually included residential commissions throughout the Boston area and in northern New England.[31] Cox and Raymond evidently agreed on architectural matters.

The aesthetic of the drafting wing that was added to the Cambridge School suggests that Cox and Raymond shared an appreciation for vernacular architecture and for recent European modernist buildings, including Gropius's Bauhaus of 1926 at Dessau, Germany. Raymond admired that building, and although she did not see it in person until after the Cambridge School building was completed, in a 1981 interview she reported that she had "brought back from Germany what is now called, or then called, the International Style."[32]

At the Cambridge School, Cox, Raymond, and their collaborators blended industrial elements with the New England domestic vernacular. Frost's account of the design process suggests that it was Cox (in likely collaboration with her lifelong colleague Raymond) who was responsible for the use of the industrial elements that were being championed by the proponents of the nascent International Style, including steel-sash windows, a flat roof, and emphatically planar masonry walls. It was they, too, who had to deal with the design problems that the juxtaposition of new and old forms created; as Frost explained: "The brick wing reaching to the eaves of the main house troubled somewhat in contemplation. We feared that the house would be dwarfed, that what some of the younger enthusiasts speak of as the modernistic tendencies of the wing would clash with the Colonial traditions of the old house." The solution was to paint both the new wing and the old house ocher, with white trim on the older building, black windows on the addition, and dark green doors and blinds.[33] This paint scheme unified the parts, but it also minimized the visual prominence of the joints in the brickwork of the new wing, thereby heightening the flatness of its walls and emphasizing the rectangular mass. In this way, the Cambridge School wing achieved the volumetric simplicity of the European modernist architecture that Raymond admired while also gracefully connecting the old and new vernaculars.

Gropius is well known for having employed materials associated with commercial and industrial architecture—steel and glass—in monumental buildings, including the Bauhaus in Dessau. He embraced the principle that modern architecture should use modern material means to meet modern requirements. As Reyner Banham has demonstrated, Gropius's modernist project was partly inspired by North American factories and grain elevators, a number of views of which he published in an influential article in the *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Werkbundes* in 1913.[34] The Cambridge School drafting wing likewise drew on the example of the North American factory, although in a much more direct and less aestheticized way. The "Daylight" type of concrete-framed factory, which prevailed in America between about 1903 and 1911, apparently embodied what Frost called the "modernist tendencies" of the Cambridge School.

The use of a factory aesthetic and construction system was partly a consequence of the involvement of Faith Bemis, the patron of the Cambridge School, and her father Albert Farwell Bemis, who was a member of its board of trustees. The elder Bemis was an 1893 graduate in civil engineering of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former president of the Bemis Brothers Bag Company. His personal holding company, Bemis Industries Inc., owned The Housing Company, Atlantic Gypsum Company, Penn Metal Company, and an architectural partnership, Gunther and Bemis. Through these companies Bemis pursued his interest in bringing industrial processes into the production of housing. In a book on the history of the house type that he co-authored with John Burchard in 1933, Bemis stated that "the intellectual basis of the modernistic house" lay in "the idea that we live in a machine age and that house should be a machine for living."[35] He was evidently conversant with Le Corbusier's writings, and possibly with that architect's experiments with mass-production in domestic construction. Gropius was also deeply engaged in the housing problem in Germany and experimented with mass-production as a means of solving it.[36]

After Faith Bemis purchased the Torrey Hancock House for the Cambridge School, her father became involved in the construction of the new drafting wing, and it is likely that he was responsible for the adoption of a structural system developed by The Housing Company.[37] As in factory buildings of the Daylight type, the north façade of the Cambridge School drafting wing comprises a masonry grid of minimized dimensions that allows the piercing of the wall by large steel sash windows (Figure 8). The brick surface obscures the underlying "beamy-style" construction developed by Bemis's company (Figure 9). This method used prefabricated "story-height units with exterior and interior facings that carry as much pre-finish as possible." Integral to these wood and metal units were vertical channels into which concrete was poured to produce the structural frame.[38] The drafting wing of the Cambridge School thus took on the appearance of a factory on the exterior and interior, marked by those features

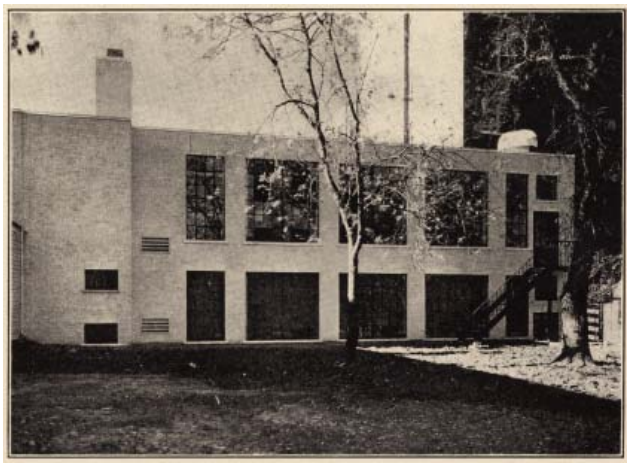

Figure 8 Raymond, et al., Cambridge School, drafting wing north façade (*Cambridge School Bulletin* 1, no. 1 [Dec. 1928], Smith College Archives)

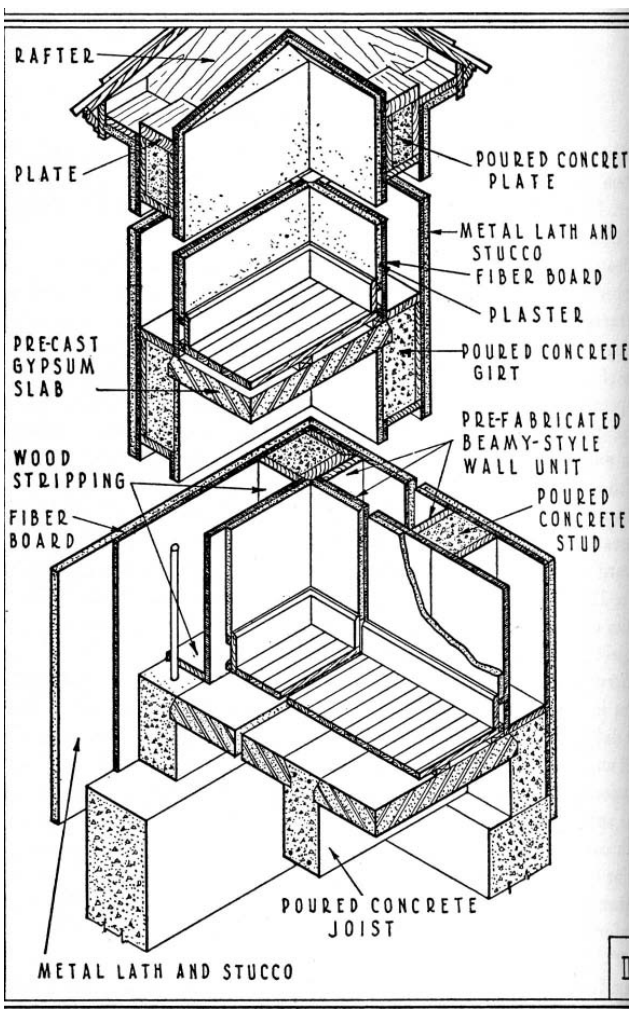

Figure 9 Albert Farwell Bemis, "Beamy-Style" illustrated in *The Evolving House 3* (1936)

of American factories that inspired European architects: steel sash, flat roofs, and façades that were gridded by structural elements (Figure 10). This was not just a matter of appearance: Bemis ensured the use of mass-production, likewise a concern of European modernists.

