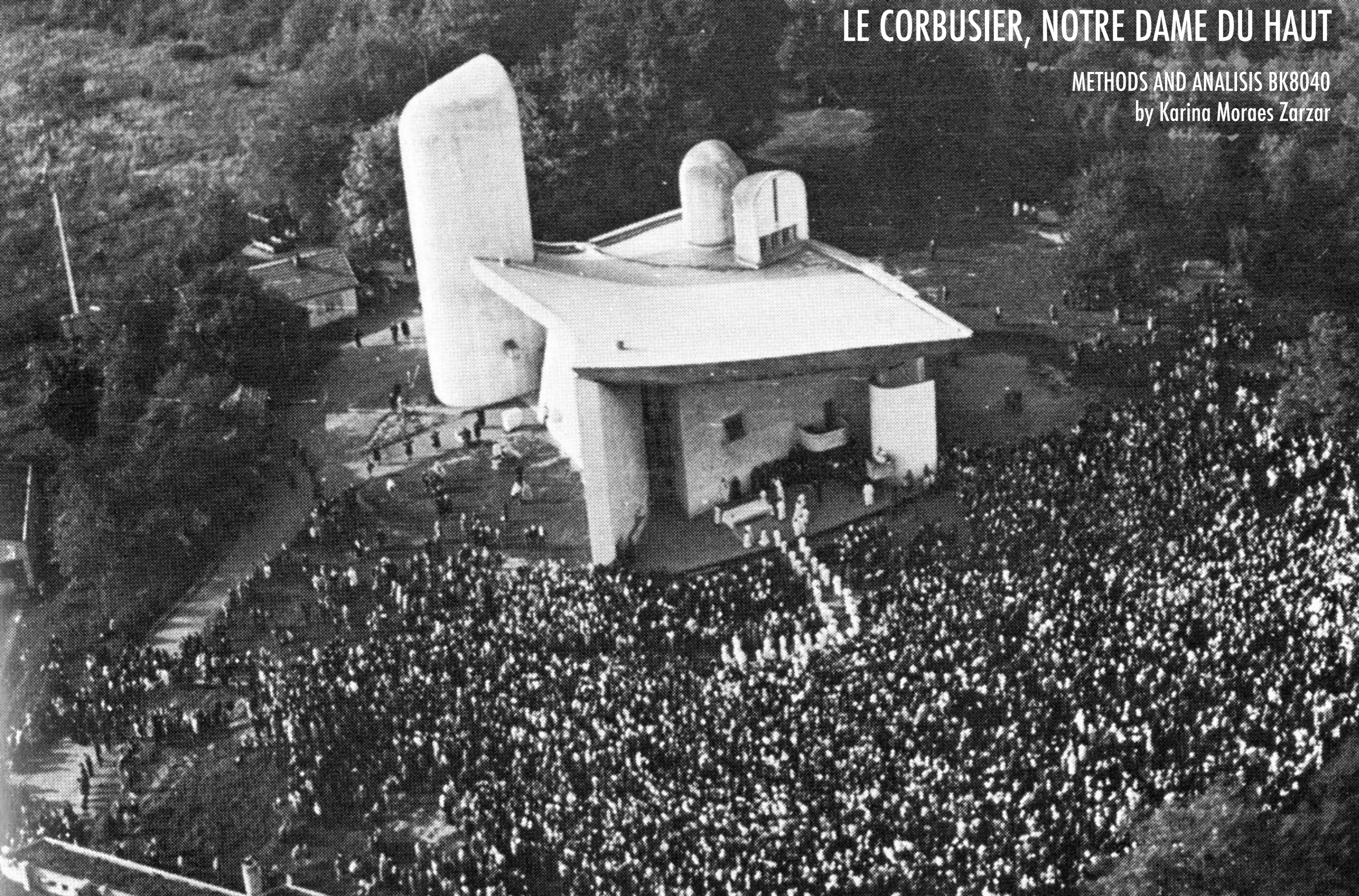
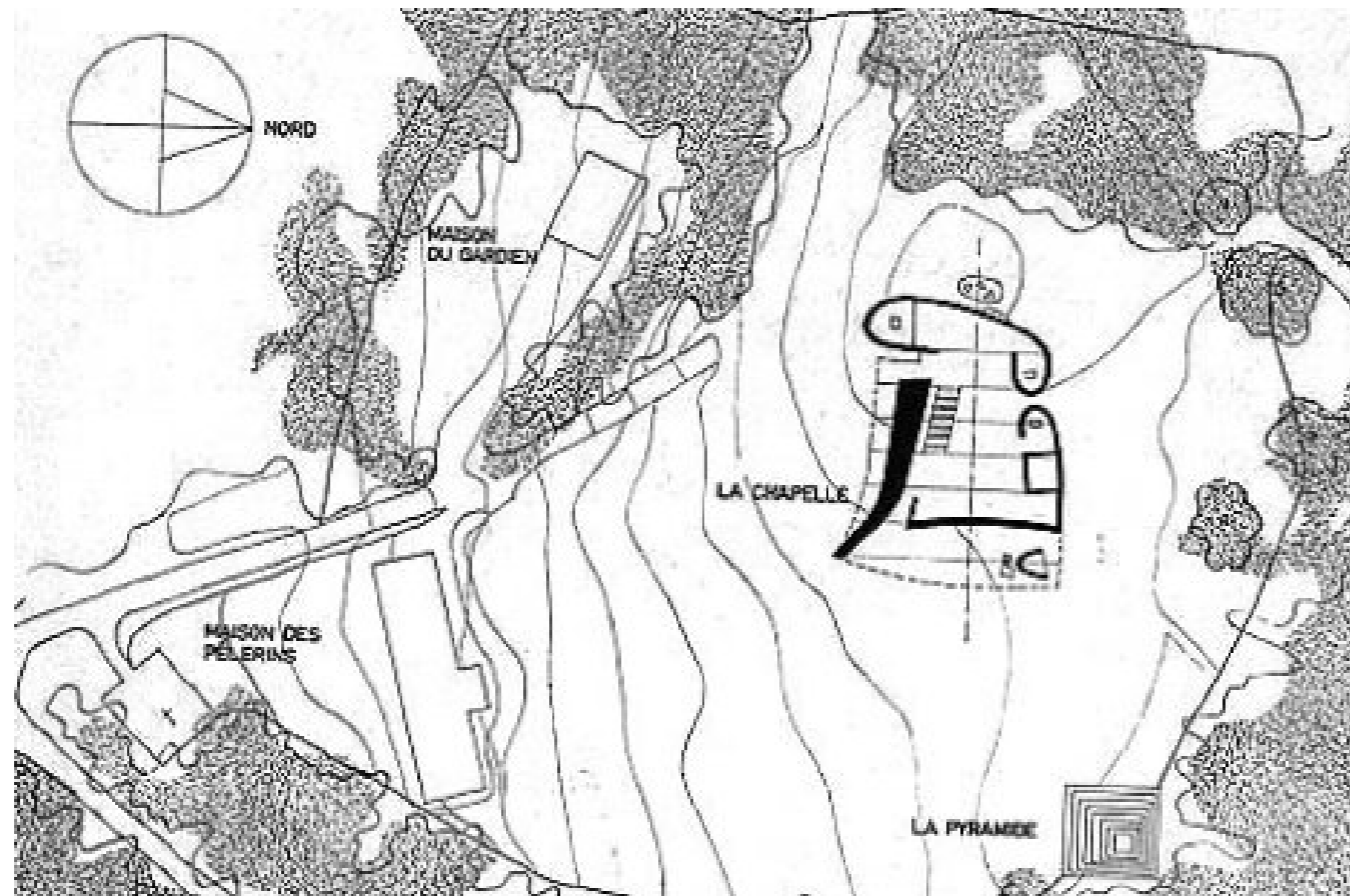


