

# IV

## A FIRST PRINCIPLE

### *Architecture as Place-making*

Contemporary theories of urban planning interpret the city as a place of gathering. In addition to providing the basic needs of a population, from housing and shopping to sewage and transportation, the “city” is meant to operate as a public space where people come together. Camillo Sitte, the nineteenth-century Austrian architect and urban theorist, was one of the first moderns to visualize the critical relationship between the urban square and the public sidewalk. Emulating the visual balance of the Nolli plan of Rome, Sitte conceived of the city as a living organism sustained by the ebb and flow of its public spaces. Historical figures from Lewis Mumford and Catherine Bauer to Booker T. Washington and Ezra Park have confirmed the importance of the urban plan, whether it takes the form of the city proper or the college campus as in the case of the latter two figures. What remains missing in these careful theorizations of the city, however, is the strategic importance of architectural space.