

CONCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

II

L'ESPRIT NOUVEAU



Fig. 16 - L'Esprit Nouveau, Issue 1
published in Frampton, K., *Le Corbusier*, (New York: Thames & Hudson), 2001, p27



Fig. 17 - Partners: Le Corbusier, Amedee Ozefant & Paul Dermee published on Google images sourced on 20th June, 2014

“The art of our era is in its rightful place when it addresses itself to elites... Art is a necessary foodstuff only for elites that must reflect so as to be able to lead. Art is in its essence elevated”²⁵
- Le Corbusier, 1923

25. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p157

26. Herbert, R., *Modern Artists On Art*, (USA: Courier Dover Publications), 2000, p52

27. Colomina, B., *Privacy And Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1994, p141

28. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p32

29. Ibid., p25

1920, 'L'Esprit Nouveau', issue four, was the publication of 'Le Purisme' (Purism), printed as a significant outline of the publications principles.²⁶ Between 1920-25 L'Esprit Nouveau (The New Spirit) ran for twenty-eight issues for 'a highly controlled and meticulously executed issues for 'a modern state of mind.'²⁷ The review was propaganda²⁸ for 'elite' social conservatives and established affiliations with industrialists²⁹ interested in Taylorist modernisation towards a 'Technocracy'. The movement was classless and apolitical in appearance only.³⁰ The articles supported and continued to develop the dual polemic and theoretical basis of the 'machine aesthetic' (the 'machine selection' of existing objects) and 'Purism' (the creation of objects).³¹ The magazine had a broad topic of study from literature and psychoanalysis to painting and cinematography.³² The graphics being as important as written content, created a "new genre of cultural journalism,"³³ as 'ready-made' images from vast sources were assembled to reflect the magazine's ongoing polemic. The magazine displayed the proliferation of 'selected' standardised, mass-produced objects, from "the coldly hygenic to the sensuously utilitarian."³⁴

30. Richards, S., *Le Corbusier And The Concept Of Self*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press), 2003, p24

31. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p5

32. Ibid., p1-3

33. Frampton, K., *Le Corbusier*, (New York: Thames & Hudson), 2001, p27

34. Ibid., p32

2.0 Republishing and Architecture



Fig. 18 - Four Books Made From Republishing *L'Esprit Nouveau*
published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925),
Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britian: MIT Press), 1987, p1

The architectural focused republishing of selected articles into LC's 1923 'Toward An Architecture' rallied the modern movement.³⁵ The book predicates itself on the idea that the 'great city' insidiously organises itself to the detriment of business and housing.³⁶ Geometry as the instrument of man must control against arbitrariness and disorder via the Purist syntax. The syntax is clear in LC's design approach to both mass-production housing, his lot developments and broader town planning.

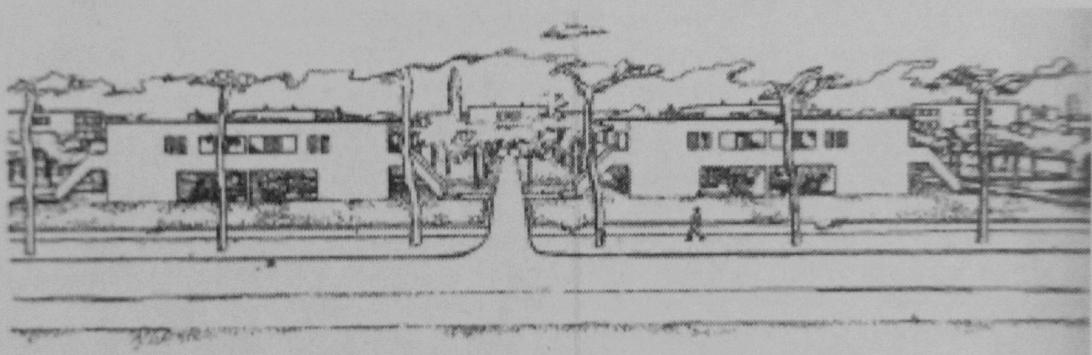


Fig. 19 - Elevation of Lot Development
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p282

35. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p52

36. Ibid., p124-125

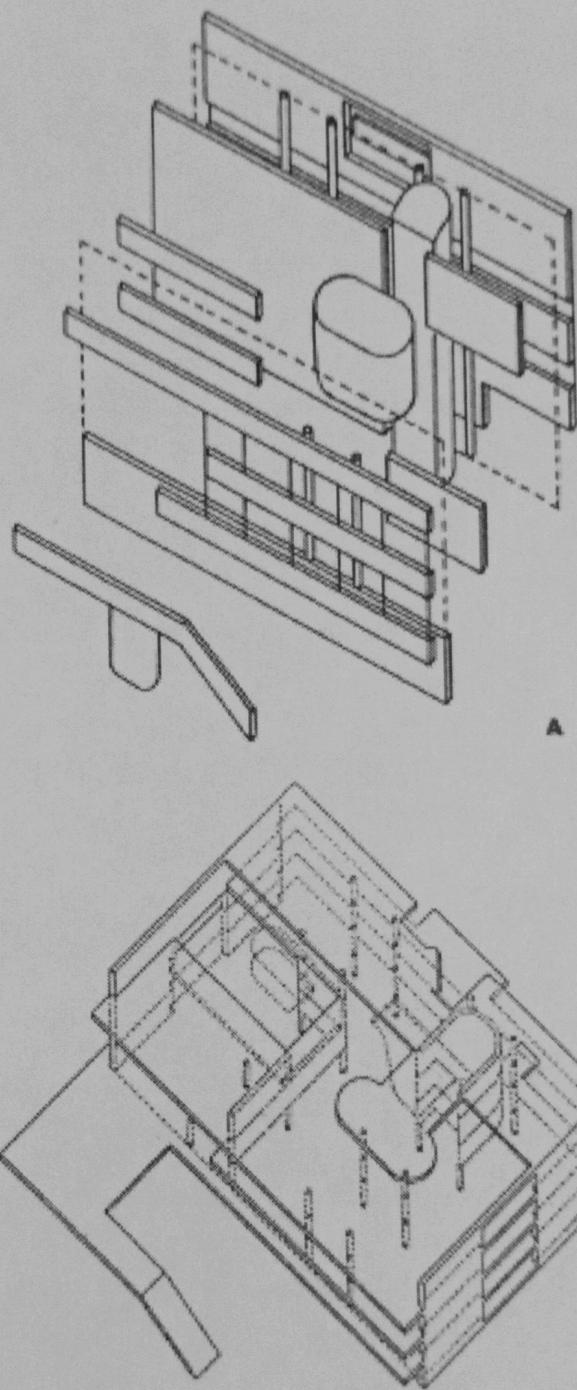


Fig. 20 - 'Villa Stein' Play Between Regulating Lines & Plan
Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*,
(New York: Rizzoli), 1991, p87

2.1 Existing Buildings And Purism

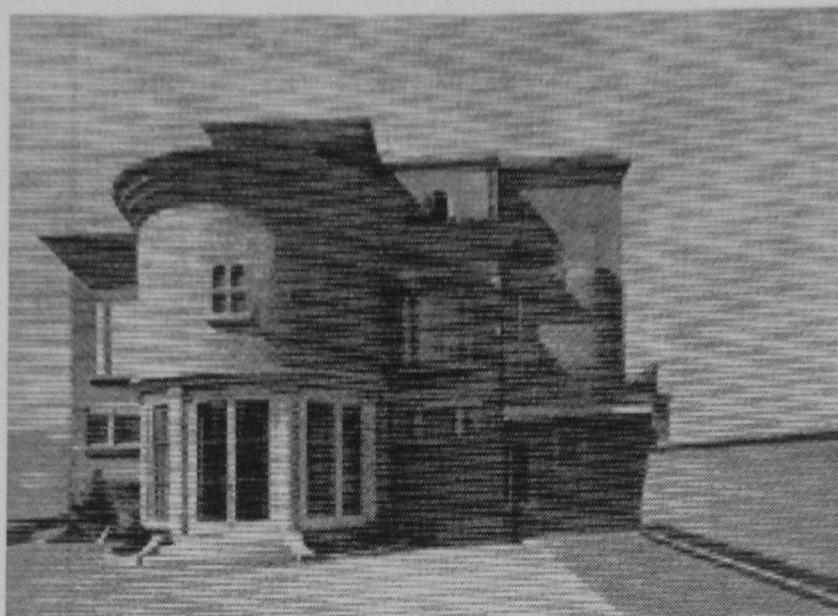


Fig. 21 - Villa Swob In L'Esprit Nouveau
published in Colomina, B., *Privacy And Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1994, p109