LE CORBUSIER, NOTRE DAME DU HAUT

METHODS AND ANALYSIS BK8040
by Karina Moraes Zarzar



NICOLE BONVIE TJERK BOOM ANNE DESSING TIMME SCHUNSELAAR



GENIUS LOCI

The Chapel of Notre Dame du haut stands on the hilltop of Bourlemant in the Haute-Saone region. From its commanding position it surveys Ronchamp, a village situated about twenty km from Belfort, on the road to Vesoul.

Around the hill unfold a vast green landscape, characterised by gently rolling forms; to the west is the Langres plateau; to the north are the last foothills of the Vosges; to the east lies the Trouee de Belfort; to the south-west the first plateaux of the Jura. The hill reaches an approximate height of five hundred metres; flanked by trees, through which two access paths have been hollowed out, it culminates in a rounded summit forming a small plateau that serves as a podium for the chapel.

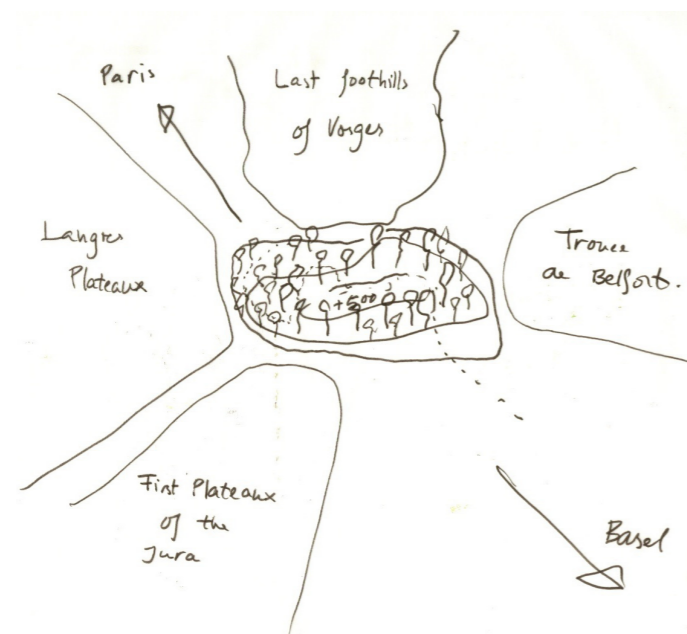
The steep sides of the hill make it a kind of natural fortress, this is first referred to in history as a strategic site. The Romans are said to have made this side one of the defensive positions. The very name Ronchamp most likely derives from the Latin Source of Romanorum Campus: Roman camp of champ (field).

