

Ivan Zaknic

Arthur Rüegg

David Leatherbarrow

Christoph Schnoor

Francesco Passanti

Johan Linton

Stanislaus von Moos

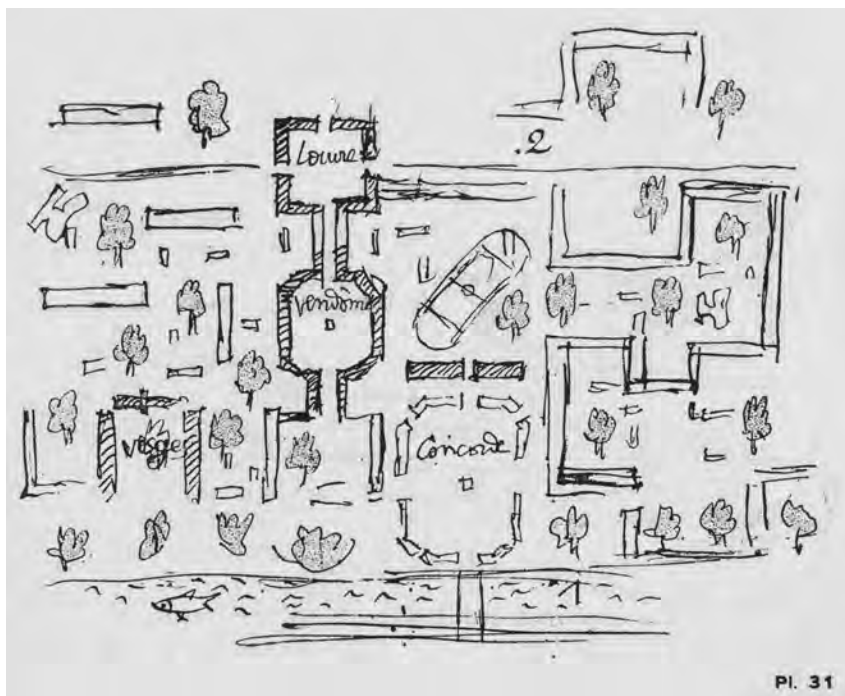
Maria Candela Suárez



LE CORBUSIER
HISTORY and **TRADITION**

Edited by

Armando Rabaça



1. Le Corbusier.
Illustration demonstrating how Le Corbusier relates dimensions of Ville radieuse to the dimensions of historical urban spaces in Paris.
From *Propos d'urbanisme* (1946).

THE MUTUAL CULTURE

LE CORBUSIER AND THE FRENCH TRADITION

In Le Corbusier's correspondence with Auguste Perret one can single out a paragraph which refers to his intense appreciation of France and French culture.¹ Le Corbusier tells of how he took Perret's recent letter up into the mountains to a point where the Alps open out and he has a view of Franche-Comté, the region he crosses on his trips to and from Paris. From here the setting sun envelops a part of France's soil in "radiant clarity"²:

The vast panorama undulating from left to right; I knew the direction of Paris and could see the sun go down almost along the ideal line which has carried me forward time and again, as you know, to your city where I never experienced anything other than joy and enthusiasm.³

Le Corbusier's work is characterized by its strong, but also contradictory, relationship to France and the French tradition. In this letter written in May 1915 he talks about his "never abandoned dream" to live in Paris but also expresses his pride in belonging to the rugged mountains of Switzerland.⁴ Over the years he began to see himself as more of a Frenchman with Mediterranean origins, while his years in the Swiss Alps seemed to belong to a time of forced exile.⁵

Some features of his rich and complex relationship with France are outlined here. The originally Swiss architect integrated French culture

profoundly into his own life and gave it a place of special importance. At the same time, he was one of the first modern architects to work across borders and appear internationally with projects in many continents. He was influenced by and interested in many aspects of the world and its cultures, which interacted with and enriched his interest in French culture. Moreover, his relationship with French culture was neither systematic nor critically nuanced. He referred to historical figures such as Louis XIV and Claude Perrault to illustrate his own reasoning rather than to reach a scientifically correct understanding of the significance of their actions.

Le Corbusier's attraction to France appears relatively late in his training and is tied to a direct encounter with German culture. After completing work on his first building, Villa Fallet, in his hometown of La Chaux-de-Fonds, he set off on his first field trip. Following instructions from his teacher, the artist Charles L'Eplattenier, he travelled to Italy in September 1907 to study Italian Medieval art and architecture. After travelling south, as far as Sienna, he returned north, reaching Budapest and Vienna by mid-November to pursue a teaching program focused on modern art and architecture. This should have included regular studies as well as working with an architect or engineer, but Le Corbusier did neither. He chose instead to design two new villas in La Chaux-de-Fonds from his distant position in Vienna. The projects, Villa Jacquemet (1908) and Villa Stotzer (1908), were conveyed by L'Eplattenier and followed in the same traditional style of Villa Fallet.

Le Corbusier's sojourn in Vienna came to an end when he travelled to Paris in mid-March 1908, against the wishes of L'Eplattenier. The reason for the breakup with his teacher has never been totally clear, but it is possible to highlight some underlying factors. From the annual reports of l'École d'art in La Chaux-de-Fonds, one can see how the school differentiated between Paris and the German-speaking countries. Paris was associated with pure art, while Germany and Austria were connected to the art industry which had a decidedly stronger connection to the economics of his hometown and the future of watch production. It seems that L'Eplattenier

saw Le Corbusier's education as part of the new industrial art movement represented by the Deutscher Werkbund and the Wiener Werkstätte.⁶

Shortly before the young architecture student left Vienna for Paris, he states in a letter to L'Eplattenier that he felt indifferently about the question of Germany and France with regard to modern art. It seems as if Le Corbusier mainly wanted to learn the applied and technical aspects of the architectural profession. "What I need is to improve my technical ability," he writes to his teacher in a letter in early March 1908.⁷ He then refers to the fact that employers in Paris used an hourly system whereby practice placements could be combined with personal study. He also sees Paris as a better alternative for artistic studies. In fact, the two cities he considers relevant for his continuing studies are Paris and Zurich, but he adds that Zurich attracts him little. The letter gives the impression that Le Corbusier had already decided to go to Paris and was merely attempting to quell the disappointment his decision would arouse in L'Eplattenier.

Although Le Corbusier abandoned L'Eplattenier's study plans in 1908, he returned, at his teacher's request, to the German-speaking environment in 1910, to work on two specific book projects. One of these was specifically concerned with the art industry and became Le Corbusier's first published book, *Étude sur le mouvement d'art décoratif en Allemagne*.⁸ Perhaps, one should not underestimate the hints that his Parisian sojourn give of Le Corbusier's artistic ambitions. Even late in life, he would refer to the time when his teacher claimed that he was not sufficiently talented to become a painter.⁹ A readiness to return to L'Eplattenier's guidance and studies within the German cultural sphere was maybe only possible after he had forged a link with the French art world. Another aspect of the question regarding Germany and France was that Le Corbusier never seems to have felt at home with the German language.¹⁰

Literature also provides us with an anecdote that gives authenticity to the impulse behind Le Corbusier's decision to leave Austria for France. The first true biography of Le Corbusier, Maximilien Gauthier's theoretically focused book *Le Corbusier ou l'architecture au service de l'homme* from 1944, tells the story

of the breakup in Vienna.¹¹ According to Gauthier, the young architect saw Giacomo Puccini's opera *La Bohème* staged in a set with turn-of-the-century Parisian decor. The biography tells how "the set and costumes expressed a strong desire to create something new" and that it was this experience which gave Le Corbusier the sudden feeling that the world's most important art centre was not Vienna, as he had first thought, but Paris.¹² This story must in some way have been told by Le Corbusier himself.

Le Corbusier left Vienna in March and travelled to Paris via Nuremberg with his sculpture student friend, Leon Perrin. He arrived in the French capital at the end of March and was obviously ill prepared. He seems to have had little prior knowledge of the Parisian environment and was slow to take up initiatives to fulfill the purpose of his journey. It took three months for him to begin any architectural practice.

During this initial period one can nevertheless note a tangible interest in French architectural literature in several of his undertakings. Firstly, he worked at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, where he made his first known reading of an architectural book, which was accompanied by careful notes about the book's contents. It was Édouard Corroyer's (a student of Viollet-le-Duc) book *L'Architecture romane* (1888).¹³ Secondly, he contacted a writer whose work he had been acquainted with during the studies at the École d'art. It was this writer, Eugène Grasset, who eventually introduced him to the architect Auguste Perret, whom Le Corbusier had not been familiar with before his arrival in Paris.¹⁴ He contacted Perret in mid-April and by the end of June he had begun to work in his office on the ground floor of the famous house at 25 bis rue Franklin. Perret was primarily known for his experimentation with reinforced concrete and the use of this material in residential constructions. The knowledge he gained from Perret would come to be of fundamental importance to the young Swiss architect. It seems reasonable to assume that Le Corbusier was also influenced by Perret's views on architecture in general.

