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## Urban Contacts: Orientalist Urban Planning and Le Corbusier in French Colonial Algiers

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Urban Contacts:

Orientalist Urban Planning and Le Corbusier in French Colonial Algiers

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## Introduction

Algiers, the first French colony in Africa, was conquered in 1830 and gained independence in 1962. During this period, Algiers was constructed into an Orientalist acting ground that was shaped through political, social, economic formations in the built environment. The French colonial fascination with Algiers centered around the casbah, and thus the casbah became a laboratory for ethnographic and urban reflections. The French process of urban planning included military intervention, preservation motivated by exoticism and museology, and superstructure master plans dictated by the present benefit of indigenous communities to the colonial regime. Le Corbusier's contact with Algiers further expresses the imperialist dynamics and the ways in which myths are physically acted upon. The formation of culture is a main component of the process of imperialism and, according to Edward Said, "by continuing consolidation within education, literature, and the visual and musical arts."<sup>1</sup> Architecture cannot be removed from this equation, and rather must be understood as a main tool of colonial powers to control experience of culture and maintain Orientalist ideologies. Colonial urban planning, enacted through the politics of preservation and especially present in Le Corbusier's master plan, is embedded with racial, gendered, and religious colonial frameworks that contribute to and further the French regime in explicit and implicit ways.

## Pre-Colonial Algiers

In pre-contact Algiers, the casbah encompassed the city center divided into the upper, private city and the lower, public city. The lower city was a business, military, and administration quarter, framed by the Mediterranean Sea in the front and Ottoman military fortifications and major roads around the sides.<sup>2</sup> Roads in the casbah were divided into three main uses. The

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, 1993), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Mustapha BenHamouche. "Decision-Making System and Urban Geometry in Traditional Muslim Cities: The Case of Algiers 1516-1830." *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 20, no. 4 (2003): 308-309.

streets in the lower casbah were designated for public, military, and business functions and were often swarmed with crowds.<sup>3</sup> The streets stretching between the upper and lower casbah served as communication methods and efficiently cut through the urban space.<sup>4</sup> The upper casbah streets were narrow and often dead ends to represent the private needs of the family, and were easily closed off with gates to protect the neighborhoods.<sup>5</sup> The upper casbah was carved into the surrounding mountains and contained small neighborhoods made up by tall, and ever growing, complexes centered around a courtyard and arcades.<sup>6</sup> These open spaces inside the private space of the home, and the private space of the home itself, were a space where Islamic gender dynamics played out. Algiers has been identified as predominantly Muslim since the 15th century, and the religion had a direct impact on the urban fabric and social order.<sup>7</sup> Gender segregation was an important social issue, and the Islamic belief system became a structural code for divisions of space. Roof terraces, arcades, and courtyards were designated for the social interactions and roles of women and children. The connection between houses, without having to transgress the public street, maintained the gendered expectations of women filling the duties of private life while also facilitating community contact without male interference.<sup>8</sup> Religious institutions were vital fixtures of Algerian life, housing schools, mosques, prayer houses, and public baths.<sup>9</sup> Major mosques were centered in the lower, public quarters while each neighborhood had prayer houses and easily accessible public spaces. Gendered excursions to these spaces facilitated both religious and community connection.

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<sup>3</sup> Zeynep Celik, *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations* (Berkeley:University of California Press, 1997), 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 15

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 15

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 12

<sup>7</sup> Janet L. Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City - Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 19, no. 2 (May 1987): 162-164.

<sup>8</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms*, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Michele Lamprakos, "Le Corbusier and Algiers: The Plan Obus as Colonial Urbanism" in *Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise* (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1992), 187.

The construction of the epistemological Islamic city myth projected onto the city had problematic consequences in colonial thought and practices. The white, interlocking house facades of this upper casbah were objects of romanticization for early Orientalist travelers. These travelers approached the casbah from the sea and equated the urban form to a sensuous, mysterious mistress that was captured through photography or painting and received by European colonists. Ethnographic studies took place as Orientalists moved inland, with special fascination paid to the daily routines of Algerian women and families, such as public baths and religious rituals. These artistic and academic preservations, depicting military violence and patriarchal politics while consciously subverting indigenous imagery and life, perpetuated racial, gendered, and religious blind spots towards the discrimination of indigeneous Algerians.<sup>10</sup> The Algerian woman specifically became a fetishized object that required various enactments of colonialism, her existence and relationship to the community mirroring Orientalist frameworks of the city itself. This is seen in the spatial and temporal constructions of colonial urban planning and the continuous destabilizing of the indigenous city, and thus indigenous life, through Orientalist constructions of the other.