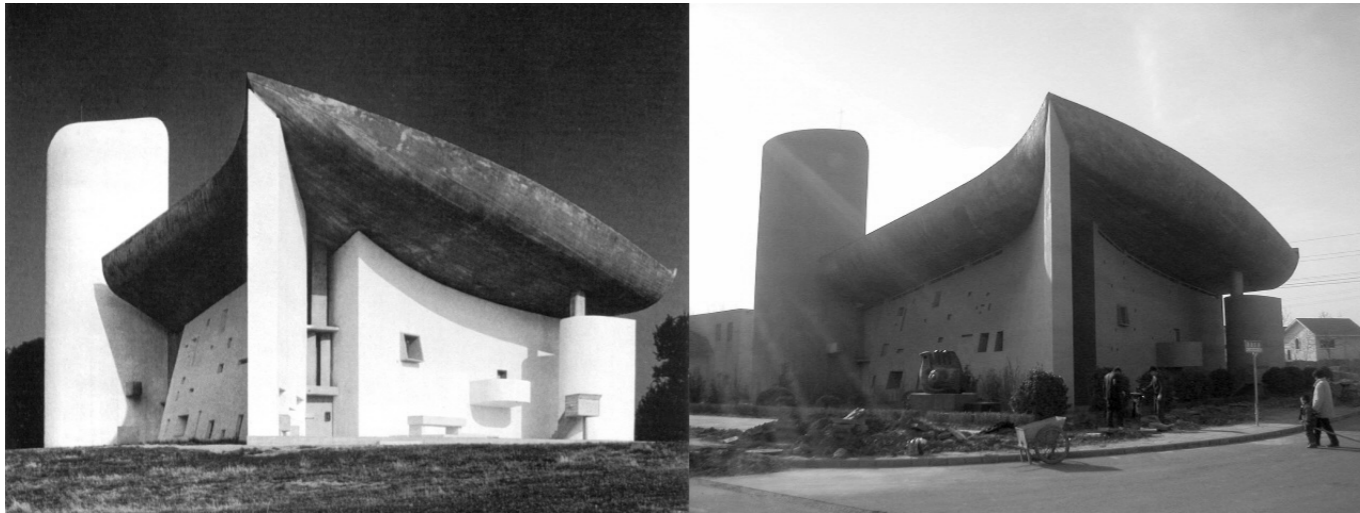
First record of a (pilgrimage) chapel. 13th century.

From the road linking Belfort with Vesoul, the white outline of the chapel can already be discerned as it rises up on the hill. Its unexpected organic form transmitting its signal to the four horizons, can be seen from miles around.

Starting from the village Ronchamp the visitor takes a small steep path, shaded by trees, suddenly the chapel emerges from the foliage.

On either side of this path there are two buildings whose geometric volumes contrast with the organic forms of the chapel. On one side in the foreground there appears the long horizontal pilgrims house. On the other side, concealed behind trees, there is the caretaker's house, accommodation of the chaplain of Notre Dame du Haut.





Ronchamp (France)

Zhenzhou (China)