While working for Perret Le Corbusier began to direct his interest towards the work of the theoretician and restoration architect Eugène

Viollet-le-Duc. In August 1908 he bought *Dictionnaire raisonné* (1854-68) and wrote in one of the volumes that he had paid for it with his first salary from Perret. "I bought this to learn," wrote Le Corbusier "because if I learn I will be able to create."¹⁵ Shortly before this, Le Corbusier had written to L'Éplattenier about his readings of Viollet-le-Duc, claiming that the writer was "a man so clear-thinking and astute, so logical, so clear and precise in his observations."¹⁶ It is likely that Perret, also influenced by Viollet-le-Duc, directed Le Corbusier in his new theoretical interest. Likewise, one can imagine that it was through Perret that Le Corbusier came to study the work of Auguste Choisy, which he gave more serious attention to at a later date. His interest in Viollet-le-Duc lasted for a limited period but his appreciation of Choisy was permanent. He bought Choisy's *Histoire de l'Architecture* (1899) in 1913 and would later describe it as one of the foremost books on architecture ever written.¹⁷ He also used illustrations from this in his books, such as *Vers une Architecture* (1923).¹⁸

During his time as an intern in Perret's office, Le Corbusier deepened his understanding of French thoughts and traditions in many other ways. He worked in the mornings and devoted his afternoons to study. On Perret's advice, he read about mathematics and took private lessons in statics with an engineer.¹⁹ In addition, he studied at the Sorbonne, where he attended courses in musical history run by Romain Rolland.²⁰ It was also at this time in Paris that he began to visit museums on a regular basis.

Le Corbusier's appreciation of the museum as an institution was twofold, but at one point he argued that knowledge gained from studies in a museum was "more reliable" than that gained from books.²¹ In the Paris museums he studied and made notes on exotic and primitive art, together with objects from French design history. Initially he was primarily interested in the French Gothic style and referred to Notre-Dame as his "laboratory."²² It is also likely that it was during this early period in Paris that Le Corbusier first encountered the work of Tony Garnier. He states, in fact, on several occasions that he met Garnier in Lyon on his way to Paris, but according to what we know from research, this is unlikely.²³

One of the earliest documented meetings with Garnier was when Le Corbusier sent him his article “Le Renouveau dans l’architecture” (1914).²⁴ This was a few years before Garnier published *Une cité industrielle* (1917), one of the few books by contemporary French architects that Le Corbusier used in his own publications. It is probable that Le Corbusier became familiar with Garnier’s work during his stay in France in 1908-09 and met him in person later.

Le Corbusier remained in Paris until December 1909, when he returned to La Chaux-de-Fonds. He devoted the following years to study and study trips to Germany and the Orient, and worked as an independently practising architect in his hometown in Switzerland. During this time his desire to return to Paris and establish himself there grew until he finally succeeded in the autumn of 1917.

Le Corbusier’s first two important writing projects were directed toward the culture of German-speaking nations. Both works had been initiated by L’Eplattenier and were implemented in accordance with the teacher’s plans for an extended stay in Germany. The first book project, “La Construction des villes” (begun in 1910 and published posthumously), grew out of Camillo Sitte’s influential work, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (1889), which Le Corbusier had first read in French.²⁵ The second, *Étude sur le mouvement d’art décoratif en Allemagne* (1912), was a study of the German industrial art movement. Although these projects were about German culture, they provided Le Corbusier with the possibility to further his pursuit of French culture.

The work on the first book began with library studies in Munich and grew partly out of his readings of French architectural literature. Among other writings, he studied the French Jesuit Marc Antoine Laugier’s classic works *Essai sur l’Architecture* (1753) and *Observations sur l’Architecture* (1765).²⁶ These readings influenced the young architect’s future view of the city in a way that should not be underestimated and Laugier became one of the few French theorists who Le Corbusier referred to in his own writing. In addition there are discussions on French architectural history in the book’s

manuscript. His movement towards French architectural culture became even clearer when Le Corbusier, in the summer of 1915, returned to his book project through studies at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Even though the studies primarily regarded illustrations and his ambition to complete the book failed, he acquired knowledge of the French architectural tradition that became an important influence for his future writing.²⁷

In his book about the German industrial art movement, which was actually a kind of report, he focuses his attention on German-speaking culture. Nevertheless, the introduction shows that Le Corbusier's analysis of German culture was, in many ways, made in relation to French culture.²⁸ It is also clear that he had begun to see the book as a study to serve French purposes. His insights into German progress did not bring him closer to Germany, but were used to strengthen his position in relation to France.²⁹

In both written works one discerns signs of a double stance in relation to the French tradition that came to be characteristic of Le Corbusier during his entire career. In "La Construction des villes," he discusses the creation of urban space in Paris during the classical period and points out how this tradition had been managed in recent times. One can already find a hint of the scepticism about French architecture in 1800, which he would develop further. He criticized what he perceived as a preoccupation with the plan drawing in itself, without regard for what it represented in reality.³⁰ Moreover, in the introduction to *Étude sur le mouvement d'art décoratif en Allemagne* (1912) we notice an ambivalence to the French heritage; it is described as a constant, currently available resource, which also leads to a loosening of architectural morality.

Following this, Le Corbusier theorizes explicitly about the French tradition for the first time in the short but significant article "Le Renouveau dans l'architecture" (1914).³¹ A starting point for this article is a comparison between the Invalides (1680) by Jules Hardouin-Mansart and Auguste Perret's recently inaugurated Théâtre des Champs Élysées (1913). Le Corbusier describes Perret's building as a renewal (renouveau) of architecture, while the older church building with its thick stone walls and historicized decorations

represents part of a tradition that is no longer justified and which fails to match modern needs and ways of life. At the same time the French tradition of 1600 was, in effect, a role model. Louis XIV, a rational and dynamic ruler, ignored and went beyond the “paralyzing” respect for history. Le Corbusier emphasizes in the text how the French autocrat renewed Paris without any consideration for its “Gothic towers” and how he allowed Claude Perrault to create the East façade of the Louvre, even if it shows no pity for its relationship to the palace’s original architecture.³²

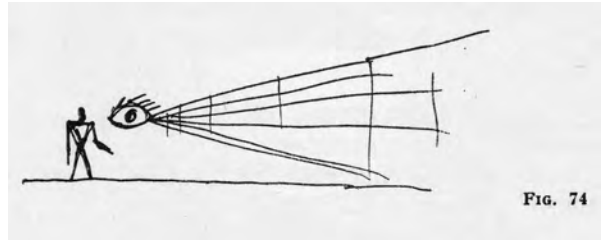
References to the French tradition are found again after Le Corbusier established himself in Paris and appear, for example, in *Après le cubisme*, the art theory book, which he wrote together with the painter Amédée Ozenfant in 1918 and which can be regarded as a breakthrough in Le Corbusier’s writing. The exchange with Ozenfant constituted a further step in Le Corbusier’s relationship with the French cultural tradition. The Frenchman had previously created *L’Élan*, one of the most important art magazines to be published in France during the First World War. The magazine was geared towards the artistic avant-garde and ten issues were published in Paris between April 1915 and December 1916. Ozenfant was supported by many others including Auguste Perret, who had brought the publication to Le Corbusier’s attention.³³ While the latter was working in La Chaux-de-Fonds and longing for the artistic cultural world of Paris, Ozenfant had already carved out a place for himself in the innermost French avant-garde circles through his work with the magazine and was acquainted with people such as Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and Jacques Lipchitz.

The references to French history in *Après le cubisme* are applied primarily to paintings. Artists as Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorraine are highlighted, together with the architect and first leader of the French Academy of Architecture, François Blondel.³⁴ The period after Classicism is indirectly described as a decline associated with Romanticism, after which painters such as Paul Cézanne, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres and Henri Matisse emerged as innovators renewing French traditional ideals.

Similar references are also found in the next publication project by Le Corbusier and Ozenfant, the magazine *L'Esprit Nouveau*, which was published in Paris between 1920 and 1925. Together with contributions about the French and international avant-garde are individual articles about artists such as Jean Fouquet, the brothers Le Nain, and Nicolas Poussin.³⁵ Furthermore, in Le Corbusier's texts on architecture and urbanism, we find positive references to French historical architects such as François Blondel, Claude Perrault (both mentioned previously) and Jacques-Ange Gabriel and to Gothic buildings such as Notre-Dame Cathedral. These are set against what Le Corbusier considers a decline in the beaux-arts tradition and contemporary interior design.