Frost, Raymond, Cox, and Bemis maximized the potential of their site to produce a dynamic visual relationship between the two parts of the school, which in turn suggested the compatibility of traditional and modernist architecture (Figure 11). The designers pivoted the drafting wing off of the southwest corner of the existing house and extended it along the south lot line to the back corner of the property. The addition joined the house at a ninety-degree angle at a

Figure 10 Cambridge School, drafting wing interior (*Cambridge School Bulletin* 1, no. 1 [Dec. 1928], Smith College Archives)

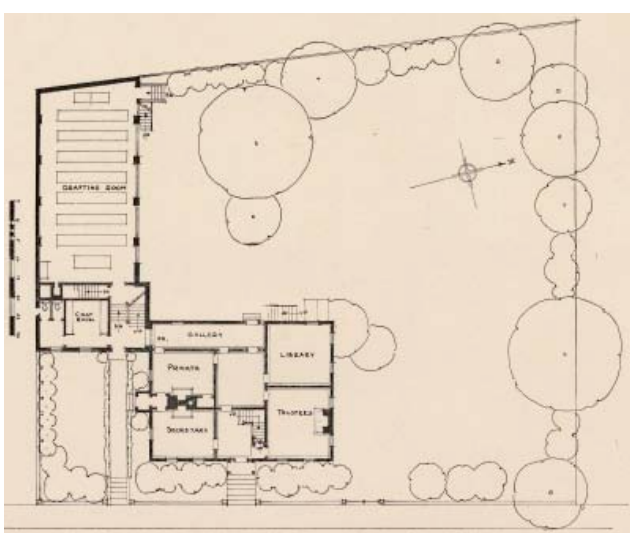

Figure 11 Cambridge School, plan (*Cambridge School Bulletin* 1, no. 1 [Dec. 1928]), Smith College Archives)

location readily visible from the street, which (as Frost suggested) created a potentially difficult but ultimately energetic relationship with the house. In part, the joint was finessed by the more conventional street façade of the addition, with windows that echoed the pattern of openings of the older house, and its entrance was framed by a shallow, round-arched recess that would not have been out of place on an early nineteenth-century house (Figure 12). The beauty of the relationship between the Torrey Hancock House and the drafting wing lies in the way that the addition barely catches the back corner of the old house. A stairwell, closet, and lavatory block works as a hinge between the two masses, joining the open space of the drafting room to the gallery that was constructed along the inside of the back wall of the existing house. The space served for both circulation and exhibitions. The placement of the wing also opened it to the northeast and left the majority of the lot open. The resulting yard was carefully screened from the street by a planting scheme developed by Edith Cochran, a Cambridge School graduate.

The two vernaculars—industrial and domestic—invoked by the Cambridge School complex helped to convey the institution's unusual mission. For Frost, who was somewhat skeptical of the modernist addition, the traditional interiors of the Torrey Hancock House were appropriate for the school's job. The "fine old Colonial tradition that the house still preserves," he wrote in 1928, prevented one from being oppressed by "a school atmosphere." He continued: "our School is concerned primarily with domestic architecture and gardens. It is fitting that the school home should include rooms that have in them the domestic touch of open fireplaces, six-paneled doors and papered walls and painted floors." None of these cozy and reassuring features were to be found in the factory-like drafting wing, however. But at the time the addition was

Figure 12 Cambridge School, joint between Torrey Hancock House and drafting wing (*The Cambridge School Bulletin* 1, no. 1 [Dec. 1928], Smith College Archives)

built, the role of women in architecture, especially the limitation of women architects to domestic design, was being rethought by the institution. Although Frost may not have been the instigator of this debate, he thoughtfully discussed the scope of architectural education for women in his remarks to the board of trustees in 1928. While he believed that the phrase "domestic architecture" in the institution's

> title was an asset twelve years ago, we are likely [if it is retained] to lose sight of the great strides that have been made by women in professional education and practice in the interim. They are, I believe, as naturally interested in domestic architecture today as when the School was founded, and turn from preference to such work in their practice. They do, however, resent any suggestion that they are not as capable of undertaking serious training as men. For this reason I have felt that the word "Domestic" has of late been a stumbling block, leading educators to think of us as teaching primarily small-house design, placing us, therefore, in their minds in the category of art schools and schools of interior decoration. If, in your opinion, this is true, the term "Domestic" should be removed from our title.[39]

The approved change in the school's name reinforced the claim that was made architecturally by the building's addition: women architects and landscape architects were capable of designing more than traditional houses. The two vernaculars of the Torrey Hancock House and the drafting wing made manifest the Cambridge School's transition from a school for house designers to one that prepared women to produce all sorts of buildings, and in the most up-to-date styles.

The Raymond-Kingsbury House

In 1931, when she published *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania*, Eleanor Raymond designed a house that embodied the complete assimilation of New England vernacular architecture by European modernism. The house, built for the architect's sister Rachel Raymond (1895–1974) and her partner in an interior design practice, Edith Kingsbury (1884–1971), was located in Belmont, a Boston suburb. It was called "probably the first modern house in Massachusetts" by *Architectural Forum* in 1933 (Figure 13). Many years later, Eleanor Raymond summarized the process of adapting the European modernist model to its regional context in the Belmont house: "What we did was to keep the style, but to do it in local, New England, materials. Over there it was all concrete and stucco, never wood. Over here wood was what we used so much. I used rough-sawn matched wood boards for the outside finish of the walls . . . [I] stained the rough wood boards a soft gray-green . . . . I had been to California and had seen cloth used to shade open places so I did that on the open terrace."[40] "Keeping the style" in this instance meant composing the house of geometric volumes that, as in some of the modernist works of her European contemporaries, were opened up with large windows and voided in places to create terraces and porches shaded by sailcloth awnings. Raymond avoided details that might have been construed as "ornamental," edging the roof with a flat board and using steel pipe for railings, both treatments borrowed from contemporary European modernist houses.

As Gropius would later do, Raymond sought to connect her work to New England's natural landscape. In an article on the Belmont project, Edith Kingsbury wrote that "A tall

Figure 13 Raymond-Kingsbury House, Belmont, Mass., 1932 (photo: Historic New England)

straight cedar and a twisted apple tree occupied the site chosen, but by careful planning the house was built between them and they became part of the design."[41] Crucial to the clients was the connection with the attractive landscape, which had motivated their escape from Boston, where they had been living. Of obvious significance as well was their background at the Cambridge School, where the planning of both house and landscape and, importantly, the relationship between the two, had been highlighted. Kingsbury and Raymond underscored this connection between the house's aesthetic and the locale. Kingsbury pointed out that the "front door, iron railings," and other details were all painted red in deference to "the barberries which grow abundantly all about the house with the cedars."[42] Not long after, Gropius would likewise treat the landscape very carefully when he built his house at Lincoln.

Berry-colored railings were only one part of a palette of materials and colors designed to link the house to its site. The wooden siding, which Raymond and Kingsbury discussed at various times, was also carefully selected. In her *House Beautiful* article about their "experiment in the country," Kingsbury explained that "the house is built of rough-sawed matched boards which give a pleasant texture. It is painted a grey-green."[43] This earthy color, a conscious departure from the white used on the European modernist houses Raymond had just seen, confirmed the relationship between the building and its setting. Matched boards carried associations not only with the organicism of nature, however, but also with the traditional American architecture that Raymond studied and admired. This was another type of attention to the specifics of the locale.

Walter Gropius and His House

Hiring Gropius to teach at the Graduate School of Design (GSD) was one part of dean Joseph Hudnut's (1886–1968) project to create a modernized architectural curriculum to replace Beaux-Arts–inspired training at Harvard. As Jill Pearlman has argued, Hudnut's intention was not to import wholesale the program of the Bauhaus. Eventually, Gropius and Hudnut (who remained dean during Gropius's entire tenure at Harvard, into the 1950s) would come to loggerheads over what Gropius claimed was the applicability of the Bauhaus model, but in his early years in Cambridge, the architect expressed an "ambiguous" view, espousing on the one hand his keen interest in local customs and circumstances, and on the other, proclaiming the "universal validity" of the Bauhaus program.[44]

Gropius's study of the vernacular was part of his avowed project to understand the local scene. His incorporation of traditional elements into the otherwise starkly modernist house he built for himself and his family was also a component of his campaign to make his Bauhaus aesthetic palatable in the U.S. He never failed to emphasize the essential compatibility of his design approach, as represented by his house, and that of New England's early builders.