#### Initial Colonial Urban Planning

Algiers was conquered by the French in 1830 and became the most profitable French colony until its independence in 1962. During the 17th century war climates, France required a larger agricultural footprint to secure their economic system.<sup>11</sup> Algiers' colonization was a direct result of European powers were racing for new land, resources, and markets, and the French presence in Algiers promised further control and monopolization of African markets. The land and people of Algiers became an imperialist acting ground in which the French established what

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<sup>10</sup> Christine Boyer *Le Corbusier: Hommes de Lettres* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), 554.

<sup>11</sup> Yasser Elsheshtawy, *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope* (Routledge, 2004), 30.

Michele Lamprakos calls “dependent capitalism” through military control, cultural domination, and legal and political intervention through physical and ideological means.<sup>12</sup> Urban planning became a tool of the French colonizers to spatially establish such methods, effectively enact divisions of occupying and indigenous groups, and guarantee economic gain. The following interventions of colonial architecture and planning also guaranteed a manipulation of colonized peoples’ lived experience, furthering the reach of imperialist governments.

The first French urban planning interventions responded directly to capitalistic and militaristic interests and centered within the lower city. The existing street network was considered irrational by early European settlers, and indigenous religious buildings and shops were appropriated and destroyed to widen thoroughfares and increase military access to ports. The creation of a Place Du Gouvernement in 1830 and 1831, a central gathering point for assembling troops modeled after a European square, was the first initiation of early destructive French urbanism.<sup>13</sup> The Place Du Government required an extensive widening of three main roads, Rue Bab Azzoun, Rue Bab el-Oued, and Rue de la Marine, through the lower city leading to the city gates and demolished existing gathering spaces and buildings for European appropriation.<sup>14</sup> Its creation solidified the French presence in the urban fabric of Algiers by establishing an environment for the existence of European colonists, a temporal distinction between French and Algerian vernacular architecture and urbanism, and indigenous density control. The streets were an exercise of military power rather than a space of public gathering, and land ownership was easily erased through French political interference. Thus, upper- and middle-class Algerians established ad-hoc settlements farther along the coast, posing further

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<sup>12</sup> Lamprakos, *Le Corbusier*, 186.

<sup>13</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms*, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Lamprakos, *Le Corbusier*, 185.

questions of control for French urbanists and contributing to the early “ghettoization” of the casbah that warranted Orientalist obsession.<sup>15</sup>

Such direct interventions served the purpose of implementing ideological colonialism. The implementation of French design forced a European hierarchy onto the area that was understood as “homogenous and non-hierarchical space.”<sup>16</sup> This assumption was inherently Orientalist in nature, framing pre-contact Algerian society in what Timothy Mitchell refers to as “a series of fundamental absences.”<sup>17</sup> The social existence of Algerians is both inherently disordered and infantile to the French, missing a heavy-handed colonial order that would allow them to thrive as developed people. The Place du Gouvernement, widened roads, and the buildings appropriated for French use formed a physical segregation between Algerians in the casbah and the European settlements in the center city.<sup>18</sup> Neoclassical architecture implemented by French military forces in Algiers carried with it motivations to control indigenous communities interacting with it in public and private spheres. The removal and replacement of vernacular architecture was a tactic of domination and propaganda, assisting the French colonial government through early forms of military and later forms of social power.<sup>19</sup> This urbanism was met with varied criticism from French powers outside of the military. Algerian vernacular architecture had Orientalist value as an untouched form of fetishized indigenous expression that could become profitable from further tourism, and the reduced destruction of existing buildings could frame European colonists as passive, just leaders.<sup>20</sup> Once military

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<sup>15</sup> Lamprakos, *Le Corbusier*, 188.

<sup>16</sup> Djafar Lesbet. *La Casbah d'Alger: Gestion Urbaine et Vide Sociale*, (Office des Publications Universitaires: Alger, 1985), 30.