From an observation of Le Corbusier's references to history in *L'Esprit Nouveau* and other written works, it becomes clear that he had a special relationship with French classicism and the Louis XIV epoch. The connection is derived not only from aspects of design but also from the link between architects or artists and power. As we have seen, he was impressed by the way in which the French King and his influential finance minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, commissioned Claude Perrault to design the East façade of the Louvre which appeared detached from the original building's stylistic scheme. Colbert contributed to the founding of the Académie Royale d'Architecture (1671) and commissioned Perrault—who was a physician and member of the French Academy of Sciences—to do a French translation of Vitruvius's architectural theory. A decade later when Perrault published his own writings on architectural theory, *Ordonnance des cinq espèces de colonnes* (1683), he referred to Colbert. In the preface, explicitly dedicated to the French Minister, he emphasizes that he would like his book to enlighten the public and expresses his gratitude to the support and requirements of Colbert.³⁶ Such direct appeals to political power and its representatives, which had previously been the prevailing model for architectural literature, had become rarer in modern times.

When the second edition of Le Corbusier's ground breaking book, *Vers une architecture* (1923), was published at the end of 1924, he claims in the



2. Page from Jean Martin's translation of Vitruvius published in 1547, with illustrations by Jean Goujon.

Le Corbusier explicitly refers to this work in his book *Une maison un palais* (1928) and writes “these lines hold freedom” and “the French Renaissance vibrates with joy”, qualities he believes come from a rediscovery of “l’Orthogonal” —the perpendicular.

3. Le Corbusier.
Sketch published in *Le Modulor* (1950).

new preface that the book interacts with a newly awakened interest for architecture in society, something which reflects key changes in modern times. In the first paragraph he compares this new celebration of the relevance of architecture to a period of French history which left important traces in the history of buildings. He mentions François Blondel with the Porte Saint-Denis and Claude Perrault with the Louvre's East façade. He points out that such persons and their work had been a reflection of a widely shared passion about architecture that was present amongst the citizens and higher political functionaries at that time.³⁷

While Le Corbusier theorized about such historical references, in practice he prepared for the construction of the Pavillon de L'Esprit Nouveau at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1925. A full-scale model of an apartment to be inserted into apartment buildings with stacked "villas" (immeuble-villas) was one of his earliest concrete proposals for a solution to the housing problems in big cities. Adjacent to the full-scale model he produced a panoramic model of the architect's plans for the renewal of Paris, the well-known Plan Voisin. Although Le Corbusier in some ways criticized how his pavilion was treated at the exhibition, it was nevertheless, inaugurated by the French Minister of Education, Anatole de Monzie.³⁸ Monzie was interested in the radical urban planning proposals for the French capital and the architect later spoke of his own experience at this important occasion: "At one moment the minister's words reached a level where I forgot the baseness of egoism. I came to think of one person in particular: Colbert."³⁹ This reference to Colbert was not temporary. In his book on urban theory, *Urbanisme*, published in the same year, Le Corbusier exalted Louis XIV's finance minister as the initiator and figurehead of "all the great works in Paris."⁴⁰

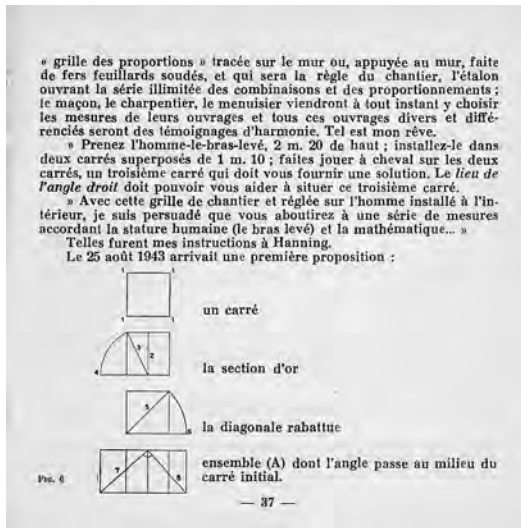
In the development of Le Corbusier's theoretical work it is, in fact, possible to identify Colbert as a kind of role model for persons in positions of authority. In the book of lectures *Précisions* (1930) Le Corbusier suggests that all countries should immediately create a ministry for building and infrastructure. He emphasizes that this should be led by a minister that could remain independent of political turbulence and that it should be:

“*The best ministry of all ministries.*” The model for the minister is more than evident: “I have been haunted for one year by the shadow of Colbert. If the nation would only give us a Colbert!”⁴¹ This haunting can be traced back to Le Corbusier’s earlier writing such as his first published article, “Art et utilité publique” from 1910, which was written to provide a useful example to those who “use their powers to combat the overwhelming ugliness.”⁴² In the previously discussed book on urban planning, which he began at the same time as the article, there is a similar dedication: “This study, written with no other purpose than as a reminder of the measures which can make life in cities more pleasant, is directed especially towards the authorities.”⁴³ The same stance is preserved in what was to become his most extensive theoretical work and book about cities and the built environment, *La Ville radieuse*, printed in 1935. It begins with the words: “This work is dedicated to the authorities, Paris, May 1933.”⁴⁴

It is equally clear that the classical epoch constituted an even more direct inspiration for Le Corbusier’s practical work. The striking similarity between the ideal plan for a modern city for three million inhabitants from 1922 and Louis XIV’s Versailles has been pointed out before.⁴⁵ This was clearly not a coincidence but an indication that Le Corbusier used the work of Louis XIV as a model for his own theories. In a text published in January 1921, just before he began to develop his well-known ideal city, he writes:

A hundred years ago the sense of the plan was lost. Tomorrow’s most important tasks are dictated by collective necessities, which take their starting point in statistics and can be understood with the help of calculations. They raise once again the question of the plan. When the undoubtable greatness of the city plan is understood, a time will come to pass that no era has previously experienced. The entire expanse of the city should be considered and planned in the same way as Oriental temples or Les Invalides and Versailles were envisaged by Louis XIV.⁴⁶

Le Corbusier also refers to the Porte Saint-Denis, another work from the French seventeenth century which was designed by François Blondel, Perrault's opponent and first director of the French Academy of Architecture. At about the same time as the above article was printed, the Swiss-French architect published a text about proportions, "The regulatory lines" (*Les tracés régulateurs*), in 1921. The article begins with a geometric analysis of Blondel's famous city gate and includes a quote in which he describes the use of "tracés régulateurs" for the work in question.⁴⁷ Le Corbusier states that such "regulatory lines" had also been used by the Greeks, Egyptians and by Michelangelo. A similar idea, which had appeared in *Après le cubisme* three years earlier, referred to design principles used throughout history and which, according to the authors' discoveries, had left traces up to the time of Louis XIV and Blondel.⁴⁸ In his article Le Corbusier demonstrates how he used regulatory lines in his building the Villa Schwob in La Chaux-de-Fonds. He apologizes for referring to his own work, but claims he had no choice, because he was unable to find modern architects who showed an interest in such matters. Leaving aside the fact that the article contains a reference to the eighteenth century and Jacques-Angé Gabriel's Petit Trianon, we get the impression that Le Corbusier intended to resume an approach to architectural design that had been ignored in all French architectural work from that time and onwards. That Le Corbusier used Blondel and his proportional thinking as a reference was clear and even led to a contribution in a later issue of *L'Esprit Nouveau*. This short text, which occupies a single page, presents "François Blondel's life."⁴⁹ The article is signed "Fayet" and everything suggests that Le Corbusier was involved.⁵⁰ It contains a geometric schedule of the Porte Saint-Denis, along with a reference to the article "Les tracés régulateurs" which begins with a version of the same geometric construction. No further references to the schedule are provided. However, if one turns to a work on architectural history that Le Corbusier repeatedly referred to, Choisy's double volume from 1899, the schedule can be found in an interpretation of Blondel's *Cours d'architecture*.⁵¹ It is likewise clear that Choisy also had a high opinion of Blondel and his work.



4. Page from François Blondel, *Cours d'architecture enseigné dans l'Académie royale d'architecture* (1675).
5. Page from Le Corbusier, *Le Modulor* (1950).