Gropius arrived in the United States with his wife, Ise, and daughter Ati in March 1937. Ise later recalled that "we became so engulfed by the hospitality of the Bostonian and Harvard circles that we finally fled to Buzzard's Bay at Cape Cod where we rented a house at the beach to recuperate from this sudden change in our lives."[45] In the fall the Gropius family sought out a more long-term rental. They rejected Hudnut's suggestion of a Beacon Hill townhouse on the grounds that their "narrow floors" and small windows made them unappealing and unsympathetic settings for the Gropius family's "Bauhaus-produced furniture." Instead, they rented a vernacular late eighteenth-century house of the sort that Walter championed as the defining element of the New England landscape: the white clapboard Smith-Cole-Stearns house (1791) on Sandy Pond in Lincoln.[46] Significantly, Gropius oversaw the design and construction of his new house—in which modernism and the regional vernacular were ostensibly blended—while living in a New England house of the kind he most cherished for its aesthetic simplicity and democratic associations.

Gropius did not have the money to build a house, but he was fortunate to have a patron, Helen O. Storrow, who was happy to provide him with a plot of land, pay for the building, and rent it back to him. She did the same for other Harvard faculty, including Gropius's architectural partner Marcel Breuer (1902–1981). Eventually, an enclave of modernist houses grew up at Woods End in Lincoln. Gropius's new house helped to establish him as both a teacher and an architect in private practice. "Widely published and regarded as a modern classic, this was Gropius's calling card, a model house with which he successfully lured clients," as Pearlman suggests. Gropius's students and family remembered many visitors from Harvard and elsewhere who came to see the house that was a physical manifestation of Gropius's claim that he had accommodated his ideas—formulated in Europe—to his new situation.[47]

Indeed, after securing the funding to build his family's house, Gropius, as Ise later recalled, "made many trips [with his family] through Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont to study the lovely old Colonial houses which, at that time, filled almost exclusively the New England countryside." The predominant wood construction of the region was relatively unfamiliar to Gropius; although he had famously designed the Sommerfeld House (Berlin,

1920–22) in wood, he was accustomed to the widespread use of masonry in Europe. According to Ise, Walter admired how American builders had adapted English Georgian forms by replacing brick with wood, painted gray to look like masonry. He also appreciated the accommodations New England builders had made to their changeable climate, with both frigid winters and sweltering summers. In his own house, the architect would similarly concern himself with climatic conditions, not to mention the qualities and quantities of sunlight on the site.[48]

Gropius's turn to the single-family house itself represented an accommodation to his new setting. In Europe, from the late 1920s he had been an important contributor to discussions of social housing and the *Existenzminimum*, that is, multiple-unit residences that met the basic needs of their occupants. While he is not known as a skyscraper designer, his entry in the Chicago Tribune Competition of 1922 notwithstanding, Gropius had argued for high-rises, surrounded by green space, to solve the urban housing shortage in Europe, notably in an address to the 1930 CIAM conference.[49] While he acknowledged and considered intractable "the desire of the city dweller to own a house," he was pessimistic that every urban inhabitant could have a free-standing residence. For those who could not, the tower with open space around it was an attractive alternative. Although championing the apartment tower as a type, Gropius had designed significant free-standing houses in Europe, among them the masters' houses (1925–26) at the Dessau Bauhaus.[50] In the U.S., where public support for social housing was weaker and public attachment to the ideal of single-family home ownership even stronger than in Europe, it was incumbent upon Gropius to demonstrate his ability to adapt his modernist aesthetic to the house type.

The residence Gropius designed for himself echoed the Dessau masters' houses in certain respects but also reflected the architect's avowed interest in the New England vernacular. Like the German houses, the Lincoln house was a geometrically simplified volume capped by a flat roof—the "white box" to which it is sometimes likened. In plan, the house conformed to Gropius's own prescriptions, articulated in a 1931 article.[51] He created a light-filled interior with expansive windows, arranged rooms functionally (rather than in deference to the arrangement of windows and doors on the exterior), and avoided the use of dark passages to connect rooms. To the degree that he fitted the major rooms within a simple rectangular plan, Gropius echoed the arrangement of the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century New England houses that predated the use of grand central hallways (Figure 14). In his choice of finishes Gropius, like Raymond, but apparently independent of her, adapted the 1920s modernist aesthetic to local building practices. He clad the exterior in wood, although he used the redwood siding vertically rather than horizontally, and coated it with white lead paint, the color he so admired on early New England houses. He also employed brick, although the massive chimney was painted white; the screened porch Gropius considered a particularly practical local adaptation to the climate, and he used it. Like Raymond, he invoked the industrial vernacular alongside the domestic references by employing steel-sash

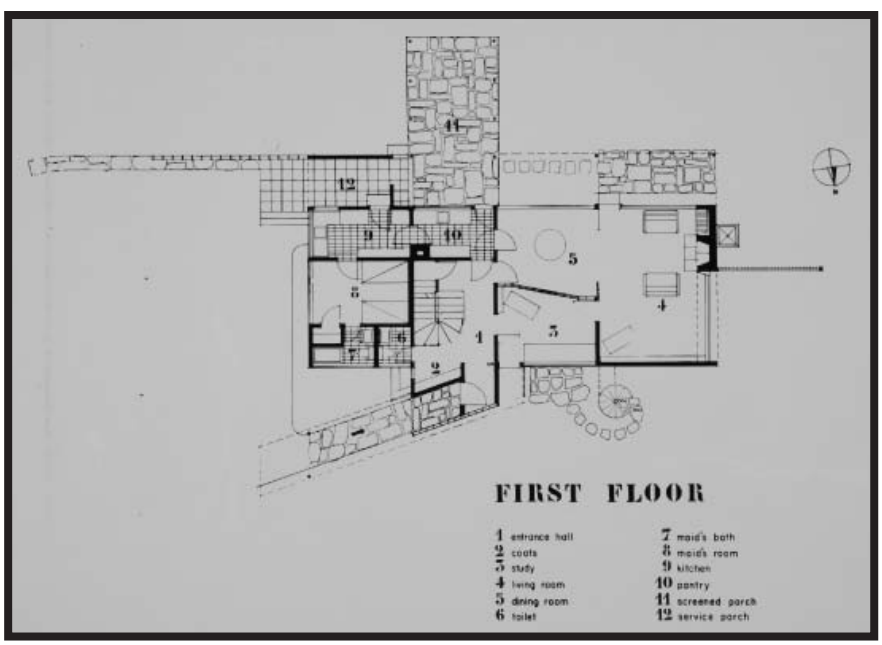

Figure 14 Gropius and Marcel Breuer, Gropius House, first-story plan (photo: Historic New England)

windows and a dramatic metal spiral stair that provided access to a roof deck (Figure 15).[52]

Just as Raymond and Kingsbury emphasized their respect for the landscape in siting the Belmont house, so the Gropiuses stressed their respectful attitude toward the setting of their Lincoln residence, which Ise described as "a small hill, surrounded by a large apple orchard" and wetlands. Eric F. Kramer has described the approach taken by the Gropiuses as "a deliberate integration of the house with the existing landscape through the intentional design of an intermediary space—the garden." The landscape design complemented the house "by extending the orthogonal artifice of the architecture back out into the landscape" and was similarly based on a blending of modernist features and historic vernacular elements (Figure 16). The orchard was disturbed as little as possible, while some trees were moved from an adjoining property to adorn what Ise described as the somewhat barren crest of the hill. Through the early 1940s Walter developed the design of stone retaining walls that extended the outdoor spaces around the house and that connected the building to the landscape. The wall materials were literally of the land, and the stone wall was a signature feature of the New England countryside. Much like Henry Frost did at the Cambridge School, in 1940 Joseph Hudnut argued for dissolving "the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture."[53] Concerning himself with both the house and the landscape, and bringing together modernist geometries and traditional materials in both instances, Gropius could offer his own residence and its surrounding landscape design as an example of the GSD's pedagogy.