<sup>17</sup> Timothy Mitchell, “Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order,” in *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, edited by Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (London: Ashgate, 2004), 442-460, 442.

<sup>18</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms*, 28.

<sup>19</sup> Lamprakos, “Le Corbusier,” 190.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

power had been secured, the French leaned towards an ideology of preservation and intervention through uniform and far-reaching master city plans.

### Le Corbusier and Algiers

Le Corbusier's first encounters with the Orient, or the countries situated outside of the western colonial framework, came from his travels documented in *Voyage D'orient* and falls within the lens that most Orientalist travelers in the 18th century held; the city held untouched, fertile feminine beauty that could be further exposed through intentional European design.<sup>21</sup> His previous work centered around the house and city as a machine conducive to human activity and, through his invitation to lecture to the Friends of Algiers in 1931 and subsequent obsession with the city, he planned to establish Algiers as a functional spatial and temporal program for the continued presence of European colonists.<sup>22</sup> Le Corbusier was drawn to Algerian vernacular architecture due to its relationship with modern architecture and its cellular organization around a singular module, or the square shaped cells, rooms, and courtyards within residential buildings.<sup>23</sup> From these observations, he created his architectural formula to happiness: the key = the cell, = men, = happiness.<sup>24</sup> Le Corbusier rejected the French interventions that altered the pre-colonial density and left it "shorn of its poetry."<sup>25</sup> He considered the Algerian casbah to provide a higher quality of life than that experienced by both European settlers in Algeria and citizens in European urban spaces, a reversal of hierarchical colonial roles consistently utilized in Le Corbusier's writings that expresses an exploitative fascination with the timeless framework

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<sup>21</sup> Le Corbusier. *La Ville radieuse* (Paris: Vincent, Freal, 1933; English trans., New York: Grossman Publishers and Faber & Faber, 1967), 260

<sup>22</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms* 73

<sup>23</sup> Zeynep Celik, "Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism." *Assemblage*, 17 (1992): 58-77, 62.

<sup>24</sup> Le Corbusier, *La Ville radieuse*, 230.

<sup>25</sup> Le Corbusier, *Poesie sur Alger* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2016), 11-13.



in which the colonial imaginary places Algiers. However, he praised the French plans for Algerian roads as “signs of civilization” that bestowed Algerians with wonderment and respect for colonizers as well as newfound knowledge.<sup>26</sup> Le Corbusier’s belief in architecture as an educator aligns with prevalent colonial practices of social and political intervention in the 18th century through measured implementation of European design. In this framework, the colonized becomes willing in their own subjugation through enlightenment brought on by purposeful preservation of existing establishments by the grace of the colonizer, while simultaneously being awoken to the superiority of western practices. Le Corbusier uses this positionality to create his master plan for Algiers: The Plan Obus.

Le Corbusier’s first iterations of the Plan Obus were published in 1932. The rhetoric surrounding the plan consisted of that of the new colonial order of the time: the city and its indigenous residents had a need for the preservation of the traditional casbah, while the European capitalist system required distinct control over the urban design in order to fully utilize the environmental and social resources of Algiers. The practice of preservation in the Plan Obus became both a fetishizing attempt to maintain an Orientalist, ahistorical framework on the artistic integrity of the city itself and a political and social attempt to subdue Algerian communities under French rule. Le Corbusier understood the population as rooted in tradition, but in need of urban renovation to “address the misery of the Muslim population” and transform Algiers into the colonial capital of France.<sup>27</sup> Thus, colonial preservationism was played out in Le Corbusier’s propositions to continue the maintenance of the upper casbah in its architectural integrity, while restricting density and street use patterns.<sup>28</sup> Some buildings were designated to residential life, but others were to be transformed into centers of arts and crafts in order to facilitate an

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<sup>26</sup>Celik, *Urban Forms*, 73.

<sup>27</sup> Le Corbusier, note for M. Sabatier, and idem, “Proposition d’un Plan Directeur.”