PRIVATE COMMISSION

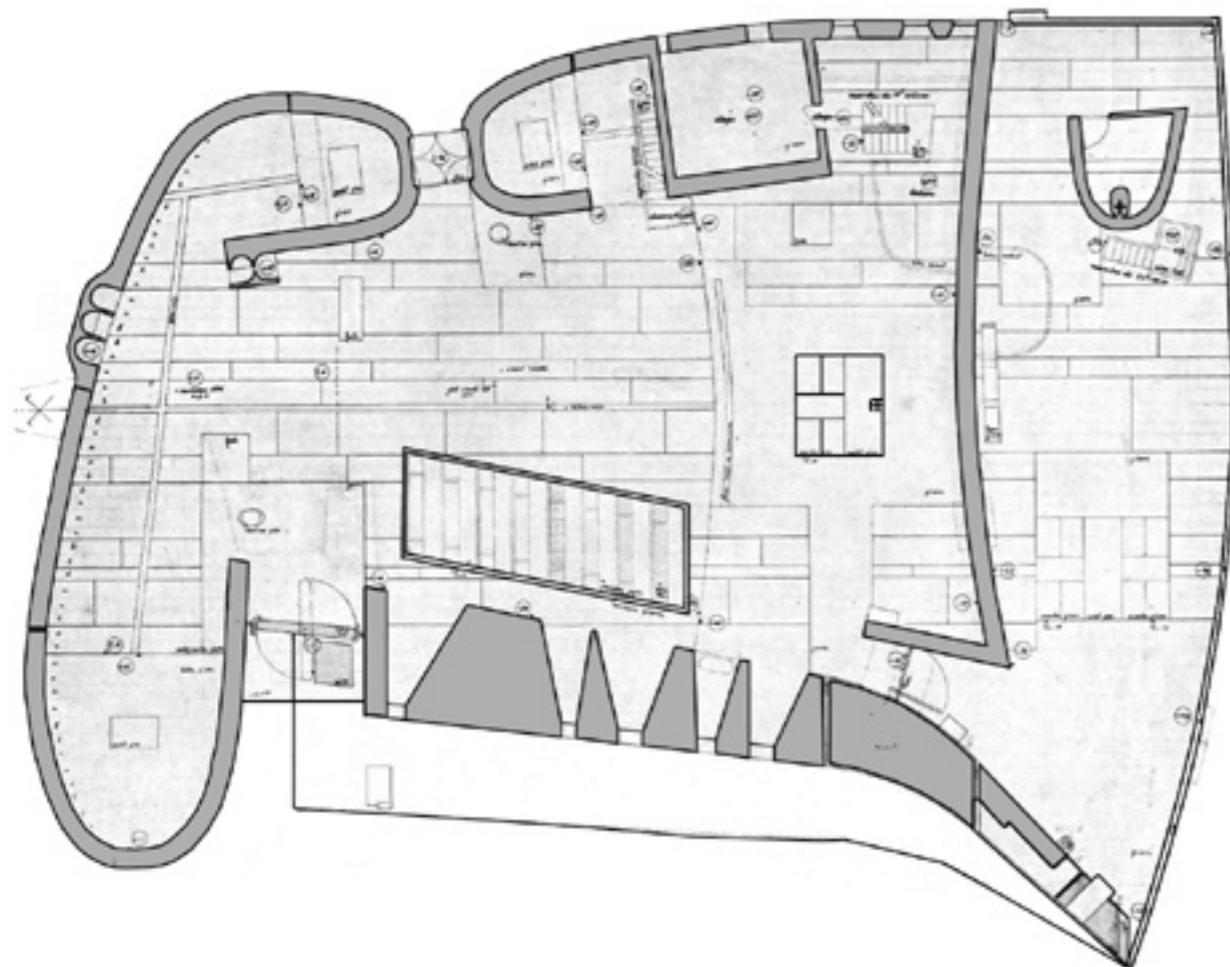
The new chapel built in 1955 was commissioned by the Notre-Dame-du-Haut property development company, a body consisting of Ronchamp parishioners which had especially set up for rebuilding the edifice. When restoring was too expensive, they asked Le Corbusier to make a design for a complete new chapel.

IDENTITY

Icon in (religious) architecture. Because the building is unique it attracts lots of tourists and pilgrims from all over the world. A copy of the building is made in Zhenzhou (China). This building hasn't got the same context as the building in Ronchamp. The form is recognizable and gives the building an identity.

PROGRAMME

The building is a pilgrimage chapel and an open air church. The programme is simple. Inside there are a main altar, three side chapels which can be used independently from the celebration of Mass and two functional spaces. Outside there is a sanctuary for open air ceremonies on pilgrimage days.

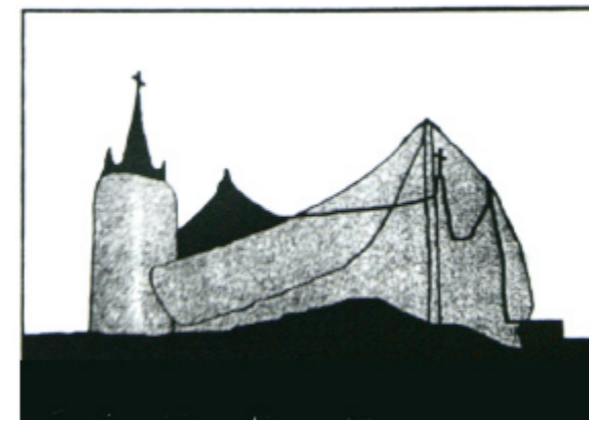




till 1913



1920 - 1944.



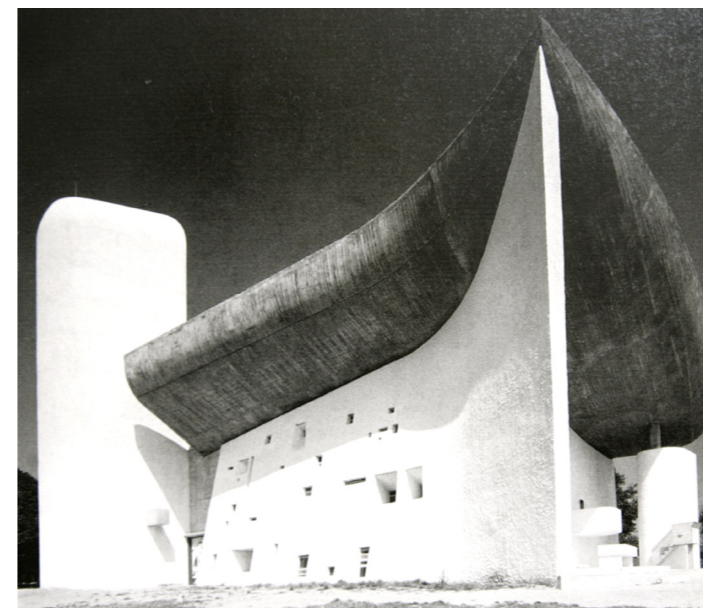
HISTORY

Le Corbusier's Notre-Dame-du-Haut is not the first chapel to stand on the site. Two others preceded it. The first, a medieval church enlarged in the nineteenth century, was destroyed by a fire in 1913. A second chapel arose from the ashes in the 1920's only to be destroyed in a battle between the French Resistance and retreating German armies in 1944.¹

Superimposition of Ronchamp I, II and III silhouettes show Le Corbusier's use of the earlier chapels in his design concept. Produced by Ben Shacklette, Robert Coombs and Mike Julius.