Figure 15 Gropius, Gropius House, 1937, spiral stair and glass-block wall, looking east (photo: Jack Boucher 1986, HABS MASS, 9-LIN,16-10)

The Gropius house was not an educational building like the Cambridge School, but the architect made it an annex to his teaching at the GSD. Both buildings showed students how traditional and industrial vernaculars could be combined with modernist architectural forms. The Gropiuses' builder recalled that even during the course of construction "almost every afternoon several of the boys from Harvard came out to Lincoln to look at the progress of the house."[54] Gropius continued to use the completed house as an example for his students; one of them, Harry Seidler, called the house "a revelation, bar none. We all were totally overwhelmed."[55] In Gropius's writing, the house was used to exemplify his approach; in *The Scope of Total Architecture* (1955) he explained, "When I built my first house in the U.S.A.—which was my own—I made it a point to absorb into my own conception those features of the New England architectural tradition that I found still alive and adequate. The fusion of the regional spirit with a contemporary approach to design produced a house I would never have built in Europe."[56]

While Gropius was designing in a new geographic context, the socially progressive attitude toward domestic architecture he had developed in Europe remained intact. In 1954 the architect reflected on the previous thirty to forty years of achievements in modern design, finding

> that we have almost done away with that artistic gentleman architect who turned out charming Tudor mansions with all modern conveniences. This type of applied archaeology is melting in the fire of our convictions: 1) that the architect should conceive buildings not as monuments but as receptacles for the flow of life which they have to serve, and 2) that his conception should be flexible enough to create a background fit to absorb the dynamic features of our modern life.[57]

Modern domestic architecture was for Gropius not just an aesthetic project but also a response to a fundamentally changed historical situation. The relationship between architecture and the social, political, and other aspects of the modern life was something Gropius and Raymond shared.

Eleanor Raymond's social argument is most clearly articulated in a hypothetical project: the prototypical "House

of To-Morrow" of 1933, published in *House Beautiful*. Her description echoes the reformist arguments of European modernist house designers (including Gropius), which were just then becoming better known in the U.S.: "Have we not come to regard clean-cut, sun-filled houses as more romantic in the best sense than those displaying the stagey, stuffy, sentimental romanticism compounded of turrets, oriel windows, and such excrescences, and with inordinately exaggerated textures, in which we had to 'act a part' in order to fit into the picture?" Raymond proposed a "simple" house that would produce "friendly congeniality" among the inhabitants.[58] Like Gropius, she played the progressive modern house off against the retardataire, historicist designs of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In her project for the House of To-Morrow, as well as in the similar Horace W. Frost House in Cambridge (1935), Raymond blended traditional massing with modernist features (Figure 17). The Frost House design respected its historic neighbors with a symmetrical two-story, hip-roofed mass and flanking one-story wings. The pattern of openings on the façade is conservative, consisting of a first-story central entrance and pairs of windows on either side, with windows

Figure 16 Gropius House, view from southwest (photo: Jack Boucher 1986, HABS MASS, 9-LIN,16-12)

Figure 17 Raymond, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Frost House, 16 Longfellow Park, Cambridge, Mass, 1935 (photo: Paul Weber, Historic New England)

in corresponding positions on the second story. Both the House of To-Morrow and the Frost House have conventional massing and arrangements of openings, but the details are all simplified. On both houses, Raymond used thin wood strips, painted a contrasting color, to create a grid across the façade, which in the Cambridge residence produces an almost streamlined effect.

For Raymond, the modernist house had a special appeal since it symbolized a new, modern way of life, like her own. She had rejected the conventional roles of wife and mother, instead living for most of her adult life with Ethel Power.[59] In 1981 Raymond told an interviewer that "I never wanted a husband or to have children. I wouldn't have the slightest know-how of how to take care of children nor would I want to take care of them."[60] For Raymond and others, as Alice Friedman has argued, the identification of "unconventional lives with architecture that was avant-garde" motivated the use of a modernist idiom.[61]

The hybridization of modernism and the New England vernacular that Raymond achieved in the Raymond-Kingsbury House and in the House of To-Morrow operated as a critique on two levels. First, its modernism refuted the ornamental nineteenth-century aesthetic, which she connected with oppressive and obsolete notions of social interaction. At the same time, however, the incorporation of consciously New England vernacular features made palatable what Power (and presumably Raymond) perceived as the "hardness and dryness" of European modernist domestic building, as evidenced in André Lurçat's recently-constructed Maison Bomsel (1926) in Versailles, which the two women visited in May 1928. Power qualified her criticism of Lurçat's design in an interesting way: she suggested that its austere functionalism might well have been a response to the elaborateness of earlier French architecture.[62] In New England that rationale could not be applied, and Raymond therefore adapted her European modernist models to the more organic local vernacular. For both Raymond and Gropius the appeal to vernacular precedent enriched their work while implicitly revising the avant-garde European architecture of the 1920s.

The introduction of modernism in New England was thus complex. It was not the simple conquest by new ideas of which the architect Harwell H. Harris wrote in 1954: "In New England . . . European Modernism met a rigid and restrictive regionalism that at first resisted and then surrendered. New England accepted European Modernism whole because its own regionalism had been reduced to a collection of restrictions."[63] Harris overlooked the extent to which vernacular architecture had been construed as honest and as compatible with modernist qualities, and he neglected the exchange between traditionalism and modernism that Raymond and Gropius, and likely others as well, had brought about.

The references to traditional American architecture that Raymond and Gropius made in their writing and architecture helped to make their work seem firmly rooted in American values at a time of increasing political tension overseas, one major source of which was the rise of fascism in Germany.[64] In that climate, those proposing the adoption of European ideas to an American audience were wise to point out connections to indigenous traditions and to argue that modern architects and vernacular builders shared fundamental beliefs.

Raymond and Gropius were far from alone in steering modernism toward organic forms and materials. Le Corbusier had famously championed rectilinear forms and the glistening products of modern industry during the twenties, but at the end of that decade he had begun to make reference to the organic with curvilinear forms and natural and traditional building materials like wood and stone.[65] This shift had a particular artistic significance and took on distinctive political connotations in every medium and in each place where it took place. Raymond's and Gropius's projects were not unparalleled, but they were distinctively rooted in an understanding of New England's vernacular architectural tradition, and they took on a particular significance for those who were immersed in the region's material culture.

Although both architects were professionally successful, they did not bring about a complete reform of New England's domestic architecture. Harwell Harris was correct in his recognition of the unbreakable grip of the region's longstanding building traditions. The vernacular to which Raymond and Gropius made reference in their work is still the favored idiom of house builders throughout the region. Nonetheless, the blending of modernist and vernacular forms that was pioneered by Raymond, Gropius, and others became a significant strand of domestic architecture in the postwar era. From Maine to California, from the 1950s through the 1970s, houses were built with the forceful geometric masses, open interiors, large windows, and other features associated with modernism, but which also incorporated such traditional building forms and materials as wood shingles, fieldstone, and rough-sawn board siding. In New England this idiom was especially appropriate, since the region's vernacular architecture continued to be an object of great interest into the postwar period.[66]

Among the architects who worked in this vein was Gropius's partner Marcel Breuer, whose designs included two houses for himself in New Canaan, Connecticut, that were part of an enclave of modernist residences, many of which included vernacular elements appropriate to the

rural setting. The first of these houses, designed in 1947, had a main floor that was dramatically cantilevered out from a concrete-block base (Figure 18). Although the cantilevering, flat roof, and ribbon windows were all modernist features, the house was also sheathed in wood to echo rural Connecticut architecture. Architect Edward Larrabee Barnes also produced postwar designs, notably for the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts (1961) in Deer Isle, Maine, that referenced regional traditions while incorporating open planning and other modernist features; this work resonated with the environmentalism of the 1960s and seventies (Figure 19). The Haystack campus is composed of shed-roofed modules clad in wood shingles. In their geometric simplicity as well as in their materials they recall the vernacular outbuildings of Deer Isle's fishing industry and farms. In addition to these one-off, architect-designed institutional buildings and houses, mass-produced house kits and plans also reflected the hybridization pioneered by Raymond and Gropius. Among these were the kit houses of the Acorn Structures company, founded by John Bemis (son of Albert Farwell Bemis) and architect Carl Koch in 1947, and Koch's Techbuilt houses (ca. 1953–57). Koch's second house for himself, in the Conantum development in Concord, Massachusetts (ca. 1951), is wood-framed and -shingled with a gabled roof, reminiscent of a barn (Figure 20). Yet the gable end wall is entirely filled with glass and the interior is open in feeling (Figure 21). Many other examples could also be cited, both from New England and other parts of the United States.[67]