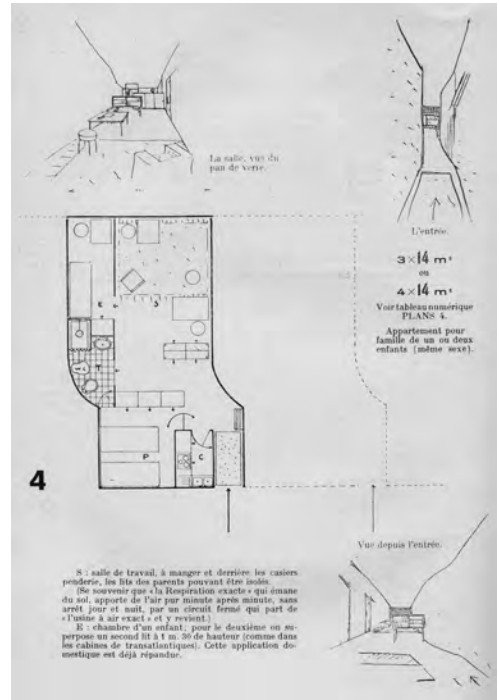
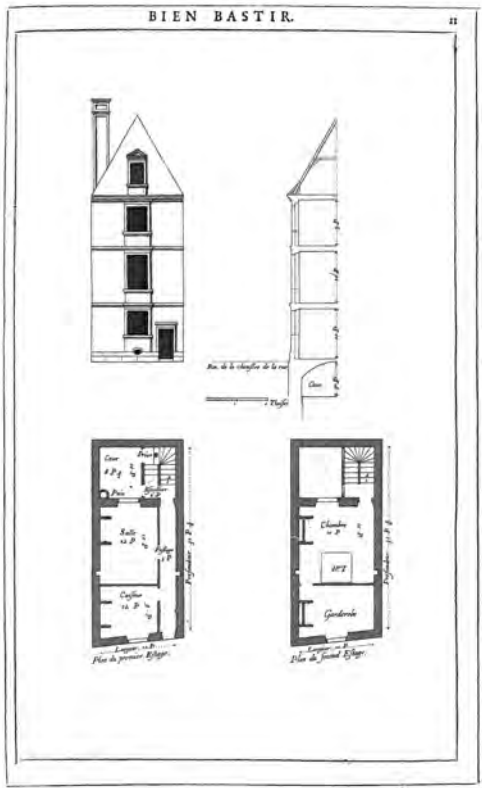
Another theorist who, like Le Corbusier, made reference to Blondel was Marc Antoine Laugier. Here we find an even greater respect and admiration for the Blondel City gate. In *Essai sur l'architecture*, which Le Corbusier read in 1910 while working on "La Construction des villes," Porte Saint-Denis is highlighted as the foremost of its kind, superior even to the antique triumphal arches.⁵²

One noticeable aspect of French architectural theory, when compared to the Italian tradition, is the presence of polemics. Disagreements over the importance of the ancient heritage as expressed in Claude Perrault's translation of Vitruvius (1673) and François Blondel's *Cours d'architecture* (1675-1683), are set against more general and protracted controversies which centre around hostilities between the old and the modern (*La Querelle des anciens et des modernes*).⁵³ The somewhat later exchange of opinions on Gothic relevance was an issue discussed by, among others, Jean Louis de Cordemoy and Amédée-François Frézier. Yet another dispute was about the hierarchy between Greek architecture and that of the Romans. This can be noted in Roland Fréart de Chambray's *Parallèle de l'architecture antique et de la moderne* (1650). As mentioned earlier, this polemical stance is tangibly present in Le Corbusier's writings from very early on. The article "Le Renouveau" from 1914 can be seen, for example, as a kind of controversy with some of the period's architects. In addition, the manifesto written together with Ozenfant, *Après le cubisme* (1918), is significantly polemic. The new art direction, purism, which the book launches, is derived from a criticism of other art movements. Two years later, when Le Corbusier began to write for *L'Esprit Nouveau*, under the pseudonym Le Corbusier, he began with a series of articles under the common title: "Three petitions to gentlemen architects."⁵⁴ As the title suggests, he directs his articles to the Beaux-Arts architects in order to criticize them and inform them about the essential components of architecture, which they do not understand. The same applies to the three articles entitled "Eyes that do not see."⁵⁵ His criticism is not gracious. The established architectural profession in France is bigoted, lazy and behaves as if it wanted to "poison" France's citizens.⁵⁶ This provocative side of Le

Corbusier's oeuvre returns throughout his career.

The emergence of the French theoretical tradition from the Renaissance onwards was coupled to the need for practical guidance in construction. This requirement could be likened, at least partly, to industrialization and the extensive needs this created in terms of urban and architectural design solutions for large numbers of people. It is not impossible at this point to see a relationship between older French architectural literature and Le Corbusier's theoretical project. In fact, he repeats again and again his goal to create a "doctrine" for contemporary architecture from the overall urban structures of society down to the detailed design of the modern home. For a possible comparison among many, one could refer to Pierre Le Muet's *Manière de bien bastir pour toutes sortes de personnes* (1623). Le Muet's concrete and pragmatic proposals for residential plans and residential buildings, from simple to more exclusive examples, can be compared to Le Corbusier's similarly pragmatic studies of the dwelling. One interesting example is the article on a 14-square meter standard that he wrote before the CIAM meeting in Brussels in 1930. Both Le Muet and Le Corbusier specify carefully calculated surface areas, ceiling heights and other practical details, such as the need for wardrobes.⁵⁷

Even without detailed studies, one can notice how Le Corbusier dealt with several questions and themes which had held an important place in the French tradition. These include the question of the relationship between buildings and nature, the discussion of "truth" in architecture and the question of architecture's aesthetic effect on man; or more precisely, how buildings affect the senses and if there are constant aspects of the experience common for all people.⁵⁸ The latter issues are taken up by, among others, Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières in *Le Génie de l'architecture; ou, l'analogie de cet art avec nos sensations* (1780). It is worth observing how similar aspects came to be treated by Le Corbusier in texts from the period around 1920, when his modernist theories were formulated in collaboration with Ozenfant. To highlight this point one can look at how Le Camus de Mézières describes the proportional role of architecture:



6. Example from Pierre Le Muet, *Manière de bien bastir pour toutes sortes de personnes* (1623).

7. Work by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret for the CIAM meeting in Brussels in 1930—standard housing designed from the living space of 14 square meters per person—published in the journal *Plans* no. 9 (November 1931).

Study incessantly and take the mutual relationship (rapport) between harmony and proportion as the primary objective; it is harmony alone which generates the enthusiasm that grips our soul.⁵⁹

Such a formulation can be compared to Le Corbusier's interest in the same inner experience of the proportions of construction:

ARCHITECTURE, that is art par excellence, reaches platonic grandeur, mathematical order, abstract meditation and the experience of harmony through proportioned relationships (rapports). That is the GOAL of architecture.⁶⁰

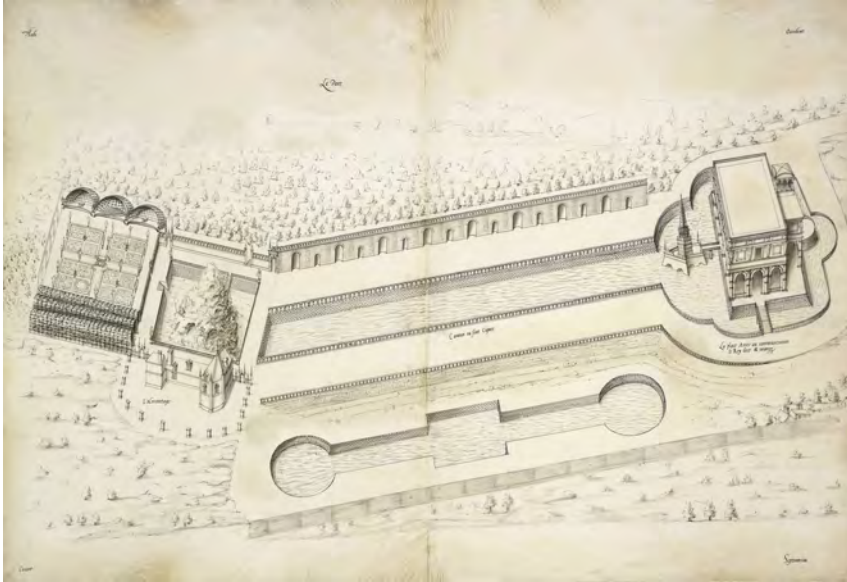
These same reflections can also be applied to theoretical concepts of French architecture. Le Corbusier discusses several concepts of mathematics and proportional doctrine, referred to as the aforementioned "rapport," but also uses terms such as "caractère", "certitude" and "utilité." Indeed, the last concept appears in the title of his first published text "L'art et l'utilité publique." In comparison, the concept is highlighted by Jacques-François Blondel in the introduction to his extensive lectures, the *Cours d'architecture*, when he discusses "benefits of Architecture" (de l'utilité de l'Architecture) immediately after the initial historical overview.⁶¹ In the same way Le Corbusier used the related concept of "usage," a term found in French architectural theory since the sixteenth century and which Claude Perrault associated with aesthetics.⁶²