<sup>28</sup> Celik, “Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism,” 69.

indigenous “renaissance” and increase tourism value.<sup>29</sup> The lower area of the city would be completely purged of its lower-class residential areas and replaced with open spaces; only the mansions would be preserved to develop museums for the indigenous arts.<sup>30</sup> In the Plan Orbus, streets were elevated to both continue implementing French roadway practices in the city as well as allow access to previously unexploitable topography and further enable French capitalism. Interestingly enough, these curved street formations would prevent development that would mirror Le Corbusier’s obsession with the indigenous cell. The original European square became the central French business district and was connected to the hillside European residences by an air belt, an inversion of the green belt that French stakeholders desired in the city to provide sanitary divisions between the Algerian population and European settlers.<sup>31</sup> The air belt serves to further the colonial urban planning goal of implementing hierarchy in the socially undeveloped casbah. The term *obus* refers to the pathway of an exploding bombshell, and this militaristic implication adequately applies to the experience of the indigenous city as bombarded with Le Corbusier’s politics of division, preservation, and capitalism. Although Le Corbusier’s Plan Obus was never implemented, the rhetoric of the plan both represented and facilitated colonial social, political, and urban practices and contributed to an Orientalist ideology reaching beyond artistic endeavours.

#### The Politics of Preservation

Preservation in French urban plan is not motivated simply by the maintenance of valuable art. The casbah and vernacular architecture were framed as valuable only in relation to the European norm, meaning their existence depended on colonial formations of the other. Algeria was unlike any European city that thrived in modernity, thus it was profitable in its

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>31</sup> Celik, *Urban Form*, 43.

perceived backwardness. Hubert Lyatey, who was working on colonial preservation in Morocco, stated "... we conserve, I would go a step further, we rescue."<sup>32</sup> This statement encompasses the framework of preservation as a rescue not from colonial actors that planners such as Lyatey were working for, but as a salvation from the barbarian ways of the Algerian people. While Algerian architecture was an object of fascination that often required resistance from direct colonial intervention, indigenous communities were unable to properly organize themselves and their environment around it. Colonial planners were tasked with preserving in order to elevate the acceptable and profitable types of culture, such as museums and traditional arts-and-crafts workshops. Preservation also represented a space of perceived colonial leniency. French planners had already destroyed a large amount of Algiers and their presence disrupted daily life, but their modern selectivity in invasive practices framed them as just leaders and warranted more respect from the people they were colonizing. This formation of the gentle imperialist enforced implicit political restrictions that were built into the urban plan.

#### Imagining Race, Gender, and Religious Constructions of the Built Environment

It is vital to understand architecture and urban planning within the context in which it was created. Because the built environment represents and dictates how daily life is acted out, it becomes a public forum for the public to experience culture, or rather how those dictating the built environment want the public to experience culture. Barbara Hooper understands the cultural placement of architecture as similar to that of the body, stating "Like the human body and its performed identities... that are socially produced but acquire the aura of real through association ... architecture performs... a similar realness upon social constructs."<sup>33</sup> Arn

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<sup>32</sup> Janet Abu-Lughod, *Rabat: Urban Apartheid in Morocco* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 143.

<sup>33</sup> Barbara Hooper, "Urban Space, Modernity, and Masculinist Desire: The Utopian Longings of Le Corbusier" in *Embodied Utopias: Gender, Social Change, and the Modern Metropolis*, edited by Amy Bingaman, Lise Sanders, and Rebecca Zorach (London: Routledge, 2002), 55-78, 62.

understanding of urbanism and architecture cannot be removed from the social history or context due to the risk of failing to comprehend the ideological constructions that created the existing reality and centering a narrative of erasure. Orientalist settlers benefitted from pre-colonial Algiers' urban design as a means to enact myths and constructions around indigenoussness just as much as they did from their physical interventions. The initial contact ideologies transmitted from Orientalist travelers to Europe served to begin to construct what Zeynep Celik identifies as "the myth of the casbah" that sparked colonial imaginations.<sup>34</sup> Roland Barthes understands a myth as a "system of communication" defined by the "way in which it utters a message."<sup>35</sup> In this sense, the myth surrounding the casbah and Algiers as a whole represented not the casbah or Algiers itself, or its inhabitants, but the desires of Orientalism and the ways in which colonialist powers understand difference. Le Corbusier's early contacts and later plans in Algiers represent the ways in which the myth is inflicted on Algiers and colonial settlements.