SITE Le Corbusier sketch: Ronchamp site from train



MATERIAL AND STRUCTURAL SYSTEM

The building is constructed of walls of sprayed untreated concrete (beton brut) and whitewashed with a coat of plaster to leave a rough surface.

The use of concrete was as much a pragmatic decision as an esthetic one: Le Corbusier recognized the difficulty of transporting more bulky materials up the hillside and the consequent fact that he would have to put up with sand and cement.²

¹ Robert Coomes, *Mystical Themes*
² *The Chapel at Ronchamp*, Ezra Stoller, p. 4

SITE

Notre-Dame-du-Haut is placed on a hill a few miles from the Swiss border in the Haute-Saone region of eastern France. A pilgrimage site since the thirteenth century.

Le Corbusier's bell-shaped plan for the chapel was conceived in a series of rapidly drawn sketches, and was driven by the response to the site: "One begins with the acoustic of the landscape," he wrote, "taking as a starting point the four horizons. These are, the plain of the Saone, opposite to it the hills of Alsace, and on the other sides two valleys. The design is conceived in conformity with these horizons—in acceptance of them."¹

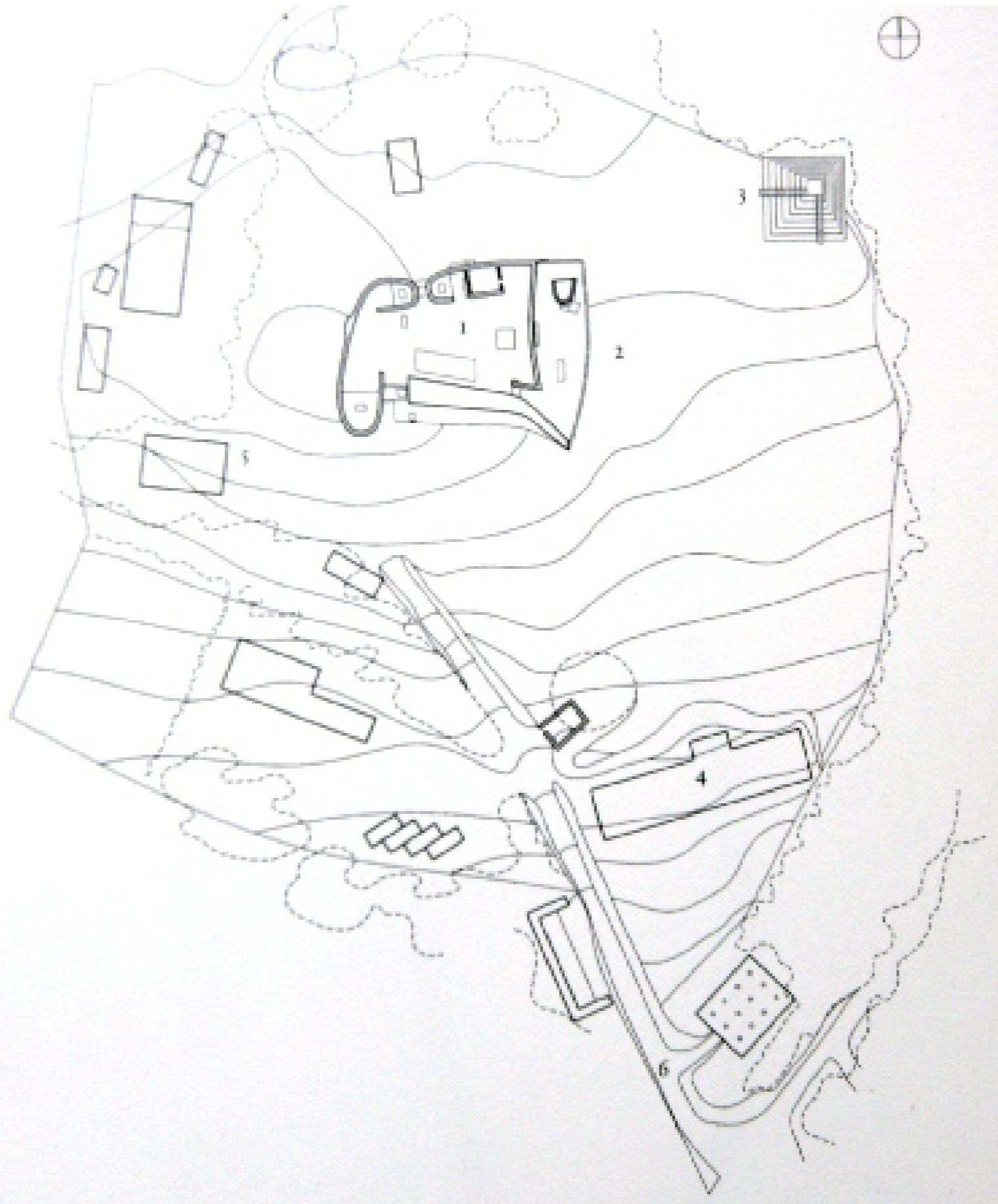
He attempted to convince members of the local parish and the citizens of Ronchamp that his intention was not to shock, that he was sympathetic to the Haute-Saone landscape, to their spiritual attachment to it, and to their faith.²