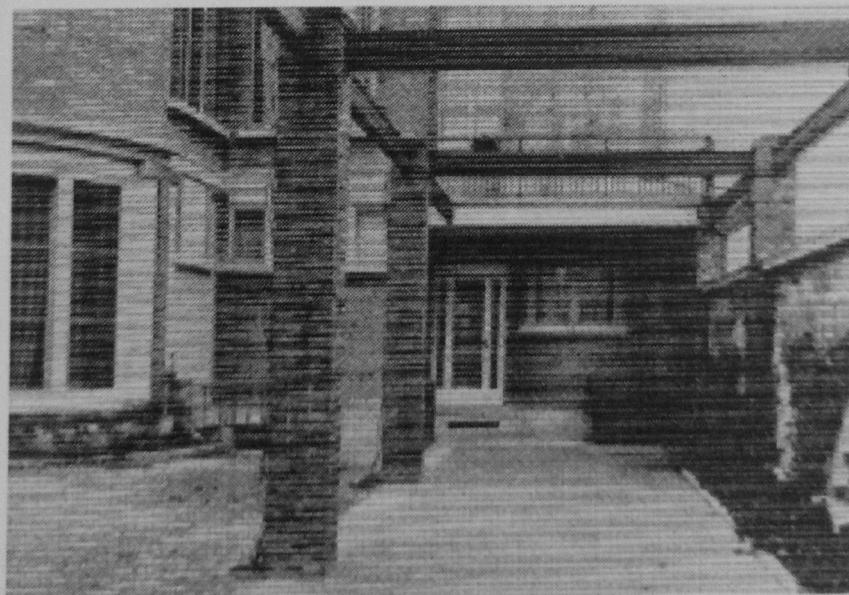


Fig. 22 - Villa Swob Before L'Esprit Nouveau
published in Colomina, B., *Privacy And Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1994, p110

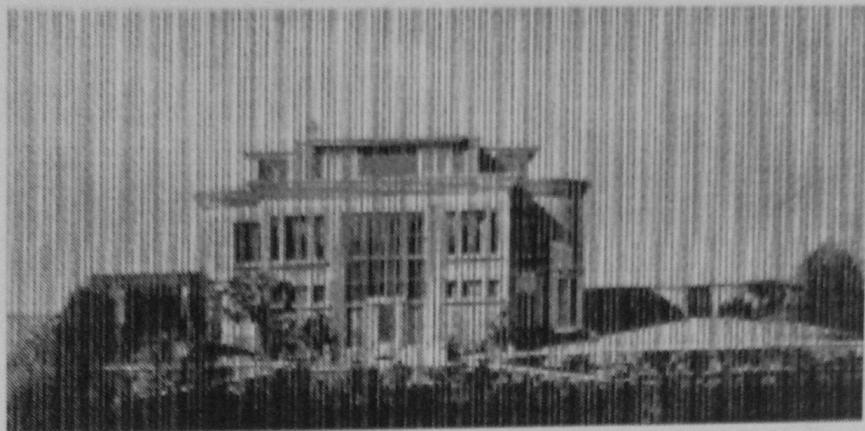


Fig. 23 - Villa Swob In L'Esprit Nouveau
published in Colomina, B., *Privacy And Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1994, p112

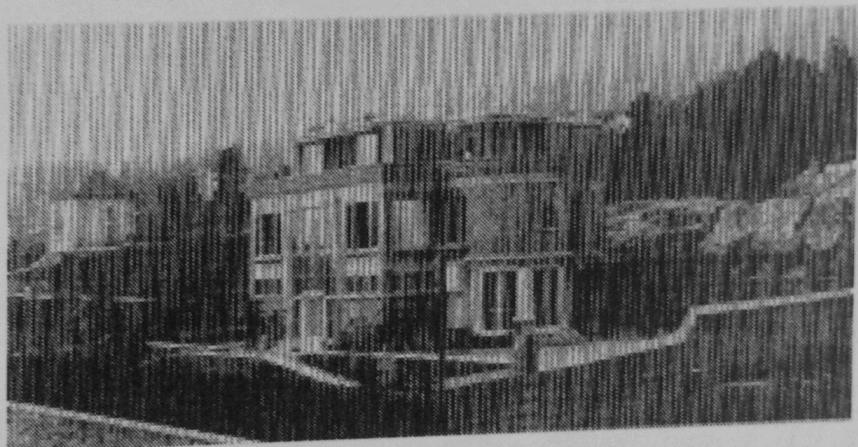


Fig. 24 - Villa Swob Before L'Esprit Nouveau
published in Colomina, B., *Privacy And Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1994, p113

LC's existing buildings were altered into projecting Purist scenery; his planned works were complete with machine aesthetic furnishings.³⁷

37. Frampton, K., *Le Corbusier*, (New York: Thames & Hudson), 2001, p33

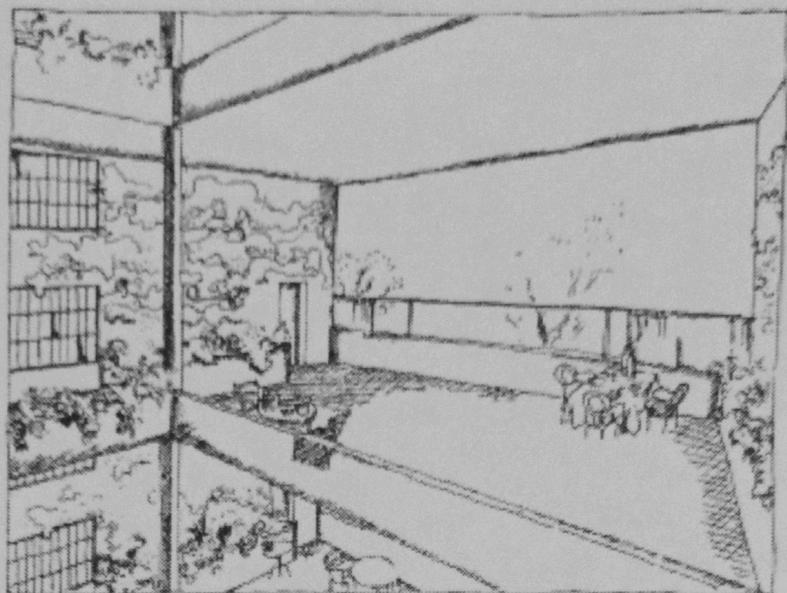


Fig. 25 - Hanging Garden

published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p274

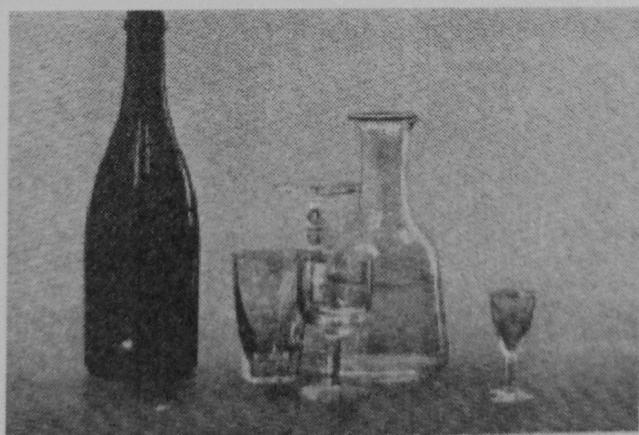
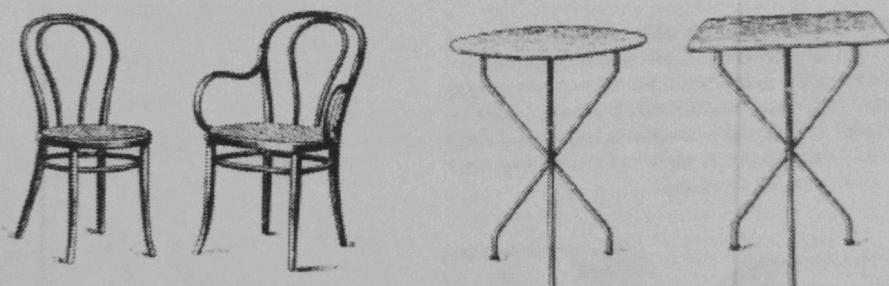


Fig. 26 - Products From 'The Decorative Art Of Today'

published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925), Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britain: MIT Press), 1987, p41, 78 & 97