The houses of the late twenties and thirties that drew upon avant-garde European architecture of the 1920s but modified it—perhaps even critiqued it—by including

Figure 18 Breuer, Breuer House I, New Canaan, Conn., ca. 1949 (photo: Pedro Guerrero; Courtesy of the Marcel Breuer Papers, 1920–1986, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution)

Figure 19 Edward Larrabee Barnes, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine, 1961 (photo: Kevin D. Murphy and Lilla Haley Caton, 2010)

Figure 20 Carl Koch, Koch House II, Concord, Mass., ca. 1951 (photo: Ezra Stoller © Esto)

Figure 21 Koch House II, ca. 1955 (photo: Ezra Stoller © Esto)

vernacular elements, occupy a unique position in twentieth-century American architecture. Chronologically, they followed quite closely what is sometimes seen as the pure modernist architecture of the 1920s, exemplified by Le Corbusier's great villas, and they came decades before the overtly postmodernist residences of the postwar period, beginning with Robert Venturi's 1959–64 Vanna Venturi house in Philadelphia.[68] Yet Gropius's own house, which was important to him pedagogically, professionally, and personally, had itself already evinced elements of the local vernacular and anticipated the uneasy relationship with prewar modernism—the "anxious modernism"—of later postwar architects. As Sarah Williams Goldhagen explains it, in the 1920s and 1930s, some architects "stressed topography, views, and sometimes local materials" and by the latter 1930s "the connection of a building to a site or a region emerged as a prominent theme as the ascendant nationalism of the interwar years ignited discussions about the relationship of a modern aesthetic to local and national cultures."[69] After World War II leading architects remained generally faithful to modernism, but they also adopted various critical strategies, such as references to "primitive" and regional traditions.

That Gropius, Breuer, and certain Bay Area architects anticipated this development in the 1930s has been recognized. Less well known are Eleanor Raymond's contributions. Moreover, the particular significance of the New England vernacular, which had long been an object of study by architects, should also be underscored. Blurring the lines between house and school, architectural design and professional advertisement, the Cambridge School and Raymond-Kingsbury House by Raymond and the Gropius house are intriguing, complex contributions to the story of architecture in the 1920s and 1930s.

Notes

1. The author would like to thank the anonymous reader of the text, David Brownlee, and Mary Christian for their helpful suggestions and editing of this article.

As Francesco Passanti has observed, "from the 1930s to the 1960s, modernist architects showed a clear concern with the vernacular." Passanti, "The Vernacular, Modernism, and Le Corbusier," *JSAH* 56, no. 4 (Dec. 1997), 438. For an overview of the field of vernacular architecture studies and a critical historiography through the 1980s see J. B. Jackson, "Vernacular," in *American Architecture: Innovation and Tradition*, ed. David De Long, Helen Searing, and Robert A. M. Stern (New York: Rizzoli, 1986).

2. Vincent J. Scully, Jr., "Doldrums in the Suburbs," *JSAH* 24, no. 1 (Mar. 1965), 36–47. The name of Gropius's partner Marcel Breuer appears on the plans of the house in Lincoln but according to the Gropiuses' daughter, Breuer had a minimal role in the design. Eric F. Kramer, "The Walter Gropius House Landscape: A Collaboration of Modernism and the Vernacular," *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 3 (Feb. 2004), 46 note 4.

3. Hélène Lipstadt has pointed out several modernist houses in Massachusetts that predate the Gropius house, including the Raymond-Kingsbury house (discussed below) and Raymond's Peabody Studio (1932) in Dover; the Field House (1934) in Weston, designed by Edwin "Ned" B. Goodell Jr.; and the Morris Studio in Lenox (1932), designed by George Sanderson. The Field house also included some vernacular elements. Lipstadt cites these houses as evidence disproving Sigfried Giedion's claim that there were no modernist houses in Massachusetts prior to Gropius's, and she discusses Goodell's leftist politics to refute the widely held notion that American practitioners of modernism were apolitical. Hélène Lipstadt, "Revising Giedion, Redefining the International Style and Preserving 'Invisible' Modernism in Massachusetts," Society of Architectural Historians *Newsletter* 45, no. 3 (June 2001), pp. 8–10. On Goodell, see "Early Modernism, Social Idealism, and Anti-communism in the Career of Edwin B. Goodell, Jr.," Boston Society of Architects, Historic Resources Committee, Meeting Notes for April, 2009, http://committees.architects.org/hrc/april09min.htm (accessed 4 April 2010).

4. John Ruskin, "The Poetry of Architecture, The Architecture of the Nations of Europe Considered in Its Association with Natural Scenery and National Character" (1837), as *The Poetry of Architecture: Cottage, Villa, Etc.* (New York: John Wiley, 1873), 71. Many other editions also exist. Ruskin's critique of the use of modern, often industrially produced materials to imitate others came in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, particularly in "The Lamp of Truth" where he cautions against "the painting of surfaces to represent some other material than that of which they actually consist," as well as "the use of cast or machine-made ornaments of any kind." Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: John Wiley, 1849), 29.

5. Benjamin Bucknall, "Translator's Note" to Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, *The Habitation of Man in All Ages* (Boston: James. R. Osgood and Co., 1876), vi–vii.

6. Le Corbusier, *Vers une Architecture* (1923), trans. John Goodman (Los Angeles: Getty Research Trust, 2007), 92.

7. Eleanor Raymond, *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania* (1931; rpt., West Chester, Pa.: Schiffer Publishing, 1977), n.p. Photographs, drawings, and some related correspondence regarding Eleanor Raymond's projects are to be found in the Eleanor Raymond Collection, Loeb Library, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge. I am grateful to Mary F. Daniels for her assistance there. Photographs of many of Raymond's projects are also found in the Eleanor Raymond collection in the archives of Historic New England, Boston, where I had the generous assistance of Lorna Condon. The photographs were a bequest of John Robinson who shared an office with Raymond in Boston.

8. Walter Gropius to Pierre Jay, 29 May 1938, quoted in Peter Gittleman, "The Gropius House: Conception, Construction, and Commentary" (MA thesis, Boston University, 1996), 4.

9. This was the school's name in 1919. Later, others were used, including The Cambridge School of Architectural and Landscape Design for Women.

10. Although Gropius sometimes claimed that his own house was his first U.S. commission, it was actually proceeded by his Hagerty house at Cohasset, Mass., which was similarly inspired by vernacular architecture, especially evident in the use of stone and wood. Leslie Humm Cormier, "Walter Gropius: Émigré Architect: Works and Refuge in England and America in the'30s," (PhD diss., Brown University, 1986), 166–67. Also see Jaci Conry and Greg Castillo, "Walter Gropius: Hagerty House," *Dwell* 9, no. 2 (Dec.–Jan. 2009), pp. 106–13 for commentary on and extensive photographs of the house.

11. Walter Gropius, "Walter Gropius: A Master Architect's View of Nature," *Horticulture*, Sept. 1978, 44; quoted in Gittleman, "The Gropius House," 10.

12. As quoted in Doris Cole, *Eleanor Raymond, Architect* (Philadelphia: Art Alliance Press and London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1981), 31.