Even around more formal aspects of theory one can find links to tradition. Both François Blondel, the Academy's first director and professor, and Jacques-François Blondel, leader of the first actual architecture school, published their theoretical reflections in the form of lectures, *Cours d'architecture*. Le Corbusier added to the tradition by posting lectures from his visit to South America in 1929—*Précisions sur un état présent de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme*—a book that turned, however, decisively against the instruction of the Academy. Parallels with the theoretical tradition might also be

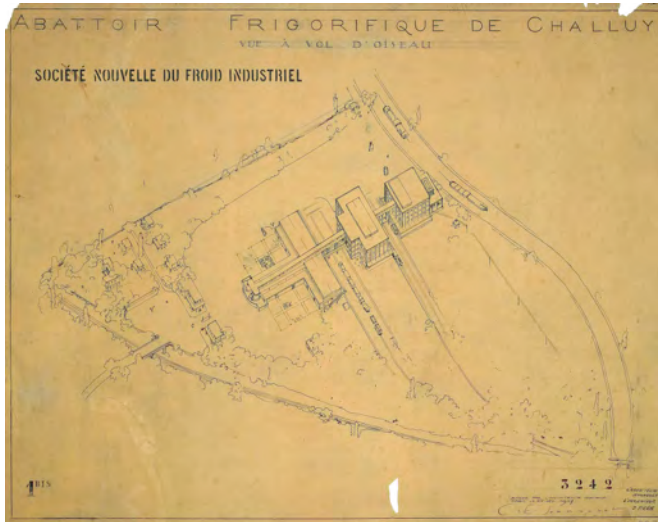
drawn from the titles of Le Corbusier's books. For example the title *Manière de penser l'urbanisme* leads one to think, not only of the already mentioned *Manière de bien bastir* (1623) by Pierre Le Muet, but also of works such as Jean Bullant's *Reigle générale d'architecture des cinq manières de colonnes* (1564), the first French book about the five orders, or the engraver Abraham Bosse's *Traité des manières de dessiner les ordres* (1664). When Le Corbusier, in his polemical writing about the contest for the headquarters of the League of Nations, chooses the designations of "house" and "palace" in the title, *Une maison - un palais, à la recherche d'une unité architecturale* (1928), we find the terminology of historical French architectural literature once again. In some cases we discover the same references even in the titles, Charles-Étienne Briseux's *Architecture moderne ou l'art de bien bâtir pour toutes sortes des personnes tant pour les maisons des particuliers que pour les palais* (1728) and in Pierre François Léonard Fontaine and Charles Percier's *Palais, maisons, et autres édifices modernes dessinés à Rome* (1798). Le Corbusier was in any case aware of such links between his own theoretical works and tradition, which he expressed openly himself in 1929 when he responded to Karel Teige's criticism of the Mundaneum. In another example of polemical writing, he commented upon the title of his article "Defence of architecture" (*Défense de l'Architecture*): "It is a title with a taste of the 'Grand siècle,' that I admit."⁶³

It is of course also possible to relate Le Corbusier's work to individual French architects. One of them it is difficult to avoid comparison with is, as indicated, Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. The latter was influential as both a theorist and a practitioner and left behind extensive written works, which placed him among the great architectural theoreticians in history. Like Le Corbusier, he stood outside the French academic system and challenged it with a radical interpretation of architecture based on technological advancements and a "modern spirit."

Other French theorists who made contributions that provide a background to Le Corbusier's vision of modern life and habitat, include Charles Fourier, and his idea of "the Phalansteries"; Eugène Hénard and Tony Garnier, with their town planning visions, and Auguste Choisy, and



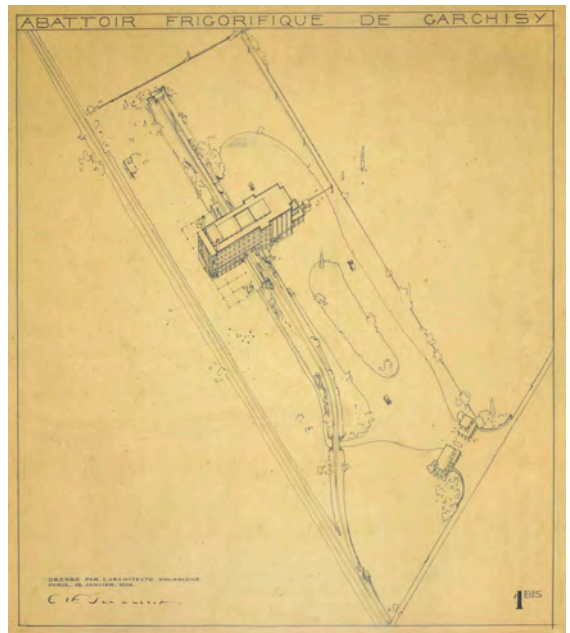
8. Jacques I Androuet du Cerceaus.
Representation of the Jardin du Lydieu
at the Château de Gaillon, one of
France's oldest Renaissance castles.



9. Le Corbusier.
Slaughterhouse project, Challuy,
1917.

10. Le Corbusier.
Slaughterhouse project, Garchizy,
1918.

In 1917/1918 Le Corbusier made two designs for slaughterhouses. In a letter from the time he writes about the projects and states that they have given him the ability to create "Loire Castles."



his ideas about the importance of modular construction. The last two were contemporary colleagues who Le Corbusier expressed his admiration for. One more role model from the modern French era was, hardly surprisingly, Georges Eugène Haussmann. Le Corbusier in his own book, *La Ville radieuse*, cut out passages from a biography of the famous city planner and introduced the citations with the words “My respect and admiration for Haussmann.”⁶⁴

French architectural theory, even prior to the Academy’s foundation, has been described as an attempt to establish an independence from the Italian tradition.⁶⁵ The establishment of the Académie royale d’architecture in the second half of the seventeenth century represented an institutional step towards the maintenance of the French tradition, a project launched by theorists such as Jacques Androuet du Cerceau the Elder, Jean Bullant and Philibert Delorme. Even in this respect, Le Corbusier joins his important French predecessors and highlights France as the main reference for architectural and urban development from the Middle Ages onwards. In *Urbanisme* (1925), for instance, he puts Louis XIV alongside the Romans as the only great city builder in the Western world.⁶⁶ In *Précisions* (1930), he writes that “France is, through its art and philosophy, a lighthouse for every place.”⁶⁷ In the introduction to *Sur les quatre routes* (1940), he points out how France, in terms of architecture and urban planning, “represents a thousand years of conquered power, an unbroken chain of harmony.”⁶⁸ Similar examples recur frequently.

According to Le Corbusier, the most important built expression of French greatness is Paris itself. In *La Ville radieuse* (1935), the chapter where his urban plans for the French capital are explained, he writes: “Paris is not just a community, Paris is the incarnation of France. Throughout the world, Paris is a beloved city, everybody reserves a space for Paris in his heart . . . Why? Because Paris has been thinking for century after century, for a thousand years about creativity, entrepreneurship, and audacity.”⁶⁹

Le Corbusier’s praise of the greatness of France and Paris is however paralleled by criticism of the present situation. Paris had become a “freak,” a “puddle,” a “protoplasm,” which “stretches out across an entire region.”

If there is still a city with radiance (Ville lumière), it is thanks to the stars which, just like in heaven, reach us with a light which has really gone out.⁷⁰

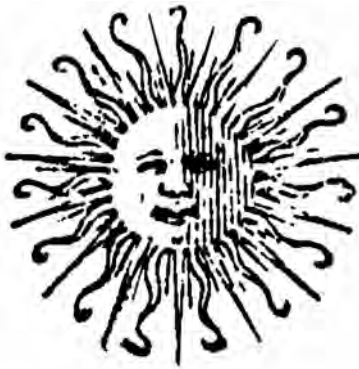
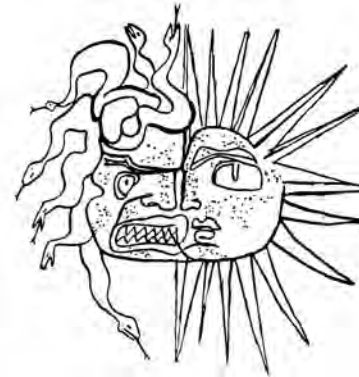
In this way Le Corbusier managed not only to align himself with the French tradition of promoting the superiority of French achievements in architecture and urbanism, but also made proposals for how French greatness in these fields could be achieved, or re-established at that time. One example is the Plan Voisin. In the manifesto which accompanies the panoramic model of the project at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1925 he writes: “Paris has expectations of our time (époque): that this endangered life be rescued. That our beautiful past be saved. To conquer the grandeur and power of the twentieth century.”⁷¹ The words of the Manifesto express a connection with Le Corbusier’s personal ambition to become the one that will realize the vision of a new grand era (époque) in the history of the French capital. The words are reminiscent of the famous phrase which we find in the introduction to the first issue of *L’Esprit Nouveau*—put in italics—“A great era has just begun” (Une grande époque vient de commencer).⁷²