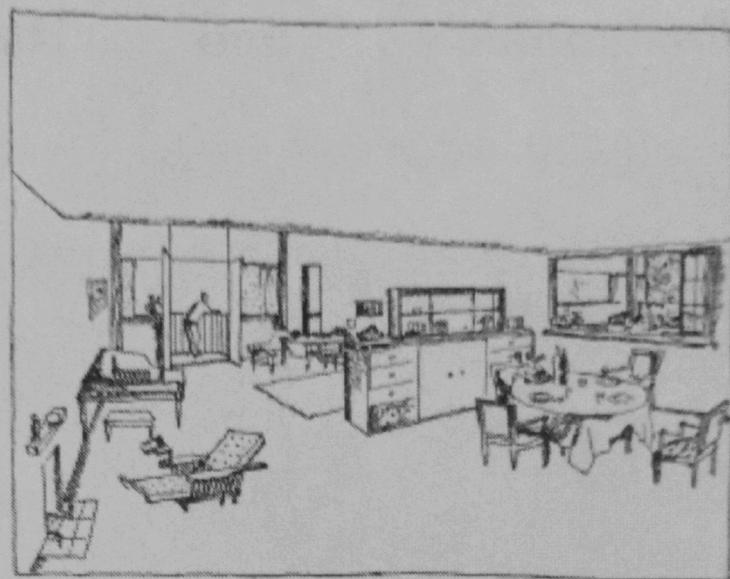


Fig. 27 - Interior

published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p274

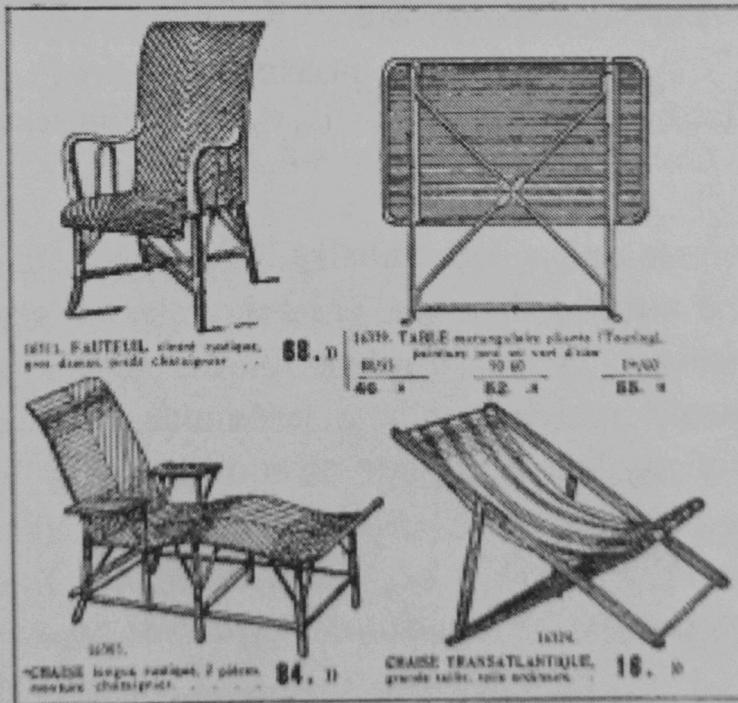


Fig. 28 - Products From 'The Decorative Art Of Today'
published in Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art Of Today*, (1925),
Trans. by Dunnet, J., (Great Britian: MIT Press), 1987, pl

2.2 **Ordonnance** and **Rhythm**

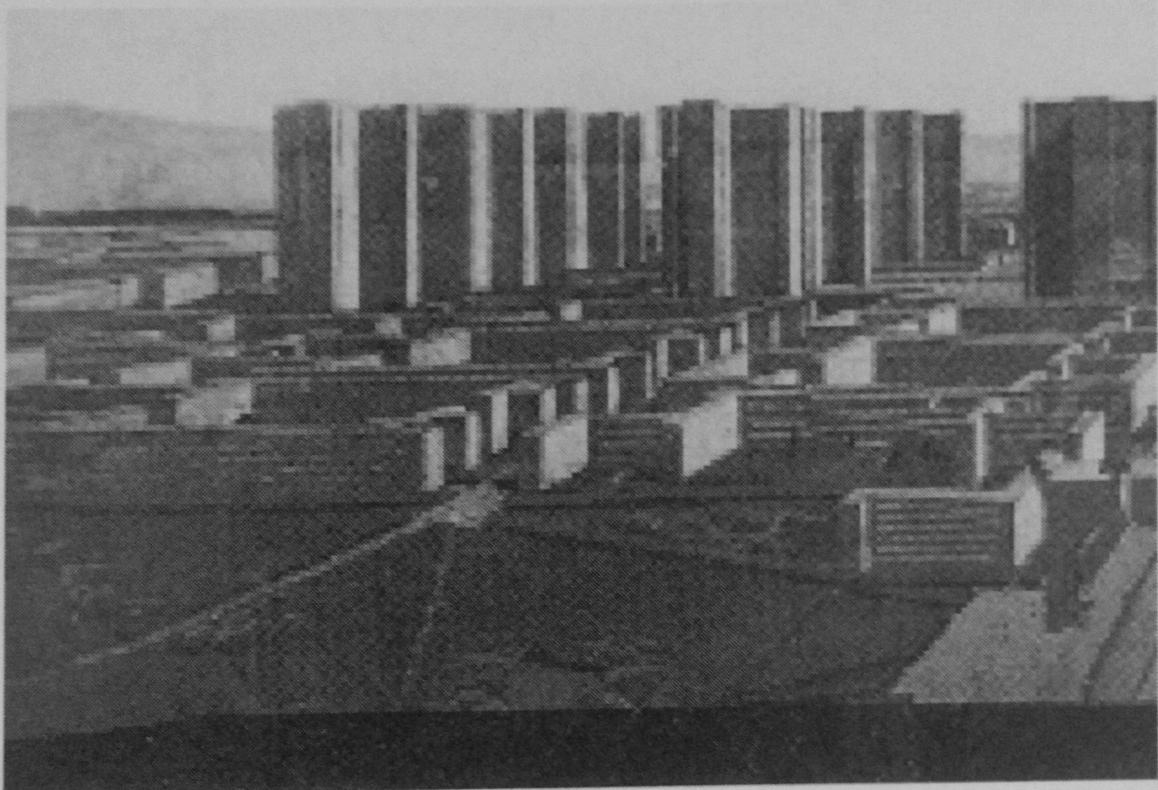


Fig. 29 - 'City for Three Million Inhabitants', Shown In 1922
published in Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., In The Footsteps Of Le
Corbusier, New York: Rizzoli, 1991, p139

The Purist syntax is continually expanded upon, for example, the term 'ordannance' (as hierarchy of goals and axis of intentions) is used to describe the skillful play of 'primary forms' and 'secondary resonances' through the expression of rhythm for a state of equilibrium.³⁸ "Rhythm is an equation: equalization (symmetry, repetition); compensation (play of contraries); modulation (development of an initial plastic invention)"³⁹

38. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p222

39. Ibid., p119



These added descriptions and many like them are part of LC's tactic of explaining already outlined Purist principles repeatedly; and through further theoretical application of Purist principles to broader Purist works, such as mass-produced housing or town planning, where hierarchy of goals, axis of intention, symmetry and repetition are clearer to a lay reader than perhaps in the design of a single housing cell or Purist painting.

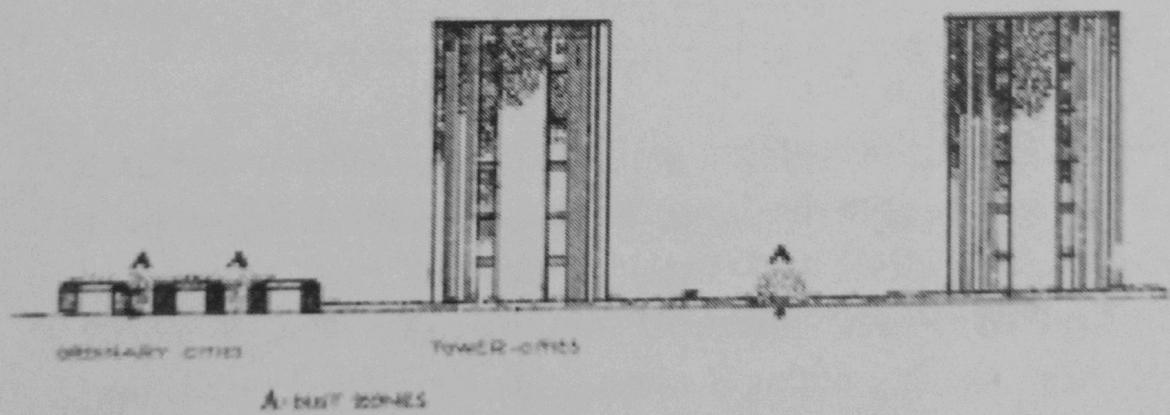
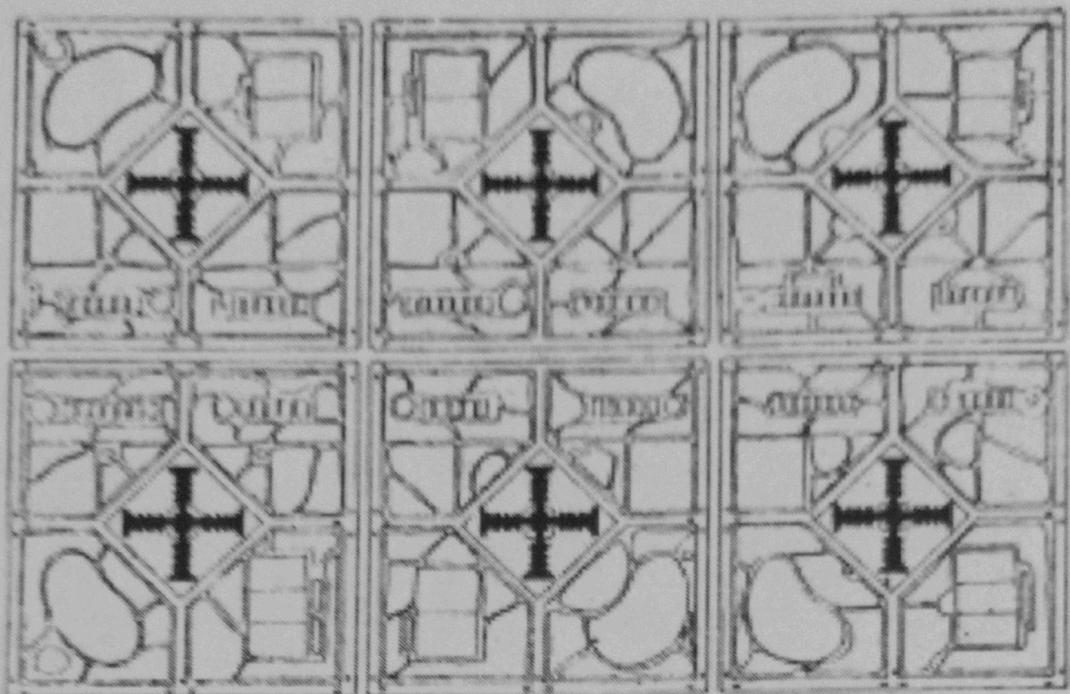