13. Brognard Okie, "Introduction" to Raymond, *Early Domestic Architecture*, n.p.

14. Raymond, *Early Domestic Architecture*, n.p.

15. See, for example, Thomas Hubka, *Big House*, *Back House*, *Little House*, *Barn*, *The Connected Farm Buildings of New England* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1984); Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons*, *Houses*, *Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

16. William E. Barry, *Pen Sketches of Old Houses* (1874; rpt. Portland: Maine Preservation, 2002).

17. William B. Rhoads, "The Discovery of America's Architectural Past, 1874–1914," in Keith N. Morgan and Richard Cheek, "History in the Service of Design: American Architect-Historians, 1870–1940," and Dell Upton, "Outside the Academy: A Century of Vernacular Architecture Studies, 1890–1990," all in *The Architectural Historian in America*, ed. Elisabeth Blair MacDougall, Studies in the History of Art 35, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1990). This rediscovery of earlier American architecture was part of a broader Colonial Revival, on which there is a large literature. See for instance William B. Rhoads, *The Colonial Revival* (New York: Garland, 1977); Alan Axelrod, ed., *The Colonial Revival in America* (New York: Norton, 1985); Sarah Giffen and Kevin D. Murphy, eds., *"A Noble and Dignified Stream": The Piscataqua Region in the Colonial Revival, 1860–1930* (York, Maine: Old York Historical Society, 1992); and Richard Guy Wilson, Shaun Eyring, and Kenny Marotta, eds., *Re-creating the American Past: Essays on the Colonial Revival* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

18. Nancy Beth Gruskin, "Building Context: The Personal and Professional Life of Eleanor Raymond, Architect (1887–1989)," (PhD diss., Boston University, 1998), 59, 122. Also see her article, "Designing Woman: Writing about Eleanor Raymond," in Kristen Frederickson and Sarah E. Webb, eds., *Singular Women: Writing the Artist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). For Okie, see Sandra L. Tatman, "Okie, Richardson Brognard," Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, www.philadelphiabuildings.org (accessed 16 March 2010).

19. William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects, Vol. 5: The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (New York: Doubleday, 1972, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 1–71.

20. Ruth Crook was born in Chicago, attended the Cambridge School, and later (between the late 1920s and 1930) was an assistant in Raymond's office. Gruskin, "Building Context," 121.

21. Ibid., 90–95; Sarah Allaback, The *First American Women Architects* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 182–83. Power was the author of *The Smaller American House: 55 Houses of the Less Expensive Type Selected from the Recent Work of Architects in all Parts of the Country* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1927).

22. Mary Anne Hunting, "Through the Eyes of the Editor: Ethel Brown Power (1881–1969)," unpublished paper, CUNY Graduate Center, 2000, Appendix VIII "*House Beautiful* Articles Focusing on Modernism." Hitchcock's article, "Six Modern European Houses That Represent Current Tendencies in France and Germany," was published in the September, 1928 issue of the magazine.

23. Henry Atherton Frost (1883–1952), born in Newton, Mass., received his AB from Harvard in 1905 and his MArch from Harvard in 1918. He taught there between 1911 and 1949, beginning as an instructor and finishing as chairman of the Architecture department (1942–49). He died while a visiting professor at Ohio University. See: *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White and Co., 1956), 41: 156.

24. The "Annex" was incorporated as Radcliffe College in 1894. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*, second edition (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 237.

25. Katherine Brooks Norcross, correspondence of 21 Feb. 1976; quoted in Dorothy May Anderson, *Women, Design and the Cambridge School* (West Lafayette, Indiana: PDA Publishers, 1980), 2. Anderson's is the only published study of the Cambridge School. A typescript history of the Cambridge School by Henry Atherton Frost is in the Dorothy May Anderson Papers, Box 2, Smith College Archives, Northampton. My interest in the Cambridge School was initially stimulated by an MA thesis for which I was a reader: Mary Pope Furr, "'The purpose . . . is to train women': the academic program of the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, 1915–1942," MA thesis, University of Virginia, 1995. Bremer Whidden Pond (1884–1959) was born in Boston, received his BS from Dartmouth College in 1907 and his MLA from Harvard in 1911. His teaching career at Harvard began in 1914 when he was appointed instructor of Landscape Architecture. In 1928 he was named Charles Eliot Professor of Landscape Architecture, and between 1930 and 1950 he was chairman of the Graduate School of Landscape Architecture. Pond retired in 1950 and was made professor emeritus. Pond also had an active professional practice that began in the Olmsted Brothers office in Brookline, Mass. in 1911. His later independent work included projects for Dartmouth and Radcliffe Colleges, as well as other New England institutions, and a war memorial in France sponsored by the state of Massachusetts. Obituaries for Pond are to be found in *Planning and Civic Comment* 25 (Sept. 1959), 49; and *Landscape Architecture* 50 (Autumn 1959), 47–48. Also see *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White and Co., 1962), 45: 226–27.

26. The Cambridge School Corporation was dissolved in 1945. The institutional history of the Cambridge School is covered in Anderson, *Cambridge School* and in the nomination of the building to the National Register of Historic Places, on file with the Cambridge Historical Commission, Cambridge, Mass. Relevant archival and published materials are found in the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture Records, 1919–86 in the Smith College Archives. I am grateful to archivist Nanci Young for arranging access to the collection and to the former archivist Margery Sly for having provided photocopies of some of the materials.

27. Quoted in Anderson, *Cambridge School*, 15.

28. Quoted in ibid., 22. Ethel Power was typical of the Cambridge School graduates who were influenced by Frost's attempt to integrate architectural and landscape design, for one of her first articles published in *House Beautiful*, published in January 1922, was "The Setting of the House." Hunting, "Through the Eyes of the Editor," 7.

29. Henry A. Frost and William R. Sears, *Women in Architecture and Landscape Architecture* ([Northampton, Mass.]: Institute for the Co-ordination of Women's Interests, 1928), 24.

30. Henry A. Frost, *The Cambridge School Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (Dec. 1928), 3, 4; typescript, Smith College Archives.

31. Information on Cox is contained in her student file in the Smith College Archives, in the Suffolk County Registry of Probate, Boston (docket #86P1537), in the Boston City Directory, and in Cole, *Eleanor Raymond*, 24. Doris Cole kindly responded to my requests for assistance in the preparation of this article. Cox designed the Richard Lennihan House in Southbridge, Mass., and the office building of the Hamilton Woolen Co. in Stockbridge, both in 1933. "Alumni Notes," *Alumnae Bulletin of the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture* 6, no. 1 (Oct. 1933), 11.

32. Cole, *Eleanor Raymond*, 40; and Doris Cole, "An Interview with Eleanor Raymond" in *Eleanor Raymond, Architectural Projects, 1919–1973*, exh. cat. (Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art, Sept. 15–Nov. 1, 1981), n.p.

33. Frost, *Bulletin*, 4.

34. Reyner Banham, *A Concrete Atlantis* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1986), 29–30.

35. Albert Farwell Bemis and John Burchard 2nd, *The Evolving House* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Technology Press, 1933), 1: 444. Biographical information on Albert Farwell Bemis (1870–1936) is found in Mary Jane

McCavitt, "Inventory of the Albert Farwell Bemis Foundation, 1938–1954," typescript, 1980; MIT, Institute Archives and Special Collections. Also see his obituaries in the *Architectural Record* 79 (May 1936), 345 and the *New York Times*, 13 April 1936; "Research Findings of Bemis Industries, Inc.," *Architectural Record* 75 (Jan. 1934), 3–8; Burnham Kelly, *The Prefabrication of Houses* (Cambridge: Technology Press/Wiley, 1951), 31–32. On Bemis's influence on the prefabrication of houses in Japan, see Ken Tadashi Oshima, "Postulating the Potential of Prefab: The Case of Japan," in Barry Bergdoll and Peter Christensen, *Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling* (exh. cat., New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 34–35.

36. From the 1910s, Le Corbusier produced a number of drawings for the "Maison Domino" which was to be constructed of reinforced concrete and perhaps was influential for Bemis. See Paul Venable Turner, "Romanticism, Rationalism and the Domino System," in Russell Walden, ed., *The Open Hand: Essays on Le Corbusier* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977). Gropius remained interested in the mass-production of housing through the period of World War II. See Gilbert Herbert, *The Dream of the Factory-Made House, Walter Gropius and Konrad Wachsmann* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984); Bergdoll and Christensen, *Home Delivery*, 17–22, 56–57, 62–65.

