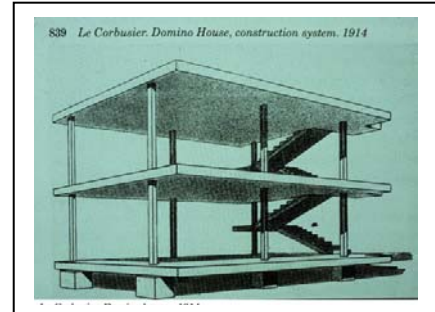


### Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) (1887-1965), The International Style, and the Rise of CIAM

Swiss architect Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier after 1920) among the most prolific, self-consciously modern architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Trained early in Swiss watch-making and engraving in an Arts and Crafts tradition, taught early to study nature and abstract from it, and exhibiting interest as well as talent in all the arts, but settling eventually on architecture and design, with painting as his next most favorite interest. Works part-time in 1908-09 for the profoundly forward-looking French architect Auguste Perret, who had designed **Rue Franklin Apartment House**, 1903, Paris: structural frame of concrete, terra cotta naturalistic decoration (reminiscent of Louis Sullivan in Chicago), rooftop garden, and wonderfully open interior spaces growing out of an increasingly modular approach to construction (p. 77-9, Curtis). August Perret, and therefore Le Corbusier as well, are indebted to the tradition of structural rationalism developed by Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet Le Duc, but with less of the latter's emphasis on gothic architecture. In 1909-10 Jeanneret travels in Germany, works briefly in the office of Peter Behrens in Berlin, meets Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and is impressed by Walter Gropius's and Adolf Meyer's use of glass envelopes and industrial construction at the Fagus Factory of 1911 and, later, the Werkbund Model Factory of 1914 at Cologne's Werkbund Exhibition. Later analyzes the "anatomy" of historical architecture (e.g., the Parthenon in Athens) during travels in 1911 to Greece, Turkey, and Italy. These travels spur his exploration of modern industrial house types: **Maison Domino** 1914 – "domus" (house) and "domino" (suggesting serial production). Maison Domino's serially reproducible units emphasize horizontal spatial freedom (the free plan) achieved via pilotis (thin structural columns) and non-load-bearing walls as spatial dividers. An alternate scheme explored in the **Maison Citrohan** project of 1922 – links spaces vertically with U-shaped wall-floor-wall of concrete, which allow for greater spatial freedom in the vertical plane. Le Corbusier, Ozenfant house and studio, 1923; Purism and the "*rappel à l'ordre*," or "call to order."



Le Corbusier's **Five Points for a New Architecture**: 1. pilotis (structural grid) 2. free plan (maximum flexibility in plan) 3. free façade (façade not dependent on structural considerations) 4. ribbon window (greater light in interiors) 5. roof garden (bringing nature from the ground plane to the roof plane). The five points glorify the possibilities of industry in building, and are devised deliberately to oppose historical conventions in the production of architecture; particularly in the 1920s, their newness or freshness amounts to an avant-garde slap in the face to traditional notions of symmetry, to conventional materials like stone or wood, to traditional double-hung or casement windows, and to the compartmentalized, cell-like rooms of traditional house plans.

Classic statement of Le Corbusier's Five Points for a New Architecture: **Villa Savoye** 1929, near Paris (in suburb of Poissy); this house expresses the idea of the journey through the house, the "path from ground to sky," an emphasis on movement and circulation that is thematized in numerous Le Corbusier houses. Expressive industrial modernity with layered spaces, numerous connections within interior and between interior and exterior spaces, and an overall atmosphere of the house as a new kind of "machine for living." Interior fittings often conform to the notion of the *objets-types*, or "**typical object**." Derived from the pre-war Werkbund and Muthesius's industrial "types," Le Corbusier defines the *objets types* as objects that "tend towards a type which is determined by the evolution of forms between the ideal of maximum utility and the necessities of economic manufacture." This recalls bits of Adolf Loos's thinking about traditions of making as well. There is one key difference however: Le Corbusier sees the objets-type as having two levels of meaning, or two kinds of characteristics: first, the universal component of, say, primary geometrical shapes (circle, square) that are generally recognizable to almost everyone on the planet and have a 'universal' cultural meaning. Second is the level of meaning that is not universal, but particular to the culture or cultural context in which the object appears; its form is, in part, a function of that context, the object's particular use, etc. This utopian characterization of industrial interior finishings is counterbalanced by the building's architectural reality: for example, the window frames of the house are specially hand-crafted and custom made to look as though they were mass produced in factories. His book *Towards A New Architecture (Vers une Architecture)*, 1923, asserts principles of industrial modernity in a manner that relates them to the ancient classical past, again showing the influence of the Werkbund and Adolf Loos's thought about modernity and tradition. Le Corbusier, **Plan Voisin for Paris/City for Three Million Project**, 1925. The vision of the zoned modernist city built with standardized industrial construction; **The Radiant City**, 1930, part of his campaign for the **International Congress of Modern Architects (CIAM)**, formed by Le Corbusier, and many others at La Sarraz, Switzerland, in 1928, as an international association of elite architects representing the interests of modern architects in individual national organizational chapters. Le Corbusier's **Unité de Habitation** as a fragment of the Radiant City realized in Marseilles, in Nantes, and a few other cities in late 1950s. Late works by Le Corbusier at Chandigarh and elsewhere are exemplified by the turn to a poetic primitivism, for example, at the Church of **Notre Dame du Haut**, Ronchamp, France, 1950-54.