



# Towards a Public Space: Le Corbusier and the Greco-Latin Tradition in the Modern City

*Marta Sequeira*

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The extensive literature on Le Corbusier's work tends to examine mostly his architecture, but he was also very interested in the larger scale of cities and planning. He makes several urban plans - for the reconstruction of France, for Bogota and for Chandigarh, for example - and writes several books on urbanism - *Urbanism*, *Precisions*, *The Radiant City*, *The Athens Charter*, *The Three Human Establishments*, just to quote a few examples. This book contributes to fill in the void regarding the systematic analysis of Le Corbusier's city scale plans and, in particular, the public space. The public spaces in Le Corbusier's plans are usually considered to break with the past and to have nothing whatsoever in common with the public spaces created before modernism. This view is fostered by evidence that masks their innovative character, and also by misinterpretations of some of Le Corbusier's own observations and liberal use of words like *civilisation machiniste* [machine civilization], *l'esprit nouveau* [new spirit] and *l'architecture de demain* [architecture of tomorrow], which mask any evocation of the past. However, if we manage to rid ourselves of certain preconceived ideas, which underpin a somewhat less-than-objective idea of modernity, we find that Le Corbusier's public spaces not only fail to break with the historical past in any abrupt way but actually testify to the continuity of human creation over time. This is what this book aims to demonstrate through an analysis of some of Le Corbusier's public spaces dating from the period immediately after the Second World War.

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