37. Faith Bemis purchased the Torrey Hancock House and leased it to the Cambridge School with the added wing for a period of five years, after which time she took back a mortgage on the property from the school, which purchased the complex. When the Cambridge School merged with Smith the building was deeded to the College, which deeded it back to Meem when the graduate school was dissolved. Photocopies of "Excerpts from the Cambridge School 'Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting Held in the Rogers Building, Boston, May 22, 1928,'" and Mrs. John G. [Faith Bemis] Meem to Dorothy May Anderson, Dec. 5, 1976; both kindly provided to me by Nancy Meem Wirth. In 1931 Faith Bemis worked for the firm of Cross and Cross, when they were designing two important Art Deco New York skyscrapers, the General Electric Building (1931) and the City Bank-Farmers Trust Building (1930–31). She subsequently joined the office of Southwest architect John Gaw Meem, whom she married in 1933. Allaback, *The First American Women Architects*, 28; Bainbridge Bunting, *John Gaw Meem, Southwestern Architect* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 57, 125; Chris Wilson, *Facing Southwest: The Life & Houses of John Gaw Meem* (New York: Norton, 2001), 36–38. Faith Bemis saw Southwest vernacular architecture in a similar way to how her Cambridge School contemporaries viewed New England's traditional architecture, writing of Santa Fe, New Mexico that "The adobe houses have a very unique style. Of course the architecture has been influenced strongly by Mexico but I believe it is much simpler here and more primitive, and of course the Indian pueblo architecture is the real beginning of it all. It is a style as truly American as the Colonial and I think it is too bad it is not more widely realized. I think, however, that it soon will be, as there is a lot in it for the 'moderns.'" "Alumni Notes," *Bulletin of the Cambridge School of Domestic and Landscape Architecture* 4, no. 1 (Dec. 1931), 3.

38. Albert Farwell Bemis, *The Evolving House* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Technology Press, 1936), 3: 359–60.

39. Henry Frost, report of October 1928, quoted in Anderson, *Cambridge School*, 62.

40. Cole, "Interview." On the Raymond-Kingsbury House see Gruskin, "Building Context," 102–8. The house was demolished in 2006.

41. Edith Kingsbury, "Spring Pasture—Our Experiment in the Country," *The House Beautiful* 72 (Oct. 1932), 201.

42. Ibid., 203.

43. Ibid.

44. Jill Pearlman, "Joseph Hudnut's Other Modernism at the 'Harvard Bauhaus," *JSAH* 56, no. 4 (Dec. 1997), 466–67. And see Anthony Alofsin, *The Struggle for Modernism: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and City Planning at Harvard* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).

45. Ise Gropius, *History of the Gropius House in Lincoln, Massachusetts* (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1977), 2.

46. Cormier, "Walter Gropius," 177; Gittleman, "Gropius House," 4.

47. Jill E. Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism: Joseph Hudnut, Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus Legacy at Harvard* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 181–82.

48. Ise Gropius, *History of the Gropius House*, 3.

49. Jeffry M. Diefendorf, "From Germany to America: Walter Gropius and Martin Wagner on Skyscrapers and the Planning of Healthy Cities," *GHI Bulletin Supplement 2*, From Manhattan to Mainhattan: Architecture and Style as Transatlantic Dialogue, 1920–1970 (2005), 29–35.

50. Paul Overy, "Visions of the Future and the Immediate Past: The Werkbund Exhibition, Paris 1930," *Journal of Design History* 17, no. 4 (2004), 345–51; Wolfgang Thöner, *Life and Work in the Masters' Houses Estate in Dessau* (Leipzig: Seemann, 2003).

51. Walter Gropius, "The Small House of To-day," *Architectural Forum* 54, no. 3 (Mar. 1931), 266–78.

52. Susan L. Buck, "A Material Evaluation of the Gropius House: Planning to Preserve a Modern Masterpiece," *APT Bulletin* 28, no. 4 (1997), 30.

53. Ise Gropius, *History of the Gropius House*, 3–4; Kramer, "The Walter Gropius House Landscape," 39–47. Joseph Hudnut, "Space and the Modern Garden," *Bulletin of the Garden Club of America* 7 (May 1940), 22.

54. Casper J. Jenney quoted in Ise Gropius, *History of the Gropius House*, 5.

55. Harry Seidler quoted in Pearlman, *Inventing American Modernism*, 181.

56. Walter Gropius, *The Scope of Total Architecture* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1955), xxi–xxii. Also see Harry Seidler, "Gropius House, 50th Anniversary," *Interior Design* 50 (Jan. 1989), 162–63.

57. Gropius, "Eight Steps toward a Solid Architecture," 1954, *GSD News* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 17.

58. Raymond, "The House of To-Morrow," *House Beautiful* 73 (July 1933), 18–19, 33–34.

59. Gruskin, "Building Context," 82–84; Alice T. Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998), 18–24.

60. Cole, "An Interview with Eleanor Raymond," n.p.

61. Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House*, 24.

62. Ethel Power to Jim Hutchison, 24 June 1928; quoted and discussed in Gruskin, "Building Context," 93–95. Lurçat's design was also criticized for aping concrete construction with more conventional materials. Jean-Louis Cohen, "Modern Architecture and the Saga of Concrete," in *Liquid Stone: New Architecture in Concrete*, ed. Jean-Louis Cohen (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), 25–26.

63. Harwell H. Harris, "Regionalism and Nationalism" (address to the North West Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Eugene, Oregon, 1954), quoted in Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism," *Perspecta* 20 (1983), 155.

64. Margret Kentgens-Craig observes that "It is also plausible that a general sense of uncertainty in the early thirties among Americans, especially urbanites, confronted with the loss of traditional values and of authority, made it difficult for new ideas and directions [in architecture] to flourish." *The Bauhaus in America: First Contacts, 1919–1936* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 31. For further discussion of the implications of the political situation for the acceptance of modernist (especially German) art and architecture see 174–83.

65. For this shift as embodied in the work of Le Corbusier, see William J. R. Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (London: Phaidon, 1986), 98; Romy Golan, *Modernity and Nostalgia: Art and Politics in France between the Wars* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 74–75. The classic

treatment of the political valences of modernist and traditionalist architectural styles, particularly in the German context, is Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918–1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). William H. Jordy argues that Marcel Breuer, among other European modernists, was "preconditioned in Europe to appreciate the New England vernacular tradition" by the increasing interest in regional traditions on the Continent in the late thirties. William H. Jordy, "Four Approaches to Regionalism in the Visual Arts," (1977) in Mardges Bacon, ed., *"Symbolic Essence" and Other Writings on Modern Architecture and American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 83.

66. This continuing interest can be gauged by, among other phenomena, the emergence of history museums that featured vernacular architecture (including Plimouth Plantation founded in 1947 and Old Sturbridge Village opened in 1946, both in Massachusetts), popular publications on the region's architecture (such as Samuel Chamberlain's *Open House in New England* first published in 1937 and in a revised edition in 1948), and scholarly research on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England buildings (including the early work of Abbott Lowell Cummings, whose decades of research culminated in *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay* in 1979). A parallel study of modernism that developed a particular expression in relation to local tradition is Elizabeth Hooper-Lane, "Domestic Modernism in Middle America: Midwestern Women in the Postwar Homes" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2009), although her focus is on the traditional furnishings used in modernist houses.

67. William D. Earls, *The Harvard Five in New Canaan: Midcentury Modern Houses by Marcel Breuer, Landis Gores, John Johansen, Philip Johnson, Eliot Noyes, and Others* (New York: Norton, 2006); Isabelle Hyman, *Marcel Breuer, Architect: The Career and the Buildings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001); Carl Koch, *At Home with Tomorrow* (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1958); Ian McCallum, *Architecture USA* (New York: Reinhold Pub. Corp., 1959), 170–74; obituary of John Bemis, *Boston Globe*, Nov. 20, 2006. The records of the Kalmia Wood Corporation, the non-profit corporation that owned the common land in Conantum, a residential development for which Koch designed the houses, is in Special Collections of the Concord Free Public Library, Concord, Mass.

