

THEORY OF CITY FORM

Aspects of modern urbanism

- 1) The “scientific” origins**
- 2) Categorization**
- 3) The “modern” obligation**
- 4) The “progressive” imperative**
- 5) The “technological” demand**
- 6) Universalization**
- 7) The new “clients”**
- 8) The finite program**
- 9) The professional’s self-image**
- 10) The spatial vocabulary**

Oscar Newman — A Short Review of CIAM Activity

work that had to be done became subordinate to a too formal structure.

(Cor van Eesteren)

The fruits of the decade 1928–1938 seem colossal not only in architecture built, but in the popularizing of an urban programme. It was inevitable that such a programme, when stripped of its imagery, should result in the banalities of much post-war planning.

Images

1930. The frame building and the multilevel high-rise city, images which contained a complete urban system.

complete

vs. 1950. Random images drawn from many sources containing single ideas which, one by one, contribute to, change, and extend the experience of space.

random

Programme

1930. To popularize the already established style of the modern movement — Didactic.

style

vs. 1950. The search for a plastic system which reciprocates and intends in architectural form existing ecological patterns.

culture

Method

1930. To categorize the general situation and to develop it through the dialectical manipulation of the categories made.

manipulation

vs. 1950. The empirical observation of particular situations and development through the architectural expression of those unique patterns observed within them.

pragmatism

Technique

1930. To replace existing buildings and cities with new categorically formulated elements.

new building

vs. 1950. The time-conscious techniques of renewal and extension derived from the recognition of the positive ecological trends to be found in every particular situation.

renewal

Results

1930. Prototype buildings and master plans, each charged with the full "international" urban programme. Irrespective of location — Didactic.

master plans

vs. 1950. Building in unique situations. The elements articulate and resolve the ecological patterns, and provide instruments of research into possible development of each location.

incremental

(John Voelcker)

It is those who become 40 years old, born around 1916 during wars and revolutions, and those then unborn, now 25 years old, born around 1930 during the preparation of a new war and amidst a profound economic, social, and political crisis — thus finding themselves in the heart of the present period the only ones capable of feeling actual problems, personally, profoundly, the goals to follow, the means to reach them, the pathetic urgency of the present situation. They are in the know. Their predecessors no longer are, they are out, they are no longer subject to the direct impact of the situation.

(Le Corbusier, Letter to CIAM 10, Dubrovnik)

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