

of sand covered with thick cement slabs with staggered joints, the joints seeded with grass, terraces with flowers, shrubberies and trees, grass.

- 3 The *free plan*, made possible by the use of a few columns supporting slab floors (see the 'Dom-Ino House' diagrammatic model).
- 4 The *long window* round the whole house and free from the columns so that the house can be evenly lit.
- 5 The *free façade*. The exterior walls being no longer load bearing can be open or closed to suit the façade. They are now only light membranes composed of insulating or window elements.

With those points to go by he offers four compositions based on his own house designs for La Roche, Garches, Stuttgart, and the Villa Savoie. The villa, now designated as a building of historical importance, has been restored and is the most sophisticated example of his mature house designs.

What explains both the stature of Le Corbusier's thinking and later the unpopularity of his work is the fact that from the very start – explicitly in *Towards a New Architecture* – he conceived architecture and town planning as one. The house and the city revealed or were generated by the same principles. The mass-produced houses were the expression of a civic culture. Unlike Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier was essentially a city man, endlessly excited by it. And the buildings he designed were ultimately components in the 'Radiant City' – his own phrase, indicating the character of the city of the future, which like the house would have light and space on top, lots of space between buildings, buildings on pilotis, gardens in the air on top.

All he now needed was a system of scale and proportion, to ensure that his buildings, free of traditional detail and composed of entirely new components, had a discipline of their own and a human scale appropriate for the new world of urban man. For the system of proportion he adapted the Golden Section (the brilliantly simple formula beloved by the architectural theorists and practitioners of the Renaissance), elaborated it and called it *Le Modulor*. That would establish a rational relationship between the parts of a building. But it was still necessary to give it a scale which would relate it not to a mathematical figure but, in true humanistic fashion, to man. To give the buildings a human scale he therefore took one of the numbers in the series and finding that it was not only a good basic module for a room but the regulation height for a London policeman, at that time the international symbol of law and order, sketched out the gesticulating diagram of a figure against the scale – Corbusian man.

The theory was complete. He spent the rest of his life implementing it. The most complete expression of those theories were the

*Pavillon Suisse, Cité Universitaire, Paris: Le Corbusier (1931–3)*

Although this job was carried out under 'the most difficult circumstances', Le Corbusier reckoned he had provided a 'laboratory' for modern architecture, particularly in the solution of technical problems over the dry stone walling and insulation between rooms achieved with inserting sheets of lead into the partition walls. The plan is T-shaped. The long-arm is formed by a slab block set on a single row of four concrete-encased steel stanchions; here are packed, on four storeys, the 51 student rooms. The short leg of the 'T' houses the refectory, gymnasium, library, etc. There is a curved staircase block attached, and a director's house and caretaker's lodge were also provided. The frescoes painted by Le Corbusier in 1948 stirred as much interest as did the architecture.



four huge housing schemes, the Unités d'Habitation de Grandeur Conforme at Marseilles, Nantes, Strasbourg and Berlin. I know two of them and have experienced the excitement that their builders and first inhabitants undoubtedly experienced, and some still do, despite what is often reported.

The most complete expression of the *Five Points* is, I think, in the few large houses built by Le Corbusier in India while designing and erecting the central massive buildings for the new capital of the Punjab, Chandigarh. The general plan was made by the English architects Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew. Le Corbusier was responsible for the capitol and its government buildings – the Secretariat, the Legislative Chamber, the Courts of Justice and the symbol of the hand. Massively constructed in concrete, they are a synthesis of his early experiments and pioneering buildings. The almost completely abstract Cubist design for the Shodan house at Ahmedabad is as complete a visual statement as he ever made