Fig. 30 - Above: Cruciform Towers in Plan
 Below: Elevations of Current City Against The Towers
 published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans.
 from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., Los
 Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007, p124

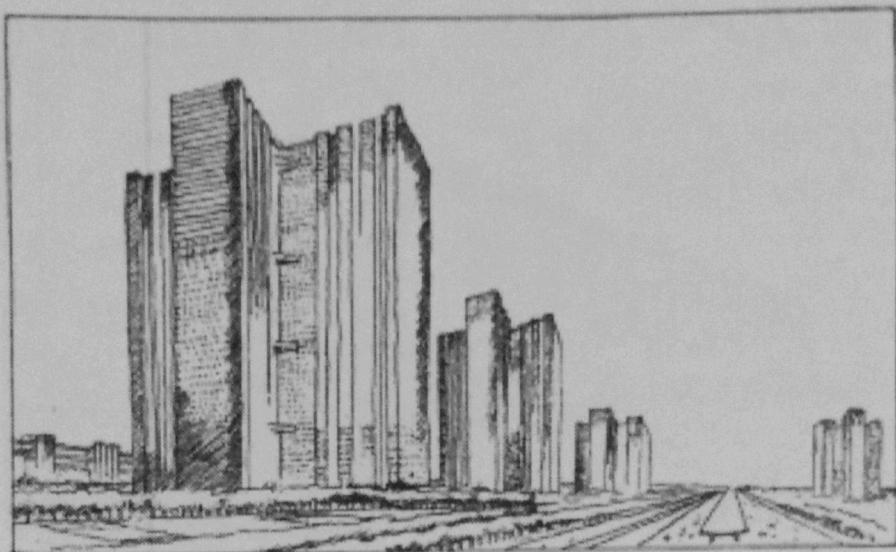


Fig. 31 - Centre of Planned City
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans.
from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., Los
Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007, p125

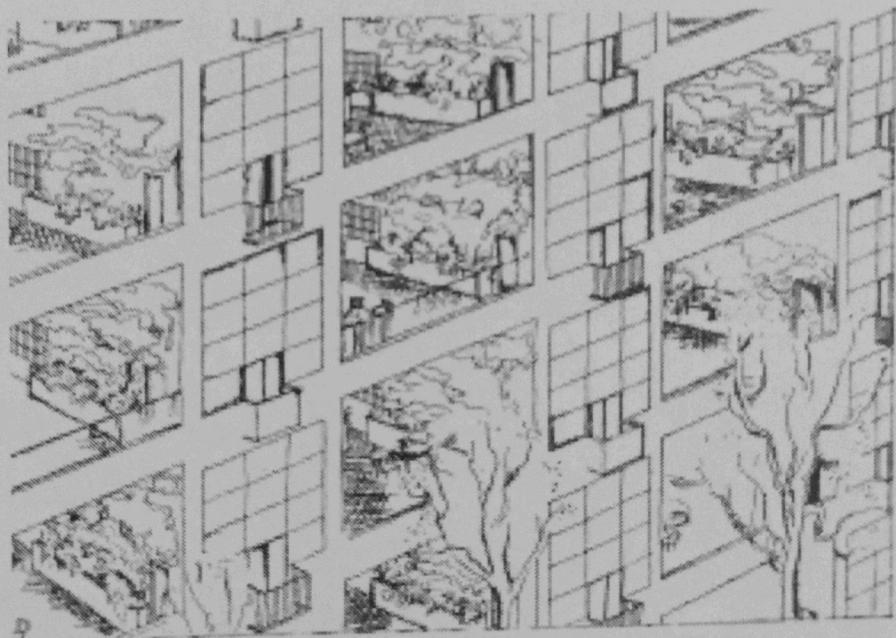


Fig. 32 - Mass-produced Stacked Housing Cells
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans.
from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., Los
Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007, p172

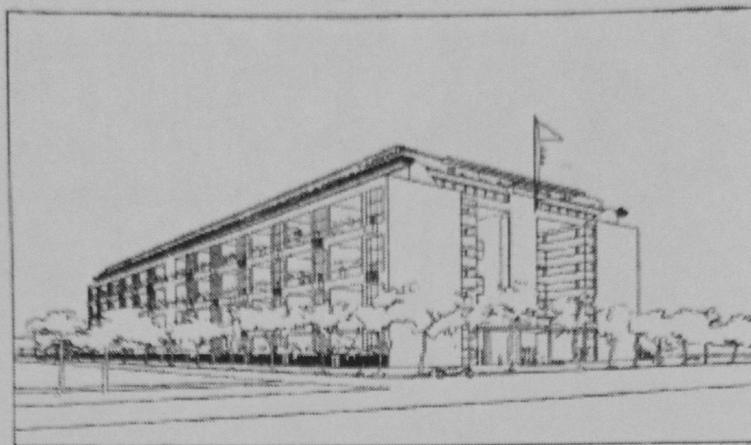


Fig. 33 - Mass-produced Block of Cells
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans.
from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., Los
Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007, p175



Fig. 34 - Mass-produced Suburb
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans.
from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., Los
Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007, p286

2.3 Structure And Reinforced Concrete

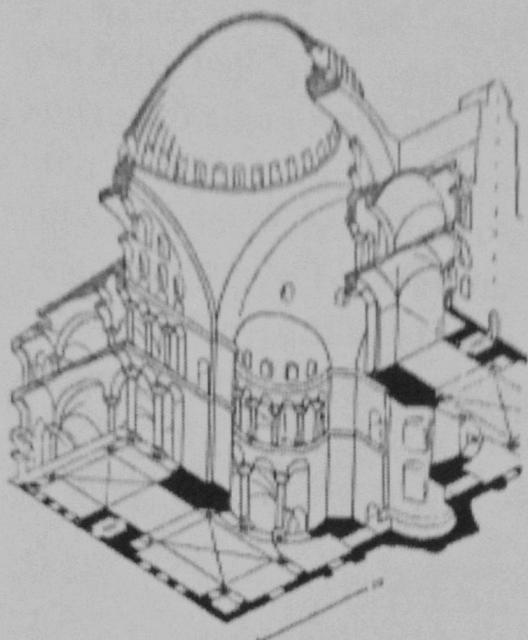
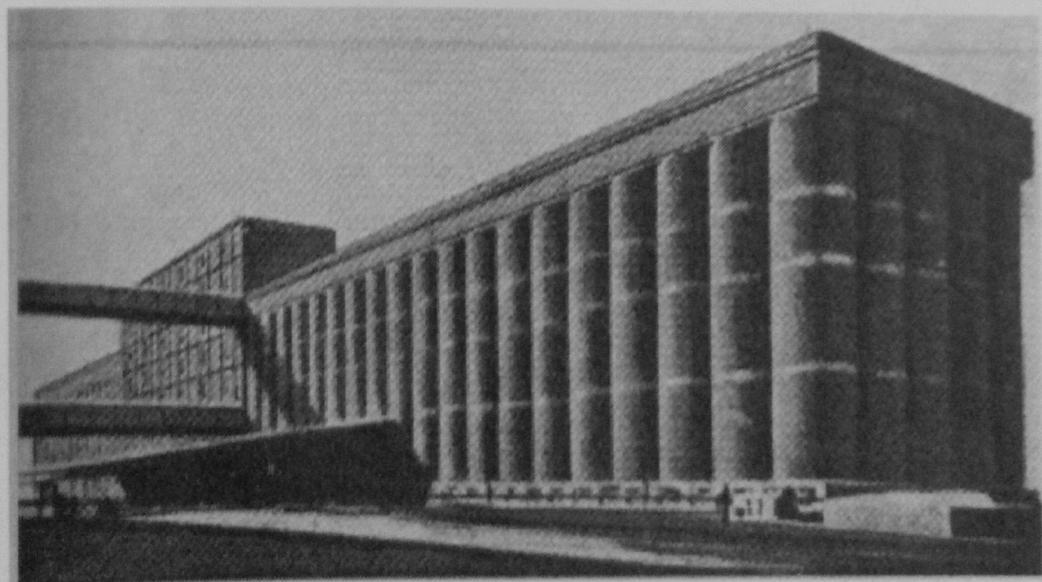