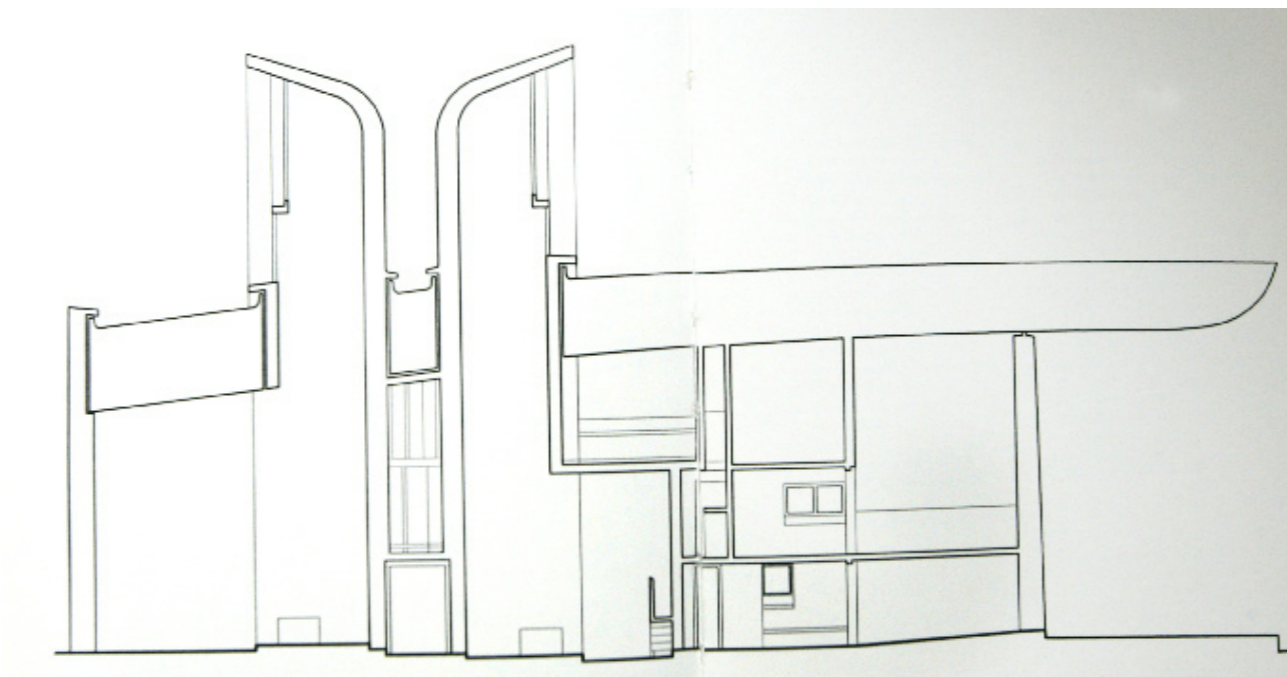
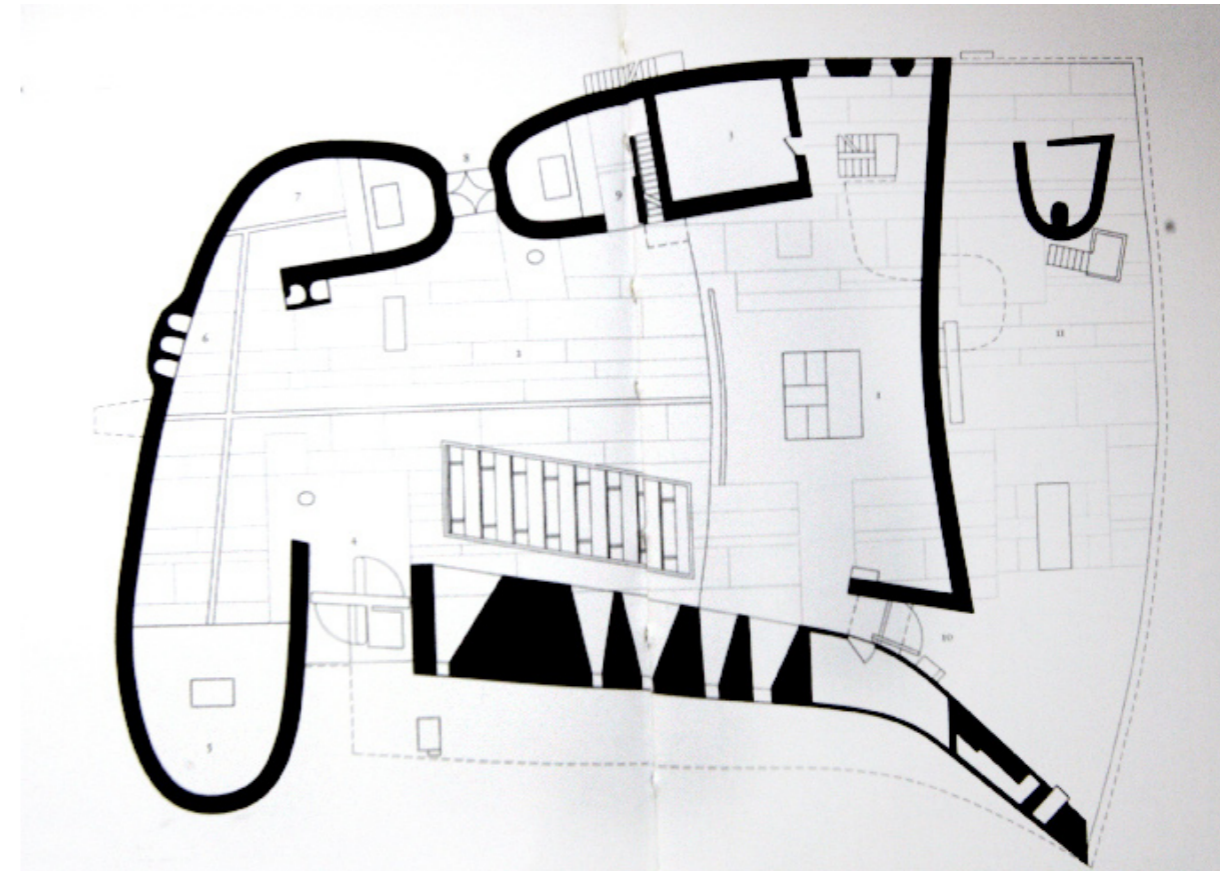
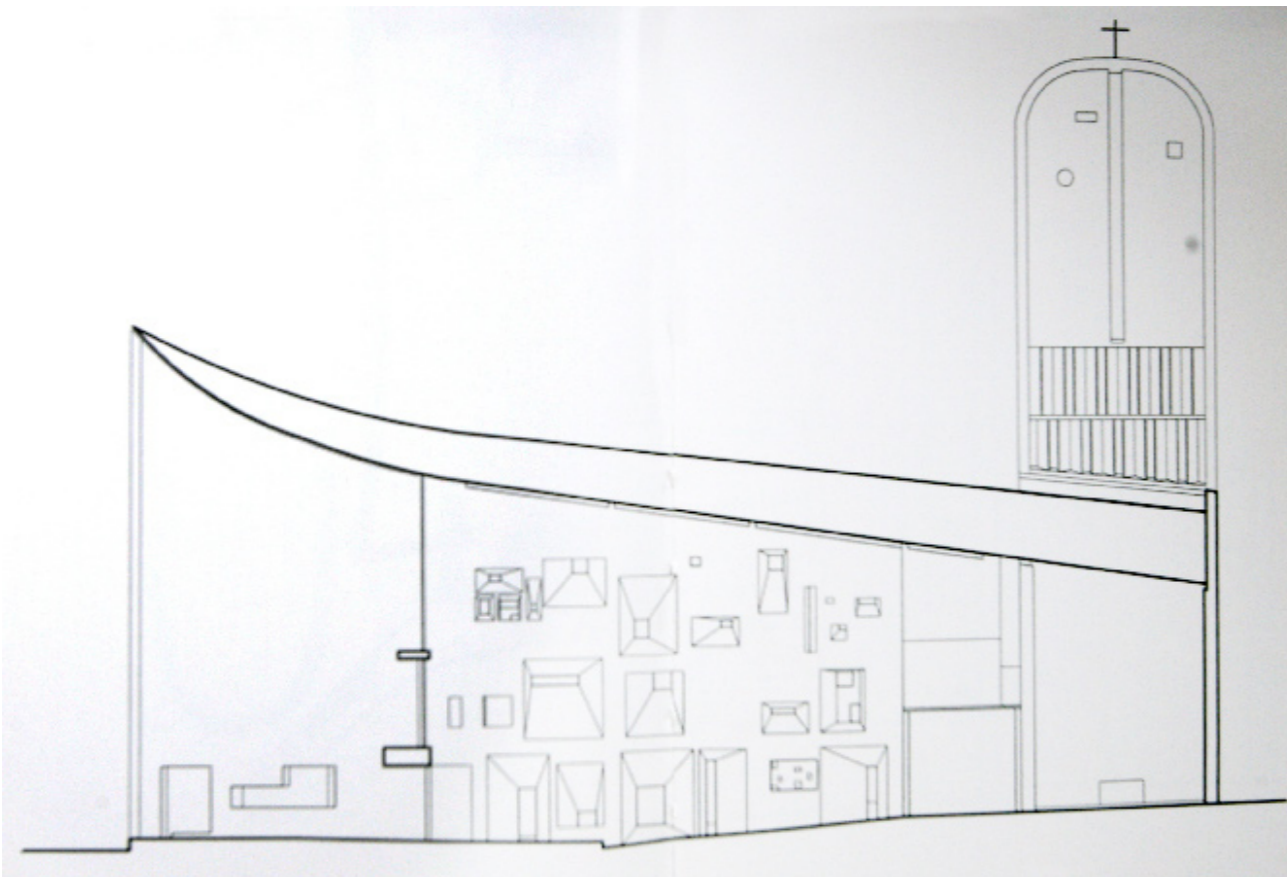
The eastern facade was specifically created to accommodate an outdoor chapel for ten-thousand worshippers, the focal point of the thrice yearly, formally planned pilgrimage masses at the hilltop.³

