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Influences on the Evolution of Le Corbusier's Early Work

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Abstract: It is commonly known that Le Corbusier, a pivotal figure in modern architecture, developed a diverse range of architectural languages. Due to his emblematic work of the International Style has become a central focus in architectural education and historiography, many scholars have redirected their attention to the architect's formative years and early career. One of the significant contributions to this is the treatise titled Le Corbusier before Le Corbusier: Applied Arts, Architecture, Painting, Photography, 1907-1922, published in conjunction with an exhibition in Switzerland in 2002, aiming to provide an extensive catalog of Le Corbusier's personal life, the societal contexts he engaged with, and his artistic pursuits. While the publication offers profound insights into the experiences and ideologies that shaped his early works, it only partially addresses the influence of those formative ideas on his later practice. This raises a question regarding the long-term impact of his early experiences as Charles-Edouard Jeanneret upon his later practice as Le Corbusier. The research aims to re-examine theoretical frameworks proposed by Le Corbusier and other scholars in juxtaposition to his built works, correspondences, and artistic persona. Although there are several milestones shaping Le Corbusier's works, through historical research, the paper is divided into three categories: 1911 "Voyage d'Orient", the immersion in the technology of reinforced concrete, and the participation in the Parisian art world. These three experiences serve as a foundation for his lifetime theories concerning function, construction, and form of architecture, demonstrating how experiences beyond the architectural domain are critical to the design of buildings. Furthermore, this study intends to illuminate the contributions of lesser-known figures who consistently influenced Le Corbusier's passionate journey toward his architectural identity.

Keywords: architecture, Le Corbusier, 20th century architecture, modern architecture

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