Fig. 35 - Left: PLAN Detail Of The Hagia Sophia

Fig. 36 - Below/Top: Factory Selected For SURFACE Detail

Fig. 37 - Below/Bottom: VOLUME Detail Of A Silo

published in Le Corbusier, Toward An Architecture,... (...Getty Research Institute), 2007, p118, p110, p103



American silos (Volume) and factories (Surface) are the 'first fruits of the new age'. Silos for their 'primary form' and factories for their 'modulation' that keeps focus on the volumetric form. LC 'reminds architects' that surfaces should be dictated by the plan and therefore made to accentuate the volumes they encompass.⁴⁰ There is another reason LC cites silos and factories, 'reinforced concrete'; The 'neutral, a-political' engineers⁴¹ are revered by LC because they use geometry and because they create the 'tools of their time', through this line of inquiry LC promotes reinforced concrete as a tool to revolutionise architectural aesthetics, in its ability to effect fundamental changes to the plan.⁴²

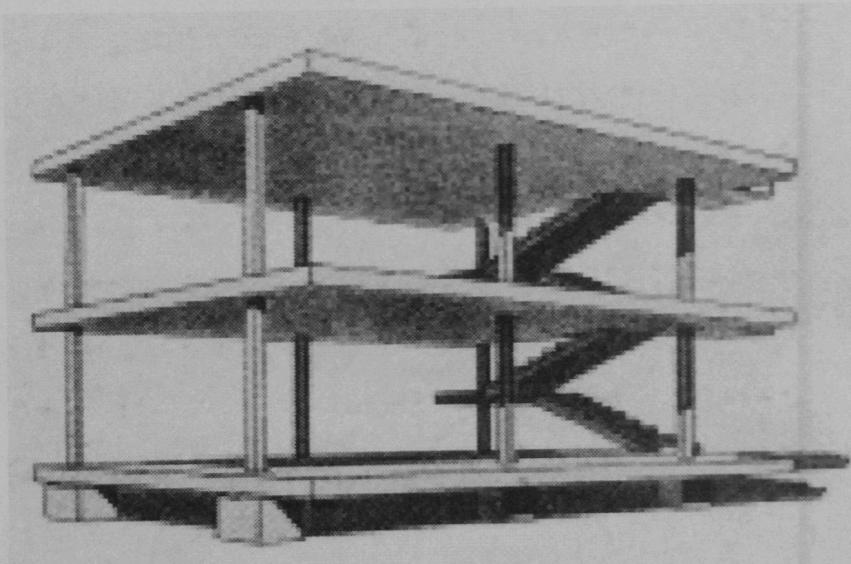


Fig. 38 - Masion Domino, 1915

published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p256

40. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p99-130

41. Richards, S., *Le Corbusier And The Concept Of Self*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press), 2003

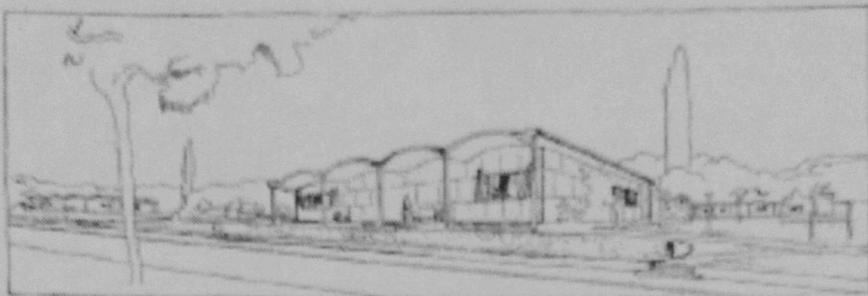


Fig. 39 - Masion Monol
published on Google images sourced on 20th June, 2014

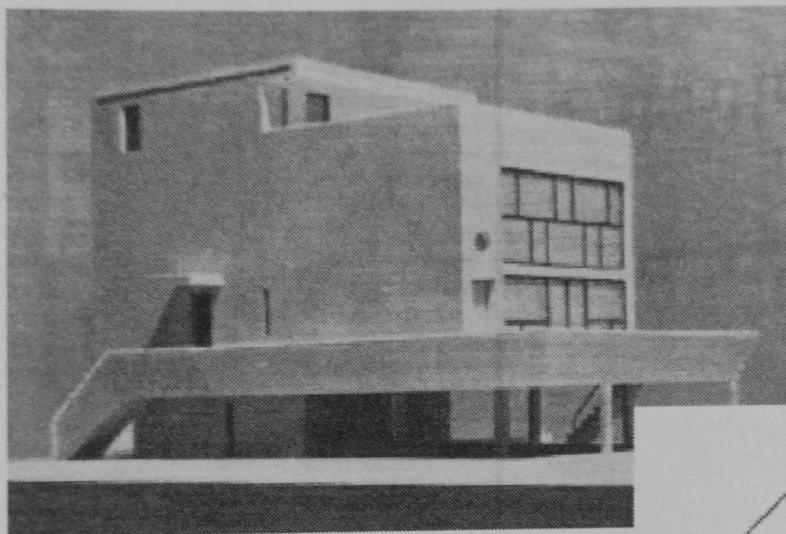
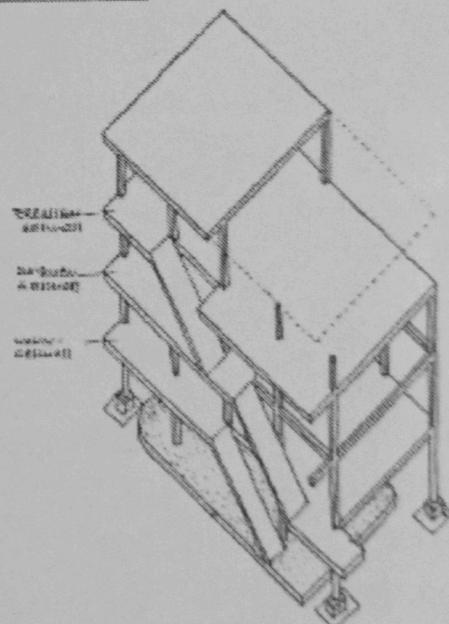


Fig. 40 - Above: 'Citrohan'
House Model
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An
Architecture,...* (...Getty Research Insti-
tute), 2007, p267

Fig. 41 - Left: 'Citrohan' Frame
Ed. by Palazzolo, C. and Vio, R., *In The
Footsteps Of Le Corbusier*, New York:
Rizzoli, 1991, p49



42. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p94

2.4 Engineers And Machine Aesthetic

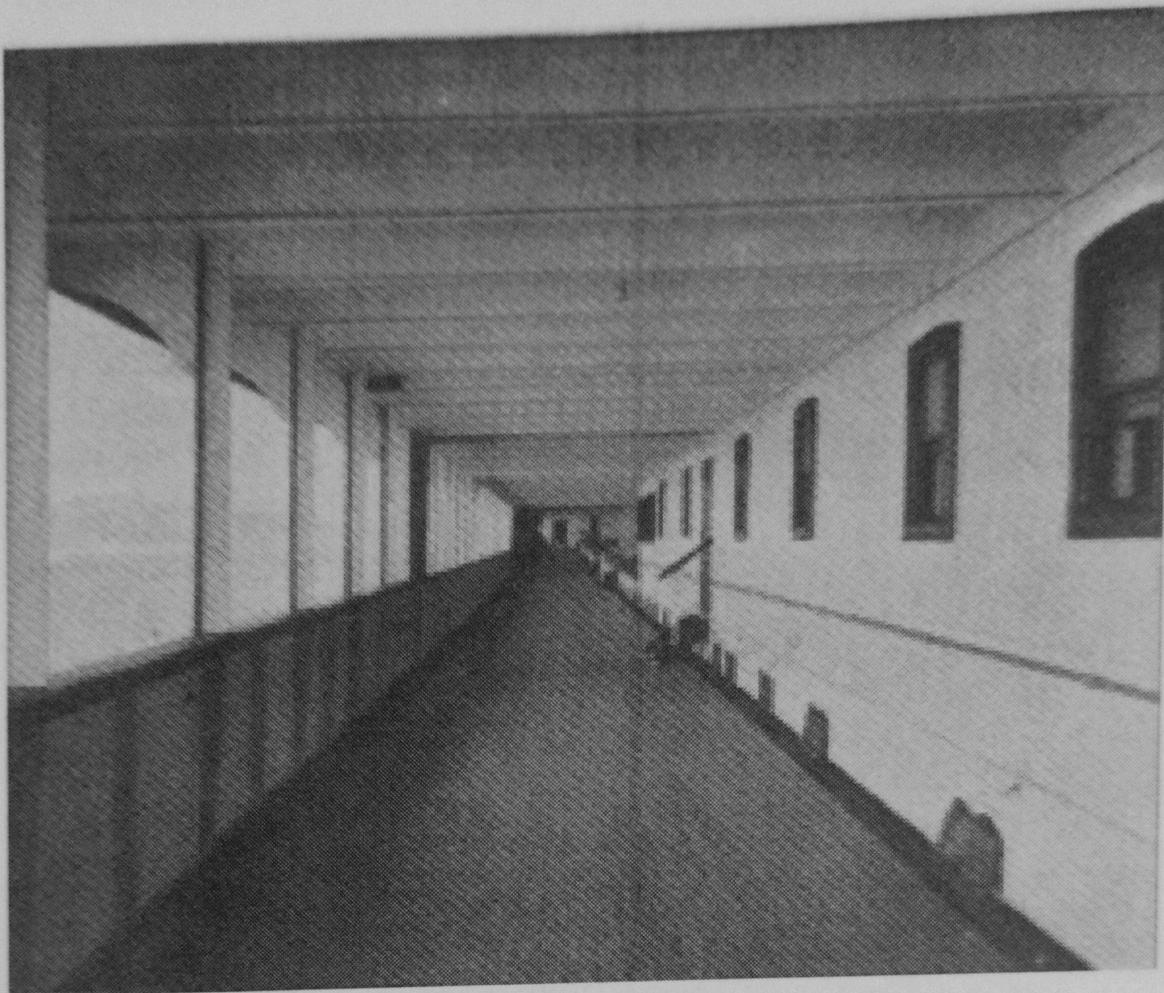


Fig. 42 - Long Promenade Onboard The 'Aquitania' & Fig. 27 published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p154 & p152

The 'machine aesthetic' is primarily explored under the title 'Eyes That Do Not See'. "Now the elite individuals who make up the world of industry and business and who live, consequently, in this virile atmosphere in which undeniably beautiful works are created, imagine themselves to be far indeed from all aesthetic activity"⁴² Here LC cites ocean-liners to support not only the Purist syntax and existing 'beautiful works' of engineered design as machine aesthetic, but also promotes the idea of the transportation machine 'for living in'.⁴³



Fig. 43 - The 'Aquitania'

-
42. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p147
43. Ibid., p151

2.5 High Selection And Problem Definition

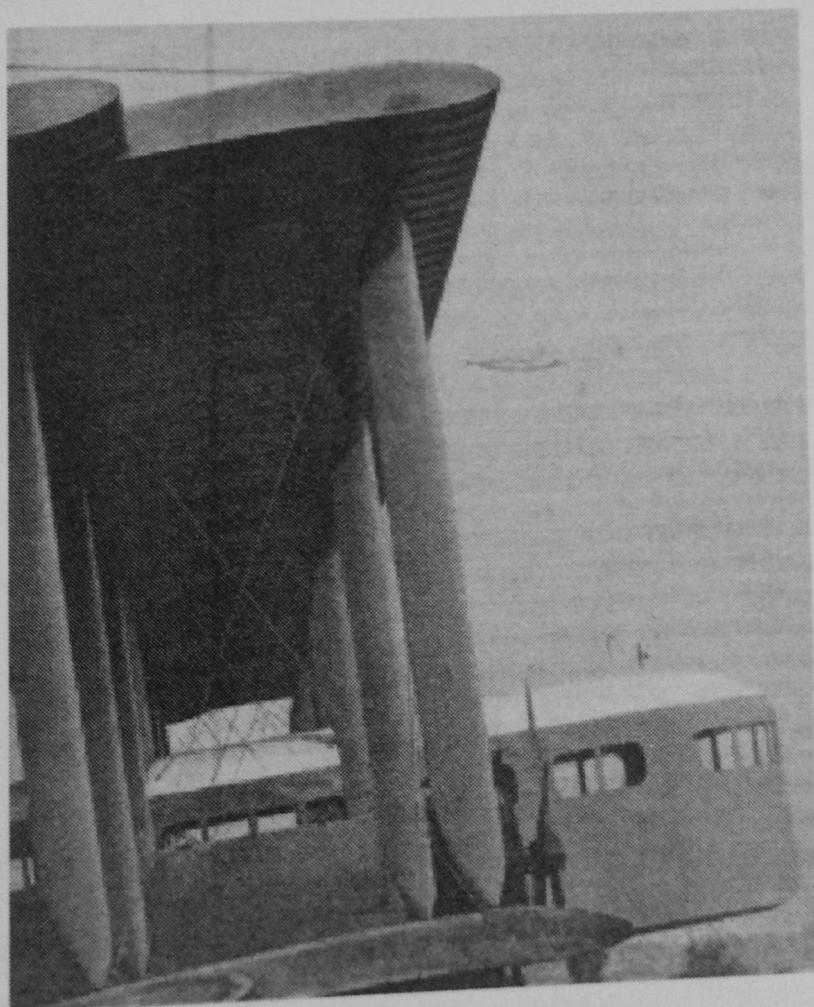
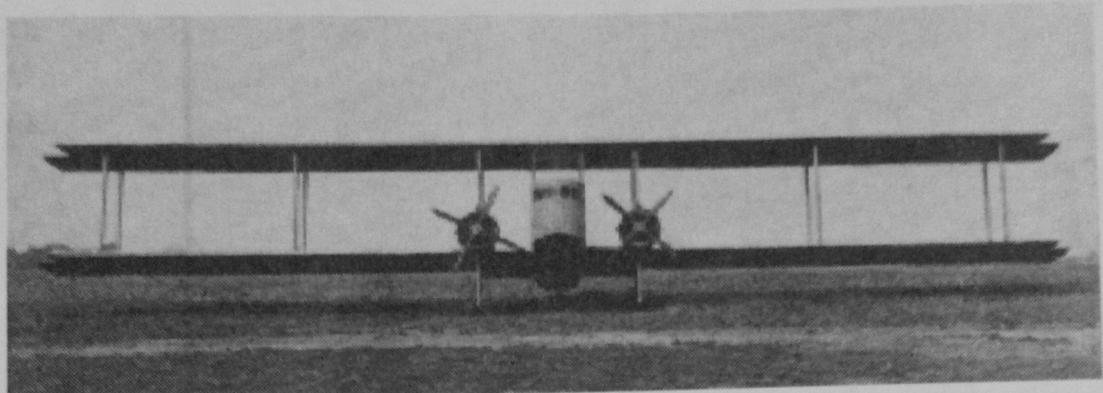


Fig. 44 & 45 - Farman Goliath

published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p171 & 175

The airplane is cited as the highest current level of 'purification'. Le Corbusier argues that the airplane reached this level of 'high selection' through a clear definition of the problem of flight. The problem of the 'house as a machine for living in' had not yet been properly posed.⁴⁴

Le Corbusier creates written standards for the dwelling:

*"A house: A shelter... A receptacle for light and sun. A certain number of compartments intended for cooking, for work, for private life. A room: An area for moving freely, a bed for reclining, a chair for relaxing and working, table for working, storage units."*⁴⁵

44. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p214

45. Ibid., p216

2.6 Standards And Development

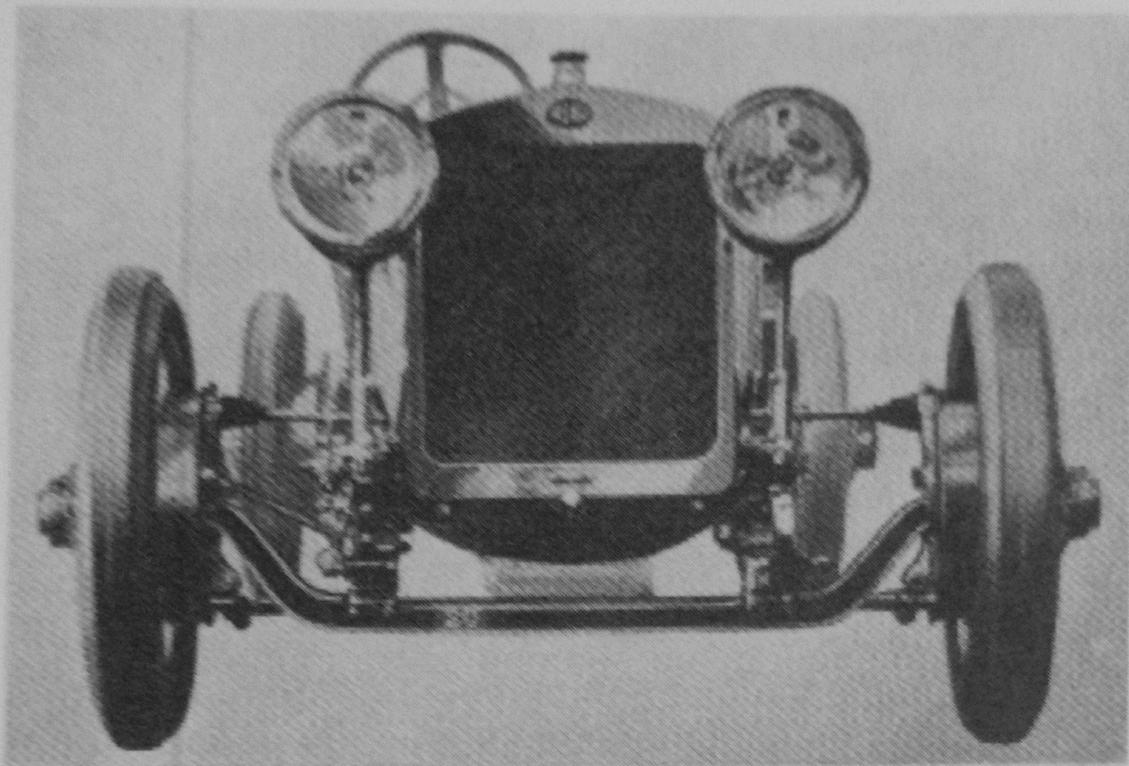
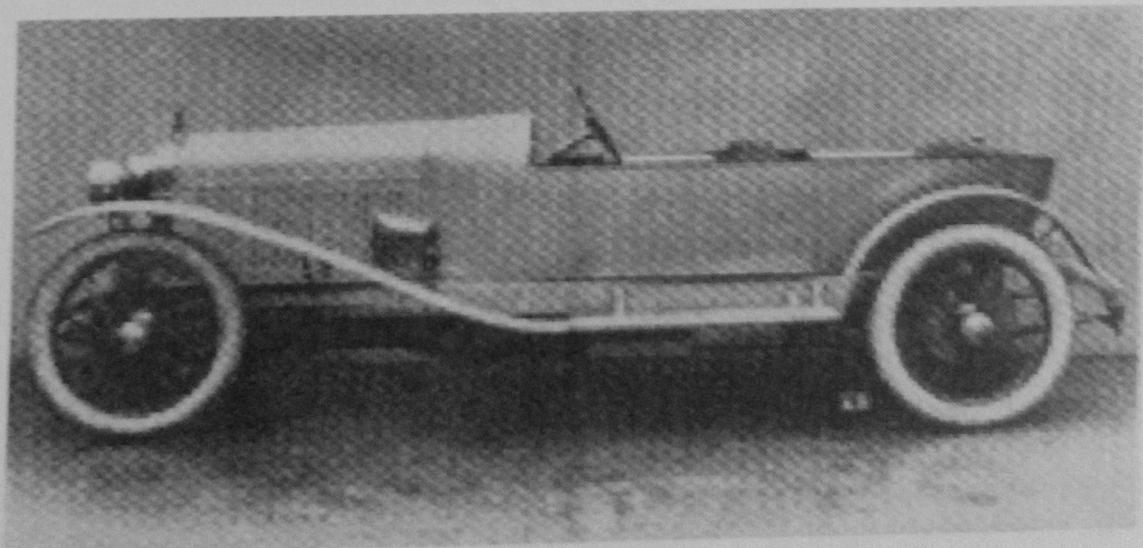


Fig. 46 & 47 - Delage Grand Sport, 1921
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from
2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles:
Getty Research Institute), 2007, p179 & p181



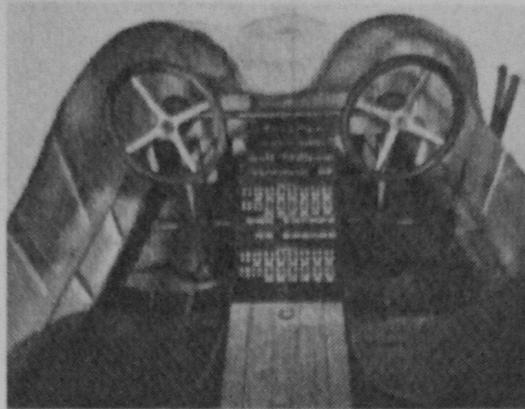


Fig. 48 - Caproni-Exploration
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*,... 2007, p186

Once a standard is set the process of 'fine tuning' begins. LC's cited automobiles display the human scale 'curves of the greatest capacity, strength and elasticity' as the result of clear logical research and development;⁴⁶ even though in actuality the curves were only symbolic of speed in their design and not at all a technical development.⁴⁷

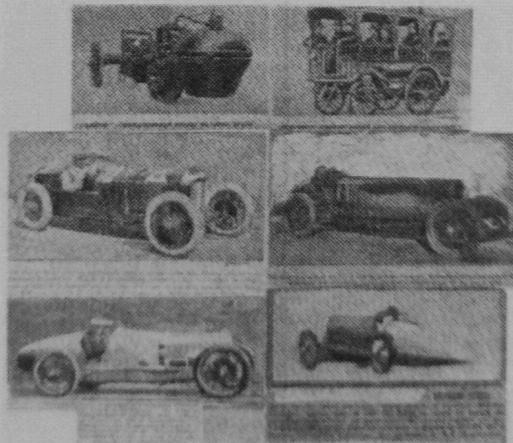


Fig. 49 - Variety of Automobiles
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*,... 2007, p190

46. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p182-183

47. Benton, T., *Dream Of Machines: Futurism and l'Esprit Nouveau*, Journal Of Design History, UK: Oxford University Press, 1990, Vol.3, No.1, p24