The scale of this exterior space gives an impression of grandness. Le Corbusier originally intended to enclose this space with a large semi-circular concrete band, a proposal that was wisely dropped. Instead, a series of landmarks defines the perimeter of this outdoor space.⁴

- 1 Chapel
- 2 Memorial Pyramid
- 3 Outdoor chapel
- 4 Pilgrim's housing
- 5 Caretaker's house
- 6 path to summit

1 The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 4
 2 The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 10
 3 Le Corbusier, Oeuvre Complete, p. 72
 4 The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 5





ORIENTATION

The building's two principal facades orient toward the south and the east, and are separated by a pinched wall that swiftly rises as it moves toward the corner.

The south facade, with its gently sloping wall punctured by a series of openings for stained glass, holds the chapel's main entrance.¹

Light pierces through the south wall into the darkened space. Punched through this thick membrane, clear windows offer a blurred view of the landscape beyond.²

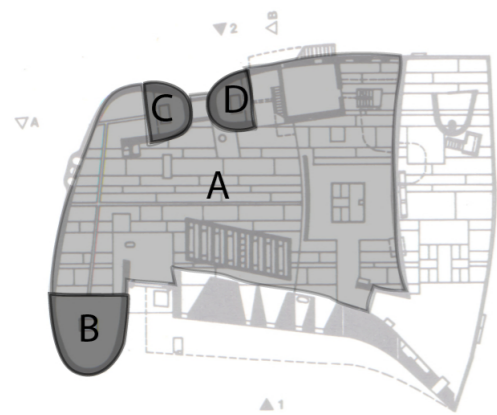
The floor follows the natural slope off the hillside leading down toward the altar, which is situated beneath the highest point in the chapel.³

¹ The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 4

² The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 7

³ The Chapel at Ronchamp, Ezra Stoller, p. 7

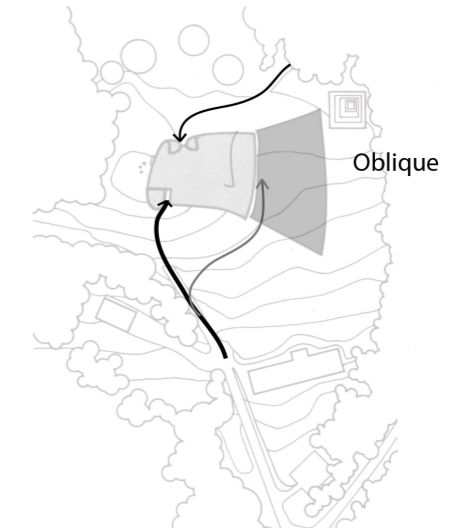
SPATIAL RELATIONS



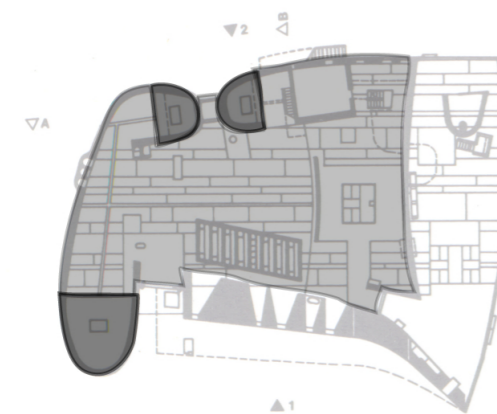
■ Adjacent spaces A-B & A-C



BUILDING APPROACH



SPATIAL ORGANISATIONS

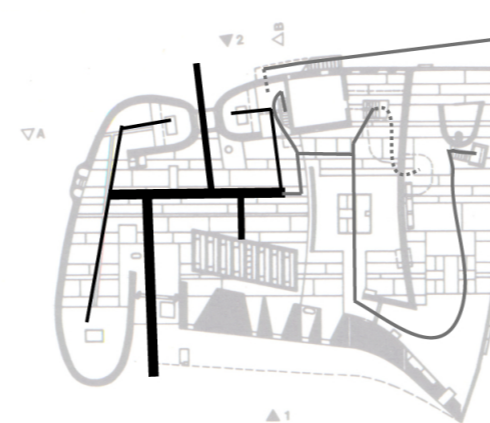


Centralized

■ Central, dominant space

■ Secondary spaces

CIRCULATION TO USE



— Visitors
— Preacher

PATH SPACE RELATIONSHIP