However, when Le Corbusier expressed such thoughts he was not yet a Frenchman. He established himself in Paris at the age of thirty in 1917. In conjunction with the launch of *L’Esprit Nouveau* in 1920, he started to abandon his Swiss name, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris for the pseudonym Le Corbusier, taken from his ancestor, Le Corbétier.⁷³ It is possible that the name also drew its origins from the raven shooters who prevented medieval cathedral façades being soiled by birds.⁷⁴ Just over a decade later, it became clear that Le Corbusier’s relationship with France would develop. In association with his plan to marry a French woman,⁷⁵ he writes to his mother about “a new big question”: his idea and desire to apply for French citizenship.⁷⁶ To his mother Le Corbusier presents the idea that he would get more work as an architect if he were a French citizen. Pretty soon it became clear that the citizenship represented a rebirth into French culture. In the book *Croisade*, published only three years after his adoption of French citizenship, he speaks of religious persecution in southern France during the 1300s and of how some of the persecuted managed to save themselves,

with the help of “French princes,” by travelling to inaccessible areas of the Swiss Jura mountains.⁷⁷ In letters, texts and notes he would then come to insist about the idea that his family had been displaced from the South of France during the Middle Ages because of religious persecution and that, consequently, his natural nationality had always been French.⁷⁸

It is not surprising therefore, that at the same time he starts to present himself as a cultured person who represents and contributes to France’s prestige. In a letter written in 1936 to the Director of Fine Arts, Georges Huisman, concerning the possibility of designing the French Embassy in Moscow, he points out how he had been the first architect to realize a building (Centrosoyus) of great publicity value for France in the USSR. He supports this claim with attached (Soviet) documents. The letter also tells the story of Le Corbusier’s origins in southern France and emphasizes that he does not wish to put on airs, but to prevent his opponents from treating him like “a long-distance Papuan,” completely devoid of “the spirit of the French genius” (*L’Esprit du Génie français*).⁷⁹

Le Corbusier’s relationship to France and French culture can be described as a life-long project to create, present and integrate his own personal contribution, which could then compete with the principal stages of French architectural history. Long before the Swiss architect became a French citizen in 1930, he chose a pseudonym that linked him to important representatives of the great national architectural tradition. He presented himself as a modern heir to luminous figures such as Le Brun, Le Camus, Le Clerc, Le Duc, Le Muet, Le Nôtre, Le Roy, Le Vau and certainly Viollet-le-Duc.⁸⁰ The case of Le Corbusier was never that of an ordinary foreign student, who in his youth had been lured to Paris by Puccini’s famous opera and dreams of bohemian life in the Quartier Latin. He was the son of a glorious France returning from exile after half a millennium with a mission to lead the country forth into a new and important century—“une grande époque,” a modern “grand siècle”—through the art form superior to all: Architecture.



11. Vignette used by François Blondel in the *Cours d'architecture enseigné dans l'Académie royale d'architecture* (1675).
12. Vignette used by Le Corbusier in *La maison des hommes* (1942).
13. Sun symbol used by Philibert Delorme in *Le Premier tome de l'architecture* (1567).

NOTES

Warm thanks to Peter and Birgitta Celsing's Foundation and to Estrid Ericson's Foundation that made it possible to write and publish this article. Warm thanks also to Sarah North for assisting with the English translation.

- 1 The extensive historical studies of Le Corbusier, his education, his practical and theoretical experiences, give an image of how he encountered and integrated parts of the French cultural heritage. The great importance of this influence is also evident in more general studies. However, as far as the author is aware, until now, no thorough study has been done that focuses on Le Corbusier's relationship with the French architectural tradition as a whole. Separate in-depth studies of certain aspects have been conducted. One of the earliest and most ambitious of these is Richard Allen Moore's dissertation on the concept of "dessin" in the French Beaux-Arts-tradition. Other examples are Philippe Duboy's work on Le Corbusier's studies at the Bibliothèque nationale in 1915, Michael Dennis's original study on the vision of space in French tradition, with a chapter on Le Corbusier, and articles like that of Jean-Louis Cohen, who places Le Corbusier in relation to Eugène Hénard, that of Antonio Bruculeri, discussing aspects of the studies at Bibliothèque nationale in 1915, or Christoph Schnoor's thorough studies of Le Corbusier's first book project that also deal with the relationship to French theory.

Richard Allen Moore, "Le Corbusier and the 'mécanique spirituelle': an investigation into Le Corbusier's architectural symbolism and its background in Beaux-Arts 'dessin.'" (Ph D diss., University of Maryland, 1979); Philippe Duboy, *Charles-Édouard Jeanneret à la Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, 1915*, [1985] new rev. print (Paris: École d'architecture de Paris-Belleville, undated); Idem., "Ch. E. Jeanneret à la Bibliothèque National, Paris 1915," *A.M.C.* 49 (September 1979): 9-12; Idem., "L.C.B.N. 1.9.15.," *Casabella* 531-532 (1987): 94-103; Michael Dennis, *Court & Garden: From the French Hôtel to the City of Modern Architecture*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986); Jean-Louis Cohen, "Sulle tracce di Hénard," *Casabella* 531-532 (1987): 34-41; Antonio Bruculeri, "The challenge of the 'Grand Siècle,'" in Stanislaus von Moos and Arthur Rüegg, eds., *Le Corbusier before Le Corbusier, Applied arts, Architecture, Painting, Photography, 1907-1922* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002); Christoph Schnoor, *La construction des villes: [Charles-Édouard Jeannerets erstes städtebauliches Traktat von 1910/11]* (Zürich: gta, 2008).

This text aims at throwing light upon Le Corbusier's relationship to French architectural culture

- and outline its extent. For the description of Le Corbusier's early education and for the history of French architectural theory, the rich studies of H. Allen Brooks and Hanno-Walter Kruft have been fundamental. H. Allen Brooks, *Le Corbusier's Formative Years, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret at La Chaux-de-Fonds* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997); Hanno-Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*, [1985] trans. by Ronald Taylor, Elsie Callander and Antony Wood (New York: Princeton architectural press, 1994).
- 2 “[C]larté étincelante.” Le Corbusier to Auguste Perret, 3 May 1915, Archives Fondation Le Corbusier [henceforth FLC] E1 (11), 164. The letter is transcribed in Marie-Jeanne Dumont, ed., *Le Corbusier, Lettres à ses maîtres*, vol. 1, *Lettres à Auguste Perret* (Paris: Éditions du Linteau, 2002), 134-137.
 - 3 “Et le long panorama mamelonnant de droite à gauche, je savais la direction de Paris, à voir le soleil se coucher presque sur la ligne idéale, qui tant de fois, vous le savez, m’a porté et reporté vers votre ville où je n’ai eu que joies et enthousiasmes.” Le Corbusier to Auguste Perret, 3 May 1915, FLC, E1 (11) 164; Le Corbusier, *Lettres à Auguste Perret*, 134-137.
 - 4 “[M]on rêve jamais trahi.” Ibid.
 - 5 See for example Johan Linton, “Arkitekturens hemvist, Le Corbusier och horisonten,” *Psykoanalytisk Tid/Skrift* 10 (2004): 78-87.
 - 6 École d’art, Rapport de la Commission 1903-1904 (La Chaux-de-Fonds, undated), 6-9; École d’art, Rapport de la Commission 1904-1905 (La Chaux-de-Fonds, undated), 7.
 - 7 “Ce qu’il me faut actuellement, c’est ma technique.” Le Corbusier to L’Eplattenier, dated Wien, 2 March 1908; FLC, E2 (12), 28. The letter is transcribed in Jean Jenger, ed., *Le Corbusier: Choix de lettres* (Basel, Boston, Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2002), 51-53.
 - 8 Le Corbusier [sign Ch-E. Jeanneret], *Étude sur le mouvement d’art décoratif en Allemagne* (La Chaux-de-Fonds: Haefeli et Cie, 1912).
 - 9 See for example Le Corbusier, “[J]’étais né pour regarder,” in *Le Corbusier: Œuvres plastiques*, exh. cat. (Paris: Éditions des musées nationaux, 1953), 7-12.
 - 10 The critical attitude towards Germany and the difficulty with the German language can be seen both in Le Corbusier’s correspondance and in his texts. See for example the letter to L’Eplattenier mentioned above or the text “Le monument à la bataille des peuples” (1913). Le Corbusier to L’Eplattenier, dated Wien, 2 March 1908; FLC, E2 (12), 28; Le Corbusier [sign Ch.-E. Jeanneret, architecte], “Le monument à la bataille des peuples (Lettre de voyage),” *Feuille d’Avis de La Chaux-de-Fonds*, 1 July 1913.

