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CIAM's Four-Function Dogma

On the Challenge of Mixing Something that Has Been Separated

Abstract

The association *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM)* is understood today as a movement that demanded to separate the city functions of dwelling, working, recreation, and transportation while failing to foresee the implications of this separation that became apparent since the 1960s. The separation of these functions was preframed during the foundation of *CIAM* at the end of the 1920s and implemented in many cities after the Second World War. The critique that accompanied this process culminated in Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* of 1961 and has continued ever since. The following contribution tries to take a differentiated look at the discussions of the four-function scheme within *CIAM*. It intends to show that *CIAM*, during its existence between 1928 and 1959, grappled with this scheme again and again, tried to develop it further in several attempts, and, being unable to overcome it, eventually broke up. The main aim is to show how, in the twentieth century, the mindset of separative analysis took over urban planning, became misunderstood as a design method, and restrained the understanding of the city as complex social, technical, and aesthetic synthesis.

Keywords

Modernism, Design Analysis, Urbanism, City Planning