

of 1929, that the study of modern architectural problems led to those of city planning, and that no clear line of separation could be drawn between the two. In many respects the primary concerns expressed in *Can Our Cities Survive?* shifted from singular architectural concerns to concerns with the entire city, and in so doing expanded the field of architectural enquiry such that “architecture and city planning were tied closer together than ever before, as many architects were faced with the problems of reconstruction and the development of new regions demanding the creation of new communities.”<sup>9</sup>

“Centres of Community Life” uses the hybrid *architect-planner* to describe a new kind of professional who seeks a broader and different kind of knowledge. The term *architect-planner* replaced the earlier *town planner*, but here again “Centres of Community Life” does not use the phrase *urban design*. Sert’s conception of the architect-planner becomes more precise: “The architect-planner can only help to build the frame or container within which this community life could take place. We are aware of the need for such a life, for the expression of a real civic culture which we believe is greatly hampered today by the chaotic conditions of life in our cities. Naturally, the character and conditions of such awakened civic life do not depend entirely on the existence of a favorable frame, but are tied to the political, social, and economic structure of every community.”<sup>10</sup> In this paragraph we are made aware also of the limitations of the architect-planner as Sert understood them. This issue repeats itself in much of Sert’s writing and speaks to the unheroic, humbler role that Sert saw as appropriate to the urban designer.

In the first few years of his tenure at Harvard, Sert brought Sigfried Giedion into the school to teach. The first year that the phrase *urban design* appeared in the curriculum of the GSD was 1954. It was introduced to Harvard through Giedion’s class “History of Urban Design” and a class simply called “Urban Design,” taught by Sert, Hideo Sasaki, and Jean-Paul Carlhian.

### **The First Conference—Staking the Claim**

After several years of developing a rather amorphous urban design curriculum at Harvard, Sert initiated a remarkable event: the First Urban Design Conference, held at the GSD on April 9 and 10, 1956. The aim of this conference, it appears, was to define urban design. To appreciate the proceedings, one has to realize that Sert conceived