68. In 1945, Joseph Hudnut who by that point was in stated opposition to what he saw as Gropius's antihistorical modernism, wrote the essay "The Post-Modern House" in which he opposed the austere functionalism of modernist houses and called for a revival of familiar forms in domestic buildings. Pearlman, "Joseph Hudnut," 474, 477 notes 124, 150.

69. Sarah Williams Goldhagen, "Coda: Reconceptualizing the Modern," in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, ed. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2000), 312–13. Also see the review of this volume by Diane Yvonne Ghirardo in *JSAH* 60, no. 4 (Dec. 2001), 528–30.

Modernism

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Term applied to the invention and the effective pursuit of artistic strategies that seek not just close but essential connections to the powerful forces of social Modernity. The responses of modernists to modernity range from triumphal celebration to agonized condemnation and differ in mode from direct picturing of the impacts of modernization to extreme renovations of purely artistic assumptions and practice. Such strategies —pursued by artists working individually or, often, in groups, as well as by critics, historians and theorists— occur in all of the arts, although in distinctive forms and across varying historical trajectories. They have been strongest in painting, design and the Modern Movement in architecture, highly significant in literature and in music, but quite muted in the crafts. They have echoes in aspects of commercial and popular culture. Despite being intermittent in their occurrence and unsystematic in nature, these strategies have been most effective in Europe and its colonies from the mid-19th century and in the USA from the early 20th, moving from the margins to the centre of visual cultures, from reactive radicality to institutionalized normality.

Some early usages of the term 'modernism' occur in the context of the recurrent battle between the new and the old. In 1737 Jonathan Swift complained to Alexander Pope about 'the corruption of English by those Scribblers, who send us over their trash in Prose and Verse, with abominable curtailings and quaint modernisms' (*Published Works*, 1757, ix: 218b). Yet such disputes were usually local ones, occurring within broader frameworks of cultural continuity, except at periods of epochal change. During the 19th century in Europe, however, modernizing forces became hegemonic, and by the mid-20th century modernity had become the norm in many parts of the world, its effects being felt everywhere.

Within this fast-changing context, certain moments in the history of the visual arts stand out as definitively modernist. The play of modernizing forces in Paris in the 1850s and 1860s was manifest in Courbet's critical realism, Manet's induction of the aesthetics of popular spectacle into high art, and the poetics and art criticism of Charles-Pierre Baudelaire. 'By *modernité*', Baudelaire wrote in 1863, 'I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable'. These artists and writers recognized that to make significant, potentially timeless art, it was necessary to begin from the transitory, ever-changing present. This reversed the historical teachings of the academies. Towards the end of the 19th century the term 'modernist' was adopted to identify Art Nouveau tendencies in many European countries. A related usage appeared in the claims of Secession artists in Germany and elsewhere.

In the years after 1900 Paris was the centre of an explosion of artistic innovations, by Fauvist and Cubist artists, which inspired radical experimentation by Futurists in Italy, Suprematists and Constructivists in Russia, Dadaists in Germany and many others. Subsequent tendencies, such as Surrealism, explored the social and psychological impacts of modernization even more deeply. In general, these artists passed from drastic

transformations of tradition to fundamental interrogations of art itself. Such extreme reflexivity, emphasizing negative criticism of the conventional and pursued by these artists usually working in groups, constitutes the avant-garde within modernism.

At the same time developments in modern art were fashioned into influential historical narratives in such exhibitions as *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* (London, 1910), opened by the critic Roger Fry, and new markets for modernist art were created by the Armory Show (New York, 1913) and others. Those involved in these developments usually identified each movement or grouping by its name and referred to 'the new art' or, increasingly after 1920, 'modern art' as the generic term for what was emerging as a broad tendency. Meanwhile, product designers made the term 'modernist' fashionable for their Art Deco elegances, but defenders of tradition during the first half of the 20th century saw 'modernistic' art as indicative of political excess, diseased social values and the insanity of those who made it.

As a name for the mainstream tendency in 20th-century abstract art 'modernism' came into widespread usage only in the 1960s. It was applied to the Abstract Expressionists and to contemporary hard-edge painting, colour field painting and abstract sculpture, most influentially by the American critic Clement Greenberg. Its lineage was traced back to Manet as the initiator of a sequence of formal innovations, particularly those that lessened illusionism in painting and mimeticism in sculpture. Reflecting the economic and cultural ascendency of the USA and the enormous power of the New York art market, this viewpoint became orthodox internationally. It was, however, subject to subversion by Pop and Minimalist artists and to devastating criticism by conceptual, political and feminist artists and commentators. By the early 1970s it was displaced as a paradigm for most artists, although it persists in many museums, galleries and educational systems.

What were the practices of modernist artists? A typical strategy was to provoke the shock of the new, to reveal the present as replete with blindingly self-evident value and, at the same instant, to consign the recent past to anachronism. Another was to imagine the future as within reach, and still another was to reclaim the distant and even ancient past as a generalized precedent, a repository of essential values that transcended the style-bound historicisms of the 19th century. Typical modes were these: picturing the environments, artefacts, styles and attitudes of everyday life in the modern world; inventing forms, compositional formats and systems of visual signage that parallel those of the forces of modernization; insisting on art's autonomy—its obligation to secure a space for unbridled creativity, for pure possibility; promoting abstraction as an inevitable historical unfolding; highlighting the separateness of the arts or mixing them in startling ways; constantly disturbing fixed relationships between artists and works of art and between works and viewers. The basic impulse of modernism within modernity is the drive to create previously unimagined objects and new ways of seeing them.

In the late 20th century, however, the limitations of modernism, its wasteful exclusions, became increasingly evident. Aspects of the cultures of non-European peoples were often incorporated into modernist experimentality as estranging devices and signals of 'primitive' otherness. This occurred throughout the vanguard movements in Europe around 1900, but from a post-colonial perspective it can be seen as a legacy of imperialism. While the agenda for world art seemed to be set by mainstream Ecole de Paris art movements, and then, after World War II, by developments in American art, artistic practice in the cultural and economic colonies is not necessarily a matter of dependent provincialism. Local artists adopt, adapt and often transform

elements that circulate throughout a system of exchange, which is itself becoming increasingly international. Regional, local, even national, modernisms have occurred all over the world since the 1920s, each with their own distinctive concerns and values. Feminist art historians draw attention to the exclusion of significant work by women artists from the canon of modernist masterpieces, to the social restrictions that prevented these artists from entering many of the spaces so vital to modern life, and to the persistence in early modernism of women seen as aesthetic objects (*see* Women and art history). Similarly, modernist art constantly pirated popular and commercial visual cultures, while still insisting on an essential critical distance from the everyday life of modernity. No longer a source of strength, this contradictory pattern of incorporation and exclusion has contributed to modernism's decline.

While modernism no longer inspires artists, its heroic history and its accumulation of masterworks have became standard fare within educated taste as it consumes the visual arts with ever-increasing enthusiasm. Modern Masters, fine designers, great geniuses, modest decorators: a diverse and conflict-free aesthetic has spread outwards from the centres of artistic innovation to become an international modernist culture among the upper and middle classes in most countries with a European heritage.

Post-modern artists and theorists (*see* Post-modernism) tend to reject modernism as a historical narrative binding on current practice, while at the same time rehearsing some of its strategies and quoting instances of early modernist art as allusions within their circulating of imagery from, potentially, anywhere and any time. Post-modernism is, however, obsessed with modernity; and the issue of whether human societies have moved into a post-modern phase remains open. Another modernist moment in art cannot, therefore, be ruled out.

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See also

Colonialism

Formalism

Fourth dimension

Fuller, R. Buckminster, §4: Later career

Manet, Edouard, §1(v): Life and work, 1879–83

Manet, Edouard, §2(i): Technique: Painting

Modernity, §2: Modernity and the arts

Mondrian, Piet

Picturesque, §3: Legacy

Primitivism, §1: Influence of African and Pacific arts

Union des Artistes Modernes