- 11 Maximilien Gauthier, *Le Corbusier ou l'architecture au service de l'homme* (Paris: Éditions Denoël, 1944). Various researchers are of the opinion that the book essentially expresses verbal information by Le Corbusier himself. See for instance Paul Turner, "The beginnings of Le Corbusier's education, 1902-07," *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (June 1971): 214n6, or Giuliano Gresleri in his introduction to the Italian edition of the book, Giuliano Gresleri, "Introduzione," in Maximilien Gauthier, *Le Corbusier, biografia di un architetto. 1944*, trans. M. A. Coppola (Bologna: Zanichelli Editore, 1987).
- 12 "[L]a mise en scène et les costumes portaient également la marque d'une puissante volonté de faire du neuf." Gauthier, *Le Corbusier*, 23.
- 13 In the beginning of the notebook Le Corbusier has written: "Study of Corroyer at Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in Paris at my arrival Spring 1908". ([E]tude faite à Paris à mon arrivée printemps 1908 à la Bibliothèque Ste Geneviève d'après Corroyer.) FLC, A2 (19), 108.
- 14 Le Corbusier would refer to the meeting with Grasset in many of his own books. Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Éditions Crès, 1925), 204; Oskar Stonorov & Willy Boesiger, eds., *Le Corbusier & Pierre Jeanneret, Ihr gesamtes Werk von 1910-1929* (Zurich: Girsberger, 1930), 5.
- 15 "J'ai acheté cet ouvrage le 1 août 1908 avec l'argent de ma première paye de [monsieur] Perret. Je l'ai acheté pour apprendre car sachant je pourrais alors créer." FLC Z 018, note in vol. 1 of Eugène Viollet-le-duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris, 1854-1868).
- 16 "[J]e lis Viollet-le-Duc, cet homme si sage, si logique, si clair et si précis dans ses observations." Le Corbusier to L'Eplattenier, dated Paris Friday morning, 3 July 1908; FLC, E2 (12), 34. It's one of the few long letters reproduced in *Le Corbusier, lui-même* (1970) (together with the letter to L'Eplattenier of 22 November 1908) and therefore probably a letter that meant something special to Le Corbusier. Jean Petit, ed., *Le Corbusier, lui-même* (Genève: Rousseau, 1970), 31-36.
- 17 Auguste Choisy, *Histoire de l'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1899). It is described in that way in Le Corbusier, *Almanach d'architecture moderne* (Paris: Éditions Crès, 1926), 116.
- 18 Illustrations by Choisy appears repeatedly in Le Corbusier's books. The most famous example is certainly Le Corbusier [sign Le Corbusier-Saugnier], *Vers une architecture* (Paris: Éditions Crès, 1923), 31, 35-39.
- 19 Le Corbusier mentions himself that Perret gave him the impulse to study mathematics. Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 206. See also Giovanni Fanelli & Roberto Gargiani, *Perret e Le Corbusier. Confronti* (Roma: Laterza, 1990), 6.

- 20 Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier, lui-même*, 31; See also Le Corbusier, *Viaggio in Oriente, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret fotografo e scrittore*, ed. by Giuliano Gresleri [1984], 3rd rev. and ext. ed. (Venezia: Marsilio, 1995), 141n2.
- 21 Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 201-202.
- 22 Le Corbusier to L'Éplattenier, dated Paris Friday morning, 3 July 1908; FLC, E2 (12), 34.
- 23 Le Corbusier writes in the (already mentioned) autobiographical introduction to the first volume of his complete works that "I met Tony Garnier in Lyon about 1907." (J'ai rencontré Tony Garnier à Lyon vers 1907). A similar statement is to be found in Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier, lui-même*. Brooks on the contrary writes. "One thing is however clear: Jeanneret did not go to Paris by way of Lyon and met Tony Garnier, as has been asserted by Jean Petit (p. 28) and others." *Le Corbusier & Pierre Jeanneret, Œuvre complète de 1910-1929*. 1930, French ed. (Zurich: Girsberger, 1937), 9; Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier, lui-même*, 28; Brooks, *Le Corbusier's Formative Years*, 149n33.
- 24 When the research for this text was made, the whereabouts of the original letter wasn't known by FLC, however there is a reference to it in a later letter by Garnier. Tony Garnier to Le Corbusier, dated 13 December 1915; FLC B1 (20), 87.
- 25 Brooks, *Le Corbusier's Formative Years*, 200.
- 26 Christoph Schnoor, in his extensive dissertation on "La construction des villes," has presented a "fictitious" bibliography of Le Corbusier's readings in relation to the writing project. Christoph Schnoor, "La construction des villes, Charles-Édouard Jeannerets erstes städtebauliches Traktat von 1910/11" (PhD Diss., Technischen Universität Berlin, 2003), 477-482.
- 27 See Philippe Duboy, "Ch. E. Jeanneret à la Bibliothèque Nationale." It is known that Le Corbusier used this study in later writings, for example in Le Corbusier, *Propos d'urbanisme* (Paris: Éditions Bourrelly, 1946).
- 28 "Considérations générales," in Le Corbusier [sign Ch.-E. Jeanneret], *Étude sur le mouvement d'art décoratif en Allemagne*, 16.
- 29 When Le Corbusier some years later presents a report to the French ministry of education, the book is emphasized as one of the most important studies of the German industry of applied arts. Le Corbusier himself is presented as Swiss, but "French at heart" (français de coeur). Le Corbusier [Sign CH.-E. Jeanneret], "Rapport de la souscommission de l'enseignement [de l'Œuvre], présenté au conseil de direction," *Les Arts français*, 24 (1918).
- 30 Marc E. Albert Emery, ed., *Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, Le Corbusier. La construction des villes* (Lausanne: L'âge d'homme, 1992), 126-132; Schnoor, *La construction des villes*, 375-384.

- 31 Le Corbusier [sign Ch. E. Jeanneret, architecte], "Le renouveau dans l'architecture," *L'Œuvre, revue suisse d'architecture, d'art et d'art appliqué*, 2 (1914).
- 32 Le Corbusier attributes the east façade of the Louvre to Claude Perrault. Today's historians refer also to other names, for instance Louis Le Vau and François d'Orbay. See Antoine Picon, *Claude Perrault, 1613-1688, ou la curiosité d'un classique* (Paris: Picard, 1988), esp. 157-196.
- 33 In March 1916 Le Corbusier asks Perret to send him a copy of *L'Élan*. See Le Corbusier to Perret, 29 March 1916, FLC, E1 (11), 201. See also Françoise Ducros, "Ozenfant," in Jacques Lucan, ed., *Le Corbusier, une encyclopédie* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 1987); Françoise Ducros, ed., *Amédée Ozenfant* (Saint-Quentin: Musée Antoine Lécuyer, 1985), 16, 18, 23, 133-134; Susan L. Ball, "Ozenfant and Purism. The evolution of a style. 1915-1930" (Diss., Yale University, 1978), rev. ed. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1981), 9.
- 34 See Le Corbusier & Amédée Ozenfant [sign. Ozenfant et Jeanneret], *Après le cubisme* (Paris: Édition des commentaires, 1918), for example 13, 14, 48.
- 35 Le Corbusier and Amédée Ozenfant [sign de Fayet], "Nicolas Poussin," *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no.7 (1921): 751-754; Idem. [sign Vauvrecy], "Les frères le Nain," *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 10 (1921): 1125-1130; Idem. [sign B], "Jean Fouquet," *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 5 (1921): 515-519.
- 36 "Epistre," unnumbered, in Claude Perrault, *Ordonnance des cinq espèces de colonnes selon la méthode des anciens* (Paris, 1683).
- 37 "Introduction à la seconde édition," dated November 1924, in Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, new enl. ed. (Paris: Éditions Crès, 1928).
- 38 Ministre de l'Instruction publique et des Beaux-Arts. de Monzie held this position between April 17 and October 11, 1925.
- 39 "Élevé doucement pour un instant par la parole du ministre, à un degré d'oubli des voracités individuelles, je songe à un homme: Colbert." Le Corbusier, *Almanach d'architecture moderne*, 136.
- 40 "Colbert est l'initiateur et le réalisateur de tous les grands travaux de Paris." Le Corbusier, *Urbanisme* (Paris: Crès, 1925), 250.
- 41 "En passant, ceci encore : ne croyez-vous pas qu'en chaque pays, la prudence commande d'instituer d'urgence un ministère de l'équipement national, avec un ministre à l'abri des sursauts des parlements? Le plus beau ministère de tous les ministères. Je suis, depuis des années, poursuivi par l'ombre de Colbert ! Que le pays nous donne un Colbert !" Le Corbusier, *Précisions sur un état présent de l'architecture et de l'urbanisme* (Paris: Crès, 1930), 187.

