

While much of the work of the collaborative Harvard Environmental Design studios remained similar to earlier CIAM projects and to the concepts already developed under previous Dean Joseph Hudnut and Chair of Architecture Walter Gropius,³² other elements now began to be present at Sert's GSD as well. Boston architect Jean-Paul Carlhian taught a Design of Cities course, and Constructivist sculptor Naum Gabo taught Design Research with Sert associate Joseph Zalewski.³³ In 1954–55, Italian CIAM member Ernesto Rogers taught a studio and Theory of Architectural Composition as a visitor.³⁴ In remarks in a CIAM 8 discussion on “Visual Expression at the Core,” Rogers had rejected a distinction between “eternal art and temporary art,” saying, “each time we draw a line we should do it as though it were forever.”³⁵ He had elaborated this position in his famous *Casabella* manifesto, “Continuity,” in which he stated, “No work is truly modern which is not genuinely rooted in tradition,”³⁶ reflecting the strongly “contextual” direction of much postwar Italian Modernism. This position of the Italian CIAM group would be harshly challenged by the Smithsons at CIAM '59 in Otterlo, and the rejection of it was one of the main reasons for the demise of CIAM. At Harvard at this time, on the other hand, one can see Sert and Rogers defining a conservative Modernist position in which the cultural and political importance of pedestrian central cities becomes a central value for Modern architecture. At the same time, they and Giedion revalued “history” within this new framework of urban design, offering the models of historic urban spaces to students in the same context as the latest urbanistic works of Le Corbusier, Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer, Sert, and Bakema.

In spring 1955, the conceptual basis of this new CIAM approach was first presented to students in a seminar called Urban Design co-taught by Sert, landscape architect Hideo Sasaki (who had been brought back to the GSD from the University of Illinois by planner Reginald Isaacs, a Gropius protégé), and Carlhian. It was described as focused on the “physical expression of city planning,” and it defined “civic design” (a term still used in the descriptive text here, as it would be around the same time at the University of Pennsylvania, as a synonym for “urban design”) as dealing with “measure and scale—groups of buildings, open areas, roads, and their relationship.”³⁷ Sert's notes on this seminar mention the necessity of tracing the factors that shape communities, including “geography and climate,” and continue