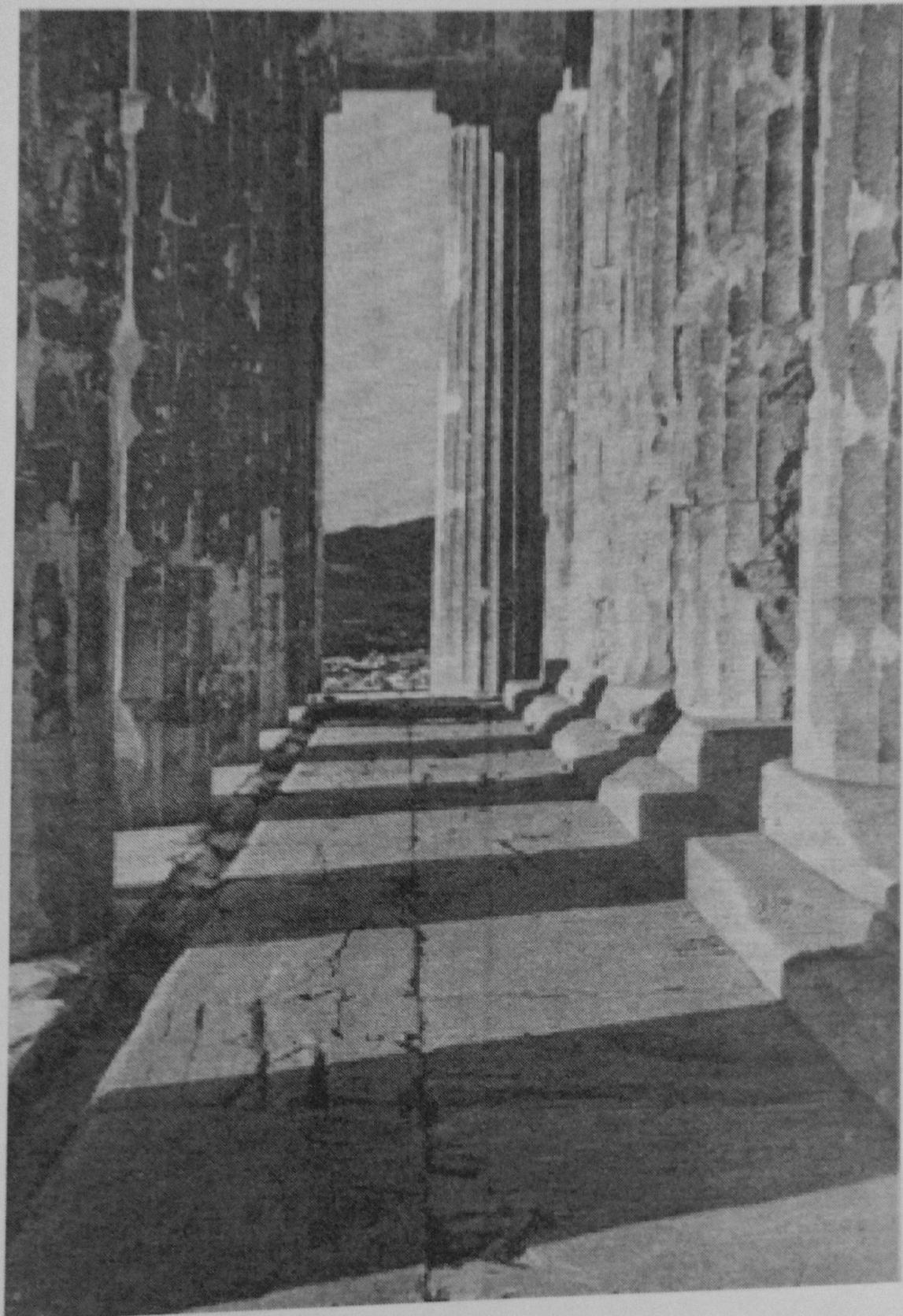


Fig. 50 - Parthenon

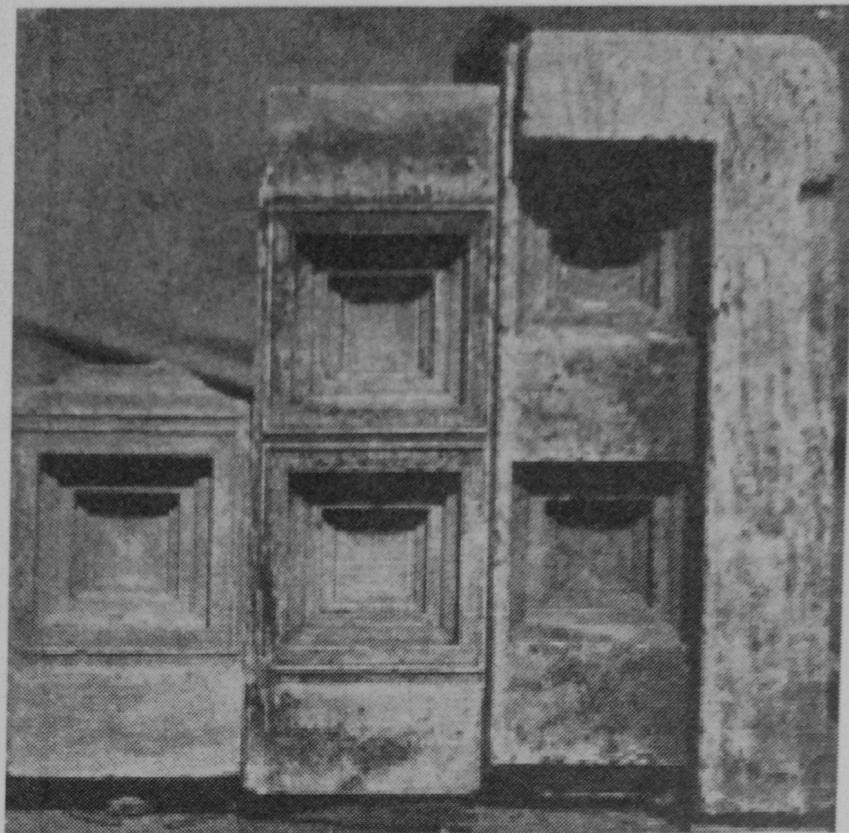


Fig. 51 - Parthenon Square Moldings & Fig. 50
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*,... 2007,
p249 & p240

Light and primary forms become a key focus in expressing Purism via the Parthenon as LC is “*overcome by a sense of rhythm.*”⁴⁸ LC depicts floors as horizontal walls, not just because both the surface and volumes should reflect the plan, but because both reflect the light. Well lit walls establish the architectural interior;⁴⁹ and at this point the density of materials as they appear in the light should become a consideration within the works hierarchy;⁵⁰ as should the modular proportions of the interior to continue a work which is ‘pure creation of the mind’.⁵¹

48. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p217

49. Ibid., p222

50. Ibid., p224

51. Ibid., p231-233

2.8 Morality And Duality

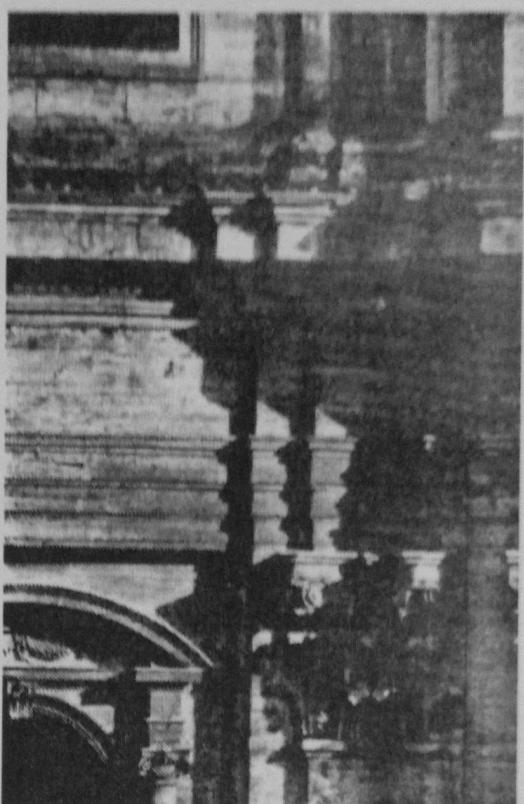
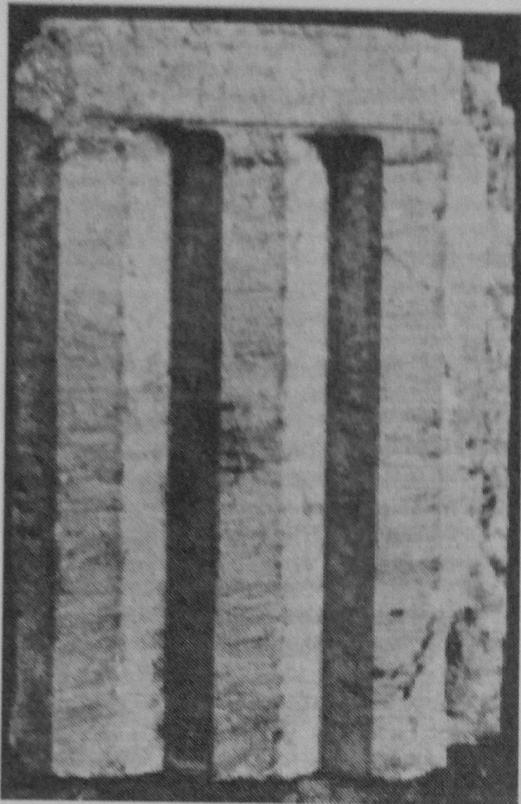


Fig. 52 - Left: Doric Symbolism

Fig. 53 - Right: The Apses of Saint Peter's

published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p247 & p207

LC frames some 'lessons in Rome', from the ancient Romans use of primary forms as sound 'morality'⁵² to Michelangelo's mix of intelligence and passion.⁵³ LC Rome lessons also recognise the Ecole des Beaux-Arts as originator of 'the plan as generator', even if its an institution that is dogmatic, formulaic, and fixed in its ways.⁵⁴

52. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p200

53. Ibid., p204

54. Ibid., p215

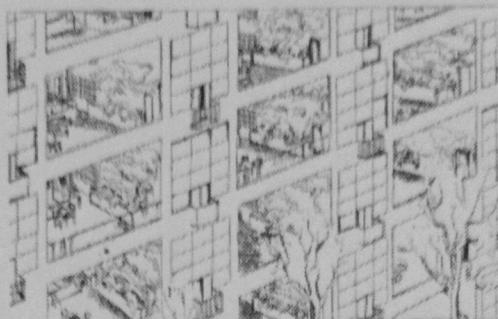


Fig. 54 - Le Corbusier's Mass-production Housing Cells
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture...* 2007, p272

LC definition of the cell is defined by his visit to 'Certosa' Ema monastery' (Charterhouse of Ema),⁵⁵ where he experienced 'communal' living.⁵⁶ The house as cell takes on a cubic volume as the surfaces are formed by both utilitarian needs and Purist syntax.⁵⁷ Specifically the syntax of modulation as the shape of the house dictates the shape of the street to the town.



Fig. 55 - Housing Designed By Tony Garnier
published in Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture...* 2007, p123

55. Vogt, A., Le Corbusier, *The Noble Savage: Towards An Archaeology Of Modernism*, (1996), Trans. by Donnell, R., (Cambridge & London: MIT Press), 1998, p22

56. Frampton, K., *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, (1980) 4th ed., (Singapore: Thames & Hudson), 2010, 150

57. Le Corbusier, *Toward An Architecture*, (1923) Trans. from 2nd French ed., Intro. by Cohen, J., Trans. Goodman, J., (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute), 2007, p245