- 42 Le Corbusier [sign Ch.-E. Jt.], “Art et utilité publique,” *L’Abeille, Supplément du National Suisse*, 15 May 1910.
- 43 “Cette étude, écrite sans autre prétention que de rappeler les procédés qui agrémentent l’existence dans les villes, s’adresse plus particulièrement aux autorités.” Emery, *La Construction des villes*, 69-70.
- 44 “Cet ouvrage est dédié à l’autorité, Paris, mai 1933.” Le Corbusier, *La Ville radiieuse. Éléments d’une doctrine d’urbanisme pour l’équipement de la civilisation machiniste* (Paris: Éditions de l’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui, 1935), 3.
- 45 In his book from 1986, Michael Dennis presents a collage comparing the plan for Versailles with the plan for a city with 3 million inhabitants. Dennis, *Court & Garden*, 209.
- 46 “Mais on a perdu le sens du plan depuis cent ans. Les grands problèmes de demain dictés par des nécessités collectives, basés sur des statistiques et réalisés par le calcul, posent à nouveau la question du plan. Lorsqu’on aura compris l’indispensable grandeur de vue qu’il faudrait apporter au tracé des villes, on entrera dans une période que nulle époque n’a encore connue. Les villes devront être conçues et tracées dans leur étendue comme furent tracées les temples de l’Orient et comme furent ordonnés les Invalides ou le Versailles de Louis XIV.” Le Corbusier [sign Le Corbusier-Saugnier], “Trois rappels à MM. les architectes [troisième rappel: le plan],” *L’Esprit Nouveau*, no. 4 (1921): 462-463.
- 47 Le Corbusier [sign Le Corbusier-Saugnier], “Les tracés régulateurs,” *L’Esprit Nouveau*, no. 5 (1921): 563-572. For further discussion on Le Corbusier and proportions, see Linton, *Om arkitekturens matematik - en studie av Le Corbusiers Modulor* (M. thesis. Göteborg: Chalmers, 1996).
- 48 Le Corbusier & Ozenfant, *Après le cubisme*, 48.
- 49 Le Corbusier [sign. Fayet], “Vie de François Blondel,” *L’Esprit Nouveau*, no. 21 (1924): n.p.
- 50 The pseudonym—or signature—“de Fayet” was used by Le Corbusier and Ozenfant both in individually and jointly written articles.
- 51 Choisy, *Histoire de l’architecture*, 2 vols. (1899), 2:746.
- 52 Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l’architecture* (Paris, 1753), 253.
- 53 One can mention that Le Corbusier participated in a discussion on art organized in Paris in May 1936. The discussion regarded reality in painting and used the famous title from the 17th century. Contributions, by Le Corbusier and others, were published in Jean Lurçat & Marcel Gromaire & Édouard Goerg et al, *La Querelle du réalisme, Deux débats organisés par l’Association des peintres et sculpteurs de la Maison de la culture* (Paris: Éditions sociales internationales, 1936).

- 54 Le Corbusier [sign. Le Corbusier-Saugnier], “Trois rappels à MM. les architectes [premier rappel: le volume],” *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 1 (1920): 90-95; Idem., “Trois rappels à MM. les architectes [second rappel: la surface],” *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 2 (1920): 195-199; Idem., “Trois rappels à MM. les architectes [troisième rappel: le plan].”
- 55 Le Corbusier [sign. Le Corbusier-Saugnier], “Des yeux qui ne voient pas..., I, les paquebots,” *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 8 (1921): 845-855; Idem., “Des yeux qui ne voient pas..., II, les avions,” *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 9 (1921): 973-988; Idem., “Des yeux qui ne voient pas..., III, les autos,” *L'Esprit Nouveau*, no. 10 (1921): 1139-1151.
- 56 Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, 7, 71, 85.
- 57 Le Corbusier, “La ‘Ville Radieuse’. 8. L’élément biologique : la cellule de 14m2 par habitant,” *Plans*, 9 (novembre 1931): 49-64; Pierre Le Muet, *Manière de bien bâtir pour toutes sortes de personnes* (Paris, 1623).
- 58 Aspects of Le Corbusier’s interest in nature and his views on the relationship between physical form and aesthetic experience are covered in Linton, *Om arkitekturens matematik*; Idem., *Le Corbusiers maskin – industriella spår i ett arkitekturtänkande* (Lic thesis [1999] 2nd rev print, Göteborg: Chalmers, 1999). As for the concept of truth one can refer to a book that Le Corbusier had in his library and that he read in Munich in 1910: Victor Cousin’s *Du vrai, du beau et du bien* from 1836.
- 59 “Consultez sans cesse, & ayez pour objet principal l’harmonie des proportions & des rapports mutuels de chaque partie; elle seule forme l’enchantement dont notre âme est éprise.” Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières, *Le Génie de l’architecture, ou, l’analogie de cet art avec nos sensations* (Paris, 1780), 7.
- 60 “L’ARCHITECTURE c’est l’art par excellence, qui atteint à l’état de grandeur platonicienne, ordre mathématique, spéculation, perception de l’harmonie par les rapports proportionnés. Voilà la FIN de l’architecture.” Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, 86-87.
- 61 Jacques-François Blondel, *Cours d’architecture*. 9 vols. (Paris, 1771–1777), 1:118-143.
- 62 Krufft, *A History of Architectural Theory*, 134.
- 63 “‘DÉFENCE DE L’ARCHITECTURE’, titre très ‘grand siècle’ j’en conviens.” Le Corbusier, “Défense de l’architecture,” *L’Architecture d’aujourd’hui*, 10 (1933): 29.
- 64 Le Corbusier, *La Ville radieuse*, 209-211.
- 65 It is described in this way by Krufft. See *A History of Architectural Theory*, 118-123.
- 66 Le Corbusier, *Urbanisme*, 8-9.

- 67 “[L]a France, parce qu’elle fut artiste et cartésienne est partout le phare qui dirige ...”
Le Corbusier, *Précisions*, 18.
- 68 “[E]n ces choses où la France représente une force acquise millénaire, une suite ininterrompue
d’harmonies successives.” Le Corbusier, *Sur les quatre routes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1941), 7.
- 69 “Paris n’est pas qu’une municipalité, Paris incarne la France, et Paris dans le monde, c’est un lieu
chéri de tous; une part du coeur de chacun s’en va vers Paris... Pourquoi? Parce que, siècle après
siècle, depuis mille années, Paris fut le haut lieu de la pensée, de la création, de l’entreprise, de
la hardiesse.” Le Corbusier, *La Ville radiieuse*, 202.
- 70 “[M]onstre”, “flaque”, “protoplasme”, “aplatis sur une région entière.” Ibid., 202.
- 71 “Paris attend de l’époque: Le sauvetage de sa vie menacée. La sauvegarde de son beau passé. La
manifestation magnifique et puissante de l’esprit du XXe siècle.” Le Corbusier, *Urbanisme*, 277.
- 72 Amédée Ozenfant, Paul Dermée, Le Corbusier [sign “L’Esprit Nouveau”], “Domaine de
l’Esprit Nouveau,” *L’Esprit Nouveau*, no. 1 (1920): n.p.
- 73 The name Le Corbézier appears with different spellings in the literature. Compare e.g. Brooks,
Le Corbusier’s formative years, 8-9 and von Moos and Rüegg, *Le Corbusier before Le Corbusier*, 305.
- 74 The story about the raven shooter is told by Ozenfant, who presents it as his own idea. Amédée
Ozenfant, *Mémoires 1886-1962* (Paris: Seghers, 1968), 113.
- 75 Yvonne Jeanne Victorine Gallis was born in Monaco January 4, 1892. She married Le Corbusier
December 18, 1930.
- 76 Le Corbusier to his mother Marie Jeanneret, 28 November 1928. FLC R2 (01), 25. Transcription
published in Le Corbusier, *Choix de lettres*, 199-200.
- 77 Le Corbusier, *Croisade ou le crépuscule des académies* (Paris: Éditions Crès, 1933), 32-35.
- 78 For further discussion, see Linton, “Arkitekturens hemvist, Le Corbusier och horisonten,”
Psykoanalytisk Tid / Skrift, 10 (2004): 78-87.
- 79 Le Corbusier to Georges Huisman, 6 April 1936, FLC E2 (11), 322. Transcription published in
Le Corbusier, *Choix de lettres*, 238-240.
- 80 Charles Le Brun (1619-1690); Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières (1721- 1789); Sébastien Leclerc
(1637-1714); Gabriel Le Duc (1635-1696); Pierre Le Muet (1591-1669); André Le Nôtre
(1613-1700); Julien-David Le Roy (1724-1803); Louis Le Vau (1612-1670); Eugène Emmanuel
Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879).