The myth of the casbah is centered around 3 main areas of difference: Race, religion, and gender. Algiers became a French colony based on the existing ideology of colonialism that elevated Western, European races above non-Western, non-white people. The early French military interventions were informed on reorganization and separation of races in order to enhance sanitation and economic and political efficiency. Reducing density and destroying indigenous public space in favor of European interpretations created explicit and implicit boundaries between Europeans and Algerians, who were further displaced based on class status. As the Algerian casbah became a site for anti-colonial organizations, attitudes around full destruction of Algiers were reconsidered and formed into a new ideology of colonialism. Preservation became the new norm as a formation of infantile identities of the colonized

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<sup>34</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms*, 21.

<sup>35</sup> Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in Susan Sontag, ed., *A Barthes Reader* (New York, 1982), 93-94.

Algerians and ahistorical fixation on traditional routines, and an identification of the potential exhibitionary profit, all of which is deeply racialized. Invasive ethnographic investigations by European scholars established overarching norms surrounding the indigenous communities, and the racist information garnered from these academic pursuits informed the master plan era in colonial Algiers. The “Arab” population, according to Hubert Lyautey, was rooted in difference from European colonizers through their resistance to modernity and need for the maintenance of their private life.<sup>36</sup> Assumptions surrounding the life of the Algerian race simplified the existence of an entire people and gave colonial powers the leverage to make decisions for this inferior group. Le Corbusier understood and acted upon this construction through his vertical divisions between European and Algerian developments and spatial organization to maintain and exploit the formations of Algerian daily life through arts-and-crafts buildings, museums, and an area of the casbah deemed Oriental enough to avoid destruction.

Colonial constructions of race tied deeply into constructions of religion. Mosques were notable formations witnessed by Orientalist travelers as they approached the bank of Algiers, informing an initial fascination with Islam. Algerian life surrounding Islam, such as commuting to and participating in prayer, sparked French ethnographic interest and European investigations into the Muslim other. Religious practices were consumed like performances that were understood as frivolous to the European. This provided reason for French settlers to take up the white man’s burden and use architecture and urbanism as a tool of education to bring enlightenment to the future French colony. Vernacular architecture was framed as representing Muslim daily life, which contributed to the further fetishization and commodification of areas preserved by colonial rule. Le Corbusier was fascinated by Islamic influence in vernacular architecture, framing his architectural formula of happiness around the organization of Islamic

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<sup>36</sup> Abu-Lughod, *Rabat*, 143.

religious buildings.<sup>37</sup> Le Corbusier attributed the overall unity of Islamic vernacular form to the unity of religion across the Muslim world. He identified the Oriental as forever religious, rooting the people in the past and using this both as a reason for selective preservation and the need for enforced enlightenment at the hands of European colonizers.

The Algerian woman became the prime temporal space in which colonial myths were enacted. Early Orientalist documentation identifies the city of Algiers as feminine, attributing the first glances of her to “a wise and dangerous mistress” exuding sex appeal.<sup>38</sup> This speaks to the gender dynamics at play in Orientalist encounters; Algiers was formed as a woman to facilitate her domination by the masculine colonial power, and the attributed sex appeal rendered her mysterious and in need of penetrative investigation and reformation to be saved by Europe. Racial and religious fascinations were often enacted on the Algerian female body as a designation of the ultimate other, for she was the subject of ethnographic research and elevated to exoticism by French settlers. Colonial redesign of Algiers altered the daily life and space originally designated to Algerian women; reorganizing the residential building, removing and repurposing religious buildings, and introducing new forms of colonial violence took away her role in the social fabric and rendered her isolated. Her isolation to the preserved casbah both made way for further colonial intervention on the Algiers and garnered anti-colonial movements around the spaces she was located.

Le Corbusier’s interactions with Algiers was in direct conversation with the colonial frameworks of the Algerian woman. He repeatedly wrote about Algiers using feminine pronouns and referred to the city’s views as parts of the female body. His sketch for the cover of *Poesie sur Alger* depicts a hand manipulating a female body of the Algiers skyline, implying the

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<sup>37</sup> Celik, “Le Corbusier,” 62.

<sup>38</sup> Celik, *Urban Forms*, 22.

architect's ability to have mastery over the feminized territory.<sup>39</sup> Le Corbusier's fascination with Islamic women was visible in his depictions of the Casbah as a veiled woman, fetishizing both religion and gender in order to portray and enforce European dominance. This ideology manifests patriarchal power structures and work to enforce colonization in the minds of both the colonized and the colonizers. The Plan Obus can be read as a physical interpretation of these power structures. Le Corbusier's imagined projection of a colonial urban fabric, combined with the existing exercises of division, destruction, and preservation, dismantle the myth of the pre-colonial Algerian woman. He maintains this formation through the rebuilding of fetishized forms in the Plan Obus. The curves in the air belts that serves as racial dividers mirror those depicted in paintings of Algerian women painted by Delacroix and himself.<sup>40</sup> The sensual form mirrors the sensuality of the casbah and the exoticism of the Algerian woman and manifests colonial fascinations into a built formation controlled by the colonizers. The Plan Obus not only represents a racial and religious hierarchy through vertical implementations and control over religious structures, but also secures a colonial understanding of the Orientalist community through gendered forms that indicate gendered bodies.

### Conclusion

Orientalism is not reserved to just artistic depictions, but are present in the fabric of colonial spaces and cultures. I pose a reading of the relationship between Le Corbusier's sketches of Algerian women and of the casbah, and the Plan Obus itself. Le Corbusier's sketches came from an erotic fascination with the routines and poses of the Algerian woman in all of her forms. He depicts the casbah as a veiled head, representing unexplored mysteries, and prostitutes, representing a conquered body ready for continued invasion. The curves of the prostitute are superimposed on the veiled woman/casbah in the Plan Obus. The Plan Obus is

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<sup>39</sup> Celik "Le Corbusier," 72.

<sup>40</sup> Celik, *Urban Form*, 63.

an interpretation of colonial depictions of domination that separates the foreign indigenous life and further divides it into conquestable and digestible pieces. The air belts frame the Algerian community and body within colonial understandings and, through the existing ideologies, manages to physically write the history and future of colonialism on the environment. Thus, the Plan Obus goes beyond being an Orientalist work of art; it is an Orientalist manifesto.





Le Corbusier, *Plan Obus*



Le Corbusier, sketches of Algerian women



Le Corbusier, sketch of the casbah

The resources provided by Copley Library were integral to the completion and academic success of my paper. My work was first inspired by my professor, Dr. Can Bilsel, and his suggested readings that were found in Copley library's course reserves. Through discussions in class and these suggested readings, I became fascinated by the relationship between urban forms and colonization. However, I was intimidated from the immediate lack of information I could find on the subject; in my limited view, it seemed that very few people were discussing this relationship. My first step into discovering contemporary thinkers on the topic was checking out an anthology of Orientalist art from Copley. From there, I poured over the works cited in the book and explored related authors and topics through the library's JSTOR access. This became one of the most integral tools in completing this research project, as I was able to find thousands of articles that engaged with the contemporary field of urban planning through a lens of decolonization.

I began actively engaging with the work of Zeynep Celik, an architectural and urban historian who studies the impacts of Orientalism and colonialism on the urban fabric. I was drawn to her work because she engaged directly with Le Corbusier, whose legacy within colonial urban planning is overshadowed by his famous urban theories and architectural contributions. I knew of Le Corbusier's *Plan Obus* and its racist implications, but I was elated to find an academic and her community engaging with it so directly. I used Copley Library's Interlibrary Loan system to receive a copy of her book as well as multiple articles not available on other platforms. This was the first time I had used the Interlibrary Loan system; the boundlessness and speed provided through it has changed the way I approach my projects.

In order for this to be a well-rounded project, I knew I needed to study images and plans as well as historical accounts and analyses. I was able to use the library's ARTstor access to study depictions of the casbah, Le Corbusier's plans, and vast Orientalist works. I used ARTstor

to connect what I was learning by reading Interlibrary Loan and JSTOR articles into a cohesive and original analysis of French Colonial Algiers.

The biggest challenge of this project was finding versions Le Corbusier's notebooks that were translated into English. I needed to engage directly with his ideas, but I did not speak the original language and, in some cases, could not find his documents at all. The librarians in Copley were extremely helpful in this case. They coached me through finding the documents through various platforms online and eventually helped me discover some translated pieces through the Interlibrary Loan system, Google Scholar, and a large anthology of architectural history in Copley. My work would have been missing vital modes of analysis if I did not have the valuable resource of Copley's librarians.